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# THE MESSENGER

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Let the  
**HEAVENS** praise  
your wonders this  
Advent season

Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones. Psalm 89:5

Photo: Margaret Glidden

## 68<sup>th</sup> Synod takes first steps Together on the Way

MARGARET GLIDDEN  
Edmonton Editor

**M**embers of the Diocese of Edmonton will seek new and better ways to walk together with “all relations,” especially those community members who have not been treated with dignity and respect.

“Our call is to be a community of just and right relationships (including our relations with the land, the waters and all creation),” said the Rt. Rev. Stephen London in his Charge to the 68th Synod during the Opening Eucharist on October 21, 2022.

Held at All Saints’ Cathedral on Treaty 6 Territory (synod continued the next day at St. Matthias Anglican Church), the opening service began with a smudge ceremony led by Cree elder Russell Auger. It also featured an Indigenous story read



Nearly 190 lay and clergy delegates from 43 parishes gather in the hall at St. Matthias Anglican Church on Saturday, October 22, 2022.

by Derian Tremblay, a member of Church of the Nativity, Frog Lake, and the Prayers of the People in Four Directions.

“Together on the Way,” the theme of synod, is “the way in which the Church is called to live out the

Gospel of Jesus Christ in our time and in our place,” said London in his first-ever Bishop’s Charge.

In response, members of synod (57 clergy and 130 lay delegates) voted to uphold several of the principles of the Edmonton diocese’s

strategic path document *Finding Our Way*, “reaffirming the truth that the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the center of our lives,” says London. “We are formed by the gospel; the gospel is our vision for life.”

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# Dayspring: seeds of something new in rural ministry

MARGARET GLIDDEN  
Edmonton Editor

The seeds of a new, hardy variety of ministry, engineered to withstand environmental threats to flourish over future generations, have been sown in the east-central region of the Edmonton diocese.

Dayspring Ministry is a new shared ministry of St. Saviour in Vermilion, St. Thomas in Wainwright and St. Mary in Edgerton, that is being led by one full-time priest and several lay leaders from the three parishes.

The origin of Dayspring Ministry is rooted in a conversation Bishop Stephen London had with the Ven. Rachael Parker, whom he collated as the diocese's first Archdeacon for Rural Ministry at the 68th Synod in October. He asked Parker to discern with him about a new model for ministry to ensure the continuation of ministry in areas served by part-time priests or no priests at all.

"I reached out to the places I had served before (dioceses of NS and PEI, Toronto and Huron), where they were doing hybrid ministry," says Parker, who has lived in Wainwright since 2020 when her husband LCdr. the Rev. Robert Parker was posted to a chaplaincy at CFB Wainwright.

She prayed and dreamed about what the new shared ministry could be and "by late spring of 2022, we began pulling things together conversationally about what it would look like for the three parishes to form a group to work in relationship with one another," she says.

Ordained deacon and priest in the Diocese of Huron in 1999, Parker had been serving as rector of St. Thomas, Wainwright and St. Mary, Edgerton. Since arriving in Wainwright, the Parkers had also been taking turns celebrating the eucharist once a month at St. Saviour in Vermilion which had been without a priest since its rector's retirement in November 2021.

The Dayspring name, from the Benedictus (Luke 1:78), came to Parker one morning in prayer: "the dayspring from on high hath visited us... I half-jokingly thought to myself, well we're far enough east we actually see the sunrise a couple of seconds before Edmonton does."

She says the ministry's nontraditional moniker is intended to, hopefully, avoid the denominational tag that can be a barrier for people. However, the three congregations will retain their Anglican names as three "campuses"

of Dayspring Ministry.

Previous opportunities to serve in communities of varying size in four dioceses, where she chaired a rural ministries committee and helped lead a rural ministries symposium, has enabled Parker to envision new possibilities for ministry.

"In my first placement, I had two churches in one parish, instead of two different parishes. I think of Dayspring as one big parish with three congregations. It may not be canonically correct, but it's the way we're living it on the ground."

*By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn (dayspring) from on high will  
break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.  
Luke 1:78-79 (NRSV)*

The difference between Dayspring and the past model of ministry which placed one priest in charge of multiple rural parishes is in the approach, she says. "We are not going at this as merely a fiscally responsible means of keeping the doors open," she says.

Under the new arrangement, the cost of priestly ministry is divided between the congregations with the parishes in Wainwright and Vermilion each covering 40 per cent, and Edgerton covering 20 per cent.

"A gift of being part of a ministry team is that we are no longer in that place of thinking 'will we be able to keep the doors open four or five years from now?' Being able to share costs means that fiscally we are in good shape."

The cost-sharing proportions are not in direct correlation to Parker's presence in a congregation.

"Sometimes, depending on what's happening in the life of the congregation, I may be needed more by one parish than the others," says the full-time rector of three congregations. "We try to make sure they all see me at some point during the week even though I can't be in each parish every Sunday."

The congregations follow a schedule which enables Parker to participate in the regular, ongoing pattern of worship in each church at least twice a month.

Pastorally, Parker says she will need to be cognizant of where she is needed the most. "I don't have kids of my own, but I imagine it's a bit like loving each of your children equally, even though one child needs you more than another."

The Dayspring congregations worked together to come up with a schedule that balances the needs of all three churches. "I like to plan ahead so we have a liturgical schedule through Reign of Christ 2023," says Parker. "But I tell people it's written in sand. At any point, it can change."

At the moment Edgerton and Wainwright have priestly ministry on the first and third Sundays of the month and lay-led liturgies on the second and fourth Sundays. Correspondingly, Vermilion has lay-led liturgies on the first and third Sundays and priestly ministry on the second and fourth Sundays.

As Dayspring gets off the ground, Parker is walking alongside the congregations by helping them prepare for Sunday worship. She produces the weekly bulletins, which include the same announcements and prayers, so everyone is on the same page, and sermons based on the five principles of *Finding Our Way* – the Edmonton diocese's strategic path forward. The sermons are delivered by either Parker or a lay reader with an interest in developing their gift for preaching. Congregations can also watch Parker's "Gospel on the Go" YouTube videos which she has been recording since the start of the COVID pandemic as part of the *Church at Home with Rachael* series.

Empowering lay members to lead (see the *Finding Our Way* principle a "Calling for All") is the foundation of the team ministry model. Parker is still getting used to this reality. "I love what I do, and I really love the people. But I am aware that I can't be in three places at once. If it's not sacramental, I need to be able to say, 'go for it and

keep me in the loop.'"

In terms of ideas for ministry, Parker says her mantra is *why not?* and *epic fail*. "If something has the potential to lead to a good thing, then I say 'go for it.' If it really doesn't work, 'let's make it an epic fail,' so we can look back and say, 'this is a story we're gonna want to tell.' Every idea has at least one thing that goes well, and that's what we're called to build on."

Parker believes wholeheartedly that interdependent ministry is the way forward. "As the priest, I'm the only one who can do the sacramental stuff, but that does not mean I'm the only one who can do other things. And, indeed, there are things I should let go of and help others do," she says. "Not every lay reader is a great preacher and not every preacher is a lay reader. But there are some people in our congregations who, with encouragement and support, can break open and share the gospel in ways people can hear."

When the Dayspring team has had time to work out some of the logistics of team ministry, Parker intends to further utilise the resources of the diocese, such as tapping into the knowledge of archdeacons. She envisions inviting Richard King, Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship, to talk about lay leadership and equipping the saints; or Travis Enright, Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Decolonization, to talk about what it means to be in relationship, and to be neighbours from different contexts.

"We are perfectly poised for furthering our relationship with Church of the Nativity, Frog Lake and Fred Matthews, lay reader-in-charge," she says.

Furthermore, Parker prays and dreams of each of the parishes finding their own niche in their surrounding communities. "How we come in as a Dayspring people to chip in with the groups already out there doing good work will look different in Edgerton than in Vermilion and different again in Wainwright."

It is the dawning of a new day for cooperative ministry in the Edmonton diocese and, as Parker says, "the possibilities are endless." She looks forward to continuing to find ways to pray together and play together.

"I think that's the way families are built. I don't know what a family boardgame night looks like for Dayspring, but we're going to have fun finding out."



# Daily practice helps us walk in solidarity with Jesus

Many blessings of Christ to you, and Happy New Year as we start the season of Advent. I hope you've tried the simple spiritual exercise I included last month:

Pray: When you wake up, ask 'Jesus, guide me today.'

Obey: If God nudges you in some way, follow it!

Say: If you meet someone whom God is nudging you with, ask: 'How are you?'

Pray: After listening to them, pray with them: 'Jesus, please help so and so with such and such.' OR 'Jesus, we thank you that such and such is happening with so and so!'

Hurray: 'Guess what happened!' Share, in an anonymous fashion, the events of the day with your fellow believers in Christ. As mentioned last month, a fuller explanation is at <http://www.qpcweb.org/assets/documents/ACORN.pdf>.



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD  
Diocese of Athabasca

It may seem frightful to discipline ourselves to daily practices, but it's surprisingly easy and helpful. Daily morning and evening prayer with scripture helps to keep us all grounded and is, I maintain, needed for our ongoing survival as Christians. As Jesus said, 'the eye is the lamp of the body.' What we pay attention to greatly influences what we understand about life and how we approach things.

As you pay attention to scripture and daily prayer, you may find that Jesus becomes more and more personal to you and more involved in your life. You may find yourself looking at other people and the world through Jesus' eyes overlaying your own. You may find your actions and words changing in surprising ways, which are healthy and good. This is all through the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Our heavenly Father dearly desires to walk with you, and Christ calls each of us to walk in solidarity with Him. He dearly desires to bless you with His creation, and to joy in blessing each other through Him. To gather together in worship and gratitude and share with joy from all He's blessed us with. God desire is to reconcile all the world to Himself, one person at a time – and you are included in that. As we discover the depth of His love for us, we can join Him in His project, until all are aware of their invitation into His family.

May you be greatly blessed this coming year as you walk daily with our heavenly Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit. May your life be transformed with health, wholeness, completeness, and joy in the Spirit.

Amen.

Be blessed in Christ;  
+ David

*Caricature of Bishop Greenwood created by Alex Blasius and used at the Bishop's request.*

# Jesus heals us, not *from* our brokenness, but *through* it

The scriptures of Advent always surprise the new Christian. Rather than being pastoral stories of cosily waiting in winter for the coming of the Son of God with hot chocolate and a warm fire, they are proclamations of judgement and warning. The central figure from the New Testament for the middle two Sundays of Advent is John the Baptist with his stern admonitions of what is to come. For the new Christian, Advent is extremely jarring to their expectations.



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON  
Diocese of Edmonton

Why does Advent have this message? It is to remind us of the nature of the world that the Christ child is entering. The message of the New Testament is that Christ came to heal a great rupture within the world. Advent reminds us that despite our best efforts there is a brokenness about the world. Even as I type this, the headlines on the news sites I read have been about war, atrocities, rigged elections, drug violence, domestic abuse, the continued fallout of the residential schools, increasing poverty, and the growing effects of climate change. This brokenness is part of the human heart. I have yet to meet the person who

has completely dealt with the contradictions within their own heart. Christ comes into the world to heal the world, to heal the human heart. But the part we don't always understand is that Jesus comes with an unexpected way of healing. It is not what we often think it should be. I have come to call it 'Broken Perfection.' When I was younger and less mature, I was constantly being disappointed by the people

around me. These were family and friends as well as people I idolized from TV or books I read. They were constantly not living up to my ideals. I would read a book and think, aha, here is someone who has figured out life. Or I would be talking with someone who had a great idea and think, aha, here is someone who finally knows. I can learn from them. But as I went deeper, I would inevitably discover their flaws and be disillusioned again.

What kept me from becoming a cynic (and a jerk) was reflecting on my own failure to live up to my own ideals. I, too, of course, wasn't perfect (shocking). I kept falling back into the same traps; but for myself, I discovered the grace and mercy of God. I discovered in Jesus Christ a new way of healing. I wasn't becoming perfect at all. To this day, I still wrestle with my flaws, my self-doubts, my fears and my sins. But I have also learned to love and be loved; I have learned to see that Christ has used my own failures to teach me about compassion and reverence. I have learned a deep humility. In eating a big serving of humble pie, I have gone back and learned to recognise that all the people I was originally disillusioned with were on their own journey. What I was missing was seeing that their 'flaws' were, in fact, the catalyst God was using to bring them into wholeness. The ideas and the love I experienced through them were real and profound, not an illusion because they weren't perfect. Jesus was born in an impoverished manger to show us that God's healing isn't *from* our brokenness but *through* our brokenness. The brokenness remains, but through it we learn the true gift of love, to love God and neighbour. As Leonard Cohen so profoundly captured this, "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

Blessings,  
+ Steve

<p>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).</p> <p>Submissions are due one month prior to the issue for which they are intended, for example: DECEMBER 1 for JANUARY, 2023.</p>	<p>Send to: Margaret Glidden (Edmonton) <a href="mailto:anglicanmessenger@gmail.com">anglicanmessenger@gmail.com</a> Peter Clarke (Athabasca) <a href="mailto:seens@telus.net">seens@telus.net</a></p> <p>MESSENGER TEAM</p> <p>EDITORS Margaret Glidden (Edmonton) Peter Clarke (Athabasca)</p>	<p>LAYOUT &amp; DESIGN Margaret Glidden Shelly King</p> <p>REPORTING Peter Clarke Margaret Glidden Shelly King</p> <p>PROOF READING John Gee</p>	<p>A \$15 annual donation is suggested. Please send donations to the Dioceses of Athabasca or Edmonton, c/o The Messenger.</p> <p><i>The Messenger</i> is published under the authority of the Dioceses of Athabasca and Edmonton. Opinions expressed in <i>The Messenger</i> are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher.</p> <p><i>The Messenger</i> is a section of the <i>Anglican Journal</i>, printed 10 times a year (no issues July and August) by Webnews Printing Inc. North York, ON.</p>
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# 68<sup>th</sup> Synod takes steps Together on the Way, continued

Continued from front page.

Since his consecration as Bishop of Edmonton in September 2021, London has travelled extensively throughout the diocese to fulfil his goal of meeting and praying with members of every parish early in his episcopacy.

"In this universally challenging time for the Church, parishes must come alongside one another to do the work of the gospel," he said.

Though the Church was "always meant to be a sign and a symbol of God's vision for all of creation to live well, we know, it has not always been so," said London. "Sometimes the Church has betrayed the gospel deeply by using the scriptures to keep marginal people marginalised... We are in a unique position to learn from 2,000 years of Christian history what has given glory to God, and what has only given glory to sinful humanity... The love of God transcends all our divisions, and it can heal all our divisions."

Synod demonstrated a desire "to walk together in mutual respect," says the Ven. Travis Enright, Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Decolonization, by giving unanimous consent to the development of policies and procedures in support of parishes and the diocese to fund local Indigenous-led community projects and healing initiatives. For Enright, these actions reflect the original intent of the treaties. "Settler and Indigenous communities have always been meant to share from their abundance. Mutual benefit is the first step in restorative justice."

Saturday morning, synod delegates considered questions relating to Goals 1-4 of the *Finding Our Way* document, having to do with our connection to God. In the afternoon, the same table groups discussed ways the Church can build better relationships with those around us, relating to Goals 5-12.

Acknowledging there is much work to be done in listening to and atoning for historical harms at the hands of the Church, and to create safe and welcoming worshipping communities for LGBTQ2SIA+ persons, members of synod voted to continue to develop safe and welcoming communities for LGBTQ2SIA+ members, to include LGBTQ2SIA+ voices in planning, and to make available



Pictured from left, front row: deacon Adenike Yesufu, who read the Gospel during the opening service of the 68th Diocesan Synod; Robert Reynolds, KC, Vice-Chancellor; Jordan Haynie Ware, Archdeacon for Justice; Susan Oliver, Archdeacon for Children, Youth and Family Ministries; Lois MacLean, KC, Chancellor; Alex Meek, Dean of Edmonton diocese; Bishop Stephen London. Pictured from left, back row: Scott Sharman, Canon to the Ordinary; Richard King, Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship; Rachael Parker, Archdeacon for Rural Ministry; Travis Enright, Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Decolonization.



Synod appointee and a founding member of Equally Anglican at the parish of Holy Trinity in Old Strathcona, Matthew Mercer-Deadman speaks to Resolution 3.



Youth delegates deliver their charge to synod. Pictured from left: Raelynn Ramage-Muir, Ella McDade, Emily Stephen-Garneau, Christopher Moore, Claire London, and spokesperson Gabriel Stephens. Photos: Margaret Glidden

to parishes training and resources to support them on their journeys to being fully welcoming and affirming, as put forward in the principles and goals of *Finding Our Way*.

Matthew Mercer-Deadman, a bishop's appointee to synod and a founder of Equally Anglican, said that considering "not all congregations and parishes are at the same place or on the same

pace in their journeys along the way, it was heartening to have the second Safe Spaces resolution be put forward by strong allies of the LGBTQ2SIA+ communities."

Furthermore, synod will ensure the diocese continues to build on the *Finding Our Way* principles and goals of outward focus and collaborative partnerships, by endorsing a motion put forth by the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott

Sharman, Canon to the Ordinary and Ecumenical and Interfaith Coordinator for the Edmonton diocese, to form an Ecumenical Shared Ministry Circle.

"Partnerships with other denominations and expressions of church is going to be a big part of the new ways Anglican churches will have to adapt in order to carry on a vibrant witness to the gospel in a changing future," says Sharman. "This resolution opens the door for our diocese to begin exploring in tangible ways this opportunity to thrive in mission anew."

Youth members of synod, in conversation with the Ven. Susan Oliver, Archdeacon for Children, Youth and Family Ministries, crafted their own response to Bishop Stephen's Charge.

Speaking on behalf of the youth, Gabe Stephens, a member of Christ Church, Edmonton, asked for more opportunities to gather together in celebration of the affirming resolutions passed earlier in the day. He suggested that a youth camp and youth groups are key to bridging the period of time between when young people outgrow Sunday school and when they join existing adult activities.

"We deeply want people to know they are beloved children of God and to live their lives out of that center," said Bishop London. "Because, ultimately, it is love which heals the human heart."

Bishop London says the Edmonton diocese has taken its first steps toward honouring the resolutions passed by synod. Queerly Beloved, a newly formed working group of the diocesan Social Justice Committee, was struck to walk alongside diocesan and parish communities in meeting "Goal #10 - Affirmation" of *Finding Our Way* ([edmonton.anglican.ca/news/finding-our-way](http://edmonton.anglican.ca/news/finding-our-way)). As well, Scott Sharman will initiate the creation of an ecumenical advisory body to advise church leadership and encourage the active exploration of local potential for "ecumenical shared ministry" congregations, a concept he has begun exploring with the ELCIC and Moravian Church of Canada. Steps to help parishes and the diocese allocate funding toward Indigenous-led community projects and healing initiatives will be discussed by the Administrative and Finance Committee at its next meeting.



# Elections, resolutions form the work of the 68<sup>th</sup> Synod

Discussions at the 68th Synod featured the principles and goals of the Edmonton diocese's strategic path, *Finding Our Way*. Synod passed four resolutions (exact wording below) including establishing a fund for local Indigenous-led community projects and healing initiatives; the affirmation of LGBTQ2SIA+ persons by creating safe and affirming communities; and the creation of a regional Ecumenical Shared Ministry Coordinating Circle. Legislative resolutions and updated canons are available on the diocesan website: [edmonton.anglican.ca](http://edmonton.anglican.ca)



Synod delegates vote using coloured cards.

Photo: Margaret Glidden

**Resolution R-1 to the 68th Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton – Reparations**

That the Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton request the Executive Council, the Property and Planning Committee, and the Administration and Finance Committee – in consultation and collaboration with local Indigenous, Metis, and Inuit partners – to develop for presentation and implementation, no later than one year from the conclusion of the 68th Synod, the following:

- a) Policies and procedures to ensure that future material benefits of the lands and infrastructure our churches occupy are equitably shared with First Nation, Metis, and Inuit partners in accordance with the spirit and intent of the treaties;
- b) Policies and procedures to support parishes and the diocese in giving away generous portions of accumulated savings accounts to fund local Indigenous-led community projects and healing initiatives;
- c) Policies and procedures to support parishes and the diocese in giving away a minimum of 10% of all future sales of diocesan properties, assets, and lands to fund local Indigenous-led community projects and healing initiatives.

**Resolution R-2 to the 68th Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton – Ecumenical Shared Ministry Circle**

That the Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton request the bishop to pursue, in consultation with other denominational leaders in Edmonton and the Central Alberta region, the creation of a regional Ecumenical Shared Ministry Coordinating Circle. The ESM Circle shall:

- a) Provide advice and recommendations for consideration by the bishop and Executive Council on areas where Anglican parishes might potentially engage in greater sharing of ministry programs, worship services, clergy, staff, buildings, or combinations thereof, with other denominational expressions of church.
- b) Be comprised of members from the Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, and Moravian churches, each appointed by their respective judicatory bodies.
- c) Actively encourage membership from other ecumenical partner churches (such as the United, Presbyterian, Christian Reformed, and Mennonite churches, etc.)

**Resolution R-3 to the 68th Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton – Affirming LGBTQ2SIA+ Persons**

That the Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton:

- a) Affirms that persons who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+ are counted, along with many other groups, as an historically marginalized group of persons;
- b) Recognizes there are vastly different biblical interpretations and theologies regarding LGBTQ2SIA+ persons within the Church, but affirms that as followers of Jesus Christ we are called to hold our differences in tension, never losing sight of the commandment to love your neighbour as yourself;
- c) Acknowledges there is much work to be done in listening and atoning for historical harms to LGBTQ2SIA+ persons at the hands of the Church;
- d) Affirms that LGBTQ2SIA+ persons are beloved children of God, equal participants in the life and work of the Church, and fully worthy of all the Sacraments;
- e) Directs the Bishop, together with the Episcopate Circle, to spend time listening to LGBTQ2SIA+ Clergy and Laity to comprehend the spiritual, mental, emotional, social, and physical space in which LGBTQ2SIA+ persons live and their requisite needs;
- f) Directs the Bishop, together with the Episcopate Circle, to respond to their time of listening by providing space for wider learning opportunities within the Diocese regarding the historical experiences of, and current needs of, persons who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+ and their families;
- g) Directs the Bishop, together with the Episcopate Circle to facilitate support to individual Clergy and Congregations as they strive to meet the unique needs of each Parish in their affirming journeys; and
- h) Directs the Bishop together with the Episcopate Circle to report to the next regular meeting of Synod on the steps taken to date on the Diocesan affirmation journey, and outline plans for diocesan policies and training.

**Resolution R-4 to the 68th Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton – Creating Safe and Affirming Communities**

- a) That the bishop request and encourage every parish to communicate through their actions, messaging, and outreach that they are an affirming and safe space for members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.
- b) That the bishop ensure every parish is able to provide welcome, support, and sacramental ministry for members in the LGBTQ2SIA+ community, including full access to celebrations of marriage within the diocese.
- c) That the Executive Council develop policies, procedures, training, and accountability infrastructure to ensure that all clergy and parishes have the resources to make our actions meet the words declared in the diocesan strategic path document *Finding Our Way*.

Following the worship service that opened the 68th Synod of the Diocese of Edmonton on Friday evening, October 21, elections were held to fill several important positions in the ongoing governance of the diocese. Diann Bowes of St. Timothy's Anglican Church in Edmonton served as Electoral Officer, ably accompanied by a team of scrutineers who counted late into Friday night to present the results for Saturday morning. The diocese thanks them all. Following are the election results:

<b>Executive Council</b>	<b>Laity</b>
<b>Battle River Deanery</b>	Cathy Armstrong
Clergy: the Ven. Rachael Parker (acclaimed)	Matthew Mercer-Deadman
Laity: Mikaela Hanley; Sheila MacKay (acclaimed)	<i>Alternates (by order of vote) -</i>
	Angeer Kur
	Sheila MacKay
	Imai Welch
	Margaret Warwick
	Oliver Trendall
	Wynne Whitten-Holmes
<b>Cold Lake Deanery</b>	<b>Youth</b>
Clergy: the Rev. Colleen Sanderson	Emily Stephen-Garneau
Laity: Cathy Armstrong; Betty Kaawha (acclaimed)	<i>Alternate</i>
	Shelby Cook
<b>Edmonton West Deanery</b>	<b>General Synod Representatives</b>
Clergy: no candidate	<b>Clergy</b>
Laity: Derek Ware; Emily Stephen-Garneau	The Rev. Danielle Key
	The Rev. Jordan Haynie Ware
<b>Whitemud Deanery</b>	<i>Alternates (by order of vote)</i>
Clergy: the Rev. Danielle Key (acclaimed)	The Rev. Ruth Sesink Bott
Laity: Tricia Laffin; Matthew Mercer-Deadman	The Rev. Colleen Sanderson
	The Rev. Aaron Parsall-Myler
<b>Yellowhead Deanery</b>	The Rev. Clare Stewart
Clergy: the Rev. Clare Stewart (acclaimed)	The Rev. Christopher Cook
Laity: Shelby Cook; Greg Heaton (acclaimed)	The Rev. Sandra Arbeau
<b>Diocesan Court</b>	<b>Laity</b>
<b>Clergy:</b>	Cathy Armstrong
The Rev. Akon Akon;	Matthew Mercer-Deadman
The Rev. Christopher Cook	<i>Alternates (by order of vote)</i>
	Sheila MacKay
<b>Laity</b>	Angeer Kur
Rob Reynolds;	Oliver Trendall
Renee Moore	Wynne Whitten-Holmes
	Imai Welch
<b>Provincial Synod Representatives</b>	<b>Youth</b>
<b>Clergy</b>	Emily Stephen-Garneau
The Rev. Akon Akon	<i>Alternate</i>
The Rev. Danielle Key	Shelby Cook
The Rev. Colleen Sanderson	
<i>Alternates (by order of vote)</i>	<b>Recorders for the 69<sup>th</sup> Synod</b>
The Rev. Clare Stewart	<b>Clergy</b>
The Rev. Ruth Sesink Bott	The Rev. Christopher Cook (acclaimed)
The Rev. Aaron Parsall-Myler	
The Rev. Christopher Cook	<b>Laity</b>
The Rev. Sandra Arbeau	Alison Hurlburt (acclaimed)



# Don't be fooled, you have everything you need in Jesus

We continue where we left off last time, with Paul articulating for us so well in his marvellous epistle to the Colossians that Christ is sufficient and supreme and is all we need. (See Colossians 1:15-18.)

Why is Paul saying all this? It's because someone has come into that church and told them they are lacking. It's the first sign of a problem that dogged the Christian church in the 2nd and 3rd centuries in which some people claimed to have a special 'secret knowledge.' It was called *gnosticism*, from the Greek word 'to know,' and those who claimed to have this knowledge tended to lord it over others, making them feel they were somehow deficient. But whoever had come to the Colossian church didn't know anything that little church needed to hear, for that



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

church already had all they needed in the sufficiency and supremacy of Jesus.

It raises an interesting question though. Do we ever feel we are somehow lacking in our Christian life; that there is an element of struggle that doesn't seem to

happen to anyone else in quite the same way; that others seem to, by all appearances, find the Christian life easier than we do? And if others seem to have gifts that we don't, that really stokes disquiet or even fear.

"Am I a proper Christian?" This may be a question that stirs in us. We doubt we are 'good enough' and then we start thinking that God can't use us. We may double-down our efforts; devoting ourselves to Bible study and prayer, waiting for

that moment when it all 'clicks' and suddenly becomes easier than it is now.

It is easy to go down this path. When we hear something that sounds plausible, which also seems to address a fear we carry, and particularly if it comes from someone we think has more or greater gifts than we do, then our ears are attentive.

We need to be self-aware with this type of thing, for too often we'll respond to something that addresses a fear of a deficiency we believe we have, which then leads us in a direction away from the promises of God and the sufficiency and supremacy of Jesus.

So what was happening in Colossae? In chapter 2 Paul reveals a little more of why he was writing:

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely,

Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. (Colossians 2:2-4)

So Paul is saying it again – and again – that Jesus is supreme and sufficient – and there is no so-called 'secret knowledge' apart from all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in him!

Paul has spent chapter 1 making clear: you already have everything you need. Everything! Nothing is lacking. Nothing! Your salvation is assured due to the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. Whatever situation you face, he who is the image of the invisible God and all those other truths about Jesus that we saw last month; he in whom all things hold together is with you. And not just *with* you... the mystery of the gospel, as Paul puts it, is that "Christ is *in* you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

We already have all we need to live a life that is worthy of the Lord as loving, missional, disciples.

You already have all you need.

With every blessing,  
Richard

## Come Again to the Manger; Let Our Vision and Dreams Be Renewed

It has often been said that what needs to happen in the Anglican Church here in Canada is for us to go out and get people to come in. To do this is evangelism. But evangelism is more than getting people into pews. Our issue in the life of the Anglican Church is not one of attendance, but of discipleship. We don't just need more people. We need an increasing number of people who are committed to being disciples of the Lord Jesus; living the way he does, so that people will want to see him more and know him better.

Many prophecies foretold how and where Jesus would come into the world. An angel from God spoke to his mother. His mother went to see family in another place for a time. When his earthly father found out he was going to be a father, he made up his mind to divorce his mother quietly. Joseph, like



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

the Joseph of old, changed his mind after a dream. The expectant couple travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register in the census decreed by the empire. When they arrived, there was no room in the inn, so they bedded down in a stable. The Lamb of God

was born in this place. Wise men brought gifts for the new King. But the current king Herod feared losing his power. He sent soldiers to Bethlehem to kill all children under the age of two. Having been warned of this in a dream, Joseph took mother and child to Egypt where they awaited news of Herod's death. In due time, and again because of another dream, the family returned to Nazareth where Jesus grew up and learned his father's trade of carpentry.

In our work this year, through the online "Imagine" workshops, we in the Athabasca diocese have been learning how to communicate the Good News so people can relate. We do "Dinner Church" to invite people to see Christ for themselves during Bible study. We are using different vocabulary, such as biography of Jesus in place of "gospel." There are many in the wider community who have yet to discover the meaning of the Good News. Presenting the Good News so people hear it will take time and effort on our part. This can be scary, even for those of us who are trained to do so. We need to remove the barriers keeping people from seeing and knowing Jesus; not just as the Babe of Bethlehem, but as the King of Kings.

So maybe this Christmas, because it has been a while, we need to come again to the manger, to see and to spend time in the presence of the Prince. Let us be renewed in terms of our vision and our dreams, that we may go out and make Christ visible to others, that they may choose to come in.

Jason+



Merry Christmas  
& Thank You!

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# Bishop shares blessed time with St. Mark's and St. Paul's

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD  
Diocese of Athabasca

**I** took great delight in joining the parish of St. Mark's, High Prairie for their WHY workshop, in which they uncovered their statement: "To follow God so that all can be part of His loving family."

How will they do this? By:

- acceptance and valuing / caring;
- freely expressing their faith;
- building relationships;
- learning / growing / strengthening each other;
- worshiping and praising God;
- sharing happiness;
- walking with Jesus.

As we follow our WHYs, we become aligned with God's WHY, and have lives of meaning and purpose. Please join with me in

praying for St. Mark's as they fulfil their WHY with God's guidance.

After the workshop we went to St. Mark's cemetery in High Prairie, where we consecrated a columbarium for the interment of ashes, in a very meaningful short ceremony.

The following day I had the pleasure of celebrating with St. Mark's, and then with St. Paul's, McLennan in the afternoon, followed by a delightful tea with the parishioners.

We truly are a blessing to each other as we follow Christ, and part of His growing family. May God's blessings be upon the people of St. Mark's and St. Paul's as they live their discipleship each day.

+ David



Pictured above: members of St. Mark's parish work together on their WHY statement; pictured below: members of St. Paul's celebrate an afternoon service with Bishop David.



## Athabasca Youth Encounter God's Spirit in Creation

WILLI WHISTON  
Diocese of Athabasca

**T**his August, we went on our first diocesan youth canoe trip, venturing out onto the lakes of the historic Churchill River system in northern Saskatchewan to share in fellowship and encounter God in creation.

Along the way, we stayed overnight at St. Timothy's Anglican Church in Edmonton and are grateful for their hospitality. We began our trip in the community of

Stanley Mission, with an opportunity to explore the historic Holy Trinity Church, before continuing down the system to look at and wonder about ancient pictographs on the shield rock.

Our trip highlight was the magnificent Nistowiak Falls where Lac La Ronge drains into the Churchill River system with an impressive display of power and beauty. We enjoyed pristine camping in quintessential Canadian shield country, ate great food, and were grateful for perfect weather with

slow winds and sunshine for the duration of the trip.

We closed out each night around the campfire with Compline. In the mornings we allowed time to journal and pray; reflecting on the "happy and crappy" of the past day and where we saw God. We recalled stories in scripture of God's breath/spirit in each of us and revealed in all of creation, such as God meeting Elijah in a whisper. When we abide in God and practice his presence, we begin to be aware of the Holy Spirit with us in each moment.

We are so grateful for the support of the Athabasca diocese for making this possible, and for the grant from the Anglican Foundation's *Say Yes! to Kids* campaign which allowed us to purchase dry bags, kitchen gear, and other odds and ends. I hope this will be the start of many canoe trips, both for youth and other families in the diocese. It was a truly transformative experience. Many, many thanks also to Jay from All Saints' for lending a hand in leadership on the trip.

## Slave Lake thrift store a financial and spiritual ministry

JANICE NOWOCHIN  
SPEC, Slave Lake

**T**o help offset the financial impact of the COVID pandemic, members of St. Peter's Ecumenical Church (SPEC) in Slave Lake decided to use the old church building, which had been deconsecrated, to help meet the needs of the Slave Lake and area community for affordable clothing and household goods. Since 1974, SPEC has been an ecumenical church affiliated with the Anglican Church of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and United Church of Canada, where people of all faiths can come together to worship.

An industrious group of volunteers held an information gathering session in May 2022, and by June had begun accepting donations two days a week to the new community thrift store. Members of the Slave Lake community have donated generously



Customers browse the St. Peter's Ecumenical Church thrift store in Slave Lake.

to the store. Since July 5, the store has been open every Tuesday, from 12 to 4 pm, and Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm. Dedicated volunteers, in addition to running the store, hold planning meetings and organisation bees, helping the thrift store flourish.

Not only is the store earning money, about \$1,000 a week, to help with operations, it is also providing the community with a sustainable way to recycle items. It is a welcoming place where folks

with limited incomes can get quality goods and it has attracted volunteers from outside the congregation who come to help.

SPEC Thrift Store supplies goods to the local women's shelter at no cost, and there are plans to give to other local charities such as Santa's Anonymous.

Volunteer Amy Wright-Rosche observed that when people are dropping off items, anyone who is there, volunteers and shoppers alike,

helps unload the vehicles. She adds that "this is where you see God in action!"

When the idea for a thrift store was first being considered, a common theme was that it needed to be a place for fellowship. Father Blessing spoke about creating relationships with people, just by listening. Volunteer Debbie Anderson shares the story of a gentleman who came in to donate his wife's things after she had passed away. Sitting in a chair by the checkout area, he told a church member about his wife. All he wanted was for someone to be kind and listen. Another time, a little girl who came in to buy a few things was afraid she didn't have enough money. One of the volunteers took her by the hand and said, "we will make it work."

Positive feedback, returning customers, and a strong volunteer base are all indicative of the importance of SPEC Thrift Store to Slave Lake and area.



# Keeping Faith: first-person stories from Edmonton diocese

KAREN SIMONS  
Diocese of Edmonton

**Introducing:** this article is the first in a series in which local author Karen Simons shares her work of gathering, editing and presenting stories of faith commissioned to mark the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Diocese of Edmonton.

## The Back-Story: Why the Stories Were Made

Long ago, in the winter of 2012, I began a series of interviews with Anglicans in the Diocese of Edmonton. The series was part of a larger project, commissioned by Bishop Jane Alexander, in which I would creatively present “stories of faith,” explore the beginnings of the diocese, and generally celebrate the strength and commitment of Anglicans in this region in honour of the diocesan centennial.

But being new to Anglicanism and fairly new to Edmonton, I soon encountered several difficulties no one had anticipated and that turned a two or three-year project into a long and arduous process—difficulties like these: the contradiction inherent in celebrating our pioneer days while at the same time lamenting the wrongs done to Indigenous peoples during the settling of the West; the repeated bereavement in my own life (in the first few years of working on the project, two close friends, my sister, and my mother died, and my brother broke his back); the pandemic that closed the doors of research libraries to me; and Bishop Jane’s resignation just as I finished a complete draft.

The pages I wrote sat quietly in two binders on a shelf in the bishop’s office until Bishop Steve moved in, discovered them, read the binder full of interview-narratives over the course of his first year as bishop, and found them encouraging. Together, we recently decided to make them available to other curious readers in the diocese by releasing them electronically, one at a time, once a month, by means of a link in the Synod Scene. These first-person narratives were always meant to be the core of the project and have been complete for some time, so there is no reason not to present them now.

The stories are told by people who come from diverse places and have lived importantly different lives, but they are all stories of keeping faith—with family, childhood, heritage, church, God, calling, and insights gained through time and experience. The names



Author Karen Simons attends and is a member of the choir at All Saints’ Anglican Cathedral in Edmonton  
Photo: Margaret Glidden

of some of the tellers are known to many in the diocese: for instance, Eileen Conway, Jeremy Spurgeon, and the legendary Tom Leadbeater. Others may be known only to their own parishes, like Winnie Rowswell, Doug Gibb, and Ragnhild Whiting. These people all tell stories of formation, of who they are, how they got here, and what they are (or were) doing here. Their stories are not about the Diocese of Edmonton, but the diocese forms a circle around them.

## The Method: How the Stories Were Made

Although the interview participants speak for themselves, the reader should be aware that they were all responding to questions asked by me. Because I wanted to remain free to pursue interesting lines of thought as they emerged in each conversation, I carried only general questions in my mind and tended to ask them differently every time. They were designed (loosely!) to explore early life, upbringing in a faith/church (or not), challenges faced in life and faith, ministry (whether lay or clergy), and thoughts about the church (past, present, and future). Each interview was 90-120 minutes long and digitally recorded. Some of the sessions were private conversations between the participant and me; others were very informal conversations among three or four people.

After struggling for some time with the question of what to do with the interviews, I decided to edit them into free-standing narratives, mini autobiographies. To begin, I transcribed the interviews, not preserving every ah and um, or details that I knew I would not use, but preserving most. Then, working

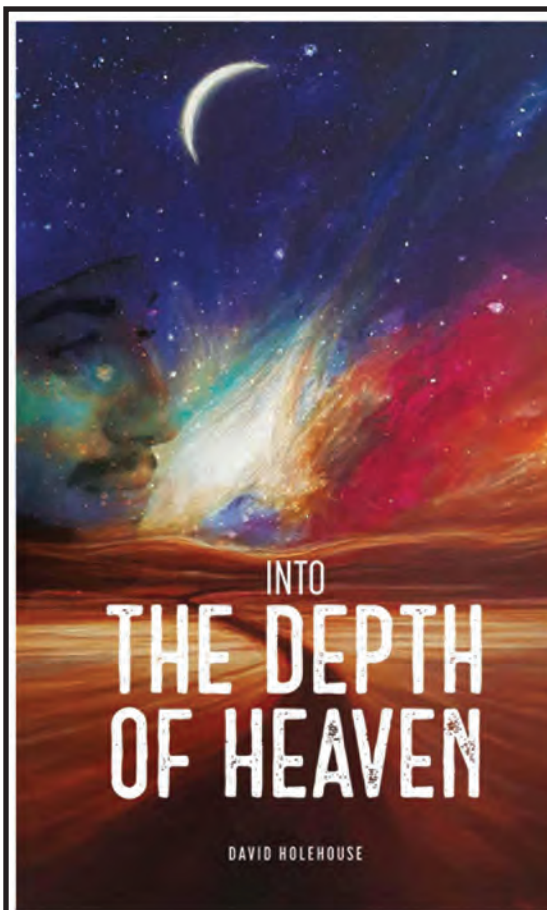
from these transcriptions, I kneaded the interview-conversations into readable, coherent narratives: I edited myself (and others) out, selected and moved chunks of text around, decided on punctuation, and eliminated frequent marks of spoken discourse while keeping enough of them to preserve the speaker’s characteristic voice on the printed page. This editing was done in the best faith, with a firm commitment to preserving each speaker’s intentions. Except for very occasional—and very small—insertions of transitional words to fill the gaps left by my deleted questions and comments, all the words, thoughts, and anecdotes in the narratives are the speakers’ own. The titles and epigraphs, however, are my inventions.

The stories are necessarily limited in scope. No one can say everything in 90 minutes, especially when being interviewed by a

stranger. So, for example, Margaret Stordalsvoll did not talk about her marriage or children because our conversation focused on her early life as a deaconess. Winnie Rowswell did not talk about her life-long love of horses because I did not know enough to ask. The speakers told their stories to a particular person (me) at a particular moment in their lives. Had the interviews occurred at another time or been conducted by another person, the results might have been quite different.

The centennial has long since come and gone, and, to my regret, some of the people I interviewed have passed away and will never read the stories they so generously shared with me. I remain grateful to them and to all my storytellers for their time and honesty. I have laboured to be accurate and true in representing them, and I deeply apologize for any errors committed in transcribing and editing. I also remain grateful to Bishop Jane for the opportunity she gave me so long ago, to Bishop Steve for initiating the “release” of these stories, and to Margaret Glidden for the work she will do in the coming months to get these stories out to readers. Finally, I must express fervent gratitude to my husband Joe Simons and my old friend Fred Meissner, far away in Ontario, for reading all the stories and offering insight and encouragement.

**First up: Jeremy Spurgeon’s “Time, Space, and Music.”** Watch for it in the *Synod Scene* in the third week of December!



## THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

This historical novel follows a teenager as he joins three eccentric “wise” men on the trip of a lifetime.

Like any of life’s journeys, it involves learning, love, sadness, and a destination beyond all expectation.

The book, published by Edmonton author David Holehouse, is available from [depthofheaven.com](http://depthofheaven.com) as an E-Pub, or as a paperback from [dwholehouse@gmail.com](mailto:dwholehouse@gmail.com).