



THE MESSENGER



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Communion bishops and spouses search for faithful response to whole human family

The Rev. STEPHANIE LONDON
Diocese of Edmonton

At a time of polarisation, conflict, and increasing secularism, bishops from the worldwide Anglican Communion gathered in Canterbury, England, from July 26 to August 8, 2022. This 15th Lambeth Conference was an opportunity for prayer, study and building bonds of friendship across the Communion to empower the church to respond faithfully and wisely to the needs and concerns of the whole human family.

The first Lambeth Conference was held in 1867, when then-Archbishop of Canterbury Charles Longley (1794-1868) invited 'British, colonial, and foreign bishops' to Lambeth Palace in London. Since then, the Lambeth Conference has been held approximately every 10 years, with the previous one held in 2008.

The Anglican Communion is an association of 41 autonomous provinces. We do not have a pope, and the Lambeth Conference carries no legislative authority. However, along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Anglican Consultative Council, and the Primates' Meeting, the Lambeth Conference represents one of the "Instruments of Communion" that gather the church and focus its unity. As such, the bishops discussed Lambeth "Calls," rather than passing resolutions. These calls addressed themes of mission and evangelism, reconciliation, safe church, environment and sustainable

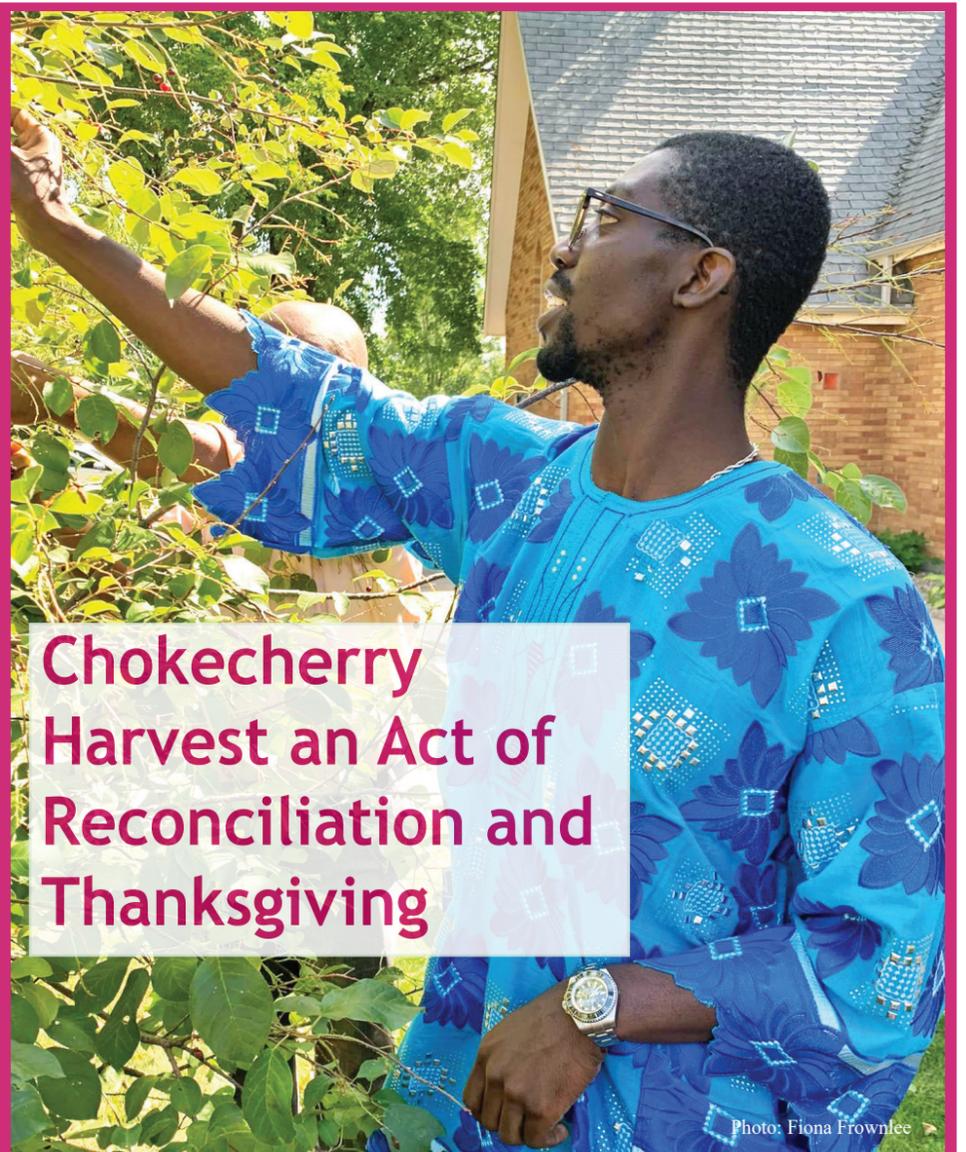


Stephanie London and Bishop Stephen London in Canterbury for the 15th Lambeth Conference.

development, Christian unity, interfaith relations, Anglican identity, human dignity, and discipleship. Each member province will discern how these calls will shape their ministry in the decade ahead. In the Anglican Church of Canada, this process will begin with the House of Bishops' meeting in October.

As part of this worldwide family of followers of Jesus, it is important we have opportunities to be formed in that diverse community, to hear and learn from one another, and to gain some sense of the breadth of God's work in the world. The conference was inspiring and encouraging, reinforcing both God's presence and activity, as well as affirming the Anglican charism of prayerfully wrestling through challenging conversations. Bishop Steve and I both felt that it marked a renewal of the Anglican Communion's commitment to walk together in God's Way of Love, proclaiming the Gospel together across differences and divisions.

At its best, when the church



Chokecherry Harvest an Act of Reconciliation and Thanksgiving

Photo: Fiona Frownlee

Mac Odele helps the parish of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin harvest nearly 13 lbs of chokecherries. What did they make with all those chokecherries? Find out on page 8.

gathers it is a sign and sacrament of the Kingdom of God. This was abundantly present in the joyful service of hundreds of people who worked for five years to allow our Communion to gather in this way. An army of volunteers from local churches worked alongside young adult Stewards from around the world to make sure everyone knew where to go and found what they needed. Members of religious orders provided onsite prayer coverage and spiritual support. University staff served meals in three different cafeterias. Coaches and minibuses moved several thousand people as efficiently as possible to conference venues. Recognising that some delegates would be unaccustomed to English weather even in the middle of a



Bishops and spouses stroll through town on their way to a service at Canterbury Cathedral.

heatwave, Mothers' Unions across the UK collected donations of warm clothing, winter coats and hats.

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Holy Trinity Fringe p.s 7&8

Edmonton diocese actively seeking ways to include all

MESSENGER STAFF

The results of a diversity and inclusion survey, conducted by the Edmonton diocese's Anti-Racism Team earlier this year, show making people feel welcome and included by their worshipping community is important to people.

The Ven. Jordan Haynie Ware, rector of Good Shepherd, Edmonton and Archdeacon for Social Justice and Community Connection, says the team heard from across the diocese, from Westlock to Onoway to Edgerton, with a particularly strong response from the Church

of the Nativity on Frog Lake First Nation.

"We learned from the survey that members of the diocese from all backgrounds value diversity and inclusion," she says. "We were also made aware of a large community of people with disabilities in our church who would like to be contacted for more conversation." Haynie Ware adds that it was an oversight to only include one question in the survey about the needs of people with disabilities and for that, she says, "we apologise."

Nevertheless, most respondents indicated they do feel respected and

valued by their parish leadership and fellow worshippers. There was a strong desire to include more Indigenous traditions and ways of worshipping.

"The Frog Lake Nativity folks seem to be doing an excellent job of that!" says Ware. In general, people stated they feel included by their worshipping communities. Interestingly, many people said they don't think they have much in common with other Anglicans. "Is this something we have in common?" Haynie Ware quips.

"Based on the survey's comment box, becoming more diverse and

inclusive is of high importance to our community. The Anti-Racism Team is working with Bishop Steve and the Policy Committee to write a strategic plan that will help us meet this goal. Thank you to all our respondents. We are so grateful to hear from you," she says.

The Anti-Racism Team would love to have more representation from people living and worshipping with a disability. If you are interested in sharing your voice on diversity and inclusion in the Edmonton diocese, please email antiracism@edmonton.anglican.ca.

Communion bishops and spouses search for faithful response to whole human family cont.

Continued from Front Page.

We walked everywhere onsite, often meeting other delegates along the way. This allowed us to reconnect with seminary classmates and colleagues and to meet new friends. I was delighted to find that many of the walking paths were lined with blackberries, which I usually pass by at the grocery store for \$7/clamshell. But here, they were ripe and ready to be picked. One afternoon, I was emerging from the brambles with two in my mouth and more in my hand, when I heard someone call out something about foraging. I grinned and, as we walked to the next venue, we had a lovely conversation about her home in France and her work with the Church of England. I learned later she was one of the conference organisers. We were also delighted to spend time with Archbishop Sixbert, now Primate of Burundi, and his wife Clotilde, from our partner diocese of Buyé. We look forward to continuing to nurture this relationship. Over conversations at meals, we learned about ministry in other parts of the Communion and shared something of the Diocese of Edmonton.

It is not possible to ignore the fact that the Anglican Communion began in an age of conquest and imperialism. Each member church is working through that heritage in its own context. Historic empirical dynamics continue to influence authority structures, gender roles, language, political and economic realities and more. The conference organisers began to speak to this issue by ensuring that most plenary speakers and session leaders were women and BIPOC leaders. Though we are only beginning to unravel the effects of our colonial

past, this Lambeth Conference opened opportunities both to work for change and to celebrate some of those who embody faithfulness and courage. The congregation was full of delegates in Mothers' Union blue and white, highlighting the vital ministry of women's groups across the Communion. Spouses' and bishops' Bible study groups encouraged a Christ-centered, rather than empire-formed, pattern of relationships. My table included spouses from Australia, South Sudan, India, Cameroon and the United States. Five days of worship, study and conversation before the opening service, laid the groundwork for more difficult conversations the following week.

It is no secret that our church continues to suffer from deep and painful divisions, particularly around same-gender unions. In protest, bishops from Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda did not attend the conference, while others attended but did not take communion with bishops and spouses in same-gender partnerships. The Archbishop of Canterbury addressed this issue



Bishop Stephen (right) exchanges greetings with Clotilde and Archbishop Sixbert Macumi of the Edmonton diocese's companion diocese of Buyé.



"Love is Love": this proclamation, displayed in a shop window in Canterbury, reflects what has at times been a contentious topic for members of the Anglican Communion.

more clearly than ever before, repeating the admonition that this is not the way forward. The Lambeth Conference is not an opportunity to shore up preconceived defenses, but to keep moving toward each other with a determined focus on Jesus. These conversations will continue as the bishops' circles meet over the next two years. As the Anglican Communion continues the hard work of living in community with each other and listening to each others' experiences, I hope ears will open, wounds will be acknowledged, fortresses will soften, and we will grow into a Communion that better reflects the heart of Christ.

The conference highlighted the blessings and challenges of living in a diverse, worldwide family of churches. At the beginning, everyone was issued a headset with channels tuned in to eight different languages: Swahili, Portuguese, Sudanese Arabic, Japanese, Spanish, French, English. Worship and music blended those languages and more, and the primary language was

not always English. As we navigated communication across cultures, our eyes opened to the challenges our distant siblings in Christ face. We met a bishop from a small island threatened by climate change. Their only way out was a plane every two weeks. Another was consecrated a bishop and almost immediately he and his whole diocese were forced to flee to a refugee camp, where

they have been living for seven years. Another was targeted in a machete attack. Archbishop Justin Welby spoke about a time when, on behalf of the local church, he agreed to meet with a local warlord as a gesture of reconciliation. Far from outside help, he and his guide were imprisoned and told to expect to be killed the next day. They prayed through the night and in the morning, found that their captor had reluctantly decided to let them go. There are still many places in the world where becoming a Christian means facing literal threats to your life. And, yet people continue to follow Jesus. I became more aware of just how much of what Jesus and the early apostles taught speaks to overcoming sectarianism, and how far we still have to go. At every turn, the conference insisted we remember that in spite of vast cultural differences, we gather because of the living Jesus.

For more about the 15th Lambeth Conference, visit lambethconference.org.

Synod prepares to set off on the right foot with Jesus

This month is our synod month! It has been a long time in coming, and there has been a lot of preparation. It is a busy weekend. There will be worship, teaching, conversation, singing, reading reports, proposing and voting on legislation, fellowship, nominations and lots of coffee and tea. I am looking forward to it. I do enjoy a good church meeting. Some of you may laugh at that, but it's true. Yes, many gatherings can be tedious. But at its best, a good church meeting evokes a combination of feelings: it feels like a family reunion, mixed with spiritual renewal, mixed with a feeling of putting things in place to help us do the serious work of the Gospel.



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON
Diocese of Edmonton



And the Gospel is, of course, the real point. Our theme this year is Together on the Way, and the way, of course, is the way of Christ. To follow the way of Jesus Christ is what it means to be a disciple. One of the translations of the Bible I have recently enjoyed meditating on is the new version called the *First Nations Version* (FNV) of the New Testament. It is a dynamic equivalence translation of the New Testament using First Nations' imagery; symbolism from the tradition of Native storytellers' oral tradition. The text is simple and has really spoken to me as I have been preparing

spiritually for our synod.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus (whose name is translated literally as 'Creator Sets Free') is talking about the Kingdom of God. A kingdom, of course, is not a First Nations' concept, and even in Jesus' day the idea of a kingdom was loaded with concepts such as power, violence, authority, arrogance and so on. Jesus' point in talking about the kingdom was to turn the idea on its head. The Kingdom of God is the opposite of all of that. For Jesus, God's reign is about love, joy, peace, hospitality and so on. The translators of the FNV have made this vision come alive again for me this year with their translation. The familiar translation is 'the Kingdom of God is

at hand!' The translation in the FNV is 'Creator's good road from above is close.' This verse has been a real gift of God to me this year. A few verses later, when Jesus tells Peter, 'Come walk the road with me,' my heart leapt within me. I want to walk the road with Jesus.

This is what this synod is about. The Edmonton diocese, in electing a new bishop, has started a new chapter in its life. This synod at the beginning of this new chapter is to start us off on the right foot by committing to walking the road together with Jesus Christ.

Blessings,
+Steve

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Bishops' Canterbury Corner

Bishop Stephen London (Edmonton), and Bishop David Greenwood (Athabasca) attended the 15th Lambeth Conference in Canterbury, U.K.

We welcome letters to the editor, news, stories and book reviews (max 500 words), event notices and high resolution photos (min 1 MB, 200 dpi).

Submissions due by SEPTEMBER 30 for NOVEMBER, 2022.

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Healthy church starts with being rooted in Jesus Christ

Do you remember the five marks of the healthy church that I wrote about last month? Paul gives them to us in his epistle to the Colossians, telling us that we are meant to be:

- *Rooted and established in Christ, with Christ at the centre of all we do;*
- *Growing in our knowledge of God;*
- *Living as disciples of Jesus, individually modelling our lives after his;*
- *Living as Jesus' family - the Body of Christ - brothers and sisters together;*
- *Living with good news to share; living a Jesus-centred life in which we engage with the mission of God.*

Today, I want to start looking at the first of those. Here is a key bible text for us:

'The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and

on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.' (Colossians 1:15-17)

This passage reminds us that all is well for us, for Christ is all we need. We see here that Jesus has power over all things. There is nothing outside of his power and authority. He created all things. He holds all things together. He is supreme. And because he is supreme, and because he holds all things together, is it not logical to believe that he who created the universe cannot therefore also work in us; to redeem us and bring us to glory. Of course, he can. And there we see how because



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

he is supreme, he is sufficient. Jesus doesn't need any help from anyone to complete his work in us. It's absurd to suggest otherwise, yet that so often happens. Often we act as though he needs our help; that our transformation is ultimately down to us. Not so.

Jesus is supreme over all things, in heaven and on

earth, which also means there is no separation between sacred and secular. Wherever we are, we are in Jesus' world. He is a mighty redeemer. He is also our creator – and be we in a church building, our own homes, the pub, a shop, in a field or by a stream – we are in Jesus' realm, he is Lord of all.

And Paul continues:

'And he is the head of the body,

the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.' (Colossians 1:18)

Just as Christ created all things, and in him all in creation holds together, so does all in the new creation, which is the Church. To be the head, the beginning, and the firstborn from among the dead, is to say we are totally dependent upon him for life.

So, to be churches that are healthy, and have those five marks present, starts with being rooted and established in Christ. If we don't start there, if we think it is by our own plans, energy, liturgy, or resources that we will flourish and grow, we are going to be disappointed.

Indeed, we are not truly the Church unless we are rooted and established in him.

With every blessing in your missional endeavours in his name,

Richard

If maturity is our goal, how do followers of Jesus get there?

I was asked recently how a person 'can become a *mature* Christian?' This question arose from the Church being referred to by the Bishop as a 'family' and calls to be followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. In the simplest terms, to be a Christian is to be one. But what does that mean? The Christian faith at its heart is incarnational. God came to us in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, and redeems us back to God. Therefore, faith in its truest sense, is relational. It is not that we desire to have God in our lives, but that God has sought us out to be in relationship with us.

This relationship with Christ, and thus with God, is about enabling people to 'grow up in Christ.' The Church as a family needs every baptised member of the Body. When a family member is not present, the Body is not whole. Unity of the Body is about being in relationship first with Christ who is the head of the Body, and with each other. We grow into mature believers as we take time to be together in worship and in fellowship with one another. We need to be together so that we



The Very Rev.
JASON HAGGSTROM
Rector of St. James'
Cathedral and Dean of
Diocese of Athabasca

can know the presence of Jesus and grow to look and live more and more like him.

To become more mature, we must know Jesus through scripture, and through each other. We get to know who the early Church understood Jesus to be because of the witness not only of what is written in the New

Testament, but also in the life of the community that Jesus made: the Church. We read the scriptures daily more so to hear who God is for us as individuals and as a family.

A person of mature faith seeks to participate in the things we see God doing in the community, not just the Church, but also the wider, secular community. Mature Christians will be fruitful, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in increasing amounts: love, joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. And at the same time, we need to put to death that which belongs to the earthly nature along with its passions and desires. Please note you will not find anywhere in

the New Testament where Christians are called to be successful.

If we are living by the Spirit, then we need to walk in step with the

Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-25) All of this needs to be done together because we need to help one another.

Jason+

Nine Cousins Baptised Together at All Saints', Athabasca

JOY McCOMB
All Saints' Anglican Church,
Athabasca

Nine children, all members of the Vye family, were baptised together on June 5, 2022.

Six-year-old Austin had been the first to decide he wanted to be baptised, and he approached the Rev. Terry Francis on his own. Then

Chloe, also age six, decided she too would like to be baptised.

Francis welcomed the children's cousins to be baptised (with their parents' permission), with Austin and Chloe.

It was a delightful service which was well attended. Each child received an age-appropriate Bible.

A celebratory lunch and cake were served after the service. Thank you to the Rev. Terry Francis!



Back row, pictured from left: Brooke (3), Austin (6), Olivia (9), Kaydence (11), Kaylyn (13), Katheryn (15). Front Row: Aubry (5), Chloe (6), Baby Borody (8 months).

Lambeth Conference 2022: exhausting but rewarding

The Rt. Rev. DAVID GREENWOOD
Bishop of Athabasca

The Lambeth Conference, held this past July and August, was informative, intense and very rewarding. Over 10 days we met in retreat, we studied scripture together, we shared opinions on various “calls,” we renewed and established relationships. I think the focus for most participants, though not all, was on relationships.

On a typical morning, the alarm went off at 6:00 am. We went to breakfast, then morning Eucharist. We listened to a “Bible Exposition” (ie: lecture), attended Bible study, then a plenary session, all before lunch at 1:00 pm. The afternoon consisted of another plenary and Evening Prayer before supper at 7:00 pm. Evening programming included a keynote address or reception, followed by events and sessions, then Night Prayer (Compline) at 9:30 pm (if you were still conscious and able to walk). And the walking! When we weren’t sitting in session or eating, we were walking from one venue to the next. The University of Kent at Canterbury comprises about 300 acres, and it seemed we walked at least half of it. So, the Lambeth Conference was also exhausting!

Three of the sessions really interested me: one called Jesus-Shaped Life: Anglican Discipleship, a session around Christian formation (including vocational formation), and church planting, evangelism, and reaching those who Christ is calling, especially those beyond our comfort zones. I want to spend some time in the coming months exploring these and see what learnings we can take advantage of in our diocese.

We discussed the "Calls," which



Pictured from left, above: Lambeth lunch with Bishop of Ibba Wilson Kamani, Mama Agnes, Benita Greenwood, Bishop of Athabasca David Greenwood, Victoria Lawson and former Bishop of Athabasca Fraser Lawton. Pictured from left, below: Michelle Bester of Wangaratta, Benita Greenwood, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby; Bishop David Greenwood with the Rev. Catherine Ngangira from Zimbabwe, who was mentored under the Rev. Dr. Blessing Shambare.



are thoughts and positions on:

- Mission and Evangelism;
- Safe Church;
- Anglican Identity;
- Reconciliation;
- Human Dignity;
- Environment and Sustainable Development;
- Christian Unity;
- Inter Faith Relations;
- Discipleship;
- Science and Faith.

We didn’t decide on any of these, for that wasn’t the point. Instead, we shared our various perspectives, and gave feedback to the organising committees of each Call regarding what our discussion group thought of their proposal(s) and what changes we thought would be beneficial. Some of these discussions were intense, some were lighthearted, and all felt rushed (we spent no more than an hour of active discussion on any one).

The key thing I took away from Lambeth, though, is that we’re all in this together. I asked a young lady from Pakistan about persecution in her county. Her first sentence was, ‘I think to follow Christ is to embrace persecution.’ Her second sentence was, ‘But we’re not really persecuted that much, not like the Christians in Palestine, for example.’ I then listened to her tell me how her parish had been attacked, and if I remember correctly her brother killed, four years earlier. And then she added, ‘But you know, of all the people who came and gave blood at the hospital to help save our lives, most were Muslim. Most people are very generous to us. It’s just a very few we have to watch.’ I listened to my new friend from South Sudan, the Most Rev. Charles Ogeno, describe how his parishioners will walk 20 kms to and from worship each Sunday. And I compared these two encounters to our own context, here in Northern Alberta.

For, we are all joined through Christ. We truly are one family; and when one suffers, we all suffer; when one is exalted, we all are. Please pray for your Christian relatives in Pakistan, in South Sudan (especially our companion diocese of Ibba!), and throughout our own diocese. Also, please pray for all the people, those images of God, who do not yet realise they are created in His Image, and through Christ are invited to one-ness with our Triune God. All glory be to our Father, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Bishops Bond Over Bible Study at Lambeth; Plan to Continue

The Rt. Rev. DAVID GREENWOOD
Bishop of Athabasca

During the Lambeth Conference (held July 26-August 8), an important part of our daily routine was bible study. With the people in our bible study, we discussed scripture in the morning, prayed, and then discussed the various “calls” (issues and decisions which we were asked to debate).

Our times together in bible study were times of great vulnerability and intense listening. Our group committed to staying together via email / whatsapp, and we are intending to try a bible study over Zoom starting in November or December.



Pictured from left: Bishop David Greenwood with bishops David Nkaabu (Meru, Kenya); John Stroyan (Warwick, England); Alphonse Isesomo (Nord Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo); David Rice (San Joaquin, US); Charles Ogeno (Archbishop of the Internal Province of Eastern Equatoria Episcopal Church of South Sudan); Larry Benfield (Arkansas, US); Gavin Collins (Dorchester, England).

Massive Mural to put St. Peter's parish 'on the map'

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

A massive, outdoor event celebrating faith, art and community was held September 3-11 at St. Peter's Anglican Church in Edmonton. The Rev. Heather Liddell, rector of St. Peter's, says members have been seeking creative ways to let their surrounding community know they are "a safe and welcoming space" for all.

While St. Peter's is located south of Edmonton's busy 111th Avenue and west of trendy 124th Street in the heart of the Westmount neighbourhood, the church building is often overshadowed by the condo complex next door.

"People keep saying to us, 'oh, there's a church there?'" says Liddell.

Although some of St. Peter's Westmount neighbours are not aware of the church community, she adds, "we've had new people every Sunday we've been open. We're still not huge, but we're a pretty fun group."

St. Peter's resumed holding services every Sunday starting in September, kicking things off with the community festival.

With a vision of raising the visibility of their church and furthering its mission, the parish applied to be part of the Mural Massive Festival, a collaborative initiative started by Grindstone Theatre and local art group Minbid. Along with their application, St. Peter's provided a copy of their



Pictured above left: St. Peter's assistant people's warden Oliver Trendall greets members of the community on the opening weekend of Mural Massive. Above right: Heather Liddell and Steve Smith in front of the walls which were transformed into community art by Mural Massive artist Jai Tanninen. The mural stretches around the corner of the church hall to include both walls.

parish Mission Action Plan (MAP). They funded the mural project with parish proceeds from the Edmonton diocese's Reach Campaign for ministry and mission.

Liddell says it took some time to hear back from the administrators of the Mural Massive project which, since 2020, has paired local artists with community organisations to help beautify buildings in the city. Mural Massive creates and maps walking and cycling tours featuring the murals.

"This has been a two-year project and we really hit the ground running once our application was approved," she says. "We hope this will help us live into our mission and put St. Peter's on the map."

When Liddell reached out to Edmonton Bishop Stephen London for guidance, he suggested a theological student to help with the project. Steve Smith, who also works with the PrayerWorks' community outreach at St. Faith's, Edmonton,

was asked to coordinate St. Peter's core team of volunteers.

"It's a wonderful project and I was eager to help out," says Smith.

Smith met with Epcor to determine which section of the church hall could be safely painted. He also formed a committee to plan eight days of free and inclusive events to engage community members as the mural was being painted.

The community festival kicked off on Saturday, September 3 with Morning Prayer, at 10 am, followed by a Smudge ceremony performed by the Ven. Travis Enright, Archdeacon for Indigenous Ministries.

Artist Jai Tanninen, who currently lives in Edmonton and grew up in Ontario, then set to work to transform a blank, off-white wall with images he hopes will convey different meaning for each person who views the mural.

As they watched Tanninen paint,

people were offered complimentary snacks, beverages and programs for the whole family. There were performances by The Wildrose Fiddlers and open stage events. Each weekend day concluded with Complaine. A member of St. Peter's led a Prayer Bead making workshop.

Liddell led Table Talks, similar to the informal Pub Theology conversations she has offered as the Edmonton diocese's educational chaplain.

In celebration of the mural, St. Peter's hosted a community barbecue (by donation) on Saturday, September 10. Members of St. John the Evangelist's Youth Group painted picnic tables which were auctioned off for community outreach initiatives and for St. Peter's. Local musicians Dave Von Bieker and Emmet Michael performed, followed by a Movie Night.

The mural was blessed on Sunday, September 11, following St. Peter's Morning Prayer service.



Showers of love and care bring a harvest of healing



The Rev. TRINA HOLMBERG
Rector, St. Andrew's, Camrose

‘I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.’
(1 Corinthians 3:6)

Living in a rural area reminds us of the cycles of the seasons. This spring was cool and dry. The farmers planted, hoping rain and warmth would come. While the crops are growing there is speculation on whether the right amount of rain and sunshine will happen for a good year. Summer weather can bring all kinds

of problems. One field may be fine while the one next door is broken and damaged beyond repair. Harvest has begun and soon we will hear whether this was a good, average, or poor growing year.

As a non-farmer it is wonderful driving down the roads watching the plants grow, flower and turn golden. Not being a farmer has its advantages. I enjoy what I see, and I pray the farmers' crops turn out well. It all looks good to me, unless of course, the field has been knocked down by the weather.

Paul talked of planting seeds in people's hearts and minds. We may not be sure about the soil and everything else that is needed for a person to grow into a Christ-follower. Our best intentions, like poor weather, can find us damaging a

budding believer, or bringing about deeper hurt in someone needing healing. When we follow God and listen, showering people with love and care, then the Holy Spirit is able to use us and others to bring about healing and health.

Like Apollos watering, we can often help ease a difficult situation. With love and care we see lives begin to grow, blossom and mature into a deep giving faith. Whether we are a seed needing to grow, a planter, or a waterer, when we allow God to direct the growth amazing outcomes happen. Love and care for one another and God will carry us through the worst storms and deepest droughts. No matter the seasons, there is always a blessed and beautiful harvest when we care for one another.



Photo: George Rosiechuk

Bountiful grain harvest of 2020.

Holy Trinity welcomes theatre-lovers back to the Fringe

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

The grounds of the Edmonton International Fringe Festival were noticeably quieter this year after a long hiatus due to COVID, but a couple of blocks east of Gateway Boulevard performers and patrons alike lined up for scones and shows in the beautiful gardens of Holy Trinity Anglican Church (HTAC).

Holy Trinity has been a popular Fringe venue since the parish became a BYOV (Bring Your Own Venue) in the mid-late '80s. The 2022 Fringe season featured seven different shows, from a children's musical to adult comedies to a Puccini opera. Every day but Sunday, from August 11 to 21, Fringe audiences took in live performances on the Sanctuary Stage and in the lower hall on the de Villars Jones LLP Stage.

The parish's reputation for warm hospitality and held-over performances is widespread and well-deserved. This year a well-prepared roster of dedicated volunteers welcomed Fringers at the front of the house, in the Green



Theatre-lovers line up at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Old Strathcona. Photo: Margaret Glidden

Room Tea Room, and in the "Klub Kunitz" (named for long-time volunteer coordinator Dwane Kunitz and family) Concession Tent.

Parish staff and members of the congregation stocked the actors' fridge with food and refreshments, opening their space to the occasional performer who braved the overwhelming heat of the unairconditioned 1913-church to

access the wifi.

"This community feels like home to a lot of people, says Holy Trinity, Old Strathcona Rector the Rev. Danielle Key. "On August 6, we had a wedding for a couple who met while performing here."

Front of house manager and parish arts administrator RJ Chambers says volunteers, whether they are members of Holy Trinity

or the local community, "share a concern for people's wellbeing and a love for the facility."

For all the hard work of staff and volunteers, the parish receives revenue to put towards its community outreach programs – a win-win for everyone. Current initiatives include a Christmas Hamper program at neighbouring King Edward School, and a weekly meal program through Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS). The youth gather at HTAC every Friday night to cook and eat together.

While Chambers says the "every-day, steady pace" of the Fringe is a lot of work, "it's also a lot of fun."

Bill and Lynn Strickland, parishioners of Holy Trinity, say they enjoy the volunteer experience. "It's a great opportunity to help out the church and participate in a community event," says Lynn.

"It's a lot of fun to volunteer because the event is so well run," says Bill. "It's easy and rewarding to help out and well worth the time."

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Book Review: Author Tracks Journey of Awareness and Growth

MARION BULMER
St. Thomas, Sherwood Park

Part of our journey with God is to explore and reimagine what we think we know about God. In *Miracles and Other Reasonable Things: a Story of Unlearning and Relearning God*, author Sarah Bessey shares about the experiences that lead her to confront her own biases and ultimately bring her to a deeper understanding of God.

Sarah is a speaker and writer who was raised on the Canadian prairies and in the mountain foothills. She met her American husband Brian while studying in the US. Their children were born in Abbotsford B.C. and the family makes their home in Calgary.

In her book, Sarah, whose ministry now spans North America, talks openly about confronting the challenges of her birth religion. She goes to great lengths to understand, honour and critique it. In finding meaning for herself, her children, and those who follow her work, she reshapes her own faith.

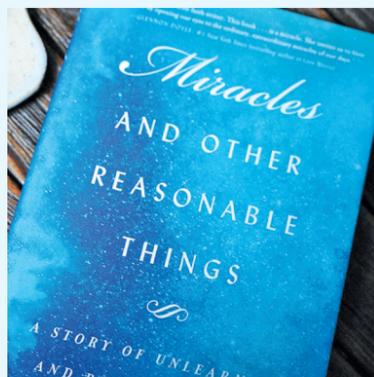
Sarah was born into a Pentecostal family. I have heard this tradition described as both charismatic and part of the

prosperity gospel. I have learned via Sarah's writing and from a friend that the term prosperity is more nuanced than simply prospering if one is Christian. It is about believing there are blessings in all, the good and the bad, and living an abundant life.

Sarah shares openly about her health issues stemming from fibromyalgia. She suffers with chronic pain and fatigue and, as a result, has had to adjust her lifestyle. Due to her nature and church tradition, she found it challenging to accept this diagnosis and seek medical help.

She had to come to terms with prayer not answered, and the realisation that lamenting is part of our prayer life. Lament is a form of prayer when not all comes right.

She speaks of building edifices to God and then of God transcending those edifices. (p. 205) Over time we are transformed by God through our life experiences. Life can be painful, suffering is normal and, in fact, ordinary. (p. 162) Sarah has learned



that we understand God differently through our own suffering.

Sarah realised the Holy Spirit is alive and well ecumenically, while she and her husband were celebrating the jubilee of the Charismatic

Movement at the Vatican with Catholics and people of other faith traditions. Two Catholic priests heal a spine injury she had suffered as the result of an accident precipitating her illness. Through this miracle, she confronts her prejudice toward the institutional Catholic Church.

While in Rome, Sarah sees there is space for other faith traditions while sharing a meal with other charismatics. They read together the sermon given by Pope Francis at the church service commemorating the Jubilee of the Charismatic movement. The Pope, in his sermon, says there cannot be unity without diversity, and unity needs diversity. Uniformity means everyone doing everything in one way and then there is no freedom. (p. 119-120)

Until this time of change, Sarah

had kept a tradition of informal prayers, but she began to take solace in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The daily hours have since become a spiritual discipline for her. She rejoices in the saints who wrote liturgy, and we see her grow in ecumenism.

Over time, Sarah realises her reliance on miracles, has resulted in her neglect of self-care.

When discussing this book with members of my book club, it was apparent some of our own prejudices toward Pentecostalism had been barriers to our understanding. Some of us found challenging her references to God as mother and of God as mothering.

In confronting her lack of unity with other church traditions, Sarah was also asking us to hear the voice of a faith tradition different from our own. Her willingness to confront her own beliefs invites readers to challenge their own biases and opinions. Or, in the least, for us to examine the positions we hold regarding other traditions.

It is my prayer those who choose to read this book might face their own biases and rejoice in our shared following of Jesus and the Holy Spirit which unite us.

Immanuel harvests chokecherry 'bumper-crop'

FIONA BROWNLEE
Immanuel, Wetaskiwin

Do you remember back in the spring of 2014 when parishes around the diocese planted chokecherry trees? At the recommendation of Indigenous elders, Bishop Jane Alexander arranged for each parish to receive a tree. They were/are a sign of reconciliation; we are dedicating ourselves as followers of Jesus to making right our relationship with the Indigenous peoples of the land.

The tree planted at Immanuel in Wetaskiwin has grown more than 10 ft. tall. Its branches were laden with chokecherries this summer.

Our rector, the Rev. Hugh Matheson, wondered if there might be enough cherries to make wine for the celebration of the eucharist. He invited members of the parish to join him for a chokecherry-picking session.



Parishioners at Immanuel, Wetaskiwin pitch in to harvest a bumper crop of chokecherries.

Photo: Carol Blair

Following morning worship on Sunday, August 28, a group of parishioners harvested about 13 pounds of chokecherries – enough to make up to 19 litres of wine.

The chokecherry wine will age in bottles for around seven weeks and, hopefully, will be ready for the celebration of the Lord's Nativity, on December 25.

The congregation of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin is looking forward to tasting this wine. We are grateful to God our Creator for blessing us with this wonderful chokecherry tree.

Holy Trinity welcomes theatre-lovers back to the Fringe, cont.

Continued from page 7.

While the Stricklands awaited the arrival of patrons under the shade of the tent on the church lawn, several more volunteers prepared for the afternoon show to let out in the cool of the tea room in the church hall basement.

"People say the tearoom is special," says Gloria Letwin who began volunteering at the Fringe more than a decade ago as "something to do when my kids were all grown." She was enjoying a refreshing cup of hibiscus iced tea with Danielle Key and tearoom volunteers Wynne Whitten-Holmes, Emily Key and Noella Bradbury. "It's a quiet oasis to relax and get away from the heat and the traffic," Letwin says.

Fifteen-year-old Fringe volunteer Emily Key says she is "kind of

getting used to" waking up at 6 am to catch a ride to work with her mom. Emily says she likes "getting to know new people while serving them in the tearoom. It's been pretty fun for me, and I'll definitely do it again."

Throughout the Fringe, Danielle Key has observed many intergenerational relationships forming, such as the bond between long-time Fringe volunteer Noella Bradbury and Emily. Bradbury says the younger volunteers have many creative ideas for everything from arranging flowers on the tables to serving cold drinks like iced tea. For the first time, the tearoom is also serving gluten-free scones, which "taste amazing," says Danielle who has celiac disease.

"Ummm, that's good," says first-time tearoom visitor Irene Robb sampling clotted cream with her

scone. Robb and her friend Janet McKernan were taking a quiet break between shows. McKernan says being invited to pick out their own teacups was "very welcoming."

No doubt, it takes work to offer the level of hospitality Fringers have

come to expect at Holy Trinity. In looking ahead to next season, both Chambers and Key hope the addition of more paid positions, perhaps through the Canada Student Jobs program, will reduce the volunteer workload.



Above: Fringe lovers line up for a cup of tea and their favourite show. Below: Danielle Key and RJ Chambers welcome Fringe-goers to enjoy one of seven different shows in the 2022 season; visitors Irene Robb and Janet McKernan enjoy a quiet break in the tearoom.

