

September 29, 2026

Dear Anglican family in the province of Alberta; Dear friends in Christ,

As the three Anglican bishops in Alberta, we are joining our voices to write a pastoral letter speaking to the upcoming referendum in our province. We do not normally address particular political issues in this public way, but this upcoming vote is different. This is a unique moment in the life of our province in which we are being asked a series of questions that each in different ways come down to choosing what kind of society we want to be.

It is, of course, never our role as church to tell people how to vote on a given electoral decision, nor to engage in political discourse in a partisan manner. However, as followers of Jesus, we believe our discernment about all things is always meant to be shaped first and foremost by our loyalty to the values and commitments of the Gospel. It is for that reason that we are issuing this message.

From the earliest pages of the Old Testament, the People of God are consistently reminded that they have a Divinely given call to welcome and care for strangers and sojourners in their midst, knowing that they themselves were once shown the very same (Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 10:17-19). In the New Testament, one of the central stories of Jesus is his Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), which invites us to consider the implications of the question: “Who is my neighbour?” In this biblical account, Jesus is clear that our neighbour is not just those who we think truly belong; rather, we have a responsibility to support and protect the lives, dignity, and worth of everyone we meet, regardless of their identity or status in our eyes.

These are not sentimental teachings from a bygone time and place, but lessons that seem to leap off the page as timely as ever. The best ways to organize our common civic life and to most effectively deliver the services and supports that our communities need to thrive are legitimate matters for people to debate and to explore in different ways. But when we reflect on these referendum questions as disciples of Christ, we are encouraged to do so not only in terms of what is best for ourselves as individuals, or best for Alberta alone, but rather with a concern for the Common Good. In other words, with an eye for how our decisions will impact all our neighbours – especially those who are most vulnerable.

As Christians, we are taught to seek the welfare of the place in which we live (Jeremiah 29:7). Using our voices and exercising our civic duties within a democratic system can be an important part of that. We therefore strongly encourage everyone to vote. We also recognize that people across Alberta – in our communities, families, and even our churches – will come to different conclusions in the choices they make. In a time of heightened polarization and the increasing vilification of those with whom we disagree, this is an opportunity for us as people of peace to meet one another with humility, charity, and grace.

The Most Rev. Greg Kerr-Wilson, Bishop of
Calgary

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The Rt. Rev. David Greenwood, Bishop of
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