



THE MESSENGER



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A joyful procession leads candidates into their Confirmation service at St. Faith's, Edmonton.

Photos: St. Faith's (above). Stephen London (right)

2026 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

THE REV. STEPHANIE LONDON
Edmonton Editor

Each January, the Edmonton District Council of Churches (EDCC) observes the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, a worldwide movement that gathers Christians to pray for unity in a divided world.

The Week of Prayer begins on January 18, the Confession of St. Peter, and ends on January 26, the Conversion of St. Paul, recognizing that—while these Apostles did not always agree—their focus was on proclaiming

the Gospel of Jesus Christ. After the opening service at Robertson-Wesley United Church, Bishop Stephen London said that "it is always a joy, together with siblings in Christ, to worship and have fellowship."

This year, the Rev. Quinn Strikwerda received the Marilyn McClung Memorial Award for Ecumenism. The award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to ecumenism, is given in honour of the Rev. Marilyn McClung, who was a priest in the Diocese of Edmonton and served as the Anglican representative on the EDCC executive.

As pastor of the Sanctuary of Peace Ministry (formerly Inner City Pastoral

Ministry), Strikwerda leads an ecumenical Christian ministry of presence serving the people of the inner city of Edmonton.

It is jointly sponsored by four denominations: United, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican. He works with Indigenous elders and knowledge-keepers, along with volunteers from many local churches, in Edmonton's Boyle McCauley neighbourhood.

Strikwerda's passion is "sharing the extraordinary and challenging news of what God is doing in the world in and through Jesus Christ: healing the sick, lifting up the poor and needy, and bringing justice, peace, love, and joy to a world in desperate need of them."



Collaborative Community



Left: The Rev. Quinn Strikwerda and Bishop Stephen London
Centre: McClung Award for Ecumenism
Right: Alex Meek, Stephen London, Scott Sharman, and ecumenical friends



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Read the Word...
Spread the Word.

2026
Bible Reading Marathon
March 29 to April 2.

Palm Sunday 1pm - Maundy Thursday 4pm

Worldwide via Zoom and Facebook

Come to
Read sequentially Genesis to Revelation one hour at a time.
Use your own Bible in your language of choice.
Everyone Welcome

Online live for 100 hours
Sign up via:
www.athdio.ca

Diocese of Athabasca
www.athdio.ca
780 624 2767

Join Athabasca's Annual Bible Reading Marathon

The Rev. PETER CLARKE
Athabasca Editor

Once again, the Diocese of Athabasca is planning the Bible Reading Marathon for Holy Week, starting at 1 pm on Sunday, March 31, and running continuously for 100 hours until 4 pm on April 2.

Anyone from around the world can sign up via the diocese's website, www.athdio.ca, to read for a one-hour period. Each reader continues reading from where the previous reader finishes. There are no preset passages of Scripture to read. Those reading during the first 45 hours or so will likely be reading from the Old Testament, but there is no certainty.

We invite people to read from their favourite Bible and in whatever language they prefer. Over the years, we have heard at least 15 different languages from a variety of countries. As the event is broadcast via the diocesan website to Facebook, anyone can watch the event, whether they choose to read or not.

Please consider taking part, or getting together with family or friends to share a one-hour time slot. We often hear from readers how relaxing and calming the experience is of reading God's Word in the comfort of their own space at whatever time of day or night they prefer.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalm 119:105

Strengthening a Place of Welcome: Bell Tower and Roof Repairs at Christ Church, Grand Prairie

MICHELLE HAUSER
Anglican Foundation of Canada

For Christ Church Anglican in Grande Prairie, the church building is far more than a physical structure. It is where people of all ages gather for worship, where youth find belonging, and where outreach and ecumenical partnership continue to grow in a city of nearly 70,000 residents.

With the support of a \$12,000 Category B grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) in November 2024, the parish has completed critical repairs to its bell tower and north-side roof—work that ensures the long-term safety and preservation of a building at the heart of parish and community life.

"I am so pleased to see this important work completed at Christ Church, Grande Prairie,"

says the Rt. Rev. David Greenwood, Bishop of Athabasca. "The parish is a unique and vital Anglican presence in the city, with a growing youth ministry, strong ecumenical relationships, and a deep commitment to reaching outward into the wider community. I am deeply grateful to the Anglican Foundation of Canada and to its members across the country, whose generosity helps make support like this possible."

As the sole Anglican parish in Grande Prairie, Christ Church serves a diverse congregation in an evolving urban context. Over time, water infiltration began to compromise the integrity of the structure—posing a growing risk to the building and to the continuity of parish life. Addressing these concerns was essential not only to preserve the church itself, but to ensure that

ministry could continue safely and without interruption.

"The Foundation is proud to support this important work," says Dr. Scott Brubacher, Executive Director of the Anglican Foundation of Canada. "Having visited the Diocese of Athabasca, I know the faithfulness and perseverance of its parishes, and we look forward to continuing this partnership in the years ahead."

Christ Church continues to live into its motto, "We seek to know Christ and make Him known," through worship, outreach, and service. The completion of this project ensures that the parish's physical home remains a stable foundation for that mission—providing a safe and accessible space for all who enter its doors.

Ministry Changes in Fairview

ELLEN LUPICK
St. Helen's, Fairview

We had to say goodbye to the Rev. Dr. Nyaroto, our former Priest at St. Helen's Church in the mall in Fairview, at the end of June 2025. We wish him well in his new endeavours.

Since August 2025, the Rev. Don Thompson has been coming to St. Helen's Church once a month to lead a service of Holy Communion.

The pictures are from St. Helen's service on January 11, 2026, when the Rev. Don Thompson led the service.

Unfortunately, due to water seepage recently, we have had to move our service to a different room and we will be there for five weeks while repairs are being done.



Come to the Feast

One of the greatest pieces of advice that was ever given to me was this: *preach the Gospel to yourself every day.* When you read that, you might be picturing a humorous scene where you stand in a pulpit and talk to yourself about God. That is not what the person who gave the advice to me had in mind. Instead, it is more like the scene where you are giving good advice to someone else, and they turn around and ask you why you don't take your own advice? I have been guilty of that many times!



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON
Diocese of Edmonton

The Gospel is the revelation in and by Jesus that the heart of God is love. One of my favorite images in Holy Scripture about salvation is that of the good table set with a feast where all are welcome. (Matt 8:11; Luke 13:29; Isaiah 25:6-8 among others) Jesus is the host, and you are invited. You sit at the table with people from every language, people and nation. At the table are teachers, bankers, artists,

politicians, professionals, the homeless, the rich, the poor, the peacemakers... it is a table abundant with God's grace. It is a table of healing and wholeness. It is a table marked by God's vision of things: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, hospitality. And Christ is the host.

The Gospel is not just about other people, but it is also about you. You are welcome to Christ's table. The entrance has no fee. You don't have to prove yourself.

You don't have to be perfect. You just have to be authentic and honest. That means knowing you don't come perfect. You carry baggage. You come hurt and disappointed. You come seeking grace. That is what Jesus offers: God's love and mercy freely given for the healing of your heart. That is grace.

To preach the Gospel to yourself everyday doesn't mean getting into a pulpit. It is reminding yourself everyday that God's love is for you too. When Jesus celebrated the last supper, his words were, "this is my body give FOR YOU." This Lent, remember that you belong, you have a seat at Christ's table.

+ Stephen



Image: sonyakamoz for Adobe Stock Images

Sharing Borrowed Light: The Lenten Way of Humility

The popular view is that Lent is about abstinence. This is true, to a point. I suggest that Lent is about humility. Humility comes from the Latin *humilis*—literally, "on the ground." A humble person is well grounded. They understand reality, exactly as it is.



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

Humility, or meekness... is a virtue through which a person has true self-knowledge, and does not hold himself too high, but regards what he justly deserves, considering ever his frailty.

– St. Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153)

Humility realizes that God loves us not because we deserve that love, but only because God wants to love us.

According to Louis de Montfort (d. 1716), a humble person is like the moon which reflects the light of the sun. Such light can help guide our footsteps, even in the darkest of nights. Paradoxically, the brighter it shines with the sun's light, the more you can see the scars and imperfections on the moon itself. It is the same with a humble person. They focus on sharing the borrowed light, even though it reveals the entire truth about themselves.

The humble person realizes he or she is enclosed in the light of God, and that is

what matters. Humble people look to remove what is preventing Christ's light shining from them and replace it with what enhances the Christ-light-reflection. Abstinence can help with this.

For example, Pride impairs the light of Christ reflecting outwards to bless others. Abstaining from things which encourage pride can help a person who seeks to not be self-worshiping (proud), but self-aware.

Humility is also trusting how much God values us.

You are a precious jewel in His crown, given honour and majesty, taken out of darkness and given light. Nothing can separate you from His love. Though we are not deserving, for some reason God values us so highly that He wants us to spend eternity with Him.

Humility says, "God created me as I am, and I am at peace with that. I am grateful for what He created me as, and I am in wonder at the universe He has placed me within."

In humility, "I know I will fail time and time again and that this failure is not a threat to how I am loved. I welcome the peace of that acceptance. I trust, hope, and believe in the mercy of the Lord. (Hamman, Grace. *Ask of Old Paths: Medieval Virtues and Vices for a Whole and Holy Life.* pp. 43-44. Kindle Edition).

The foundation of humility is, therefore, trust. Faith. Understanding. An awareness of the loving being that created you. Humility knows, above all, that we are loved. "Out of humility's root, out of the knowledge of belovedness and limitation, flowers love of self, neighbor, creation, and God." (*Ibid*, pp. 45-46)

We confront pain, forgive, confess, and surrender, so Christ can tear off the skin of pride, deceit, and selfishness, allowing the skin of humility and rightness to grow (like Eustace in C.S. Lewis' *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*). Our wholeness requires this; humility is about being made whole.

Picture God bending down to our level, reaching out and putting His hand underneath you, and raising you up to His level of rightness. That is what humility does. It is God's great gift of transformation, raising us up the scale.

What does the LORD require of you but to do what is right, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?

– Micah 6:8

And that is what Lent is about.

God bless you greatly.

+ 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: February 2 for March 2026.

CONTACT

Stephanie London (Edmonton Editor)
anglicanmessenger@gmail.com

Peter Clarke (Athabasca Editor)
seens@telus.net

REPORTING, LAYOUT & DESIGN
Stephanie London

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The publishers and editorial staff of *The Messenger* value honest, transparent and respectful communication. We seek to provide encouragement and inspiration to all who are building loving, inclusive, Christ-centered communities. We respect the dignity of every human being, endeavouring to lift the voices of people who are marginalised.

We are committed to the quality of our content, reserving the right to edit all contributed material. We immediately correct factual errors. To report an error, please email anglicanmessenger@gmail.com

Ordination in Edmonton

On January 18, Bishop Stephen London of Edmonton and Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Armed Forces Nigel Shaw together ordained the Rev. Nathan Wright to the Diaconate.

The service took place at the Chapel of St. Luke and St. John at Edmonton Garrison. The Rev. Susan Oliver preached and Noah Wright served as Cantor.

Wright, who served as a United Church pastor for over two decades before discerning a call to transfer to the Anglican Church, will continue to serve as a chaplain to the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Rev. Nathan Wright after his ordination with his son Noah Wright, his husband Roberto Robledo, Bishop Stephen and Bishop Nigel



Books to Read in Lent

 Purposeful Discipleship

If you want to explore and expand your Christian faith, consider starting with one of the books from this list of Bishop Stephen's favourite discipleship reads. If you don't get to all the books, the first two are the top two!

- *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense* by N.T. Wright
- *The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can Be Made Right* by Lisa Sharon Harper
- *A People's History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story* by Diana Butler Bass
- *The Ultimate Quest: A Geek's Guide to (The Episcopal) Church* by Jordan Haynie Ware
- *To Love & Serve: Anglican Beliefs & Practices* by Melody Wilson Shobe and Scott Gunn
- *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again* by Rachel Held Evans
- *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* by Timothy Keller
- *God-Soaked Life: Discovering a Kingdom Spirituality* by Chris Webb

Photo by Kimberly Farmer on Unsplash

World Interfaith Harmony Week Breakfast



Bishop David Motiuk (Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton), the Honourable Salma Lakhani, Rabbi Alisa Zilbershtein (Beth Shalom), Bishop Stephen London

THE REV. HELEN CHAN BENNETT
Edmonton

During the UN-designated World Interfaith Harmony Week, leaders and community members gathered at the University of Alberta Faculty Club for a meaningful Interfaith Breakfast that embodied the week's call to promote peace, mutual understanding, and dialogue—especially in a time marked by global conflict, polarization, and moral uncertainty. We were honoured by the presence of Bishop Stephen London (Anglican Diocese of Edmonton), Bishop David Motiuk (Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton), and Rabbi Alisa Zilbershtein, whose participation reflected a shared commitment to compassionate presence, moral courage, and hope across faith traditions.

A central highlight was the address by Salma Lakhani, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta. She spoke movingly about Canada as a nation shaped by diversity and inclusion, and how the world continues to see Canada as a place of peace. Hon. Lakhani shared her own

immigration story, reminding us that Canada is a place of welcome and opportunity—a country where people can begin again, contribute fully, and belong. In a world that often feels as though it has lost its moral compass, she named Canada's potential to be an anchor: a steady witness to human dignity, pluralism, and the common good. Drawing on the theme of power to the powerless, she challenged us to consider concrete actions that promote peace and justice—standing with those who are marginalized, countering hatred with relationships, and choosing dialogue over division.

Also present were The Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman, The Rev. Dr. Blessing Shambare, The Rev. Nick Trussell, The Rev. Helen Chan Bennett, and aspirant Nana Dadson.

Together, this gathering reminded us that interfaith engagement is not symbolic—it is relational, practical, and urgently needed. When we choose one another, we become co-builders of peace.