



The Diocese of Rupert's Land

The Right Reverend Geoffrey Woodcroft
Bishop of Rupert's Land

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1, 2 and 3 Land, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, Sioux and Oji-Cree people and the homeland of the Metis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality, which allows us to live, work and service God the Creator here.

Diocese of Rupert's Land
Address to Annual General Meetings
of the Parishes and Missions

Mid-winter 2022

Friends,

Greetings in and through the One who forms and shapes us into his Body.

On this the occasion of your Annual General Meeting, I give thanks to God for your life in ministry and mission through this past year. Another extraordinary year passes, yet remain in extraordinary circumstances, loss and a sense that issues do not resolve easily in this moment. I am grateful for the generosity of our municipal, provincial and national governments in providing both monetary and human resources to institutions, ourselves included, to sustain ministries and program that benefit communities. I am glad that we, among other groups, remain important to our government as we seek to do God's mission in the fabric of Canadian culture.

Your diocesan staff work tirelessly to provide financial support and bookkeeping, information dissemination, facilitation of processes for local communities, educational opportunities, worship leadership, and ongoing aid to diocesan ministry and mission committees. We are thankful for their commitment and generosity. Your Diocesan Dean, Archdeacons and District Deans continue to provide excellence in much needed local leadership, doing this challenging work quite often while offering themselves fully to their parishes.

As individuals much unfolds in our lives, highs and lows, births and deaths, and getting older. As parishes and missions, this is more intense as we experience together the culmination of those individual happenings, plus the immensity of corporate emotional and psychological highs and lows in the Body of Christ and the world every day. The weight of decision-making, communication and pastoral care is constantly upon clergy and lay leaders, it is our desire and our joy to offer them care, time, resourcefulness and love, allowing them needed rest and recuperation.

Since our last round of Annual General Meetings we have had many opportunities to theologically reflect how God guides the Body in and through extraordinary times. Through this reflection we see more clearly God's call for us to act for a just and healthy creation. While many of us have received booster vaccinations, millions upon millions in the world have not received their first dose. While developed nations such as ours debate to own carbon credits, the largest human migration in history is taking place, and several species of plants and animals become extinct. While the leaders of some of the wealthiest countries in the world meet to discuss trade, indigenous persons in the same countries suffer intense discrimination and injustice, as do the impoverished of the world who are rendered powerless. God is surely speaking, the Word of God is not rare, but clearly before us.

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We are the Church, the Body of Christ, living not for ourselves but for God and God's creation. We who have received must live life gratuitously, the same way God lives amidst us. May our decisions be of God, and may we plan to live God's love and joy for all creation, just as God expresses love and joy for us through all of creation.

May this meeting be blessed in the Holy and undivided Trinity. Amen.

+ Geoffrey

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