



## Anglicans March with Pride—and Purpose

THE REV. MARK VIGRASS  
St. George's Edmonton

**I**n a vibrant show of love and solidarity, over twenty Anglicans marched in the 2025 Edmonton Pride Parade on Saturday, August 23. Organized by *Queerly Beloved*, a working group under the diocesan Social Justice Committee, the contingent marked the first official Anglican presence at the parade since its inception in 1991. Marching under banners reading "Proud Anglicans," "Queerly Beloved," and "Anglican Diocese of Edmonton," their participation reflected a clear commitment to affirming that 2SLGBTQ+ people are truly beloved of God.

Decked out in rainbow colours and carrying placards and flags, the Anglican contingent brought both celebration and protest to the streets. "It was affirming and energizing to be greeted by thousands of people waving flags and shouting encouragement," the Reverend Mark Vigrass, deacon at St. George's, Edmonton, shared. "To walk with and among people who accepted and affirmed me as a beloved queer child of God—and extended that affirmation to others—was deeply moving."

The Reverend Jordan Giggey, rector at St. Timothy's, Edmonton,

described the experience as "living out a part of my calling to the priesthood," and a tangible step toward reconciliation with the 2SLGBTQ+ community. "Seeing so many denominations gathered to remind us in the queer community that we too are beloved of God was a powerful testament to the Gospel at work in our city and our diocese," he noted. Though the walk lasted only 30 minutes, Rev. Giggey believes its emotional impact "will last for years to come."

Carly Murphy, a member of Lodgepole Communitas, Edmonton, reflected on the deeper meaning of their participation. "There have been mornings when I've longed for the quiet comfort of staying under the covers," they admitted, "but something inside me called me to rise, to march, to stand tall and be there for my community." For Carly, the parade is a sacred act of solidarity—"a triumph of radical love and authenticity." Yet they also acknowledged the bittersweet nature of Pride: "I carry a whisper of guilt... because the concept of pride is necessary in a world so steeped in inequality and injustice."

Rob Betty, a parishioner at St.



Members of the Diocese of Edmonton at the 2025 Pride Parade.

John the Evangelist, Edmonton, and first-time Pride participant, described the event as "a wonderful celebration" and "a powerful moment of unity." Initially unsure of what to expect, Betty was struck by the warmth of the crowd and the recognition shown to the Anglican contingent. "We were respected for showing our support of and solidarity with the queer community," he commented. His preference now is to refer to the

wider "queer family" since "there was definitely a sense of unity that rose to the level of family."

The Anglican presence at Edmonton's Pride Parade was more than symbolic—it was a heartfelt declaration of inclusion, reconciliation, and radical love. For many, it marked a turning point in how their beloved Anglican community shows up for their queer siblings, not just in words, but in joyful, public witness.



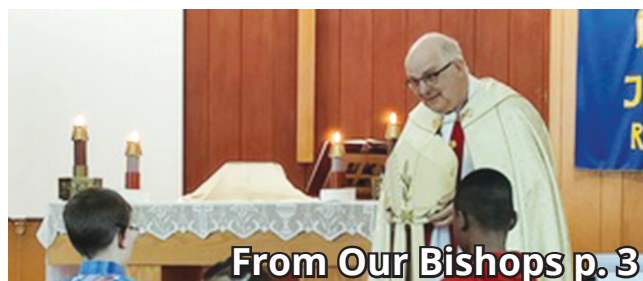
Above: the Diocese of Edmonton joined representatives of United and Lutheran Churches, and many diverse community groups at the Pride Parade.

Left: Bishop Stephen London, Archdeacon Jordan Ware, Deacon Mark Vigrass

photos: *Queerly Beloved*



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# Holy Trinity Welcomes Crowds to the Edmonton Fringe

STEPHANIE LONDON  
Edmonton editor

Holy Trinity, Edmonton, once again opened its doors to the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival from August 14-24, 2025. The parish provided a venue and volunteers for local theatre productions. Patrons also enjoyed good food and friendly gathering spaces, including a concession and tea room.

Noella Bradbury, who manages the tea room, volunteers because she "experiences great satisfaction in welcoming guests, chatting with them about the church, being inclusive to all, and making their experience special." She enjoys seeing actors and community members return year after year.

Lydia Neufeld, who volunteers as a retirement project, sees the Fringe as "a good

way to give back to my church community which gives me so very much! It ends up being a lot of fun as well. I worked with a terrific group of people. There was much laughter, good chats, and I made some new friends." Festival goers and performers are "just so darn nice!"

Serving the Fringe benefits more than just its volunteers. Neufeld writes, "I think this outreach is important because it brings people into church in an indirect way. It is not threatening to them in any way. I think it may be particularly helpful for people who have had a negative experience with church, to come here for something that is fun and inclusive. It makes our church more approachable. Plus they get to meet some of us and our clergy and see that we are open and friendly. Perhaps some of them may even find they want to attend other events at the church and maybe even drop in on a book club or Sunday service."



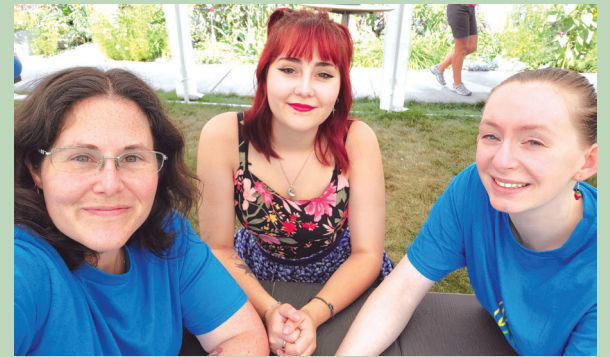
Reflecting on sixteen years as Holy Trinity Fringe volunteers, Cathy and David Harvey participate as a tangible way to live out their Christian faith. "It is fostering and furthering our mission, 'Making Christ visible through the arts'. The buzz around Holy Trinity throughout the Fringe feels like a little village...

Being hosts gives us permission to share our faith not so much in words, but through our actions."

Bradbury agrees. The Fringe

## THE FRINGE AT HOLY TRINITY BY THE NUMBERS

- 6 front of house and site supervisor volunteers
- 120 performances
- 47 actors
- 5000 show tickets sold
- 18 food service volunteers
- 400 patrons served at tea room
- 1200 beverages served at concession
- 137 hours of fun over 11 days!



The Rev. Danielle Key with youth volunteers

ministry "promotes conversation about our faith and our inclusiveness. Our amazing and very hard working clergy have managed to encourage many new members who have expressed gratitude that they feel so welcome and blessed at Holy Trinity."

more photos on page 4

# Gospel Ministry in the Diocese of Buyé

STEPHANIE LONDON  
Edmonton editor  
with files from CANON DOMINIQUE CIZA  
Diocese of Buyé

For the past seven years, the Diocese of Edmonton has collected funds to bring the gift of medical care to vulnerable seniors in our partner Diocese of Buyé, Burundi, through our yearly Fall Coffee Hour fundraiser.

Each \$5 donation buys a medical card, which entitles the recipient and all children under their care to 80% off the cost of medical expenses for an entire year. For many people experiencing extreme poverty, a medical card means the difference between health and significant disability or death.

Canon Dominique of the Diocese of Buyé writes:

*Summer greetings from the Diocese of Buyé. Please find pictures of the distribution of Medical Cards to 150 vulnerable people that took place at Gashikanwa parish today. The recipients were so excited and thankful for the gift. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this project.*



Clotilde Muhimpundu and Canon Bibiane Nsengiyumva deliver medical cards on behalf of the Mothers' Union and the Diocese of Buyé. The Diocese of Edmonton contributes to the cost of these cards through its \$5 Coffee Hour Fundraiser every September.



# The Truth Will Set You Free

I recognize that this is still October, but I have already been thinking a lot about Lent because I will have the opportunity to lead a Lenten retreat at the Providence Center in a few months. If you are interested in attending, look for more information in the new year.

I have been planning my theme and talks, and I think that it will spark really good conversations. Regardless of whether someone comes to the retreat or not, the theme is timeless. It comes from this quotation from Jesus: "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). What does it mean to be set free? What does it mean to live well and deeply? I believe these are questions that everyone wants to answer. The challenge is that, while the answers are complex, the Christian tradition has too often made them simplistic.

Quite a few years ago, I was helping lead a renewal weekend at a parish in Connecticut. During the sharing time, one participant told their story. I won't include personal details



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON  
Diocese of Edmonton

here, but in a general way, it matched so many stories I have heard over the years. They said, "I believed that if I led a life of faith with church attendance, bible study, and service, that faithfulness would be rewarded with the victorious life." However, this soon turned into a story of frustration. Even though this person had done all the correct things according to their church, they were really struggling in several areas of their life. My heart went out to them because they felt that their struggles proved God must have been angry with them. The spiritual life is just more complicated than that simple equation. I have pondered this story as I have helped many people over the years wrestle with the same question. How does our faith form our lives?

I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ wants to set people free. The Gospel is all about the transformation of the human heart so that we can express the gifts of the Holy Spirit more and more naturally: love, joy, peace, patience,

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no doubt that to encounter Jesus Christ is healing. However, this healing is not often simple or straightforward. When we encounter Jesus, everyone brings a whole history, particular rhythms of life, past choices we have made, our personalities, our particular gifts, our own unique struggles, and so on.

What does it mean to be set free and grow in maturity as a Christian and as a human being? Each of us will spend our whole lives answering this question. The gift of the Christian tradition is that it reminds us we don't have to wrestle alone. If the retreat I am offering is not an option for you, you can explore these questions with your priest, a spiritual director, or a trusted friend. As you do, know that God's love for you is unconditional. If you are struggling, it says absolutely nothing about whether or not you are 'good enough' to receive God's love for you. We bring our whole selves to God and are set free over time. That is the *secret*.

Blessings!  
+Stephen

# Learning to Rejoice

*"Always rejoice, constantly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)*

There always seems to be so much to do. There always seems to be so much to teach! Truly, our faith is a never-ending well of wisdom and understanding, the full depths of which no one can embrace.

The Ministry Committee of the diocese has been talking "Catechisms." A more modern word might be "Instruction." The committee is acknowledging the importance of us truly understanding our faith, more and more. As I shared in the June column, we recognize, just as the early church did, that being a Christian isn't automatic. Someone must tell you about Christianity, and someone must teach you what it means.

For some, it is a change in lifestyle. For some, a change in attitude. For all, a change in understanding.

At Bishop's Lodge, I am blessed to have a library, filled floor to the ceiling with books.



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD  
Diocese of Athabasca

About a third of our books are various interests – fantasy, childhood fiction, a variety of non-fiction; a third are math books from Benita's time as a teacher. The final third are theology books, which I refer to from time to time. There is much to learn, and as John wrote about Jesus, "I suppose the whole world would not have room for the books that could be written." (John 21:25).

But in Thessalonians, Paul distills it down to three things: always: rejoice, pray, give thanks. I once heard a person trying to explain this, and he could have been understood as saying, "If you have a broken leg, rejoice for that! If you have a rough time, rejoice for that!" However, I do not think that was what Paul meant. I don't expect us to rejoice when things are rough – instead, when things are rough, turn to God regarding them.

It is very important to always ask the question, "Why?" I know my kids drove me crazy with that question when they were little,

but it is probably the wisest question there is. So, why did Paul tell us to rejoice, pray, and give thanks?

We are to rejoice because, regardless of what this present life (or our own fallibility) gives us, in Christ we can look forward to an eternal life of joy in relationship with God our Father.

We are to pray because, regardless of what we see or how we feel, through Christ we have direct access to the heart and mind of God our Father.

And we are to give thanks, because Christ gave His life for ours, saving us from eternal death, granting us access to the Father and the joy of eternal life.

Eternal life. One with God. Salvation. That is what my library points to, what the bible points to, what all the teachings of all the catechisms lead to. It is what we are blessed with, in Christ. With that understanding, let us always rejoice, constantly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Let us not extinguish the Spirit but walk in His way by always pursuing what is good for one another and for all, including teaching our faith, and the love of God in that.

Amen.  
+David

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 are due one month prior to the issue for which they are intended, for example: October 1 for November 2025.

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# 150 Years of Anglican Ministry in Fort Saskatchewan

The Parish of St. George in Fort Saskatchewan has come a long way since its first priest arrived on horseback in 1875. Canon William Newton would be pleased to know that Anglican ministry continues to serve the community 150 years later. At the end of August, parishioners, friends, and community members gathered from as far away as British Columbia to celebrate this significant anniversary.

Bishop Stephen London, who spoke at the celebratory dinner, noted that the story of St. George's is really the story of the whole Diocese of Edmonton. In 1870, Bishop John McLean of Saskatchewan put out a call for missionaries to go and preach the Gospel at Fort Edmonton. Only one person answered: the Rev. William Newton, a wild-eyed, stubborn, and very determined man with a quick temper and independent nature. Newton left his wife and nine sons in Ontario to make the five-month journey west. When Newton arrived, he found that the Catholics and Methodists were already there, so he set up his log cabin outside and began to offer services in English and Cree. The church he helped found in Edmonton would later become All Saints' Cathedral. Soon, he added another ministry, this time at the Northwest Mounted Police outpost at Fort Saskatchewan. There, he led a ministry to young officers living far from home. For many years, he traveled between the parishes on horseback every Sunday afternoon. The twelve mile trip took three hours.

This exhausting schedule was difficult to maintain for long. In 1895, leadership of the ministry transferred to the Rev. G. C. d'Easum, who built his own log rectory and supported himself by farming part-time. Under his leadership, the parish of St. George's was formally established.

Through the following decades, St. George's served families who moved into the area to work in the booming petrochemical industry. As Mayor Gale Katchur recounted, their Christian presence helped ground the community of Fort Saskatchewan in a spirit of care and concern for one another.

"Why do we tell these stories?" asked Bishop London. "They help to remind us that we are the inheritors of those who gave everything for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They knew the power of Jesus to transform lives, and they worked hard to live out that truth in a challenging place and time... the work, the struggles, and the joys that they had has now been handed to you and me."

"Who are you, St. George's?" he continued, "You are a royal priesthood, a holy nation... tasked to proclaim and demonstrate the goodness, love, and mercy of God. You have received something beautiful and precious, and now you carry it forward."



Above: The celebration included a Eucharist on St. George's front lawn  
Below: Bishop Stephen London, Mayor Gale Katchur, the Rev. Regula Brandle  
Photos: Kathy Prout

## Reflections on Community Ministry

THE REV. REGULA BRANDLE  
Rector, St. George, Fort Saskatchewan

The first event was a celebration dinner in the parish hall for which we had sent e-mail invitations to current and past parishioners, past clergy of St. George's and to other churches in Fort Saskatchewan. In the end we had about 91 people gathered, former and current parishioners and clergy of St. George's, friends from other local churches, some community friends and the guests of honor, the mayor of Fort Saskatchewan and the bishop of the diocese of Edmonton.

Of course, you would expect that people were to have a lovely time around a catered dinner meal, but I very much sensed a lightness, joy, positive atmosphere and godly conversations that I trust was God's presence among us.

Maybe it was because there had been prayers for the event, prayers over the location and prayers over every dinner table prior to the event. Only God knows, but to God be the Glory for a deeply moving and beautiful evening that was much more than just a lovely gathering!

The second event was the outdoor worship service, and the free BBQ and kids' activities for the community on Sunday. About 70



people were present for the Thanksgiving worship service, and about double as many for the BBQ and kids' activities, though mainly people associated with St. George's or from our neighbouring Bridge church. Very few people from the wider community came to this outdoor event despite thorough and multi-faceted advertising in Fort Saskatchewan. I believe it was quite a reminder of how difficult it is to attract people from the wider community in Fort Saskatchewan to such a church event. It seems that the threshold to attend church events has become ever increasingly higher. However, there was quite a bit of foot and car traffic passing by the church grounds, which I trust was a reminder for the passing people that St. George's is an active church, not just a church building that is part of the history of Fort Saskatchewan.

## Parish News: ACW Supports Students in Wetaskiwin

JOYCE SEWELL  
Immanuel, Wetaskiwin

Centennial School representatives are shown here receiving a donation of school supplies and a cheque for \$250.00 towards their school food program from members of the Anglican Church Women of Immanuel Wetaskiwin.

This donation to Centennial's food program was the second one of the year, with the school supplies being donated by the group members.

Photo (L-R): Mary Lynn Kary, Principal of Centennial School; Janet Hutsulak, ACW member; Brittany Fisher, Mental Health Practitioner at Centennial School; Joyce Sewell, ACW member

