



A River of Grace: Growing Compassionate Parishes

THE REV. STEPHANIE LONDON
Edmonton Editor

Clergy and lay leaders from across the Diocese of Edmonton gathered at the Cathedral on September 25 to learn what they can do to help their congregations become compassionate carers and community-builders.

By 2030, one in four Canadians will be over the age of 65. The need for end-of-life care in Alberta is expected to rise significantly as the population ages. This demographic reality presents an important opportunity for the church to embody God's call to love one another and to care for the vulnerable.

We often think of end-of-life care as a medical area with doctors as the primary caregivers. In reality, medical care represents the smallest part of the individual's day. Outside of appointments and treatments, most interactions involve a network of care, which includes family members, close friends, and wider circles of support. Churches have an important role to play in that network of care.

At the learning day, participants heard from other organisations, like the Alzheimer Society of Alberta, who are eager to help churches grow in their capacity in this area.

Dr. Mary-Ann Shantz and Lutheran Deacon the Rev. Sarah Rudd led the morning sessions, which explored palliative care and Alzheimer's care. These sessions sparked ideas and spurred conversations that will continue to bear fruit.

The afternoon featured a panel discussion with the Rev. Madeleine Urion and Dr. Rob Curtis.

Rev. Urion serves as Rector of St. George's by the U of A in Edmonton. She is also completing training as a Death Doula, a specialized end-of-life care ministry. She spoke about how growing in our capacity as a caring community is a natural outgrowth of ministries



Edmonton Dean Alexandra Meek listens to the Rev. Madeleine Urion speak on compassionate end-of-life care

and practices already in place in local churches.

Members of St. George's have discerned a genuine vocation to visit people whom health issues have separated from the community. When these volunteers began visiting people who are homebound and in hospital, they found that their visits became "an extension of the Sacrament, of what we do with the bread and wine. It's beautiful... It flows right from the table of Christ, from Jesus' people as a river of Grace in our lives. We may not recognize it as such right away, but it's there."

Dr. Curtis, whose wife Connie died in 2021 when their son was five years old, offered a thoughtful reflection on his family's experience of serious illness and death. He acknowledged the work of caring for loved ones facing death can be heavy, and that "this is a job that's too big not to share around."

About this issue of *The Messenger*

Every year, we celebrate All Saints on November 1. This feast day honours all those who have lived in faithful witness to Jesus Christ, and whose example inspires us to do the same.

This issue of *The Messenger* highlights some of the many ways we are formed as disciples of Jesus, and how that relationship empowers each of us to live and minister according to the ways of the Kingdom of God.

Saints are Christians who in various ways, often against great odds, showed an extraordinary love for Christ. The Holy Spirit acted in their lives so that they chose to bring aid to the needy, justice to the oppressed, hope to the sorrowful, and the divine word of forgiveness to sinners. For the sake of Christ they were servants to the people of their day; and the service they rendered in the past makes them examples to the rest of the people of God throughout history. ...that is the ministry of the saints in heaven as on earth: to help others become partners in the salvation of God.

—For All the Saints (2007), p. 328

His family experienced care from communities within and outside the church during Connie's illness. While that sometimes included grand gestures, what Curtis found most impactful were "the very quiet presence things, those check-ins on the group chat with my friends, where they would just say, any news? What's going on? I knew that I didn't have to answer if I wasn't feeling up to it. But I also knew they were there and knowing that they were thinking about it and wanted to ask the question was huge." He recalled the best text message he received from a friend, who wrote, simply, "We love you. This sucks. With a heart emoji." There was no call me if you need anything, or give me an update, no action needed on my part, it was just an expression of love and the closest thing to a hug over text. Those sorts of simple things are huge.

Advice for churches who want to expand their ministries of care

from Madeleine Urion
and Rob Curtis

- Think of compassionate care as sharing the ministry of Jesus, who "chose to bear our griefs and sorrows" (Eucharistic Prayer 2).
- Look for people in the parish with passion, capacity, and disposition for this ministry.
- Equip people in basic skills of listening and self-awareness.
- Emphasize the importance of setting aside our own agenda and recognizing our own potential inner projections.
- Learn how to avoid laying our own concerns on people who are suffering. Grow in the ability to be truly present in the fullness of who we are.
- Be cautious in offering supports so that it doesn't put too much of an onus on the person you're trying to support.
- Explore ways to further a network of care around people in challenging circumstances, especially if they don't have family close by.



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Period Pantry in Grimshaw

THE REV. DEACON DANIELLE MCKENZIE
Grimshaw-Berwyn Parish

It has been almost one year since the Period Pantry went up in our community! What a blessing it has been—granting access to period products to anyone in need. Thank you to all who have supported this initiative and all who continue to donate products for others. No one should have to choose between hygiene and food, or hygiene and paying bills, whatever the case may be. Feminine hygiene products NEED to be available free to everyone and anyone who needs them. Is there a period pantry in your community?



Compassionate Parishes, Continued

One of the most important contributions the church can make, Curtis said, is to de-stigmatize talking about death and grief. "Sometimes we feel awkward talking about it. Sometimes we're worried about what if the other person starts crying. What if I start crying? But we miss out on a lot by not talking about death. When you de-stigmatize these things, suddenly you're reaching out and it's so much more."

The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and the Northwest Territories is deepening its commitment to walk alongside people living with dementia and their care partners through a palliative approach and grief support initiative. Grounded in the understanding that grief is best carried in community, these resources offer practical tools, peer support circles, and gentle mindfulness practices that can enrich the care and accompaniment our congregations already provide. Sarah Rudd, a Lutheran Diaconal Minister, is available for worship service support, dementia compassionate community presentations, or to share more about a peer support grief program. Please reach out to Sarah Rudd at srudd@alzheimer.ab.ca if you'd like to connect or explore how these resources can bless your congregation's ministry.



End-of-Life Care in Canada

- The average number of deaths in Canada is expected to increase from 270,000 in 2021 to 425,000 in 2036
- Only 16-30% of Canadians currently have access to Palliative and End-of-Life Care
- In 2016, 14% of Canada's First Nations population lived in Alberta. Indigenous communities face barriers in accessing quality, culturally-appropriate health care and end-of-life care.

—Advancing palliative and end-of-life care in Alberta
Alberta Health/Government of Alberta (2021)

Above: the Rev. Sarah Rudd presents at the learning day
Left: Dr. Rob Curtis
Far left: Dr. Mary-Ann Shantz

Photos: Stephanie London

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Complete Our Communications Survey!

The Synod Office of the Diocese of Edmonton is eager to hear how you interact with our communications channels. Please scan the QR code or use this link to complete our 5-minute Communications Survey. synodoffice.breezechms.com/form/475aee

If you would rather complete the survey by phone, please call the Synod Office at 780-439-7344. Do you receive The Messenger, read the Synod Scene, or follow our socials from outside the Diocese of Edmonton? We need your input too.



Behold What You Are; Become What You Receive

When I first came back to the church in the early 1990s, one of my favourite feast days was All Saints. This celebration embodied much of what drew me back to relationship with Jesus Christ. In the church where I relearned what it means to be a Christian, All Saints was a three-day celebration. On Oct 31, we would celebrate the Eve of All Saints at evensong, then on November 1, we would celebrate All Saints. On November 2, we would celebrate All Souls.

On All Saints we honoured the stories of all of the famous saints in recorded history. On All Souls, we honoured the stories of all the saints who don't have books written about them but whom we love. For me, this was the opportunity to remember the love and care of my grandfather.

On All Souls, I loved celebrating the variety of ways people follow Jesus. Some of the saints were monks and nuns, some were married, some were politicians, some were doctors, some were farmers, storekeepers, preachers, pray-ers, mystics, activists, rich, poor, introverts,



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON
Diocese of Edmonton

extraverts... all of it. Unity in diversity; diversity in unity.

That was a message I needed to hear. Growing up in a more rigorous tradition, I struggled with the teaching that there was one rigid way to follow Jesus. But here in the Anglican church, I discovered that there is no one single way to be a disciple. I love the stories of how saints across the ages have expressed their love of God and neighbour in so many beautiful ways.

My invitation to each of us is to ponder our own calling

to follow Jesus. Each of us is called to turn to God to receive the blessing that Jesus brings, and in turn to bring God's blessing to the world and those around us. Ministry is a not a matter of being clergy or lay. It is solely a matter of being a disciple of Jesus.

Last year, I visited a creative expression of Christian liturgy called St. Benedict's Table in Winnipeg. I loved the moment when the priest holds up the bread and invites the congregation using the words of St. Augustine: "Behold

what you are; become what you receive." This call is to embrace the transformative power of communion and relationship with Jesus Christ.

The secret to the church growing and flourishing is everyone taking their discipleship seriously in their own unique way. Explore God's particular call on your life. My friends, you are a disciple. Embrace who you are. Become more and more what God has called you to be.

Blessings!
+Stephen



Photo: Nick Castelli on Unsplash.com

Practicing Remembrance

November is an interesting month. We start with All Saints' Day (immediately after Halloween), in which we commemorate all the Saints of Christ who have gone before us. All Saints' Day is followed by All Souls' Day, when we commemorate all who have died—all Images of God—from our parish, the wider community, and beyond. On Nov 9, you may observe Remembrance Sunday, especially if you do not have a service on Remembrance Day.

The month begins with much remembering, much commemorating, much giving thanks for those who have gone before us. We begin with members of our faith in Christ and reach out in stages until we are remembering all who have died in war, regardless of their faith, sacrificing their lives on behalf of their country. It is joyful remembering, and it is sombre remembering.

The Reign of Christ Sunday (used to be Christ the King) takes place a couple of weeks later, on November 23. Then, we remember the sovereign rule of Jesus over all creation, a



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

reality that is both present and future.

In Matthew, Jesus says, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* –Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

In other words, I think Jesus is saying, "I now have

all authority. Using that authority, I want you to teach. Teach how to love the Father and love each other. Teach how to heal. Teach how to be brave, to trust Me, to love in my name. Teach with the aim that you are making fellow disciples. Encourage people to pattern their lives after mine, as you have tried to do these past three years. Baptize them. Formally accept their transformation from living lives focused on the ways of the world, to living lives focused on eternal life and the will of my Father. Baptize

them into the Holy Spirit, into My Way. Baptize them through Me, into the Father. Through the Holy Spirit, unite them with Me. Through Me, unite them with the Father. Let all be one.

"My kingdom will spread like yeast spreads in the dough, like a virus spreads through the body. Cell by cell, person by person. Love them.

"Remember that I am with you always, to the end of the age. And I have all authority."

Let us remember and act out all that November asks of us.

And do not forget that November ends with Advent 1, when we get to start all over again.

Be blessed in Christ,
+David

**Remember,
I am with you always,
to the end of the age.**

- Jesus (Matthew 28:20)

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: November 1 for December 2025.

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Revive

Equipping Lay Leaders to be Spiritual Leaders

THE REV. ANDREAS SIGRIST
Rector, St. Matthias
Diocese of Edmonton Revive Coordinator

I first heard about Revive when Dawn Davis came to the diocese to introduce the resource. I was intrigued by the invitation and promise that there can be more to church than what many of us have been experiencing: not just doing some Church jobs, not just attending a service on Sunday morning, not just giving some money and then going back home, but the promise to know God and to be known by name, to grow into the person we are called to be. Revive is a resource that allows people to experience this beautiful invitation.

Revive is a resource that can actually facilitate or make those kind of experiences happen that help people get to know God better. Participants get to know themselves better and grow into the people they're called to be. They become free to love and free to be engaged in Love's ongoing labor of making all things well. Revive prepares people to pray with Jesus in the Garden, "your will be done, not mine" because Revive provides space to experience what Jesus knew perfectly, that he and we are God's beloved. People who know how deeply they are loved by God are able to explore and ask what it means for us to say "your will be done, not mine", which is an essential disposition for us during this time of imagining what it means to be the church today.

We live in complicated times as a church and we're trying all kinds of new things. If people engage with Revive as a resource and experience what it has to offer, I believe we get to the root of the problem. Revive can help us develop the root system we need to journey through the wilderness ahead of us. Revive provides space to grow deep roots into the vastness of God's love



Canon Dawn Davis introduces Revive to the Diocese of Edmonton, 2023
Photo: Margaret Glidden

Revive provides space to connect with purpose, creating freedom and space to explore new ways forward. It increases capacity to discern next steps, to respond to God's invitation to be Christ's body here on earth, and to explore what that looks like practically. Revive makes space for people to experience prayer and their relationship or connection with God in new and old ways. It's kind of like a buffet: you try all kinds of things, then when you go back for seconds, you only chose what works.

Revive is an incredibly adaptive resource. It can be used in all kinds of contexts and

ways. It has been used by churches who don't have clergy to facilitate transformative Sunday morning services. It can facilitate ongoing growth. One of the groups that went through Revive together now continues to meet once a month because they appreciate the depth, conversations, vulnerability and safety to share. Many who participated want to lead Revive for others. Those who have experienced it keep saying, "If others only knew what it is like, they would love it too."

Revive is available for free and is very easy to use. I am committed to supporting people who want to run it in any way I can!

Revive in Edmonton



The Rev. Canon Dr. Dawn Davis, then Faith Formation Coordinator for the Diocese of Niagara, created Revive through Forward Movement's RenewalWorks Program. Canon Davis visited the Diocese of Edmonton in 2023, when she led a clergy day on the theme "Discipleship—A Calling for All". Later that year, a small group of clergy began praying, reviewing the material, and preparing for our first Revive cohort.

Revive launched in January, 2024, with an in-person cohort facilitated by the Rev.

Andreas Sigrist and Canon Scott Sharman at St. Matthias. The Revs. Madeleine Urion and Stephanie London facilitated a parallel online cohort. The Cathedral and St. Luke's began offering Revive later that year. The Diocese began a second series in January, 2025, at St. Matthias.

The Diocese of Edmonton has purchased a subscription to the Revive program for use in its parishes. If you are interested in starting a group, please contact RJ Chambers at the Synod Office, churched@edmonton.anglican.



Goals of Revive

Participants will develop a deeper relationship with God and others while getting to know more about themselves as spiritual leaders. They will:

- develop a prayer life that suits their personal spiritual temperament
- gain confidence in speaking about God in their lives
- experience scripture as a spiritual resource
- gain experience praying in public and leading bible study
- create a Rule of Life that expresses their personal spiritual practices
- discern their call for justice, forgiveness and peace as servants of Christ's kingdom

—from revive.forwardmovement.org/about

Why participate in Revive?

- Experience with others the joy of connecting with God.
- Learn tools to cultivate your spiritual life and know yourself as God's beloved.
- Respond to the invitation to be on a journey of healing and transformation.
- Grow your capacity to engage love's ongoing labour of making all things well.

Sign up

The next Revive cohort begins in early 2026 at St. Matthias, 6210 188 St NW, Edmonton, AB T5T 5T4

Module 1 starts in January and will finish just before Lent. It is only 6 weeks long. Come and try it out!

Watch for information on other Revive programs at St. Peter's and St. John the Evangelist, Edmonton.

Participant Feedback

What were some highlights of the Revive program?

The community that we built as a group and how we have opened up over time, both personally and spiritually. —Emily Stephen-Garneau

I learned some different ways of praying (Visio Divina) and of reading Scripture (Lectio Divina, the Ignatian Imaginative Method). —Dawn Ritz

Learning how to pray properly, and finding a great group of fellow Christians. —Andrew Peters

What surprised or challenged you?

Sometimes because of my busy schedule, I may not have wanted to go that evening, but when leaving those evenings, I was happy that I learned something new, built stronger connections with others in the group, and more clarity of what God's plan is for me. —Emily

I was surprised by the formation and then the strength and depth of the community that grew out of our meeting. It was great to meet with people who had in common a desire to learn and to follow God's direction. It was a place of openness and honesty about our lives with God. —Dawn

How did Revive help you grow as a disciple of Jesus?

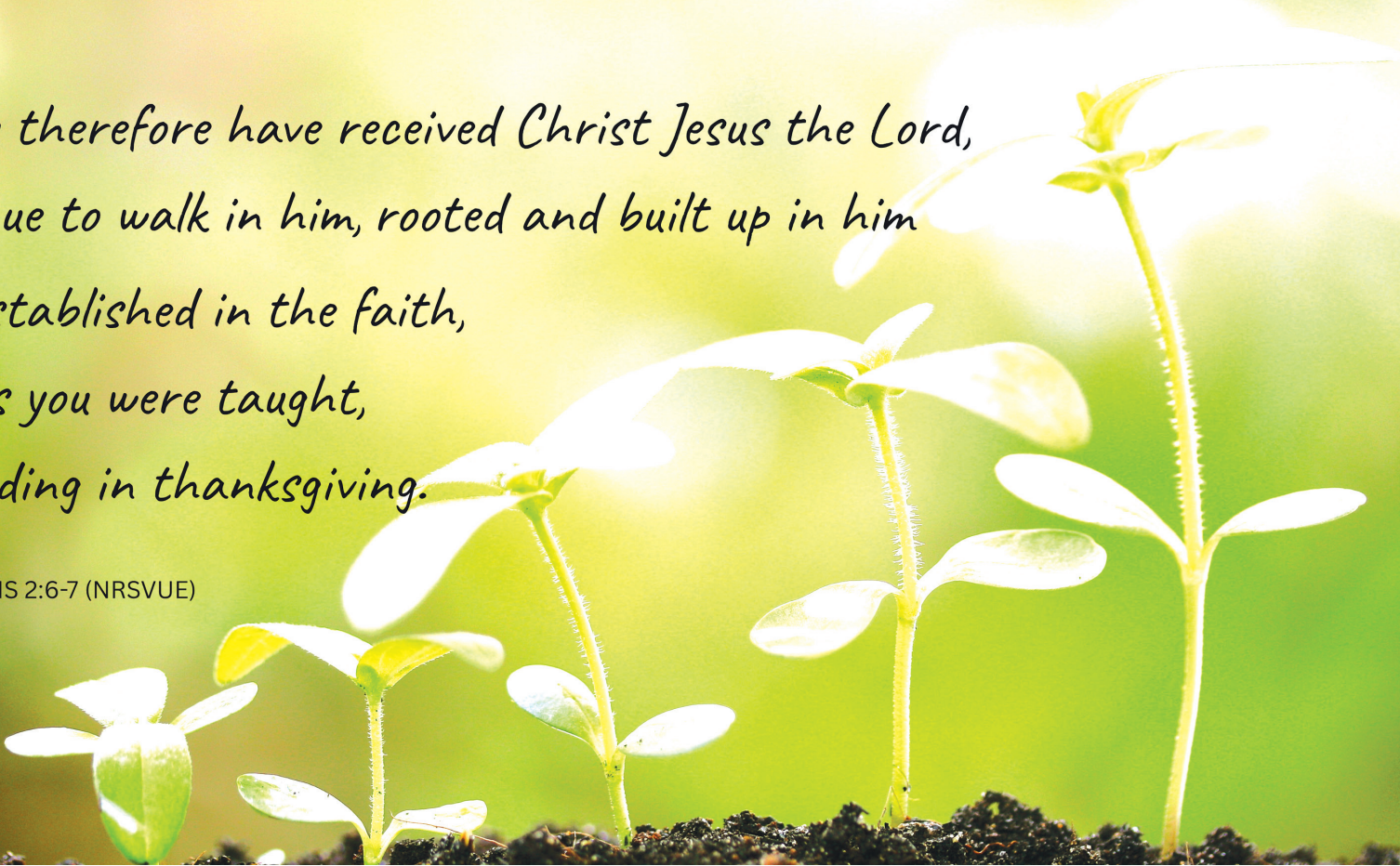
The Holy Spirit spoke to me in ways I had never imagined and about things I hadn't fully realized that I needed to be spoken to about. —Dawn

Having open discussions with fellow Christians regarding Bible topics that interested me. —Andrew

[Revive helped me] to open up with people more spiritually and to be the person to start those conversations. It's inspired me and given me the confidence to take on more positions in my parish and in our Diocese. I have a stronger prayer life now, as it gave me the tools. After finishing Revive, I have become the Rector's Warden at my parish. I completed the training and am now a Licensed Lay Reader. —Emily

*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord,
continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him
and established in the faith,
just as you were taught,
abounding in thanksgiving.*

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7 (NRSVUE)



Ecumenical Partnerships Bring Hope

 Collaborative Community

THE REV. STEPHANIE LONDON
Edmonton Editor

ON September 9, the Diocese of Edmonton Synod Office hosted an ecumenical staff meeting with leaders from our full communion partners, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Moravian Church.

Canon Scott Sharman, who serves as Animator for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations for the Anglican Church of Canada in addition to his role as Canon to the Ordinary in Edmonton, organized the meeting as a way to build collaborative community among the churches.

Gatherings like this one are important, says Sharman, because "it will help us build a culture where we think of working together in ministry and mission as a first thought and not as an afterthought."

During the event, staff from all three churches had an opportunity to grow relationships, share stories, and imagine ways to work more closely together. A highlight for Sharman was hearing everyone sharing their biggest hope for the future. "It was great to listen to how much hope there actually is, and to recognize how much resonance there is among us in where we see the Spirit leading us now."

He is convinced that God is using what we sometimes call the decline of mainline churches in North America as an opportunity to rebuild us into something more faithful and beautiful than before. Our growing ecumenical partnerships are a sign of great hope because "the divisions among the churches of Europe which were brought over to this land with colonization do not have to define who we are, how we follow Jesus today, and how we will relate to one another

now. I think God wants to show us that, and to free us from that broken history, so we can be reconciled with one another and with all. In that sense, what we are doing by promoting this kind of cooperation and connection is trying to step into that future in small ways even now."

Attendees left the event with renewed enthusiasm for ongoing collaboration. Sharman agrees: "I hope that as we continue meeting in this way more regularly, we will begin to think of ourselves not as three churches or three staff teams but one team working in mission and ministry together as fully as possible at every opportunity."

Below: Staff from Lutheran, Moravian, and Anglican regional offices build a vision for working together

Bottom left: Canon Scott Sharman facilitates an exercise

Bottom right: Bishop Stephen London (Anglican) and Bishop Trish Schmermund (Lutheran)



New Ecumenical Shared Ministry in Vegreville

THE REV. LAURETA BLONDIN
Rector, St. Mary the Virgin and
Vegreville United Church

On the beautiful Sunday morning of October 5th, St. Mary the Virgin Anglican and Vegreville United Churches — two faithful church communities from two different denominations, officially came together to worship and create a single congregation to serve the community of Vegreville, Alberta. Two representatives from each faith community along with one representative from the Northern Spirit Region of the United Church of Canada and another from the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, part of the Anglican Church of Canada came forward in the middle of a joint worship service to sign their new Ecumenical Shared Ministry (ESM) Agreement.

This scripture passage from St. Paul's first letter to the early church in Corinth has inspired their work on this agreement: "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose." 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NRSV)

The signing of this new Anglican and United Church Ministries agreement—a first between the Northern Spirit Region and the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton—is the culmination of much hard work over the past three years by several dedicated individuals from both St. Mary the Virgin Anglican and Vegreville United Churches. And as the Reverend Laureta Blondin, minister for both congregations, said in her Sunday morning message, it seems most apropos that the signing of this agreement takes place on World Communion Sunday, a special day in the life of the church that is observed by many denominations on the first Sunday of every October; a day specifically set aside to promote Christian unity and ecumenical cooperation.

The Reverend Adam Hall, Pastoral Relations Minister for the Northern Spirit Region led the service and expressed his great joy that the vision Laureta had shared with him in an email years earlier was now coming to fruition with a signed agreement. The Venerable Jonathan Crane, Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship in the Diocese of Edmonton, brought greetings and a personal message from Bishop Stephen London, who



said, "We are all part of a big family being gathered in faith and spirit; and our dinner table just got a little wider—thanks be to God."

In speaking with different members from both churches about the challenges of two different churches coming together, the theme is almost always the same, says Laureta, "we have so much more in common than differences." Nevertheless, this decision has not come without serious consequences, the Anglicans have had to say goodbye to their beautiful church building by putting it up for sale, and the United Church members have had to move some of their precious furnishings out of their sanctuary to accommodate a few of the Anglicans' equally valuable church furnishings.

However, there is a shared recognition that becoming a single Christian community of faith ensures that in everything we do, and in all our worship, we can continue to serve the community of Vegreville, based on our shared Christian ideals of justice, compassion, love and peace. Together, we see Jesus as a model for our lives as we live in God's world and we understand that we are not alone in the work that we do. As we mark this milestone — a new beginning in our shared discipleship, we truly look forward to our new life together as one congregation that celebrates the very best of two different denominations.

More photos on page 8



Discerning for Missional Renewal

 **Vital
Congregations**



THE REV. NICK TRUSSELL
Coordinator for Missional Renewal
Diocese of Edmonton

My name is the Rev. Nick Trussell and I am our first "Coordinator for Missional Renewal" in our diocese. Our strategic work plan created the role of "Coordinator for Missional Renewal" as part of the "Vital Congregations" guiding principle.

My role is to facilitate parishes through a discernment process specific to their local mission, needs and resources. This discernment will be an opportunity for all our communities to ask some big questions about what it means to be church right now. We'll ask questions together about structure, leadership and purpose, and to plan faithful action in response to God's call. As a Diocesan family of parishes we know we don't do this discernment alone and we are stronger when we act together. Many of our parishes are asking the same questions in their own unique contexts, so let's learn from one another, multiply our courage

and creativity, and find strength together.

Discernment about the shape and leadership of a parish as well as its purpose and mission will be facilitated together with the parish leadership and customized for their needs and context. It could be a one day workshop or a longer process for conversation and discovery. Our goal is for every parish to engage in a discernment process that suits them. Some will need more direct facilitation than others.

I also hope to help coordinate and animate some of the work in the other areas of our strategic plan. Equipping leaders, engaging in discipleship and understanding our building assets are all relevant to our process of discernment.

In my first month in this role it has been a joy to see what God is doing in and through our parishes and the new opportunities that are emerging before us. I look forward to learning more and being part of how God is calling and equipping the church for mission.



**Purposeful
Discipleship**

St. Augustine's-Parkland hosts Christian Basics

MICHELLE SQUANCE-SLADE
St. Augustine's-Parkland

Through the month of June, we welcomed the Rev. Tim Chesterton to present his Christian Basics course to us. The following is feedback we received from participants after the course!

Having seen the Synod Scene invitation for parishes to host Christian Basics, a parishioner reached out to request that St. Augustine's-Parkland host the course. The answer was immediate: YES! So it was that 16 participants launched into a four-week journey of Tim's book *Starting at the Beginning*. Through each of Tim's presentations and small group sessions, all were encouraged to grow deeper in faith and the Christian life. Focusing on the first four chapters of his book, Tim led us through the themes of i) God's story in the Bible, ii) our understanding of Jesus, iii) how we connect with Jesus, and iv) where Jesus is leading us. Thank you, Tim, for your faith-full and fruit-filled ministry. It was time well spent as we learned what it means to follow Jesus more fully. —the Rev. Kevin Kraglund

Although I attend church pretty much every Sunday and read my Bible daily, I felt my Christian life was becoming routine so I decided to take the course to refresh my thinking. I was not disappointed—each of the four weeks we listened to some

readings, including a Gospel parable, and then broke into small groups to discuss what we had heard. We shared our thoughts, listened to each other, and learned new ways of looking at familiar Bible passages. I would highly recommend the Course to anyone of any age and personally hope a Christian Basics 2 course appears in the near future. —Elizabeth

I found the Christian Basics Course to be thought-provoking. It really made me think about my journey of faith. It was enlightening, opening my eyes to a new way of thinking about God and how we relate to him. Meeting new people and listening to their stories has helped me to have a new perspective on the parables, helping me form a greater understanding of the Bible. —Lenora

It was taught in a friendly manner but was very deep in meaningful content and discussion. My Christian faith has been enhanced by this course and I would encourage others to take the opportunity to learn and deepen your faith. —Karen

The discussion groups were amazing times. We are answering questions and chatting with people we see almost every week, and yet, we found out so much about one another that we didn't know before. Not just opinions but their life experiences and how those fit with the subject each evening. For people like me, a cradle Anglican, some was refresher and some was *aha!* ... The most important thing of the four sessions was learning just how much we are deeply loved by God. He is with us. He will never leave us. —Judy



New Ecumenical Shared Ministry in Vegreville, Continued

Above right: the Rev. Laureta Blondin speaks at the service

Above, and right: the Ven. Jonathan Crane and members of both churches sign the Ecumenical Shared Ministry agreement

Far right: the Rev. Adam Hall (United Church-Northern Spirit Region) presides

Photos: Lisa Topilko

