

THE MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2018

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Rural churches host outdoor community Advent celebrations

St. Mark's, High Prairie Presents Live Nativity



In High Prairie it is an annual tradition for several churches to gather the first Friday in December on the snow-covered front lawn of St. Mark's Anglican Church to tell the story of Jesus' birth through scripture readings and hymns. This year, a cast (including a donkey and miniature horse), crew and audience of more than 100 people took part in the show. Turn to page 6 for Peter Clarke's story about St. Mark's Live Nativity and more photos courtesy of Chris Clegg, *South Peace News*.

Journey from Edson to Bethlehem



Nine churches in Edson celebrated the 50th anniversary of their church-run community thrift store with a Journey to Bethlehem walk on December 8 and 9. Pictured above are Laura Roome and Rose Joudrey in the inn. Turn to page 7 for a reflection by St. Catherine's Anglican/Grace Lutheran member Myrna Downer, who played an innkeeper, and more photos by Ken McCarthy and Maxine Armagost.

Opportune time for interfaith community to work together

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

More than 80 people representing as many as 16 different faiths and 13 community organizations, front-line agencies and community stakeholders participated in the Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative (CRIHI) Plenary on November 28, 2017.

Plenary participants were greeted by Bishop Jane Alexander of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, Archbishop Richard Smith of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese and by pastors Bonnie Hodge and Keith Taylor of Beulah Alliance Church, who hosted the workshop in their church.

"We're in an incredible time of opportunity," said Bishop Jane Alexander encouraging the interfaith community to find ways to build up the whole community. "Whether it is the city's commitment to ending poverty and homelessness and all the work that has been done around the game changers such as affordable transit and the new plan for urban health and wellness; whether it is our commitment to the TRC *Calls to Action* (which impacts the work we're doing because

of the overrepresentation of our First Nations people in this particular population); whether it is the provincial government's plan to end homelessness (released in 2008); or whether it is the federal housing and poverty strategies coming in; this is the time of opportunity. I hope you are as excited as I am that we might actually be the generation that sees this happen," she said.

Leading up to a national housing strategy recognizing adequate housing as a fundamental right for all Canadian citizens, announced on National Housing Day, November 22, 2017, leaders of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada issued a joint statement. Anglican Primate Fred Hiltz, National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald and National Lutheran Bishop Susan Johnson urged faith communities to advocate for improved access to housing for those in need, and to pray for the action necessary to address this need.

"From large urban centres to remote northern communities, homelessness is experienced by diverse populations including young people,



Bishop Jane Alexander and Holy Trinity Riverbend parishioner Patti Holmstrom at the CRIHI Plenary.

seniors, families, veterans, and more. Indigenous people are disproportionately represented among homeless populations in Canada, and many Indigenous communities continue to experience acute housing crises such as overcrowding, lack of sanitation, and the poor condition of existing housing stock. Many Indigenous people in urban contexts also continue to experience discrimination in access to housing," said the statement.

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“Our Common Ground” celebrates finale with Round Dance

Our Common Ground, a four-part celebration of urban Indigenous culture and spirituality in Edmonton, concluded Saturday evening, December 16, with more than 60 people participating in a smudging ceremony, feasting on homemade bannock and stew and holding hands for a Round Dance at Alex Taylor School.

Members of the organizing committee representing Indigenous Ministries of the Anglican Diocese, Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM) and Moving Forward with Reconciliation of the United Church Presbytery were honoured with gifts and danced the first round.

Large crowds turned out to each Our Common Ground gathering. The first focused on youth leadership and prayer, the second on healing, the third on wisdom and the fourth on thanksgiving. The series was funded by the Anglican Foundation of Canada.

Receiving gifts are: Our Common Ground organizing committee members Nancy Siever, Moving Forward with Reconciliation, United Church Presbytery; Michelle Nieviadomy, ICPM Oskapewis; Travis Enright, Indigenous Ministry Archdeacon; Rick Chapman, ICPM Pastor.



Opportune time for interfaith community to work together cont.

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Bishop Jane echoed these sentiments in her address to the CRIHI Plenary: “Absolutely, (as Archbishop Smith said), ‘we have to keep working at it. So that, when we speak about people who find themselves homeless, or in need of housing, or that are falling through the cracks, it’s not *them*. It’s *us*. When one part of the community hurts, we all hurt. In my denomination, in the Christian faith, we would say when one part of the body hurts, we all hurt. And so, as we work together, not just on housing, but on all those things that contribute to people finding themselves in that situation where they can find themselves homeless, we’re actually building up our entire community for the good of everybody,” she said. Bishop Jane urges Edmonton’s faith community to confront the causes of poverty and homelessness by supporting the City of Edmonton’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness (updated in 2017) through her commitment to the work of the CRIHI and as co-chair of EndPovertyEdmonton.

Members of the CRIHI are also committed to meeting the needs of men, women and children already living in poverty. In the fall of 2017, the CRIHI Steering Committee recognized it was time to update their *Call to Action* and to further align their goals with *A Place to Call Home: Edmonton’s Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Edmonton*. The plenary was an opportunity for faith groups to respond to the CRIHI’s ideas around Engagement, Advocacy, Education, Support, and Volunteerism (as outlined in its *Revised Call to Action*), and to help prioritize goals.



CRIHI Coordinator Rabbanit Batya Ivry-Friedman (left) and a plenary participant discuss ways for the interfaith community to engage in poverty and housing issues.

Many people including faith community members, real estate developers and City of Edmonton employees shared their ideas at the CRIHI Plenary. Dorian Smith, a social worker, BSW, RSW, in the Family and Community Supports section of the City of Edmonton Citizen Services Department, wondered if it might be feasible for faith communities to open their doors as part of a city-wide network of safe access points. Smith and her colleagues actively seek avenues to build community while leading compassionate conversations about homelessness. This work includes the Homeless on Public Land initiative which connects people experiencing homelessness with community outreach and housing supports through Boyle Street Community Services.

While serving with a sexual exploitation working group several years ago, Smith encountered a woman who said she had been homeless and walked into a west-end church looking for someone to help her. The warm, non-judgmental welcome she received from the church turned out to be a catalyst for change in the

woman’s life.

“I think Dorian’s idea to start a database for faith groups is wonderful,” said Rabbanit Batya Ivry-Friedman, Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative Coordinator. “Perhaps we could post a sign-up sheet on our website for communities to offer their places of worship as safe spaces.”

All Saints’ Anglican Cathedral Vicar the Rev. Quinn Strikwerda participated in the plenary, along with members of the Cathedral’s Social Justice Committee. He, too, thinks an open church database or online calendar could work.

“I especially like the idea of offering pastoral support to front-line workers who may need it,” said Strikwerda. “Working with populations with the challenges we meet in the downtown core is wonderful work, but can also be very physically and spiritually stressful. I think people like street outreach workers, social workers, and others are sometimes overlooked as people who need much care. I know, too, from experience that self-care is often relegated to the back burner. I would be very interested to see a coalition of willing spiritual caregivers to reach out to an often forgotten and neglected population.”

Out of the plenary’s group discussions, said Strikwerda, came the realization that people who volunteer/work in churches are often uncomfortable “interacting with people who experience mental health, addiction and trauma as part of their daily reality” - a barrier to connecting on a personal level with the homeless and under-housed.

Continued on page 5.

Lived koinonia uplifts new cathedral in Ibba diocese



BISHOP FRASER LAWTON
Diocese of Athabasca

In mid-December, I had the opportunity and privilege of travelling to South Sudan for the consecration of the new cathedral in the Diocese of Ibba. It was a marvelous celebration and joining with the congregation of St. Barnabas' were

Christians not only from across the diocese, but also from neighbouring dioceses and communities. It was my second visit and it was wonderful to see familiar faces and places. I also enjoyed sampling again the local cuisine. I had anticipated, and enjoyed again, cassava greens with ground nut "sauce." Meals were a significant part of the experience. This wasn't so much because of the food, but because of the people. While several of us were guests at the same house, many more shared in the meals there. This was in keeping with the sense of community

I felt throughout my visit. Whenever someone came to join our conversations or sit with us, they would make a point of personally greeting each person present. Though they began each time with the guests of honour, every person in the circle or room was also greeted. In fact, often people passing through the area where we were gathered would stop and greet us all in this way before continuing on. To a degree, I expect some of this comes from the demands of everyday living and the culture that arises from this mutual reliance. However, there is also something deeper being experienced. I was seeing (perhaps especially as an "objective" outsider) lived koinonia. Many of us have a sense of community and commitment in and with our church families. Some of us, in fact, have found our congregations to be very much our family. Generally, though, there are boundaries to that. Most of the time, our interactions with church family are not intertwined in our day-to-day living. In Ibba they are. Entwined with everyday living (and a culture of "community" over "the individual") is also a mutuality of faith and Christian living. I am not romanticizing the reality of living in Ibba diocese. People are people and they, too, experience conflict and struggle, along

with the abrasives and blessings of life. But there is something for us to take from this. We live in a world that tends to keep us from one another's presence. We live much further apart, physically, from one another than people in Ibba. The way our lives are organized mitigates this kind of communal day. We pay a price for our space and privacy. They have a strength borne of constant mutual encouragement, prayer, conversation and challenge. There is no substitute in having community for the time spent together. We can learn something about sharing meals and honouring one another from the people of Ibba. There is no such thing as the Lone Christian. The scriptures assume the church is a community of people actually spending time together. It is not a luxury to be savoured from time to time, but a necessity for our spiritual health. I am not suggesting we all sell our homes and open a commune. I am suggesting we could make a point of spending regular time in one another's presence to achieve a similar end. The Season of Lent is an opportune time for us to take up this challenge and make the sacrifices and effort to share our lives more deeply with one another (Matthew 18:20; Ecclesiastes 4:9).
The Lord be with you, +Fraser



Bishop Lawton visited Ibba diocese in the Republic of South Sudan, from December 14 to 18, 2017, for the consecration of St. Barnabas' Cathedral. Clockwise from top left: cathedral Sunday school performs a song/dance; Bishop Fraser among guests including the Maridi State Governor, county commissioner, ministers (state departments) and others attending events celebrating the consecration; leaders of the Mothers' Union and diocesan clergy, a CMS worker who lives in Maridi and a guest from Northern Ireland representing two of Ibba's partner parishes in Ireland; St. Barnabas' Cathedral receives a last-minute coat of paint the day before its consecration; homes (including one of the few houses with a permanent brick/metal roof) near the cathedral. Photos: Bishop Fraser Lawton

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Mission Action Planning: much more fun than it sounds



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

We have covered a great deal of ground in the last year and a bit since I started writing these articles on missional discipleship. We have looked closely at Jesus' model for developing

disciples. We have talked about opening the church's front door and closing the back door, and the reasons some people will never come to a Sunday morning service. Last month we completed the second of two articles on 'Fresh Expressions' of church. All of these articles are designed to be a resource for missional discipleship thinking in your parish and I hope they are proving to be so. Copies of previous articles are available on the diocesan website.

Mission Action Planning

As we forge our way in 2018, it may be time for your parish to revisit or begin to develop a Mission Action Plan (MAP). It may be that you groan as you

read that statement, thinking a MAP is just another make-work exercise that will make no real difference to the life of your parish. Well, if that's the case, I understand, and that will certainly be true if we think of a MAP as a 'to-do-list' of programs.

In fact, the development of a MAP for your parish should be exciting. The key thing to always bear in mind is the method Jesus used for developing disciples. In Luke 7-10, we see that he Engages with people and Nurtures His disciples toward an Encounter with God as they participate in mission and thus, Grow! Jesus doesn't wait until they 'know enough.' They always learn by doing. I'm sure they made mistakes

but Jesus was happy to take the risk, knowing that 'right action leads to right thinking' more than the other way around. When we come to developing our Mission Action Plans we must apply these same principles for our own growth as missional disciples who make other missional disciples.

A MAP can help us shape our vision and activity around mission. We revisit it year on year and refine and develop it as we progress and grow numerically and spiritually.

So whether your parish has had a MAP for many years, or you are about to develop your first one, the first two essential steps are:

1. Remember that the purpose of a MAP is to

develop missional disciples who grow the church. A MAP that does not start with this understanding will be ultimately ineffective.

2. Begin with prayer! Organise a vestry prayer day, or a parish prayer day, or both. Make it a focus of prayer in the 'Prayers of the People' on a Sunday morning. Let it be preached about and discussed. We need to keep praying individually and corporately. Any MAP that does not start with us on our knees suggests we think we can do this in our own strength, without waiting on the God who calls us out in Mission. More next time.

*With every blessing,
Richard*

Athabasca archdeacon urges shift away from focus on content



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

Much of my current ministry is steeped in theory, theology and education. I've always laid emphasis on understanding and the rational processing

of information. All I had to do was teach the right things in the right ways and parishioners would respond in faithful obedience to God. Over the past 35 years of ministry I have created an uncounted number of educational resources for baptismal preparation, marriage preparation and confirmation classes. I have created presentations, board games and puppet shows. I have cajoled godparents, brides, grooms, and teenagers facing the heavy hands of bishops. All in all, I have performed well and creatively, and three generations of potential disciples have benefitted from my educational prowess.

Yet, I think I have achieved next to nothing. Oh, sure, people always come away "knowing" more than when they arrived. People have had great experiences of the content of the Great Tradition of the Church. Never had they had to memorize the Creeds or the order of the books of the Bible. Always have they had the opportunity to comprehend the faith and apply it in their daily lives.

But, rarely have they actually become functioning disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, able to assist God in making more disciples. I pray that God will accept the earnestness with which I taught the gospel and forgive the single focus of

rational comprehension.

You see, becoming a disciple is never about content. It is always about relationship—the relationship between the disciple and God, supported and strengthened by the relationships amongst disciples. My singular focus on rational comprehension actually inhibited the development of divine relationships—may God forgive me.

So, discipleship development is about formation, not education. We don't need lay catechists, if their focus is transmitting content. We need mentors, both lay and clerical. The Church needs people who will share in

the journey towards God's salvation. We need people who will share the struggle of Christian faithfulness in contemporary society. We need disciples who will say, "I experience Jesus in these ways. What about you?"

The time has come for the whole Church to give up its focus on content. We need to focus on the courage to accompany others in their spiritual formation and maturity. The Church needs to risk ridicule and rejection for the sake of the salvation of others. Today we mentor others as we learn to say, "Here's my experience of Jesus. What's yours?"

Christmas appeal donations will improve Buyé pediatric ward

MESSENGER STAFF

Bishop Jane's Christmas appeal for donations to renovate the pediatric ward of the Buyé health centre was a resounding success. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, Edmonton Diocese has raised more than \$77,000 for the project (\$65,000 from Reach pledges and \$12,000 from individual donations).

We are waiting approval from PWRDF to begin work on the project, which is anticipated to begin this spring.

The Rev. Dominique Ciza, Health and Christian Education Coordinator for Buyé Diocese, says the ward currently in use is congested, with two and sometimes three patients sharing a bed. As a result, children are being re-infected by other patients, picking up illnesses

other than those for which they were admitted in the first place. Ciza says the building renovation will help to solve these issues.

Last year Edmonton diocese sponsored the construction of a maternity ward in Buyé, enabling health care staff to serve approximately 5,400 women each year, and providing a clean and safe space for deliveries and c-sections.



This crowded pediatric unit in Buyé was built in the 1940s.

Lovingly preserved memorabilia tells story of All Saints'

MARY GISLASON

All Saints', Athabasca

It is often said, "You must know your past before you can define the future." Besides, in this journey of life on earth, we all must live to the fullest of true happiness if we have: Hope, Peace, Love, Joy in whatever church religion we belong to and cherish. There is something still very special about "churches." Even young children, right from Sunday school, admire church memorabilia.

When the new church was built in 1990, the committee of All Saints' Anglican Church in Athabasca decided to compile a "history," with the goal of working toward a historical museum to memorialize the lives of our many, many ministers, primates, bishops, lay readers, etc., from the parish's beginning in 1894.

Much work, re: collections, research, etc., went into this history. In collecting church memorabilia, we have succeeding in knowing more about how people lived then and now. Then, finally, on June 25, 2011

we were fortunate to have Bishop Fraser Lawton and the Rev. Glenn Lynn bless and open our historical museum.

It thrills one's heart to witness visitors admiring the things of our past. In the early days, from 1894 until the late 1940s, affluent churches and dioceses in England and eastern Canada shipped "bales" (crates) to equip (St. Matthew's first and then All Saints' I, Athabasca). These bales (our museum has preserved four of them) containing clothing, blankets, books, toys, beads, fine linen cloths, brocade hangings, brass and silver altar pieces, etc., originally arrived in England from Ceylon with tea. Each bale still bears the original tea label and contains the silver paper that teas were wrapped in. To open a bale was like receiving a treasured gift at any time of the year, not just on a special occasion. Every last item was put to use in the depressed areas that received them.

The St. Matthew's and later All Saints' churches both had the beautiful leaded windows. The inside frame was painted white and

the outside was the natural wood colour. Research shows that the stained glass and leaded windows were possibly brought over the ocean to Canada in molasses barrels. It is possible that the leaded windows in St. Matthew's and All Saints' churches were made in Czecho-Slovakia.

It is a pleasure to watch visitors touch the windows and admire the smoothness. Saint Mark's, Plum Lake Church, had stained glass windows bought by families in memory of loved ones. When the church closed, the stained glass windows were moved to St. Paul's Church in Boyle, Alberta.

All Saints', Athabasca has a beautiful stained glass window in memory of Archdeacon Robert Little (1914-1950). In our present All Saints' Church II it is located behind the altar. At the time the window was



Illuminating All Saints' altar are beautiful stained glass windows in memory of Archdeacon Robert Little.

bought, it cost \$1,500.

When All Saints' Church I was dismantled, some leaded windows were sold. Some parishioners bought the large ones and donated them to our museum in memory of pioneer family members. The church committee also donated some smaller two-part leaded windows to our museum.

There are still many parishioners who treasure the pioneer churches and the memorabilia of our precious beginnings.

Thanks be to God.



Christ Church Organist Retires on a Happy Note

Christ Church, Grande Prairie, recently celebrated the ministry of organist Bob Orr. In 12 years, Bob grew comfortable playing a variety of music for the congregation, especially the traditional carols proclaiming Christ's birth. Retiring on a happy note in 2017, Bob played for Christ Church's three Christmas Eve services. He says it has been an honour to play the Christ Church pipe organ. The parish has been uplifted by his beautiful music. Photo: Janice Orr, deacon

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Parish websites

- Peace River: www.stjamespr.org
- Fort McMurray, All Saints': www.allsaintsanglican.ca
- Fort McMurray, St. Thomas': www.sttom.ca
- Grande Prairie: www.christchurchanglicangp.org
- Boyle: www.parishnorthernlights.org



Opportune time for interfaith community to work together cont.

Continued from page 2.

"This, for me, dovetails with the effort the cathedral congregation has been making to be more open to the downtown population," he said.

During the winter volunteers interact with people experiencing poverty at a free pancake breakfast provided by the Cathedral every Friday morning. "Some of our volunteers come out of the street population we serve, and many of the volunteers sit and eat together with the guests," Strikwerda said.

He adds that during the summer

months, when the doors of the church are kept open for several hours on weekdays surrounding the noon-hour lunchtime for Open Cathedral, "we have many people from all walks of life who drop in to see the church, to talk, or just to rest awhile. The volunteer docents all report this as a valuable ministry. We have seen an increase in use of the medicines at the smudge station as well."

Open Cathedral welcomes people with many of the same issues and challenges the Friday morning

breakfast guests face. All Saints' is planning to hold a mental health workshop for its volunteers, and for volunteers from other churches in the area, who interact with the downtown public. It is Strikwerda's hope that the mental health first aid training, which he completed last fall, "will enable our front-line volunteers to be more confident in their ministry, be better equipped to spot the issues they are confronted with and direct people to the kind of help they need, if any."

As its next steps CRIHI

is developing a timeline for implementing the action items brought forward at the plenary. Identifying opportunities for Edmonton's faith community to work together is a priority. Coordinator Batya Ivry-Friedman and Housing Ambassador Mike Van Boom ask members of the faith community to tell them about their initiatives to prevent poverty and homelessness. For more information and to read the plenary report, visit: <https://interfaithhousinginitiative.wordpress.com/>.

St. Mark's High Prairie brings Christmas story to life

PETER CLARKE
Athabasca Editor

For many years High Prairie's Anglican parish has proclaimed the real reason for Christmas at a free, outdoor ecumenical event held the first Friday of December. The Live Nativity tells the story of Jesus' birth through scripture readings and hymn singing. The whole town is invited to the front lawn of St. Mark's church, usually knee-deep in snow and adjacent to the main highway through town.

Several churches take part in the production and, should anyone happen to venture into the church hall before the start, they are strongly encouraged to put on a costume. Amazingly, just before show time God routinely sends a host of people to round out the cast of many characters, and this year more than 100 people (cast, crew and audience members) took part.

The Holy Family's crèche is illuminated by outdoor lights and overhead lighting assists the people with speaking and singing parts. The church's loudspeakers are propped up in the snow and the show can be heard several blocks away.

Live animals, such as sheep in the past and, this year, a donkey and

miniature horse courtesy of Mathew Marquardt, round out the lineup. The program begins with song and the Annunciation to Mary, foretelling baby Jesus' birth. Mary and Joseph journey to the stable in the middle of the lawn accompanied by music and scripture readings. The angels, ranging in size from knee-high in stature to basketball player height, appear before the shepherds. King Herod, aka our own the Rev. Leon Cadsap, speaks as the magi travel to the stable to deliver their gifts. The town's roaming choir and the Filipino community choir brought the performance to a joyful close with several popular Christmas songs.

St. Mark's cosy church hall provided the perfect backdrop for refreshments and fellowship. Every year, those who attend remark that the Live Nativity is the perfect way to get into the true spirit of



Clockwise from top left: Gabriel (James Waikle) leads seven angels in song; Magi from the East (Lorene Rose and Larry Greer); Mary (Desire Bissell) and Joseph (Pastor Brian Gilroy); children of the Filipino community choir.



Photos courtesy of Chris Clegg, *South Peace News*

Christmas.

This year a reporter from our local paper took part as a wise man, whilst his editor took the pictures you see here. We also earned a 'thumbs up' review in the

community events section of the same paper.

Many hands contribute to this annual production but there is great joy and happiness in proclaiming Jesus' birth in High Prairie.

All Saints' Athabasca keeps the spirit of Christmas alive

MARY GISLASON
All Saints' Anglican Church
Athabasca

Gathering the children at the altar, the Rev. David Greenwood and rector's warden, Shirley Nixon, lit the Advent Wreath during Sunday school time at All Saints' Anglican Church on December 15.

It was interesting to watch the children light the Prophecy candle, the Bethlehem candle and the Shepherd's candle. All three candles were lavender in colour to symbolize repentance of sins. The Eternal Flame was glowing in the center of the Advent wreath.

On Christmas Eve, 2017, they lit the Angel candle and the big, beautiful Christ candle representing the Light of the World. The white Christ candle holds every color of the spectrum and is symbolic of



Lay Reader David Lines, above, and Rector's Warden Sheila Nixon, left, assist the children with the lighting of the Advent Wreath at All Saints' Athabasca.

purity.

It is indeed wondrous to see the children at the altar lighting the candles and speaking with the rector about "Christmas." It reminded us that love is our strongest bond. This love began in Bethlehem and leads us on to eternity, while reminding us to "keep Christmas all year!"

Sitting in the pews, all the parishioners shared in the readings, lighting, and singing with others the Joy of God who gave us Jesus and His Loving Presence in our lives today.

The Athabasca Community Christmas Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was held on December 21, 2017 at All Saints' Anglican Church in Athabasca. 108 people from approximately 10 different churches took part in the community gathering organized by Marvyn Rogers. There were representatives from Athabasca, Boyle, Perryvale and Wandering River, Alberta.

The Rev. David Greenwood performed the blessing. Among the dignitaries invited to read scripture were Athabasca Mayor Colleen Powell, Chamber of Commerce President Laurie Bonell, County Reeve Doris Splane, Athabasca University President Neil Fassina, MLA Colin Piquette, Athabasca Director of Family and Community Support Services Debbie Wood, Aspen View Public School Division Board Chairman Dennis MacNeil, Athabasca RCMP Detachment Constable Travis King and St. Gabriel's Roman Catholic Church



New Horizon Choir.

Photos: Mary Gislason

Priest Father Paulsen.

The church was filled with an audience singing joyfully to its heart's content. Several individuals and groups also entertained including the Athabasca Community Handbell Choir; Golden Memories Choir; the Rev. Christobel Lines, the Rev. Monica Rosborough and the Rev. Cecile Fausak; Gabriel Singers; Athabasca United Church Choir; Marion Singers; Ukrainian Catholic Church Carolers; New Horizon Singers and Friends and many more.

The freewill offering is donated to the "Road to Hope" program which supplies transportation to cancer patients for their treatment sessions out of town.

Thanks be to God.

Christ Church Kid-centered Worship Evokes Wonder and Awe



The youngest members of the parish of Christ Church, Edmonton are often invited by their rector Susan Oliver to help celebrate communion. The "Everyone Upstairs" intergenerational service, held the second Sunday of Advent, was tailored to members of the congregation who routinely head downstairs for Sunday school. After helping out with a play about God's miraculous surprises for Mary, her fiancé Joseph and her cousin Elizabeth, the children gather around a kid-sized altar to break bread. Photo: Shannon Kerr; Christ church assistant priest Nick Trussell and a flock of angels, sheep and shepherds surround Sue Oliver as she prepares the bread and wine at a birthday party for Jesus - one of five services offered by the parish on Christmas Eve. Photos: Margaret Glidden

Edson churches present Advent journey to Bethlehem

MYRNA DOWNER

St. Catherine's/Grace, Edson
Diocese of Edmonton

Editor's Note: Nine churches in the town of Edson celebrated the 50th anniversary of their church-run community thrift store with a Journey to Bethlehem walk on December 8 and 9. Ken McCarthy brought the idea to Edson having previously been a guide on the Fort Assiniboine version of Journey to Bethlehem. "It went well and we are planning to continue the tradition next year, hoping to make it even better," says McCarthy.

Myrna Downer, a member of St. Catherine's/Grace, shares her experience as an innkeeper and fellow traveller on the road to the manger:

It was a big step out of my comfort zone to agree to be an innkeeper on Friday night. But when Ken (McCarthy) asked, my friend Sheryl readily agreed to work with me and, before we knew it, we were standing under a big sky of stars with candlelight flickering around us. All was ready for the travellers to stop by the inn. As I looked awestruck into the heavens the sheep started to bleat and I pictured what it must have been like on the first holy night thousands of years ago in Bethlehem.

The next evening, Laura Roome and Rose Joudrey played the innkeepers and I was able to visit all the stations on the road to Bethlehem with my sister Maxine (Armogost). It was inspiring to travel the road past Roman soldiers, shepherds, angels, wise men and servants, fishermen, census



Pictured right: Rogan and Jerren Fron as Roman Soldiers; Myrna Downer as innkeeper. Photos: Maxine Armogost and Ken McCarthy

keepers, inn keepers and, finally, to arrive at the manger before Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. The sheep and donkeys seemed as content as I to be there. When all the people in our group knelt in the snow with the little children kneeling first – wow – what a powerful moment!

I want to thank all the people involved in planning, preparing, rehearsing, acting, building sets and making this journey happen. I can't imagine a more special gift to give the community this Christmas. I also want to thank the excellent



musicians and singers who performed for us in the Christian school chapel and the lovely people who fed us after our journey. My sister was very impressed to see many different churches working together. I thought of the many prayers that Jesus said for unity, that we all would be one.

Steve Bell and Malcolm Guite Sound the Season of Advent



An extraordinary friendship and abundant talent made for an unforgettable performance by English poet-priest Malcolm Guite and Christian singer/songwriter/storyteller Steve Bell before a nearly sold-out crowd at All Saints' Cathedral, Edmonton on the evening of December 8. Bell performed several songs from his 20th career album, *Where the Good Way Lies*, recorded with "old school" analogue tape machines. Guite serves as the chaplain of Girton College at the University of Cambridge, and moonlights as lead singer and guitarist for the blues-rock band Mystery Train. The two artists met at a CS Lewis conference in the UK, and many of Guite's sonnets (he has recorded a CD of 70 sonnets for the Christian year from his popular book of poetry, *Sounding the Seasons*), have inspired Bell's own music.

St. Mary Vegreville's first Nativity Festival a success!

The Rev. LAURETA BLONDIN
St. Mary the Virgin, Vegreville

The parish of St. Mary the Virgin in Vegreville decided to try something different this Advent. A number of parishioners and their rector enjoy collecting nativities from around the world. We decided it would be fun to display our nativities at the church and invite the wider community to our first-ever Nativity Festival.

On December 9 and 10, the church basement was filled with more than 70 different styles of nativities – big and small. A large number of nativities came from different countries in Africa, including one from Burundi; as

well as from Mexico, Central America and South America.

The Nativity Festival doors opened on Saturday at 11:00 am and a surprise visitor - Mrs. Claus - came to bake fresh homemade cookies in the kitchen and serve them to all the visitors. The tasty treats, including shortbread and sugar cookies, were served with a choice of Mrs. Claus' special hot chocolate, mulled spiced apple cider, coffee and tea.

The Nativity Festival was well attended by parishioners and members of our local community, including Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville MLA Jessica Littlewood on Saturday, and a newspaper reporter on Sunday.

Many people asked if, and hope we will, do it again. And, with the event such a success, we may just do that!



Above left: Mrs. Claus with Laureta Blondin's granddaughters. Above right: Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville MLA Jessica Littlewood, rector Laureta Blondin and Mrs. Claus (Janet Julian-Hopchin from Holy Trinity, Tofield).

Edmonton Cursillo Welcomes New Cursillistas

GEN ASHWELL
Edmonton Cursillo

52 Cursillistas attended our Welcome Ultreya last December. Included were nine new Cursillistas who had attended the November 10-12 Cursillo Weekend.

As Outgoing Lay Director, Brian Richardson expressed his appreciation for his experience as



a leader. He then introduced the current Secretariat: Lay Director, David Holehouse; 4th-Day Chair, Ted Greenaway; Pre-Cursillo, Elaine Dickie; Secretary, Sandra Arbeau; Palanca, Joyce Farion; Treasurer, Barb Lingelbach; Communications, Gen Ashwell; Spiritual Director, Sheila Hagan-Bloxham.

Barb Lingelbach coordinated a small crew for efficient clean-up in the kitchen. We ended the evening with a prayer circle, with Sheila offering a closing prayer.



St. Luke's 'fresh expression of church' a load of Messy fun

SHELLY KING
St. Luke, Edmonton

St. Luke's Edmonton hosted a Messy Christmas Pageant on December 9, 2017 and what a party it was! For the first time, St. Luke's combined the December Messy Church event with the parish's annual Christmas pageant.

The messy activities included building the star and making angel wings, sheep hats and gifts for the magi to carry in the re-enactment of Jesus' birth.

One regular Messy Church attender brought in a few friends to provide musical entertainment, and the event wrapped up with a delicious potluck supper.

Approximately 90 people enjoyed the festivities - about 60 adults and 30 children - representing a mix of regular St. Luke's parishioners, regular Messy Church



folk and new friends from the surrounding communities of Holyrood and Ottewell.

The Ven. Richard King, Rector of St. Luke's and Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship says, "It was very special and, actually, quite profound. It is a joy to see relationships forming, growing and deepening."

St. Luke's launched 'Messy' as a fresh expression of church in September, 2016.



Wabamun rector marks 20th anniversary of ordination

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

Sunday, November 19, 2017 was a special day in the life of the Mission of St. Saviour, Wabamun and its rector.

Twenty years before, on November 18, 1997, the Rev. Coleen Lynch was ordained a deacon at All Saints' Cathedral by Bishop Victoria Matthews. She became a priest the next year, serving in several Edmonton parishes and founding the Women's Reintegration Chaplaincy - a ministry to help women on parole fit back into society.

In an article for *The Messenger*, published in April, 2017, Coleen said that on Sundays she would be asked to fill in at rural parishes "and it was during this time that my love and appreciation for rural ministry took root."

"Since I left the world of corrections in 2008, I have served in

Devon, Rexboro, Tofield and now my beloved Wabamun. What captured my heart? The goodness and graciousness of the people and the beauty and the glory of the land," she said. Coleen is currently completing a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree at St. Stephen's College through the University of Alberta, and her dissertation will tell the story of St. Saviour. At the same time, she is studying rural sociology through the U of A Augustana in Camrose, and hopes this course will further her understanding of the challenges of rural communities, as well as opportunities for development and sustainability.

"In April 2014, Bishop Jane asked me to go out to Wabamun and start a year-round church. To my



Above: Bishop Jane presents Coleen Lynch with a bouquet on behalf of St. Saviour's Mission, Wabamun. Right: Rev. Coleen shares a blessing with one of St. Saviour's young parishioners.

Photos: Margaret Glidden



great surprise, thrill and delight I got to name the parish. The former parish in Wabamun closed in 1967

and I had known it was called St. Saviour," said Coleen.

Continued next page.

Kate's Kitchen Hosts Christmas Meal in Edson

MARGARET GLIDDEN
with Keith Denman and Joan Carter

Kate's Kitchen diners receive much more than a full tummy - they get to be part of a welcoming community in Edson. The monthly community meal is for anyone who would like to come. Some people are in need of a good meal and come for the food, while some people seek fellowship and friendship.

This year, with a generous donation from a local oil and gas company, the parish was able to provide a Christmas meal for 70 people. Tables were set up in St. Catherine's hall, entryway and in the back of the sanctuary to accommodate all who attended. Many hands helped with setting up, serving the meal and cleaning up.

Joan Carter, a member of St. Catherine's, says the Kate's Kitchen ministry began in November, 2009 when church members learned of no fewer than "58 homeless people living in our community. There is a Mission House in town, but it is not certified to provide meals to the general population, and so there was nowhere for these people to receive a free meal," says Carter. "We provide lunch on the third Thursday of each month at St. Catherine's. This has now become a joint ministry with our friends from Grace Lutheran as we worship together as one congregation."

With the help of a local restaurant, Kate's Kitchen offered hearty meals of lasagna, pizza, soup or spaghetti. Since then another restaurant has come on board to supply meals. During only its second year, Kate's Kitchen was able to serve its friends a full turkey dinner in December.

"The church members came together in a big way to provide and prepare the food. This, of course, was a huge success," says Carter. For the past three years, food for the meal has been donated.

"In October I received a phone call from a representative of Repsol, a local resource company, asking about our Kate's Kitchen," she says.

A few weeks later Carter was surprised to receive another call inviting her to the company's office. "I was overwhelmed to receive a cheque for \$1,660 to cover the cost of our Christmas meal. The funds had been raised by donation at one of their safety meetings. We cannot thank them enough for their generosity," she says.

The Rev. Keith Denman, interim priest-in-charge of the parishes of



St. Catherine's (Anglican) and Grace (Lutheran), describes Kate's Kitchen as a "significant and growing outreach."

On its first day Kate's Kitchen extended a warm welcome to nine people who were cold and hungry. With the support of church members and friends who donate their time and resources, the ministry is now capable of providing a hot meal for, on average, 40 people per month. During the summer, Kate's Kitchen welcomes upwards of 70 people to its free Saturday noon-hour barbecues.

"We have learned that the need of the people who attend is not always hunger. For some it is loneliness that brings them in the



Bottom left and right: Mary Louise Downer, Alison Reid and Des Tesfamari serve Christmas dinner to Kate's Kitchen diners. Photos: Keith Denman, Joan Carter

door," says Carter. "The chance to share a meal with others is a highlight of their week. Some of the people who come can afford to buy lunch, and make a donation toward the cost of food."

Kate's Kitchen continues to seek support from local businesses, and the local newspaper has published numerous stories and pictures, keeping the ministry in the public eye.

It is Carter's hope that with continued funding and volunteer support people will be welcomed at the door of Kate's Kitchen every week.

Carol Blair, where were you born and what does the word “home” mean to you? I was born in Lacombe, Alberta and raised on a small dairy farm about 30 miles east of Lacombe. I loved growing up on a farm and remain a country girl at heart! Home, to me, is a feeling as much as it is a specific place. I am at home whenever, or wherever, I feel at peace, feel love and support surrounding me and experience solace and gratitude.

What is your favourite season? Spring, as the earth awakens after a long and often cold winter. I delight in seeing our perennial flowers poking their heads through the ground, the early spring blossoms and the budding of bright green leaves on the trees. Spring is the promise of more growth, longer and warmer days ahead and, with hopeful anticipation, some great golf games - once the flower beds and other yard work is done!

What is your favourite passage from the Bible? Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (A Time for Everything). I find it a valuable reflection on both the precarious and precious nature of life, and the wonders of God’s work in our lives. While not related to the specific bible passage, the quote “When the student is ready, the Teacher appears” also affirms for me that it is “God who has made everything suitable for its time” and underscores the futility of fretting and worrying, despite our human nature to do so.

What is your greatest desire? My greatest desire is for all people, regardless of their situation or being in this world, to feel loved and valued. Hatred and injustices of all kinds destroy the love, good and potential in which God created people.

Where in the world are you most at peace? When I am immersed in the solitude, beauty and bounty of God’s creation.

What/who inspires you? People under incredible adversity who do great things to help others or themselves when they have hit rock bottom. Life is full of spoken and unspoken love, heroism and acts of kindness, often with substantial sacrifice. God has given us the way to be of this character through His Son and His ultimate sacrifice.

What are you afraid of? Depending on the circumstances, vulnerability. Vulnerability is how we can learn and grow, but handled in the wrong way it can be very damaging.

What might people be surprised to know about you? Merv, my husband, and I met in our last year of university and were married three years later. One of the enduring gifts of our relationship is Merv’s son, my step-son, who has given us two lovely grandchildren, now adults. Last May, our granddaughter gave us a beautiful great granddaughter, Katie, who was born on Merv’s father’s birthday. The joyous circle of life continues.

What is the best book you’ve ever read? I love books, as can be witnessed in both our home and my office! I find it hard to identify a favourite book, but one of my favourite genres is biographies/autobiographies. I am fascinated and inspired by people’s lives, their ups and downs, the lessons they learned (from failure and success, however they are defined in the context of their lives), and what I might learn from them and apply to my own life.



CAROL BLAIR

AROUND THE DIOCESE

IMMANUEL WETASKIWIN

What is your most memorable meal? High tea at my grandmother’s home after church. My grandmother was a short perky English woman, who loved nothing more than to serve guests in her small farmhouse. Church services were held at least once a month in the community’s old school house. After church everyone was invited to her home for tea – the number of people was never a concern. Tea consisted of ham sandwiches, sweet mixed pickles (my job to load up the pickle dishes!), Ritz cheese crackers and sliced cheddar cheese, double layer iced chocolate cake, walnut squares, chocolate marshmallow cookies and large pots of tea. We would all gather around her old oak table in the living room and enjoy fun and serious conversation all underpinned by the love and joy of her hospitality.

Wabamun rector marks 20th anniversary of ordination cont.

Continued from previous page.

Preaching on Jesus’ Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30), Bishop Jane said in her homily that “God chooses specific roles for specific people. You know, perfectly well, that God has chosen you for particular ministries in your families and in your community. He intended for you to take a

few risks and put your gifts on the market, if you like... There’s no one with a gift that isn’t useful, a gift that isn’t needed, a gift that doesn’t bring glory to God. Don’t bury your gifts and be distracted from using them. Be brave. Take a chance and

share the gifts that God has given you. Remember, our whole life together depends on generosity and on a faith community willing to share.”

“Twenty years ago,” she continued, “I happen to know that Coleen placed her gifts at the service of the church in a most particular way when she was ordained to the diaconate. And, I suspect, that as a little child Coleen never saw that

coming. But she followed God’s calls on her life with faith and trust and here she is. Coleen, thank you for sharing your gifts with this church and with the church of God,” said Bishop Jane, presenting Coleen with a bouquet of flowers from the parish.

‘Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.’”

John Wesley, 18th Century hymn writer, preacher and pastor.

Anglican Church Women celebrates lifetime of membership and service



The ACW Whitemud Regional Meeting was held at Immanuel Anglican Church in Wetaskiwin on October 14, 2017. Katie Mabbutt, ACW Diocesan Life Member Coordinator (far right) presents Life Membership pins to, from left: Heather Labrie and Deb Stevens of St. Mary, Ponoka; Linda Cameron, Maureen Juhlke and Carol Blair of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin. Donna Boyd from St. Mary, Ponoka (not present) was also honoured with a Life Membership.

PWRDF contributions help feed families in South Sudan



DOROTHY MARSHALL
Diocesan Representative
PWRDF

The winter solstice is a matter of history once again, and the periods of extreme cold can be a bit of a challenge here on the farm, especially when you are thawing frozen livestock waterers with a brisk wind for company (as I struggled with this morning). I know that the days will gradually lengthen, bearing the promise of a distant spring. While my crop-growing neighbours are busy planning rotations and seed varieties, my favorite project is to nestle down with a cup of tea and the annual seed catalogues to plan for next

year's garden. It is hard to make choices as I am enticed by a plethora of short season varieties, each promising an abundant harvest.

As I ponder which type of beans I should grow (my catalogue offers 20), I realize how blessed I am. On the other side of the world people are scratching the earth, struggling for a morsel of something edible to fend off starvation.

Hunger is continuing to persist in South Sudan, but we each have the ability to do a small part of making a big difference. Our church's relief and development agency, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), leads a \$375,000 food assistance program. We have distributed tons of nourishing sorghum and beans, cooking oil and salt to thousands of people in Eastern Equatoria State. It was purchased with our equity in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and a 4:1 matching grant from Global Affairs Canada, and distributed by our partner

Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA).

This project is benefitting almost 9,000 people, such as Lotum Longolio who lives with her husband and three young children. "The happiest day of my life has finally come, a day when my household will now have the opportunity to have a decent meal," Lotum told an aid worker. "Today, I am overwhelmed with joy because it is the first time my household has ever received food assistance," she said. "We will at least have an increased meal portion today and we shall

eat twice a day, compared to the past where my household barely survived on very little millet, through which we ate once a day."

According to aid workers, every one of the people they spoke to said they were sharing what they had received with family and community members, many of whom are subsisting on whatever scarce wild fruits they can find.

Another grateful beneficiary is Nateba Lokorio who, at 30, is a widow supporting her two daughters, her mother and two elderly aunts.



Natede and her daughter walk three hours to get food aid. The family of seven children have been living on wild fruit.

"I am very grateful for this wonderful gift that I have received today for my household," says Nateba. "I will always be thankful and most especially to the donor for the good food that I have received today at the distribution site. My household is now guaranteed a meal each day of the week."

No one of us alone can solve the epic problem of starvation in South Sudan, but working together through the PWRDF and our partners we can each do our part. Just imagine the difference we could make if we each gave even a portion of what we would normally spend on seeds and bedding plants for our gardens and yards! You can give through your church envelopes or at www.pwrdf.org, where you can find more information about our projects. If you would like to learn more about sharing these stories in your parish, please talk to your rector or contact our Diocesan Rep, Dorothy Marshall at camfarm@syban.net.

St. Mary's Ponoka raises funds for moms and their children

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

With a little help from their friends in the dioceses of Edmonton and Calgary, the parish of St. Mary's, Ponoka raised more than \$930 for the All Women and Children Count project of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). The focus of the third annual PWRDF fundraising event hosted by St. Mary's in October, was to help raise awareness of the organization's efforts to improve maternal, newborn and child health in developing countries.

"PWRDF does such great work getting to the root of poverty," said Jeffrey Hanger, PWRDF Parish Representative for St. Mary's, Ponoka.

Hanger organized the PWRDF presentation and



Jeff Hanger, PWRDF representative at St. Mary's Ponoka, addresses a receptive audience on the need for maternal health care.



silent auction fundraiser with the cooperation of St. Mary's parishioners (including the youngest members who danced with joy at the end of the Powerpoint presentation), and a member of the nearby parish of Church of the Epiphany, Rimbey.

"For most people, problems in the developing world are not their problems. They are a long way away, they are disconnected. My role is to try and bridge that gap, and being the PWRDF rep is a key part of that," he

said.

Hanger, who has a degree in Third World Development Studies and currently serves as executive director of the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance, stressed the need to protect and promote the rights of women in poor, rural, often patriarchal societies, where a mother's needs often come last behind the father, who is head of the household, and their children.

In Burundi, "gender inequality is still occurring in every sphere of life," said

the Rev. Dominique Ciza, Buyé diocesan secretary, in an email to Hanger.

An integral part of this program is the recognition that healthy women and children contribute to strong, vibrant, resilient and tolerant communities. Maternal mortality is a health indicator that shows very wide gaps between rich and poor, urban and rural areas, both between countries and within them. Malnourished mothers are more susceptible to infection and disease and are at greater risk

for complications during childbirth.

Around the world, approximately 830 women die every day from preventable complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. The risk of a woman in a developing country dying from a maternal-related cause during her lifetime is about 23 times higher than a woman living in a developed country.

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St. Matthew's promotes ongoing work and service in Belize

HEATHER LESLIE

St. Matthew's, St. Albert
Diocese of Edmonton

Editor's Note: Rick and Heather Leslie, members of St. Matthew's, St. Albert, have made several trips to the Anglican Diocese of Belize since 2006. As a Registered Nurse, now retired, Heather helped provide public health education. The couple also assisted with school-run music and meal programs. As members of Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Yellowknife they helped build Holy Cross Anglican School in San Pedro and now, as members of St. Matthew's, they are helping make improvements to St. Ann's Primary School in Belmopan. St. Matthew's has had an ongoing partnership with Belize diocese, supporting a lunch program at the Belize City Cathedral and providing school art supplies. In 2016, St. Matthew's Sunday school raised money to build a second story on St. Ann's school. As they prepared for a return trip to Belize on February 6, Heather shared their story with The Messenger.

Our story begins at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Yellowknife (Diocese of the Arctic), where I was inspired by two fellow parishioners. Stories of their work in Honduras encouraged me to apply for similar work through the South American Missionary Society and in that way to seek opportunities to use my nursing skills for service abroad.



Pictured left: The second floor at St. Ann's school under construction in Belmopan in March 2017. Pictured right: Heather's friend Laura Chan with students in her classroom at St. Ann's school.

In early 2006 I travelled to Belize City and put my nursing skills to use teaching health promotion in the four Anglican schools in the city and working at a primary health clinic. I met and travelled with Bishop Phillip Wright and worked with the volunteer coordination team of Francis and Vernon Wilson, missionaries from the Episcopal Church in Virginia. Francis was coordinating volunteer teams who visited the Anglican schools in Belize.

My second visit to Belize later in 2006 was quite exciting as I assisted in opening Holy Cross Anglican School in San Pedro. This marked the beginning of an educational journey for many students who may not otherwise have had that opportunity. The Wilsons had recognized the need, acted in faith, and created the school with the assistance of many donors from North America and Britain.

From 2007 through 2014 I was able to travel to Holy Cross to volunteer, often accompanied



by my husband Rick. In 2007 we also brought a volunteer team from Holy Trinity. Back at home in Yellowknife, we raised funds to support the school feeding program. I also worked in a health clinic and with community-based programs.

Upon relocating to St. Albert in 2013, we began attending St. Matthew's Anglican Church and our focus shifted to schools around Belmopan, the capital of Belize. By this time, Holy Cross was well established and well provided for. When we visited, we saw happy children dressed for school emerging from small houses and apartments. In spite of challenging economic situations, many of these same children have gone on to excel at their studies and graduate from high school, while welcoming the opportunities open to them.

Funds raised at St. Matthew's were used to support a lunch program in Belize City run by the cathedral, and to buy art supplies for a school near Belmopan. As well, we did health teaching and helped with a

music ministry led by Bishop Larry Robertson of the Yukon.

In 2017, St. Matthew's Sunday School sent us with funds to support a building project at St. Ann's School in Belmopan. The donation helped build a second floor on the primary school. As you are reading this, we are back in Belize gathering information about a new building project to provide a roof for St. Ann's. Watch for more details in the future.

Lessons learned:

- Slow down. North American culture keeps us rushing from one task to the next;
- You benefit as much or more than the people you are serving;
- Adopt a community development approach. Work with people on the ground to ensure your work will go ahead;
- A little bit of work is a lot of work in hot/humid climates;
- We are called to do it all: volunteer at home and overseas;
- Do your homework before you go. Knowledge about the country you are visiting helps put things into context;
- Be flexible and open to change. Although you planned to do one project, you may be asked to do something else.

It has been humbling to continue this challenging work with Belize. We ask for your prayers as we look for direction, both from the people we meet in the diocese and from God who is in charge of the outcome.

St. Mary's raises funds for moms and their children cont.

Continued from page 11.

In developing countries the maternal mortality ratio in 2015 was 239 deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to 7 deaths per 100,000 live births in Canada, where access to health care services and medicine is readily available and provided by skilled professionals.

Three years into its five-year, \$20 million Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Program, PWRDF continues its work to lower mother and child mortality rates, ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing in 350 villages in Burundi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Rwanda. To date, the organization has supplied bicycle ambulances to transport pregnant women, provided vaccinations for more than 100,000 children under age five, established nutrition centres, and built pharmacies, labs, maternity wards,

homes for expectant mothers, and water wells providing access to safe drinking water, as well as providing community health and food security training.

Edmonton diocese recently partnered with PWRDF to expand the maternity ward at the Buyé health centre and the diocesan Anglican Church Women (ACW) led a project to equip the new ward with beds and bedding.

Dorothy Marshall, PWRDF Representative for the Diocese of Edmonton, described how the innovation of "Solar Suitcases" enables health care providers in rural Africa to deliver babies at night by providing portable, cost-effective power for medical lighting, equipment and cellphones.

"Before the Solar Suitcases, it was common for nurses to hold a flashlight in their teeth to see," said Marshall. The suitcases, which

can be built for \$500, are "really a wonderful thing," she said. Dorothy noted that had she given birth to her first four children in rural Africa, the birth of her fifth child, Leah, who was a high-risk delivery, would have been impossible. In May, Leah was able to see firsthand the difference 20 years of programming has made in the Diocese of Masasi, when she travelled to Tanzania as a member of the PWRDF Youth Council. A video of the PWRDF Youth Council trip to Tanzania can be viewed on YouTube: https://youtu.be/c_kXREw448o PWRDF.

PWRDF is also partnering with indigenous communities in Canada, Mexico and Peru to implement a Maternal Newborn and Child Health program in the Americas.

Judy Adams has been the PWRDF representative for the Church of the Epiphany in Rimbe for more than 10 years. "I was just so

impressed with how quickly they are on the ground helping and how much of the money they raise goes to the cause," she said.

"PWRDF goes on the ground to determine the needs of the people and empowers them through quality, sustainable development," said the Ven. Alan Perry, Executive Archdeacon of the Edmonton diocese, who was invited to lead the Sunday service prior to the PWRDF presentation with the assistance of the Rev. Donna Willer, rector of St. Mary's. "While other charitable organizations can allocate up to 20% of their annual revenue for administration costs, PWRDF spends nowhere near that amount," (6.6% in 2016, according to charityintelligence.ca) he said.

You can donate to the good work of PWRDF through your parish, or online at www.pwrdf.org.