



THE MESSENGER

OCTOBER 2020



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Bishop Jane Alexander rests on one of two carved benches painted with the Seven Sacred Teachings in the re-imagined Reconciliation Garden at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Camrose. Photos: Jennifer Wirun

*Creator; we thank you for giving us another day.
We ask that today you grant us patience, kindness
tolerance, and love. Give us strength and wisdom to
listen and hear. Bless all our friends and relatives.
Amen.*



Garden of invitation and reconciliation in Camrose

DOROTHY MARSHALL
St. Andrew's, Camrose

What began as a problem – a leaky roof caused by pine needles plugging the eavestrough and drainpipes and, unfortunately, the removal of the two giant pines that had stood like sentinels in front of St. Andrew's church in Camrose for close to 70 years – blossomed into an act of reconciliation and welcoming.

Removing the trees was a difficult decision, but it gave us the opportunity to re-imagine the "face" of our building. We formed a committee and consolidated our ideas into a "front yard revitalization project," partially funded by REACH funds.

Our goal was to make the building visible and identifiable as a Christian church and to create an inviting oasis where people could pause and reflect. We wanted the plantings to be sustainable and have environmental conservation elements.

We incorporated three themes into the project. In the north area we expanded the "reconciliation"

theme which had begun when we planted a chokecherry tree a few years ago. We laid paving stones near the sidewalk and installed a beautiful bench. The bench is decorated with animals symbolising the seven sacred teachings of the First Nations: love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility and truth. These teachings connect the Indigenous people with the Creator God, and reinforce our Christian values as we also connect with God.

We mounted a plaque on a large rock near the chokecherry tree. It acknowledges we are on Treaty Six land, commemorates the survivors of the Residential Schools and pledges our parish to the pursuit of reconciliation. It also includes a prayer in Cree syllabics and English.

The center-front area contains a large Celtic cross which was carved from the stump of one of the trees we removed. A plaque at its base remembers with gratitude the pioneers who established the parish in 1906 and those who followed in faith as disciples of Christ.

Both the center and south areas have been

planted with native grasses and native perennial flowers creating a natural prairie meadow effect. The grasses have established well, aided by an abundance of rain this year, and we are now seeing the flowering plants appear. In the south side of the garden anyone can pick up a book from the free lending library, designed like a little, steepled church. People can wait for the bus on another bench set on paving stones. Appropriately, the bench is decorated with Jesus' words: "come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The new landscaping project melds beautifully with the existing plantings along the front of the building, and we are excited to see how it matures. Many members of our parish family contributed to this project and many hands made the job fun. We especially acknowledge "Kelly the Carver" who used his chainsaw to create the beautiful cross; Larry Mackenzie who built the little church library; Bill Andreassen who did the paving stones and Bill Thompson who built both benches.



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Indigenous birth support ministry helping build strong communities



Lori Calkins, left, describes her ministry to synod office communications staff Shelly King and Margaret Glidden.

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

An Anglican priest and Métis doula is walking alongside Indigenous women and their families during pregnancy, birth, the postpartum period and beyond, with the continued support of donors within the Anglican Church and the community at-large.

Through her ministry in Amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton), the Rev. Lori Calkins, who is both a member of the Indigenous Ministries Team of the Edmonton diocese and a practicing doula with Indigenous Birth of Alberta (IBA), fosters healing, cultural resurgence, resiliency, strength and wellness within Indigenous families. Calkins views this work as an act of reconciliation for the church and a tangible way for the church to offer amends and restitution for the harm that was done to families and communities.

"I really believe birth work has the ability to contribute to the healing of intergenerational trauma that is a direct result of the Residential Schools and our colonial systems," she says.

"When we bring little ones into the world surrounded by culture from the beginning, and their moms and dads are tapping into their family and community around them, the blood memory - the way our culture, our ceremonies and our ways of being, doing and knowing are remembered and passed on through our bodies and spirits to the next generation - counteracts the trauma which has been passed on the same way.

"A big part of birth work is restoring our teachings, traditions and ceremonies to our families, so that we get back to a place where the knowledge is embedded in our communities and we don't have to have specialised workers, because our aunties, our sisters, our kokums and our female friends just know how to support those in their circle," says Calkins.

Indigenous birth workers are commonly referred to as aunties (nikâwîs, the Cree word for auntie, means "little mother"), in recognition of the support they provide to an expectant family. As an auntie, Calkins provides Indigenous families with wrap-around care, including referrals to practical, cultural, emotional and spiritual supports in the community. She helps families navigate the health care system in relation to pregnancy, birth and early parenting, and access necessities like housing supports, food security, baby supplies, parenting and childcare support. She speaks to racism and discrimination in our health care system and, when asked, will advocate on behalf of birthing persons and their families so that they receive culturally appropriate care.

Together, the birth worker, pregnant person

and primary care provider (midwife or medical doctor) discuss any concerns or desires of the family. Elders are consulted if the family so wishes. When possible, the birth worker will be with the birthing person during labour to provide emotional, physical, cultural, spiritual and informational support to uphold their birth desires.

"The beauty of being a birth worker is that we're there to support families in making the choices that are right for them from their perspective," she says.

"I was at a birth early on and the woman, who had other children, said to me, 'I have never had support that was just for me - ever.' And she didn't mean just in birthing her babies. Having a person with you that you trust who is there to hold a sacred space for you and support you in the choices that are important to you; who can help you navigate the medical system and help you be a voice for yourself, or find ways to make a challenging situation the best that it can be in the moment, who is there with skills and experience to help you have the best possible birth experience, can be healing. For those who want to be connected to culture from the very beginning, it's important and can be empowering."

Twenty-three years ago when Calkins gave birth to her first daughter in B.C., she says, "my mother and grandmother were unable to help, I was the first in my friend group to have a baby and I didn't know about doulas. But when I found out, after my daughter was born, I wanted to learn how to do that so other women could have a supportive experience."

Earning her certificate in Advanced Labour Support in 1999, Calkins practiced as a doula for a few years before attending theological school and being ordained an Anglican priest in 2008. While serving in the Edmonton diocese as a member of the Indigenous Ministries team, she began serving the Indigenous community full-time as a birth support worker in January, 2019.

Calkins says she did not intentionally decide to work in the Indigenous community, but rather,



Lori Calkins at the opening ceremony for the "Ni Wapataenan" (We See) art installation which ran on Alberta Avenue in 2016.

"was led into it." While her mother's family is from the Red River Settlement in Manitoba and fought with Louis Riel in the resistance, the family did not speak about their Métis heritage to her, or anyone for that matter, while she was growing up on the West Coast.

"I think that was their way of trying to protect us," she says. "We had been branded as traitors and there was so much racism."

Wearing a Métis sash for the first time in public to a Truth and Reconciliation traveling

exhibit at All Saints' Cathedral in 2016, she was captivated by 40 red dresses which had been hung in the church sanctuary to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and their families.

"I had my hand on one of the dresses and this voice - I think it was Creator's/God's voice - said quietly in my head, 'these dresses need to come out of the church and go into the community in a place where people can engage with them.' That's a good idea...who is going to do that?" I asked. 'You are!' the voice replied. As an Indigenous person just coming back to her sense of identity and still not connected in the community, I was terrified," she says.

With some trepidation, Calkins sought and instantly received Bishop Jane's blessing to borrow the dresses. She continued to share her idea with people she knew had a heart for reconciliation, like her friend Dave Von Bieker, then artistic director of Bleeding Heart Art Space. Together they curated the public art installation "Ni Wapataenan" (We See), encircling a bare tipi frame with trees from which the red dresses were hung. The project was held in conjunction with the "KÂ-KATAWASISICIK ISKWÊWAK" (Woman who are Beautiful) art exhibit in the Bleeding Heart art gallery, which featured strong and courageous Indigenous women painted by Cree artist Lana Whiskeyjack.

Calkins says the "Ni wapataenan" (We See) installation was "a life changing" experience. "I had been praying for Elders to come into my life, to teach me, and that's the way they showed up. From there, I went on to support Indigenous families in a host of different ways in the community, as I've been invited into people's lives and spaces."

An article written by an Indigenous woman who had decided to re-direct her energy from pushing back against colonial systems and structures to strengthening her community, was also profoundly moving for Calkins: "it really resonated with me," she says. "So much of the work I was doing was trauma-centered, crisis response work, and I was frustrated under the weight and exhaustion of not really knowing how to bring about significant change," she says. "I was involved with Anglican church conversations around human trafficking and I was becoming aware of the factors that coalesce to make people vulnerable, and I needed to contribute to the wellness and healing of my people."

The Indigenous birth support ministry walks alongside a woman and her family during what can be a vulnerable and isolating time. Clients are sometimes referred to Calkins through front line agencies such as Edmonton's C5 Northeast Hub: a collection of five community agencies working collaboratively to give a voice to more than 30,000 Edmontonians in a city with the second largest urban Indigenous population in Canada. Other referrals come through IBA and word of mouth in the community.

"COVID-19 has increased that sense of isolation and has shut down a lot of the in-person supports that some families have really depended on and that's been hard," says Calkins.

Continued on page 8.

Reason for being gives direction in chaotic times



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

straight, then turn, turn, turn, turn, straight again,

“So, Julia,” I asked. “How do we get there from here?” From her seat in the back of the van, five-year old Julia, my granddaughter, thought and then replied triumphantly: “well grandpa, you go

turn, one more turn and then you’re there!” I laughed silently to myself and thought, “good thing I know the way!” COVID-19 is still among us. Schools have re-opened, to a fair bit of trepidation. Some of you are attending in-person worship now, in masks and with distancing, some are not. Which way are we going? Where are we getting to? How long will this current situation last? Which way do we turn? Last issue, I wrote at length about wanting us to seriously, prayerfully, discern why we are here. Why is ‘why’ important? Because ‘why’ gives us an ultimate goal, a purpose, to guide us through, especially when times are uncertain or chaotic.

I think it is important that we, as a body, have a common ‘why.’ I think it’s important that you, as a parish, have a common ‘why,’ that fits into the diocesan ‘why.’ I think it’s important that you, as an individual, have a ‘why’ that supports the other two ‘whys,’ as well. Having a ‘why’ will give you grounding when you are facing difficult choices, conversations, actions. Having the ‘hows’ to support that ‘why’ will give you guidance in responding, so you are always moving forward to your destination. It’s like in the *Book of Common Prayer*, page 555, telling us to have a Rule of Life.

Continued on page 5.

Physically distanced; bound together in prayer

‘Everybody prays whether he [sic] thinks of it as praying or not. The odd silence you fall into when something very beautiful is happening or something very good or bad... The stammer of pain at somebody else’s pain. The stammer of joy at somebody else’s joy. Whatever words or sounds you use for sighing with over your own life. These are all prayers in their way. These are all spoken not just to yourself but to something even more familiar than yourself and even more strange than the world.’

Frederick Buechner,
Listening to Your Life, p211-212



Bishop JANE ALEXANDER
Diocese of Edmonton

What have you been reading lately? During this time when we have all been home more, once the Netflix binges were over, did you take up some reading for yourself? I know I did; fiction, certainly, but also some books

of prayers and meditations. I jumped back into Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life*, from which the quote above is taken. It’s a book of daily devotions, and this quote is from mid-August. It has stuck with me as an encouragement. I imagine the prayers winging heavenward right now must be rising up like balloons in the millions. We are praying for health and security for those we love; people far and near. We are praying our usual prayers, yes, but also prayers for an end to this

pandemic and a return to the beauty of our lives in community in ways we have come to know and to love. We are linked together in close communion, and so, that ability to lift the person I cannot be with up in prayer is a comfort and a blessing. Since COVID-19 really made its presence felt we have had less opportunity for physical contact with one another; the casual hug or squeeze of the hand. I think the realisation for us, that this hurts us at a deep soul level, brings to mind what it means in a visceral way to be the body of Christ. People ask what things will be like after COVID-19; will people want to come together for worship now we are comfortable with online gatherings? My feeling is we are longing to be together – yes, we have learned that as a church we need to be ever more flexible in how we meet and reach one another. But for those who have hinted that in-person worship might be passé, I think they are wrong. It will be a both/and-world ahead. Are you longing to see people’s faces in worship – their whole face, not just their eyes above their masks? Are you longing to gather together at the communion rail, to share the bread and the cup in powerful solidarity with one another



and with Christ? And whether you sing like an angel or a barn owl, are you longing to let go in a full-throated chorus of praise? I know I am. So I pray for a time when we can do all these things together again. When I can hug someone who is mourning, sit close enough to hear a whispered prayer – what a joy that will be. Until then we carry on nurturing one another, we carry on being the church in and for the world. We do it with joy and in hope for the time that will come. And, in the meantime, when you lift your heart in prayer, silently or aloud, know that thousands upon thousands of people are praying with you. There is an intensity of prayer across this diocese, across the world right now that is almost palpable. Your deepest prayers are needed this fall. You are needed. This is the work of the church, this is our work. And so let us pray:

Love Never Fails

Even in the darkest moments,
love gives hope.
Love compels us to fight against coronavirus
alongside our sisters and brothers
living in poverty.
Love compels us to
stand together in prayer
with our neighbours near and far.
Love compels us to give and act as one.
Now, it is clear that our futures are bound
together more tightly than ever before.
As we pray in our individual homes –
around the nation and around the world –
we are united as one family.
So, let us pause and find
a moment of peace,
as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

(Source: www.christianaid.org.uk)

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Pandemic an opportunity to reframe view of mission



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

Hello, again.
Last time, I wrote of the liminal space we are in due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I made the point that we have actually been in a liminal space for decades as we have watched our culture change around us and the membership in our churches slowly decline. We have not known what to do about it. We have simply carried on doing what we have always done in the hope that, one day, people would return to

our churches. In this way, as with many things, the pandemic has not so much created a problem, as it has highlighted a situation that already existed.

This in-between space has been, and is, uncomfortable. Liminal spaces always are. Yet we need not fear them. In fact, the very opposite! However uncomfortable they are, they can become a means of growth for us. They bring us to a place where we have to ask questions of ourselves; questions relating to how we understand our task as the Lord's people. This is especially relevant during a pandemic because, for so long, we have understood our primary duty to be church attendance. What is our function then, when a virus has stopped us from attending church?

Jesus made our primary duty very clear. He was sent into the world to fulfill the mission of God to reconcile the world to himself, and Jesus has sent us into the

world just as his Father sent him (John 20:21). A pandemic doesn't change that, but it might narrow down our thinking on how it is we go about it.

In our churches, we have come to think about mission as a special effort made by certain people, that usually happens 'somewhere else,' perhaps very far away. We go on a mission, or perhaps we *support* a mission financially.

Don't get me wrong. These may be very good causes. But, in as much as they happen 'somewhere else,' we miss the point of how each of us is called to be *personally* involved in God's ongoing,

overarching mission to the world; a world which includes our family and our neighbourhood.

The pandemic may actually help us here, because in the days of a pandemic, the focus of daily life for many of us becomes smaller. Who are the people we actually see? Who are the people in our 'cohort' or 'bubble?' It's our family. It's our neighbours. Perhaps our co-workers.

We may have prayed long and hard for these people. Maybe we haven't been able to get them to *come* to church. We might have felt a failure when they didn't come. But perhaps we will start to look at them

differently in a pandemic; become more aware of how much we need them and they need us; let go of the agenda of 'getting them to *come* to church' and simply *love* them unconditionally in Jesus' name, leaving the rest to him. That is the mission of God. That is *you*, sent as Jesus was sent.

You may feel ill-equipped for such a task. But, rest assured, Jesus has given you everything you need. We'll unpack that in the months to come.

May God bless you in all your endeavours in His name.

Richard



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Jesus: Sole Solution to Church's Identity Crisis



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

There are times when it appears that the Church does not really know who it is:

- When a congregation is so focused on its own survival that it neglects its neighbours or its neighbourhood;
- When a church website posts a brightly coloured graphic that says, "We're spiritual, just not religious;"
- When a congregation

spends more effort finding parishioners for a painting-bee than finding participants for an Alpha course.

This situation is made more complicated by our relationships with the outside world. When the Church doesn't know who it is, then neither can society around us. So, the world comes to us to "get the baby done," or to provide the pretty location for a wedding. The world nearly always assumes our primary interest is money, or telling everyone how they should behave. When we don't know who we are, neither can the world know.

Of course, this condition is not universal. The pressures applied to the Church are forcing the Church to recover its identity. But there are enough examples to indicate that the Church has some identity issues.

Our identity issues

are rooted in the world's need to push us into its own governmental and institutional frameworks. That is, the world tries to understand us using the same understandings that it applies to itself. The world sees us as an institution with property, budgets and a hierarchical leadership team.

Sadly, the Church often buys into this institutional viewpoint, and our declining financial health has only made it worse.

I think there is still time to back out of this "I'm-spiritual-just-not-religious" approach to being the Church. We can recover our identity as the Body of Christ and the Family of God, if we also recover a deeper appreciation for the identity of Christ. You see, what we know about Jesus truly drives what we know about the Church. In "churchy" terms, we always move from Christology to ecclesiology.

Jesus is not a nice man from first century Palestine who teaches us how to be good and told nice children's stories. Jesus is not a first century rabbi in a long line of Jewish prophetic figures who travelled around the country trying to overcome the oppression by the occupying authorities. Jesus is not a myth whose followers made him out to be more than he really was.

Jesus is the God-Man. I don't understand the physics of either the incarnation or the Trinity. I can only accept what is revealed by God. Jesus is the God-Man who united in his own living the life of God and the life of humankind.

Jesus is the God-Man, whose life, execution and resurrection are both example and the secure route to salvation. That is, Jesus' life, execution and resurrection are authoritative and normative

for Christians. Jesus' life, execution and resurrection also create the only certain path to eternity in the presence of the Trinity.

The Church is created by God to be the active agent of Christ in this world (= the Body of Christ + the Family of God). The Church is, individually and collectively, the hands, feet and voice of God. Our sole purpose is to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the two Great Commandments (Mark 12:23-33).

Our ministries, from painting the church building to marriage preparation, from worship to producing meeting minutes, are aimed at fulfilling this twinned purpose. If a ministry cannot be made to satisfy this purpose, then it must be discarded. In this way, our ministries will more effectively proclaim our identity which is based on the identity of the Christ.

Legacy of early missionaries honoured in Fairview

BETTY MACARTHUR
St. Helen's, Fairview

In August 2020, St. Helen's Anglican Church, in Fairview, dedicated a bench in memory of St. Saviour's Mission at the Maples.

Located west of where the Dunvegan bridge crosses the Peace River (27 kms south of Fairview), the Maples was once the site of an Anglican Mission and is today a beautiful park.

The Anglican church established its mission, St. Saviour's, at The Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Dunvegan in 1878.

Thomas Bunn constructed a church and living quarters, fencing off two acres for a garden



plot. By that time, the buffalo had disappeared and the rivers had been over trapped leaving the Indigenous people and early missionaries desperate for another fresh, food source.

The Rev. John Brick, an established agriculturalist, also encouraged people to plant gardens to grow food. Brick is credited for planting the maple trees along the river flats, where today's



Pictured from left: Shirley Lof reads and prays with Tammy McKeachnie at the dedication of the memorial bench in the Maples park, Fairview.

wide Peace River. Anglicans across the diocese gathered in this area during the summer months to have outdoor services.

A local resident, who had purchased land from the Hudson's Bay Company, donated 11 acres to the Diocese of Athabasca, including

the Maples. A stipulation was that it never be sold for commercial uses and always be open to the public.

In 1981 the diocese sold the 11 acres to the local municipality with the same stipulation.

picnic area is located. He was followed by the Rev. A. Garriock, who served the mission until 1891 when it was closed.

The area became a favourite gathering place because the ferry was located nearby. It was one of the few places to cross the

Reason for being gives direction in chaotic times, cont.

Continued from page 3.

Understanding our 'why' is important. I think, it is critical that 'why' fits into God's 'why' for us, which is *why* it is so important to look to Jesus. In today's world emphasising self-fulfillment, self-realisation, self-everything: emphasising wealth, power, and achievement; emphasising striving to achieve mastery over each other and over the world, we need to hear words like, "If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For

whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it. For what does it benefit a person if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life?" (Matthew 16:25-26)

We are Images of God. We are worthy of love as Images of God. If you meditate on what it truly means to be an Image of God, I don't think it can fail but to totally blow your mind: it is truly, an incredible concept. And, as much love as we are worthy of, because God made us in His image, others, also made

in His image, whether they realise it or not, are worthy of the same level of love. They are worth sacrificing for; as much as we sacrifice for ourselves. And even more – so much more! – is the love for (and of) Christ, for the Father, for the Holy Spirit. We cannot be truly empowered and capable Images unless, and until, we truly and fully love that which we are the Image of. This is our challenge, first and foremost: to love.

If we can fit our smaller 'whys' into this greater 'why,' then the way forward, even in

the chaos of the moment, comes a little clearer. It's like another grandchild of mine, 3-year-old Adam. When ready to turn at an intersection, I asked: "which way, Adam, left or right?" I heard from the back of the van: "this way, grandpa-grandpa!" And I looked back to see him pointing the way. When our 'whys' fit into our Father's 'why,' we shall get direction in the midst of the

chaos of our lives – and we shall look back to see Him pointing the way.

May God guide us in our 'why,' and may it support, encourage, and enable His. May you be empowered in this, and may you truly, fully and in all aspects, realise the love that God has for you.

To God's glory and our joy;

+David

Athabasca Diocese Virtual Worship Resources and Opportunities



For access to online services, both mid-week and on Sunday, please visit the diocesan website at www.dioath.ca or one of the following parish websites:

- www.stjamespr.org
- www.sttom.ca
- www.allsaintsanglican.ca
- www.christchurchanglicangp.org
- www.parishnorthernlights.org

Or, go to Facebook.com and search:

- The Diocese of Athabasca
- St. James Cathedral
- St. Mark's High Prairie
- St. Thomas Fort McMurray
- Christ Church Grande Prairie
- St. Anne's Church Valleyview
- All Saints Church Fort McMurray
- St. Peters Church Slave Lake
- Anglican Church of Athabasca
- St. Helen's Anglican Church
- St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church

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Rural minister says good-bye to two special congregations

ALLAN SAMM
St. Thomas', Wainwright

The Rev. Ann Marie and her husband Owen ventured off into retirement, COVID-19 style, on August 30, their last official Sunday with the parishes of St. Thomas', Wainwright and St. Mary's, Edgerton.

In her reflection, Amie (Ann Marie) recalled some of the cherished memories she and Owen share of serving in the parishes of St. Thomas' and St. Mary's since 2013. In her homily, she said she is sure the Spirit has future plans for her in the wider community.

In her announcement, back in May, she noted it had been a difficult decision to retire during the pandemic.

However, she explained: "On September 1 of this year, I will have been here for seven years. In Biblical terms seven represents perfection. It seems an appropriate time for me to retire. After consulting with Bishop Jane, we decided my last official Sunday as your priest would be August 30 this year."

"This has been a difficult decision in many ways. I have treasured my time as your priest. You are two very special congregations. You are warm and accepting and you have inspired me over the past nearly seven

years. Each priest has their favourite appointments and I can honestly say that you are mine. I treasure each and every individual in these two communities."

During the service, St. Thomas' Rector's Warden Margaret Yurachek also reflected on the past seven years and she read a retirement blessing, by



Pictured top: Ann Marie Nicklin presides at her last service at St. Thomas, Wainwright; pictured above: retirement gifts for a beloved priest.



Barbara MacAdam. She presented Ann Marie with retirement gifts and a card signed by members of the parish.

St. Mary's held an outdoor service later in the afternoon. Both parishes

wish the best in retirement for Ann Marie and Owen.

Editor's note: the Rev. Rachael Parker was appointed rector of St. Thomas', Wainwright and St. Mary's, Edgerton, as of September 15, 2020.

ACW Life Memberships Represent a Lifetime of Service

ALLAN SAMM
St. Thomas', Wainwright

Members of St. Thomas', Wainwright gathered for prayers, for the presentation of the 'Lammas Loaf' and to share the joy of two ladies receiving their ACW life membership on August 2, Lammas Sunday.

Doreen Anderson and the Rev. Ann Marie Nicklin were presented with ACW lifetime membership pins and flowers by Ruth Iverson of St. Thomas' and Rita Fraser of St. Mary's, Edgerton.

Doreen and Rev. Amie have been faithful members



Pictured from left: Ann Marie Nicklin and Doreen Anderson receive ACW lifetime memberships, presented by Ruth Iverson and Rita Fraser.

of the ACW for decades and have been involved with numerous ACW initiatives.

Lammas is an English feast day,

celebrating the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Churches stopped marking the day at the Reformation, but the tradition has been

reintroduced in recent years. It involves the presentation of the Lammas Loaf, a loaf of bread made from the new crop, which may or may not

be used as the bread of the eucharist. Wafers were used on this occasion in keeping with COVID-19 protocol.

Back-to-school backpack blessings at Holy Trinity Riverbend



Starting the school year can be a nerve-wracking experience, especially when students lack all necessary supplies. Though backpacks stocked with school supplies are sometimes thought of as essential, they can be a luxury for some students. As they have done for many years, members of Holy Trinity Riverbend parish in southwest Edmonton helped kids start school on a sure foot by donating backpacks and supplies. The backpacks, blessed by the Rev. Rebecca Harris on Sunday, August 30, were given to students enrolled in an inner-city school.



PWRDF & partners raise more than \$8 million for Beirut



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton

I was reminiscing with my daughter about Thanksgiving and she remembered how years ago the whole family worked together at our Thanksgiving feast - and not just by helping with the dishes!

We would send out our annual invitation to my five siblings and their families with the addendum: "please bring a fork." We were not low on kitchen cutlery - we were short garden forks! By the time the family had assembled for the feast, the turkey was in the oven and the side dishes were prepared - all but the potatoes. Teams would assemble in the garden (about the size of a city lot) and the fun (?) would begin. We had diggers (adults) and pickers (kids), and contests to keep them engaged: find the largest spud or the one

with the most lumps on it. When we were done we would feast on our results. At the end of the celebration, each family took home as many potatoes as they wanted, and we stowed our winter supply. We worked together on a common goal for the benefit of all...and made memories while doing so.

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) works together for the common good with trusted partners on development projects and relief efforts in times of disaster. The recent appeal for support for the people of Lebanon after the disastrous explosion in the port of Beirut is a great example of this model in action. The explosion caused widespread damage up to 20 km away: healthcare facilities and major hospitals were destroyed, silos holding 85% of the country's grain were destroyed and more than 300,000 people were rendered homeless. This dealt a crippling blow to a country already in disarray and dealing with a financial crisis, government corruption, food shortages, a large refugee population and COVID-19.

PWRDF partnered with the Anglican Diocese of

Jerusalem, which includes Lebanon. The Archbishop of the diocese issued an appeal for help to its international partners for relief funds to repair All Saints' Church and the Anglican Centre at the Near East School of Theology, and to engage in a larger outreach effort to members of the community most stricken by the tragedy.

Other PWRDF partners on the ground are The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), who took on the task of extending support to displaced and homeless people, providing food, water, hygiene and clothing; and, in Lebanon, the Joint Christian Committee. Both organisations are members of the ACT Alliance - a worldwide organisation of

more than 145 churches and related organisations working together to create positive change in the lives of marginalised people. As a partner and member of the ACT Alliance, PWRDF quickly pledged \$25,000. to support our partner's efforts.

Another partner is the Government of Canada who pledged matching funds for donations made prior to August 24. These donations were distributed to Canada's Humanitarian Coalition, an organisation of 12 relief and development organisations including the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. As a partner in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, all donations received by PWRDF for the Lebanon appeal were matched 1:1. More than \$8 million has

been raised by this appeal to date, with PWRDF donors contributing \$109,000 of that amount.

I would say many strong partners working together on a common goal, and raising millions to be matched by the Government of Canada, is 'no small potatoes!'

If you would like to learn more about the work of PWRDF and its partners around the world, please check out our website at www.pwrdf.org. I think you will be amazed at what can be accomplished when we work together!

If you would like to learn how you can support this work in your parish, please contact Dorothy Marshall by email at pwrdf@edmonton.anglican.ca.



Health, Education, Construction: a Buyé Diocese Update

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

With contributions from members of the Edmonton diocese, Buyé diocese last year was able to provide healthcare and pandemic training, theological education, clean water and church building improvements.

During the month of September, parishes collected \$5 donations for medical cards. Medical coverage is out of reach for most seniors in Buyé diocese, but with the Edmonton diocese's support last year, the Buyé Mothers Union purchased

and distributed medical cards to 823 people from Kirima, Giteranyi, Vumbi, Canika, Kibonde, Murehe, and Gakana parishes. Cardholders, such as women, seniors and children under 18, receive 80% healthcare coverage.

The Rev. Audace Kwizera, Buyé diocesan secretary, reports that while, at the time of writing, there had been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Buyé diocese, Christians throughout the diocese have been made aware of the pandemic and how

to prevent it from spreading. More than 300 trainees attended workshops and then imparted information to members throughout their respective sub-parishes.

"The challenge is that some parishes/sub parishes have difficulty accessing soap for regular

handwashing," he said.

The Buyé Bible College 2019-2020 academic year was successfully completed by 11 students and 10 students will be ordained deacons in the summer of 2021.

"As you may know, our bible college is supported,

in part, by Christians giving food in kind (beans)," he said. Additional food supplies, including rice, banana, salt and cooking oil, are also needed.

A new water filtration system was built by the community of Muhinzoga in Giteranyi parish, and members of the Kigina congregation are happy to be worshipping in a newly built church, which can accommodate everyone.

"Please pray for us because we have other congregations that are busy constructing their churches. Iron sheets (for the roof) will be needed indeed," said Kwizera.



One group of many in Buyé diocese, receiving medical cards valid for one year.

Writing as way of being - poet reflects on first publication

This fall, Holy Trinity Riverbend parishioner Paul Pearson fulfilled a life-long dream with the debut - at the Edmonton Poetry Festival - of his first published work, a book of poetry titled Lunatic Engine. In Part II of a Q&A with Messenger editor Margaret Glidden, Pearson reflects on the craft of writing as a way of being in the world.

Q: How has the support of your family and fellow Anglicans supported you on this journey?

A: A great deal of this book was written in the small spaces in our lives: between the kids' activities at the YMCA and the gymnastics club, in the car during piano lessons, in elementary school hallways during dance rehearsals, at the public library during quiet reading time. The poems in this book were formed while I watched my kids grow up.

Also, sometimes my mind wanders at church, especially when I'm in the middle of a piece. Poems tend to rattle around in my head for a few days before they find a way out. Many Sundays (pre-pandemic) when I was working on the last half of the book (the hard part, the part after I'd finished the poems titled for chapters from Dava Sobel's *Galileo's Daughter*), I'd be sitting with my family, content, basking in the domestic humanity of family life, coasting through the readings, standing and singing, then sitting and standing, half-thinking about a poem and then - BAM! - one of Nick's (the Rev. Nick Trussell was then priest-charge of Holy Trinity Riverbend) sermons would suddenly be there. By his quiet way of telling a story, some

concept, some parable, something that had been opaque or that I had overlooked, would become clear as day, clear as a bell. And a poem that had slipped through my fingers all week would finally agree to be put down on paper.

Q: How has your writing been shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: Despite the challenges of trying to write during a pandemic, I have kept writing in the margins of our days. One hears anecdotes about writers, composers and thinkers doing some of their best work during the plague or other pandemic, and this creative output is often attributed to having more time to create during forced isolation. I suspect this is probably not the entire story.

Don't get me wrong, I would dearly love to have a week, or two, of uninterrupted, solitary writing time. But that is a luxury far beyond our reach. This pandemic has been scary. Both my wife Sue and I work in areas that have been responding directly to the crisis: Sue in in healthcare, and me for a municipality. Like so many others, we had kids trying to teach themselves at home. We have parents in care facilities.

It has been harder for me to find time to write. The background noise of fear and anxiety that usually accompanies daily life has been turned up, amplified. Finding time to sit down and be creative has been more challenging, not less. However, the quality of that writing time has been increased. We're in the middle of obvious and immediate existential threats and

nothing focuses the attention like an existential threat.

My writing has moved from being intensely personal to an outward focus: engaging with my environment and the ongoing dismantling of colonialism. A lot of the work I do in my volunteer time with various literary organisations and events is focused on making space for others, handing the microphone to people whose voices have been pushed to the sides.

Q: What advice do you have for aspiring writers?

A: Pay attention to your intent. Why are you writing and for whom? Be honest with yourself and always be working on your craft. Know the market. If you want to write poetry, you have to read poetry. Be humble. Be persistent. Be patient. This is not a get-rich-quick scheme. This is a way of being in the world. Join a writing group, take a class, volunteer for a literary organisation or festival. Be part of the community.

Know that finishing a manuscript is the hard part, but not the last part, of the process. I have an entire folder of rejection letters from publishers. I was fortunate that *Lunatic Engine* found a home after only two years and four publishers. It has been another two years since I signed the contract with Turnstone. In that time I've spent hundreds of more hours working with my editor, rewriting, fixing, updating and rewriting again. Writing *is* worth it.

Indigenous birth support ministry helping build strong communities

Continued from page 2.

Calkins says she is continuously learning from the many women she calls her sisters, who have gone before her to lay the groundwork, women like Indigenous doula Nadia Houle, founder of the grassroots organisation Indigenous Birth of Alberta (<https://www.indigenousbirthalberta.org/>).

Early on in her journey back to birth work, Calkins was invited to a full-moon pipe ceremony at MacEwan University, where 13 grandmothers from different Indigenous communities prayed for Indigenous families, birth support workers and midwives.

"In the sharing circle I listened as these women from different First Nations and Métis communities said over and over that our healing all goes back to birth and learning our language and our ways from the very beginning. It was a profound experience and affirmation that I'm on the right path," she says. "I have been taught by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, kokums (grandmothers) and pipe carriers from a number of nations that because women are in their most sacred space when birthing, we begin to restore the sacred bond at birth.

"For me, having grown up in a family that didn't talk about being Métis and didn't overtly pass on cultural knowledge, teachings and practices, being able to be part of other families



Lori Calkins describes her ministry to expectant mothers and families to members of the Edmonton diocese's Indigenous ministries team and the 66th Synod in 2019.

reconnecting with their culture is profoundly meaningful," says Calkins. Like the Indigenous people in Métis writer Cherie Dimaline's young adult novel *The Marrow Thieves*, she has experienced the "joy, excitement and gratitude" of coming back to her culture.

"When I've learned a teaching, or a new word in Cree or I've been welcomed into a ceremony, when I am able to share something with a family and see that same look of hunger, excitement connection and belonging on their faces, there's nothing like that. It's so healing."

Generous support for the Diocese of Edmonton's Indigenous Birth Support Worker Program has come from across Canada and will enable the ministry to continue making a difference at least until February 2021. Monetary

gifts have been received from individual donors and families, the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, Primate's Word Relief and Development Fund, the Diocese of New Westminster, and the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund administered through the Edmonton Community Foundation.

Calkins says there are many ways people can engage in reconciliation and contribute to the birth support ministry.

"Food security is an issue for many families, so grocery cards are needed, as are donations for taxi vouchers and baby supplies. St. Mary's, Edmonton (where Calkins serves as honorary priest) has been really fabulous, setting aside money for community needs," she says. "These kinds of things are always valued and welcomed."

Donations to the Edmonton diocese's Indigenous Birth Support Worker ministry can be made online at www.edmonton.anglican.ca: select "Donate" and "Indigenous Ministries" from dropdown menu; type "Indigenous Birth Support Ministry" in memo.

"It's only when we work together and build these relationships and these collaborations, and work on our healing and wellness together, that we start to see real change and transformation happening, and that's what's happening right now," says Calkins.