



Diocese of Kootenay

ANGELICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

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To the Churches and Communities in the Diocese of Kootenay,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Christ, our refuge and our strength.

As wildfires once again sweep across our region, filling our valleys with smoke and our hearts with concern, we hold close in prayer every person, parish, and community across the Diocese of Kootenay. We extend our heartfelt prayers across our sister dioceses in the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon—the Territory of the People, New Westminster, Islands and Inlets (British Columbia), Caledonia, and Yukon—as fires displace people across the province and territory. We pray for safety, cooling rains, protection for firefighters and first responders, and peace for all who have fled their homes.

We encourage churches to be prepared to offer some relief shelter if it is within your community's capacity and as the need arises.

In times of peril, our faith invites us into deep prayer paired with practical preparation and compassionate action.

Practical Evacuation Preparation

- **Pack "Grab-and-Go" Bags** ([resource link](#)): Assemble a 72-hour emergency kit for each household member and pet. Include essential medications, important documents, water, non-perishable food, flashlights, phone chargers, and N95 masks for heavy smoke. For insurance purposes, photograph or video your home prior to any alert for evacuation.
- **Establish a Household Plan** ([resource link](#)): Identify multiple evacuation routes out of your neighborhood, designate an off-site meeting location, and ensure everyone knows your designated out-of-town contact. Follow emergency notices and directions.
- **Monitor Official Alerts:** Keep devices charged, follow the [BC Wildfire Service map](#), and sign up for local municipal emergency notification systems. Note that different municipalities use different systems (for example, [Alertable](#), Voyent Alert, and others).

- **Register with Emergency Support Services** ([resource link](#)) and contact your insurance company. If you have been evacuated, you may be provided with basic supports like accommodation, food, clothing and other temporary support. If you have home or tenant's insurance, contact your insurance provider about coverage for living expenses during evacuations.

Serving Evacuees and First Responders

- **Volunteer with Reception Centres:** Connect with local Emergency Support Services (ESS) or multifaith emergency networks in your municipality to help register evacuees, distribute supplies, or offer hospitality. We share some of this information below.
- **Partner Across Faith Communities:** Work alongside local ecumenical and multi-faith networks such as the [Penticton Sikh Temple](#), the Salvation Army, [Central Okanagan Community Food Bank](#), [Mutual Aid Networks](#), and community organizations like [Mamas for Mamas](#) to coordinate meals, shelter, and emotional support. Find out who's leading which efforts, and offer to join in. Be kind to one another.
- **Care for First Responders:** Support response crews by donating requested items to official collection points, offering quiet spaces for respite where possible, and keeping them steadfastly in your prayers.
- **Support Emergency Funds:** Financial donations allow emergency personnel on the ground to address immediate needs directly. Consider giving to Alongside Hope's Emergency Response Fund ([link](#)), or local and national relief initiatives.

Please share this information with others, be they your neighbour in the pew, or down the street. May the God of hope grant us calm in the midst of the storm and open our hands in generosity to care for our neighbours.

May this be our prayer as we act in faith and love with courage -
"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." — Psalm 46:1



The Ven. Chris Parsons
 Executive Archdeacon
 Diocese of Kootenay



The Very Rev. David Tiessen
 Dean
 Diocese of Kootenay

cc: The Rt. Rev. Lynne McNaughton // Bishop // Diocese of Kootenay