



# FINDING OUR WAY

Summer 2022

## DISCERNING A STRATEGIC PATH FOR THE DIOCESE OF EDMONTON

### THE GOSPEL AT THE CENTRE

The Gospel is all about good relations. God's own being is a community of relationships, and God is Creator because God wills to extend this circle of relations to us and to all. We each yearn and are made for this connection with our maker and one another. However, we often struggle to live it, and wound our relationships whenever we choose to be for ourselves alone. Yet, God never breaks relationship with us. The Good News is that God comes to us in Christ to put right our relationships with God and everything else. Jesus shows a Way to be healed from the guilt and shame that cause us to hide from the Creator, and a Way to be freed from all that disrupts our relationships within humanity and with creation.

As a church on this land and for this time, the Diocese of Edmonton stands at a critical crossroads. Yet the path of choice for Gospel People remains clear as ever: we must not follow the various dead-end routes that end in self-sufficiency, isolation, and fear. Instead, we must choose the journey of our baptismal promises: placing the Gospel at the centre through devotion to the apostles' teaching and fellowship; being quick to repent and courageous in resisting evil in all forms; proclaiming Jesus' message by word and example; serving, loving, and striving for justice and dignity for all neighbours; and renewing the life of creation within which we are all related. As pilgrim disciples, this is our Way.

## OUR FIVE PRIMARY PRINCIPLES

As we travel this Way, we will look to these primary principles:

### 1. Transformative Discipleship

A renewed and transformative personal encounter with Jesus for every member of the Church is where everything else finds its source. This process, both individual and communal, is supported by intentional engagement with spiritual wisdom and practices from the Jesus Way, both old and new. Inspired disciples who live Jesus-shaped lives are always the best witnesses to the Good News for others.

### 2. A Calling for All

All who are baptized are called to share in the mission of God through their own unique ministries. An empowered laity, serving as equals alongside a collaborative and team-oriented clergy, strive to be the Body of Christ together in renewed closeness and cooperation.

### 3. Outward Focus

Being missional disciples means our primary focus is to join God in the world where God is already present and at work. This helps us remember that Church communities, buildings, and resources exist not as ends to be preserved in and of themselves, but as means to bless and serve others, especially those often considered “the least of these”, with whom Jesus especially identified.

### 4. Collaborative Partnerships

Seeing our diocese not as loosely associated solo congregations, but rather as one church family together, will be a source of new life and vitality. Joining and sharing with other denominations of faith in Christ can reinvigorate our ministry presence across our towns and neighbourhoods. We will all benefit from seeking social and entrepreneurial partnerships with other community-based movements for the common good.

### 5. All Relations

The Church has put up barriers which harm and oppress beloved creations of God. It now needs to embody its confession of these sins. A safe and accessible faith community will actively dismantle everything which traumatizes and excludes others based on race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, socioeconomic standing, and more. This call to be a community of justice and right relationships also includes our relations with the land, the waters, and all creation.



## OUR TWELVE SPECIFIC GOALS

From these principles, we set these specific goals:

1. **Spiritual Renewal**

We will encourage and support smaller intentional gatherings of Jesus-followers with the aim of fostering personal and communal spiritual renewal.

2. **Prayer and Devotion**

We will make available engaging resources designed to enrich our lives of prayer and devotion, including drawing upon the 'rhythm of life' known as *The Way of Love*.

3. **Formation**

We will reanimate programs that serve the ongoing spiritual growth of children, youth, and adults of all ages. We will seek to support all members of our diocese in embracing their own particular call to ministry through spiritual gifts discernment, opportunities for mentored experience, and pathways of educational formation.

4. **Fresh Expressions**

We will encourage and support experiments in the 'how' of church that emphasize diverse forms of spirituality, creative sources of liturgy, different times and places of gathering, and more intimate community life.

5. **Team Ministry**

We will explore with congregations and clergy the greater coordination of nearby parishes and the potential for regional shared ministry teams as an alternative or supplement to the traditional parochial structure.

6. **Ecumenical Sharing**

Wherever possible, we will maximize ecumenical shared ministry arrangements to share as appropriate everything from buildings, to programs, to services, to clergy, with our closest ecumenical partner churches.



## 7. Social Enterprise

We will form a team to consider how we might better use our physical church infrastructure to host socially responsible and revenue-generating enterprises and other community development initiatives oriented to Gospel values.

## 8. Beloved Community

We will work to become an anti-racist and culturally diversifying diocese, supporting this goal with extensive anti-racism, equity, and inclusion training for clergy, staff, and lay leaders.

## 9. Reparation

We will seek to enter true reciprocal relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit partners and organizations by living up to our commitments as treaty people and addressing the imbalanced sharing of financial and infrastructure resources with the First Peoples of this land.

## 10. Affirmation

We will affirm and declare publicly, intentionally, and explicitly our commitment to the welcome, safety, and full access of siblings in the LGBTQ2SIA+ communities within our churches and will support these commitments with requisite diocesan policies and training.

## 11. Accessibility

We will evaluate all buildings, programs, vocabulary, and ways of working to identify and remove obstacles to accessibility and participation in our faith communities because of physical, social, and systemic barriers.

## 12. Renewing the Earth

We will recognize the ecological crisis we are in and implement policies and practices to tangibly reduce the environmental footprint of our church buildings, our homes, and ourselves.



Anglican Diocese of  
Edmonton