



# Diocese of New Westminster

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

March 3, 2026

## **The Most Rev'd Douglas Walter Hambidge** **March 6, 1927-March 2, 2026**

To the People of the Diocese of New Westminster,

Grace and peace to you.

It is with great sadness that I write this pastoral letter to inform you that the Most Rev'd Douglas Hambidge, former Archbishop of the Diocese of New Westminster and Metropolitan of British Columbia and Yukon died earlier this week

+Douglas was the seventh bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster. He was translated (from the Diocese of Caledonia) and then installed as the Bishop of our diocese in 1980 and became the Metropolitan a year later. He retired in 1993 after a full and fruitful ministry.

Archbishop Douglas was a kind and compassionate man; he could be very firm if needed, but often brought humour into any and all situations. +Douglas was a teacher through and through. He loved to share his knowledge about a whole array of subjects: biblical study, parish ministry, homiletics, the role of bishop, and many others. But he was known very well throughout the Anglican Church of Canada and the Anglican Communion for his teaching on stewardship and sharing the gifts that God has given to our lives. His well-respected wisdom, good humour and clear thinking brought appreciation from many parts of the globe. Douglas was an ordained cleric for so much of his life and it certainly shaped and formed how he lived each day.

I knew Archbishop Hambidge from about 1980 onwards as he was often active in the parish in which I grew up. He loved to be with people and to work closely with the clergy. He had a strong interest in youth ministry and developing and growing faith in Jesus Christ in all people. When I was ordained, Douglas continued to be of great support and encouragement to me. He was interested in my ministry and where the Holy Spirit had been leading me. When I was consecrated a bishop, Douglas continued to reach out to me and offer whatever support he could. He told me once, "You know it is amazing that in the Church we have an election of a bishop and there is lots of conversation about who will make a good bishop. And in the process, it is hard to tell. But somehow the Holy Spirit moves through all of this, an election takes place and the right candidate comes forward. A bishop suddenly steps forward. And it happens every time." He trusted in this and knew that indeed the Holy Spirit continues to guide and direct the Church.

About four years ago, Archbishop Douglas gave me a gift. He presented me with a pectoral cross that he had received from some of the leadership of the diocese. The cross is in the shape that was chosen as the emblem for the Stewards in Action program in the Diocese of New Westminster in his time and for many years later. I thanked him profusely for the cross, and in his gentle way he simply



said, "I really want you to have it now." It is something that I cherish, for it reminds me of Douglas and also his commitment to this diocese, our faith and also that we are called to give back to God as God has richly blessed us.

May Archbishop Douglas Hambidge rest in God's peace. May the love of God, that he knew very well, that surrounded him in this lifetime, continue to surround and hold him now. May he rise in glory.

Please pray for his family and many friends who grieve his loss from this world. May they know God's peace and grace walking with them in the days ahead. May they, like us, know that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Archbishop Hambidge, when writing to me, would often refer to himself as simply #7 (the seventh Bishop of New Westminster) and I would reply as simply #10. And so from #10 to #7, well done good and faithful servant.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Stephens" with a small cross symbol to the left of the first letter.

The Most Revd John R. Stephens  
*Archbishop of New Westminster*  
*Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC & Yukon*

