



THE MESSENGER

MAY 2020



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Simple Ordination Service Marks Milestone in Unconventional Faith Journey



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Rebecca Harris was ordained an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Edmonton on March 25, 2020, the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in a simple service attended by her family, close friends and a few clergy colleagues.

Reaching out with intent during time of social distancing

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

Who would have thought a few months ago that, for parishioners in the Edmonton diocese, going to church on Sunday morning would mean sitting at home in pajamas, coffee in hand, iPad in lap, watching a live-streamed worship service or pre-recorded sermon?

But in early March daily life was changing quickly in Alberta, with the government issuing new social distancing guidelines every day in an effort to “flatten the curve” and stop the COVID-19 virus from reaching society’s vulnerable citizens. Worship had begun to look differently too with stricter provisions for sanitizing, Communion in One Kind (bread only), and strong advice to anyone feeling unwell to stay home.

There was a time when some of us took for granted the act of gathering in church for worship. But quickly we discovered that getting together in these uncertain times of COVID-19 was not safe for ourselves or others. Among Bishop Jane Alexander’s guidelines, was a directive to postpone all non-essential gatherings and face-to-face



Hugh Matheson and Fiona Brownlee lead virtual Morning Prayer for Immanuel parish in Wetaskiwin.

meetings, like coffee hours and potluck lunches, Bible studies and meetings of vestries. Then, on March 14, she notified clergy of the diocese that public worship services would be postponed effective the very next day, Sunday, March 15.

“We are living in an extraordinary time and we need to put the needs of the most vulnerable members of our churches before all else,” said Bishop Jane. “Please know that this was a very difficult decision made out of love and not fear.”

Later, she would describe this proactive step as possibly the most “difficult decision I have ever had to make as your Bishop. I, personally, know the comfort of being able to gather for worship and the deep, deep joy of bringing the whole body of Christ together in our local

parishes to share in the sacraments.”

Avowing to be a comforting and steady presence for her diocese, Bishop Jane announced she would not be giving her formal resignation to Diocese of Rupert’s Land Metropolitan Archbishop Greg Kerr-Wilson in April as had been previously announced.

“Although it had been my intention to leave at the end of July, I would not feel right in leaving the diocese at this time. Therefore, I will stay in place until at least December 31, 2020, and we will see where we are at come fall,” she said. “My hope is to be a non-anxious, prayerful presence during this time.”

When faced with the threat of COVID-19, church leaders in the Edmonton diocese, like the pastoral community across Canada and around the Anglican Communion, combined ingenuity and digital media resources to overcome physical distancing barriers and build connection in their parishes. They led their communities in new ways of doing worship, confident in the knowledge that church is more than a building, church is a way of being; a way of sharing God’s love wherever we may be.

With only weeks until Holy

Week and Easter, clergy began making pastoral phone calls to church members and gathering resources for at-home prayer and worship. Several parishes made preparations to broadcast prayers and services over the internet, either from a nearly empty sanctuary or from their priest’s own living or dining room. In homes and parishes, candles of hope were lit, email messages and newsletters full of comforting words and prayers were sent, and blogs and podcasts were posted. Bishop Jane hosted virtual coffee hours for the clergy, made prayer videos which were shared over social media and the diocesan website, and invited people to join her for a virtual Lenten reading series on the Gospel of Mark and Holy Week reflections. Invitations to “Zoom” virtual meetings populated email inboxes as people arranged virtual gatherings.

While leading a live-streamed service on Sunday, March 15, the Rev. Jonathan Crane, rector of St. Augustine of Canterbury Church in Edmonton, put things in perspective by asking his congregation to consider a question: Where is Jesus most present? The answer, of course, is “in us.”

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Rebecca Harris trusts in God to follow path to priesthood

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

When the Rev. Rebecca Harris was ordained an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Edmonton on March 25, 2020, the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the simple ceremony was a fitting reflection of her unpretentious ministry and unconventional faith journey.

As was to be expected, the ordination service was led by Bishop Jane Alexander at All Saints' Cathedral. Unexpected, and, as a result of precautionary measures instituted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the congregation was fewer than 15 people, including Rebecca's husband Ian and daughter Misty, chancellor, parishioner and friend Ken Holmstrom and Patti Holmstrom and clergy.

Yet, through the wonders of digital technology and video equipment set up by the Dean of Edmonton the Very Rev. Alex Meek, the service was live-streamed for those who were unable to be present in person. This thoughtful gesture was, undoubtedly, appreciated by members of Holy Trinity Riverbend, Edmonton, where Harris serves as priest-in-charge, and her daughter Wendy, who watched from her home in Edson.

The service, a pared-down version of the ordination eucharist, was held in the chancel. Members of the congregation, with the exception of those who live in the same household, were seated a minimum of two meters apart, as per social distancing protocol. The music and sung prayers were offered by All Saints' Music Director Jeremy Spurgeon. Patti Holmstrom gave the First Reading Hebrews 10:5-10; and the Rev. John Gee read the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38. Harris was presented for examination, signing her declaration before chancellor Ken Holmstrom. Consecrated and proclaimed a priest in the church of God by Bishop Jane, she was presented with a Bible, chalice and paten, and was vested according to the order of priests.

"It was not at all what I expected, but everything I could ever want," says Harris now of her spirit-filled ordination to the priesthood. "It was intimate and solemn, yet joyous and filled with love... I was surprised at my emotional reaction when I was pronounced a priest. God's grace and love was very present in that moment."



Rebecca Harris awaits the start of her ordination service with daughter Misty and husband Ian; Bishop Jane presents Rebecca, the newly vested priest, with a chalice and paten.



Later, Bishop Jane said of this holy time, "I was keenly aware that Rebecca was being commissioned for pastoral and priestly ministry and being sent out to work in ways she could never have imagined. She will, of course, have the opportunity for a larger celebration once we can all gather again, but as she herself said, 'It's not about the ceremony of ordination, it's about the ministry.' Yes indeed, Rebecca, and the prayers of the whole diocese are with you in your work."

It is little surprise that Harris would enter priestly ministry in unusual times when you consider the unconventional path she has followed to the priesthood. Raised in a "non-church-going" family, she asked Jesus to enter her life at age 16 after encountering a stranger on a Hawaiian beach.

"He asked if I'd like to accept Jesus into my heart," she says. "My family didn't talk about God and we didn't attend church, but my response was 'yes, I would.'"

At university Harris experienced what she describes as a "period of wonder and learning" while studying world religions. But it would be several years later, after marrying Ian and starting a family, that she would start attending church regularly. It was important to the couple that "our children have Christian knowledge in order to make informed choices as they grew up," she says.

Harris loved her church community. "It wasn't long before I was actively involved in all aspects; serving on the altar guild, as a member of vestry, teaching Sunday school, and representing my church at synod." Liturgical dance, which she performed at several churches in the diocese throughout the 1980s and '90s, was a way for her to passionately express "God's word through music and dance."

However, as she observed the

minister from her pew week after week, she felt "a strong desire to be at the front leading, so I could teach people too. It was as if something was tugging at my heart telling me 'you can do more.'" She became a licensed lay reader, helping to lead worship and preaching sermons.

Clergy and friends also recognised her gifts and encouraged her to pursue becoming a deacon. But by this time the Harris's had retired from their secular careers and purchased a home in Yuma, Arizona. She doubted whether a second career as a minister made sense for a woman in her 60s. "I honestly thought it was too late; I couldn't attend seminary at that stage in my life."

At this point Harris says her faith journey started to get difficult with numerous "disappointments and setbacks."

"I wasn't sure about God's path for me," she says. "But I knew I needed to trust him." She sought the guidance of a Spiritual Director who continues to help her know herself and God better.

"My very wise spiritual director told me, 'God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies the called,'" she says.

She also enrolled in pastoral training and Education for Ministry (EfM), and "all of a sudden things began to change." After she was ordained a deacon by Bishop Jane Alexander on Holy Cross Day in September, 2017, Harris began ministering to people in ways she had only dreamt of.

"I had the privilege of serving under a wonderful mentor, the Rev. Dr. Cherian Pulimootil, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Yuma for two winters. He took me under his wing and taught me the things you don't learn from a book: the nuts and bolts and behind the scenes," she says. Even though her church community

in Edmonton was very small, she found she felt "relaxed and at home preaching to a congregation of 100 at St. Paul's."

In February, 2019 Rebecca and Ian sold their home in Yuma and moved back to Edmonton to be closer to their daughters and grandchildren. Around the same time, the Rev. Dan Wold, who was interim deacon-in-charge of Holy Trinity Riverbend parish, stepped back from his ministry to be with his wife Daphne who had been diagnosed with cancer.

"I started right at Easter – the busiest time of the year," she says, adding she has received incredible support from the parish she and Ian helped start.

"We have been attending Holy Trinity Riverbend since its inception, and I think of every member of the parish as my extended family. They are a wonderfully diverse group of people who are my constant supporters."

A year later, she remembers crying tears of joy at upon hearing the news from Bishop Jane, her friend of more than 25 years, that she would be ordained a priest. Her family, including her parents, now in their nineties and living in Oregon, were "really excited and supportive," to hear the news of her ordination.

Among the gifts Rebecca brings to her ministry, says husband Ian, are "a deep-seated commitment to assist parishioners with their spiritual growth; and her personal relationship with God, and an understanding that she is acting as a steward of God's word."

"People ask me how I got to where I am and I tell them it's the Holy Spirit," she says. "This is God's plan for me." Borrowing from an oft repeated quote, she adds, "I found my life, and it fits."

Harmony of shalom to prevail over dissonance caused by virus

Listening to Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," I thought: 'all great music has a strong melody and harmony.' Beethoven, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Gershwin, Strauss, Debussy, all created great melodic music. Pachelbel's "Canon in D Major" is a great example. Modern classics have the same attribute: "Let it Be," "Bridge Over Troubled Water," "Yesterday," "Georgia on My Mind," to name a few, all have great melodies which wind throughout. J.S. Bach's music often seems to be a melody that is continually playing with itself: a good example of this is "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring."



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

God writes great music. In the beginning, he introduced his melody: a burst of creation, speaking good from nothing, introducing greater order and complexity from chaos, culminating in the rich treasure of living in tranquility, health, and wholeness with his people, his Images. It was good, very good. The harmony was fantastic. But then dissonance was introduced: a harshness, a break from the theme; humanity decided it wanted not to be Image Of God but, rather, God himself; and picked the apple. This introduced a whole kaleidoscope of counter-harmonies: jealousy,

killing, war. The music became not a triumphal march from creation to shalom (wholeness in God), but one in which the major theme, the harmony of shalom, is often countered with, and sometimes overwhelmed with, the dissonance of death. World War I and World War II are good examples of this. Any time we sacrifice another person's livelihood or wellbeing on the altar of greed or selfishness (often called 'economics' or 'expediency'), we are in the dissonance. Plagues and diseases are one of the counter-harmonies of this dissonance. COVID-19 started life as an animal virus, crossed over to humanity, and is now, as we know, wreaking havoc amongst us. But it is not the melody. It is not the main harmony. In all great music, the melody and harmony will prevail; 'carry the day,' so to speak.

We are not people of the virus, we are people of Christ. COVID-19 will become a part of our history. In Christ, God came to earth and sacrificed himself to restore the great melody. In Christ, his people can live in harmony, bringing forth the gifts each has to provide a fulsome image of Christ. The Bible tells us the strategy of God's brilliant piece is to reassert the original melody, and end with that: God and his people, living together in tranquility, health, and wholeness; living in harmony. We can look towards this, even whilst the counter-harmonies assail us with their dissonance. Each day we can practice walking with Christ and talking with Christ. Reach out with him to those in need. Live his life of shalom. It truly is the life of love. May you be blessed in this experience. +David

Reaching out with intent during period of social distancing continued

Continued from Front Page.

"We forget often, one of the hardest teachings of Christianity, that Jesus takes flesh and becomes present in our own being," he said. "Jesus is looking out your eyes, and Jesus is present equally in our neighbours and families." Crane asked his viewers to look around their communities for acts of love and compassion being carried out by healthcare professionals, first responders and caregivers, grocery store clerks, frontline agencies and people offering to pick-up groceries for an elderly neighbour.

That same morning, the Rev. Madeleine Urion emailed parishioners at St. George's, Edmonton, with a reassuring and encouraging message.

"We are each waking up to a strange new landscape here in Edmonton," she wrote. "The healing, restoring, and comforting Spirit of God is present in this landscape in a multitude of ways. Although the future may seem uncertain as we adapt our lives to this new reality, we

can be assured that we will emerge out the other side of this time with a deeper knowledge of ourselves, how our society functions, and our own capabilities and various forms of resilience."

At the same time people were being asked to stay home, concern for the people most vulnerable to COVID-19, those who do not have a home to stay in, was growing. Essential ministries, such as the community meal programs run by St. Faith's PrayerWorks and Christ Church and the Manna Market and Friday Morning Breakfasts at All Saints', as well as the Sunday lunch program, an ecumenical effort coordinated by Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM), would need to be continued, but not in the normal fashion.

"We served about 60 bag lunches to community dinner guests who came to our doors," said the Rev. Susan Oliver, rector of Christ Church, in an email to her parishioners in March. "It was a very different way of feeding people and

felt strange not to be able to invite them inside."

In mid-March the "Worship at Home" online prayer and resource offerings on www.edmonton.anglican.ca also grew exponentially. The March 15 eucharist led by Holy Trinity Anglican Church (HTAC) was watched by more than 1,100 Facebook Live viewers. According to the Ven. Chris Pappas, HTAC began broadcasting sermons on Facebook Live about three years ago. The gradually added Christmas, Easter and Remembrance Day services to the live-stream line-up and, in September, 2019, made all Sunday services available to online viewers. By Palm Sunday, April 5, half of the 50 urban and rural parishes in the Edmonton diocese offered morning or evening prayer, eucharist or Taizé services online via Facebook, Zoom or YouTube. Some parishes were also distributing Messy Church and Sunday school crafts to families with online or printed instructions for completing the activities at home.

With these new ways of being

together and being the church, we have grown more confident in our ability to use digital technology to connect with Christians, not just in Alberta, but everywhere.

Although we may not be able to meet again in person "until Pentecost, or even beyond," says Bishop Jane, "I am hearing comments from folks all the time about the blessings, often unexpected, of reaching out through virtual worship."

In addition to hearing from our own parishioners, Bishop Jane says people who have seldom been heard from, or who were feeling disenfranchised, are reaching out.

"How amazing is it that God takes even these situations and turns them into blessings to bring God's children closer to him and to one another?" she asks. "I think we will be an even more connected church at the end of this pandemic, knowing each other more deeply, praying more deeply and reaching out with even more intention than before."

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Go and make disciples! Leadership in trying days

I begin with words I never dreamed I would write: we are having to be the church in the time of a global pandemic. How do we do that? What do we need to be able to do that? I would suggest that we already have all we need. Our God has not changed and continues to



The Ven. RICHARD KING
Archdeacon for
Mission and Discipleship
Diocese of Edmonton

abide in us as we abide in Him. We have seen in the articles over the past months what He calls the church to be and how he equips us.

We look to Jesus and we ask what would Jesus have us do? As we have seen over previous articles, Jesus engages in the world in these five ways, which he calls us to reflect (Ephesians 4:11-16):

- He is the Good Shepherd. He would have us care for each other and ensure everyone is

nurtured and valued through this time.

- He is Rabbi/Teacher. He will have things to teach us in this time that we could not learn any other way. So we continue to focus on getting to know our God and what it means to be a faithful disciple.
- He is the great Evangelist, in the purest sense of the word. He continues

to invite people to work and walk with Him. We still need to be Jesus' inviting, connecting people, though we may need to be more creative in how we do that.

- Jesus is described in Luke 24 as the Prophet, the one promised in the Old Testament who would call us back into faithful relationship with God. So we need to keep asking ourselves: Are we being faithful and

obedient to what God would have us do? Life is very different at the moment, so it's very important we ask these kinds of questions. It's important we not simply assume we must do the usual thing, just in a different way.

- He is the great Apostle (Hebrews 3:1). We saw that we too are 'sent' (apostolos) into the world. We are part of God's ongoing mission of redemption and reconciliation. What an opportunity we have been given in these days, to think through what we do and why!

So by starting with Jesus and these five functions (shepherding, teaching, inviting, plus that which is prophetic and apostolic), we lead with Christology through these trying days. It's all about Jesus, making Him known in word and action, glorifying Him in our lives. We saw in previous articles how we tend to lead with our ecclesiology instead, focusing upon our church life and what we do on Sundays. How can

we ensure we care for everyone and nurture missional discipleship when we can't meet on Sundays? That is the key question here. We answer by leading with Jesus (Christology) and bringing all five of these aspects of Jesus' mission and ministry to bear on every decision we make.

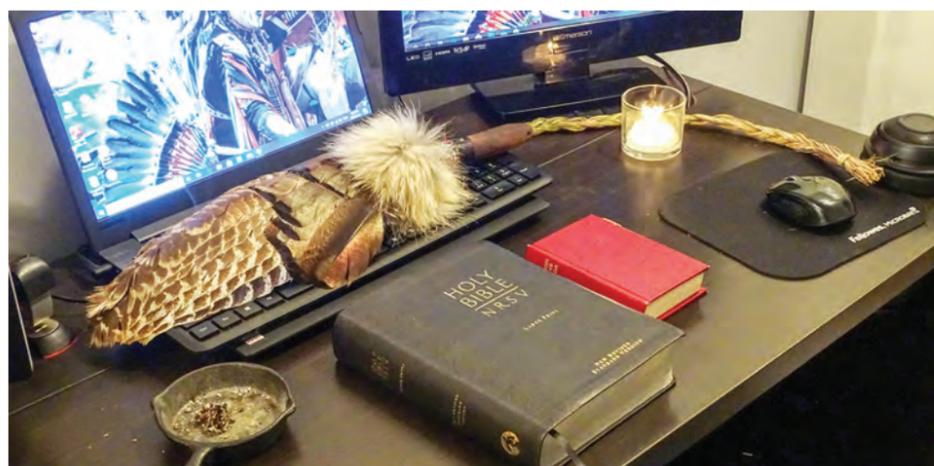
What will success look like? That is a simple question to answer. Jesus calls us, as his disciples, to go and make disciples. That's it! That's the unchanging task given to the Church. We are called to be faithful, trusting, loving, grace-and-hope-filled disciples who go and make more disciples. Success in these days is not ultimately about our streaming, the clicks on our websites, our social media use or the quality of our online production, except in as much as these things enable us to move forward as disciples who make disciples.

*May God bless you richly in all your endeavours in His name,
Richard*

Walking the Red Road as a follower of Jesus

The moonlight shines through the small opening between the curtains in my bedroom as the scream of the alarm clock goes off. It is 5:30 am and the start of a new day. For many people, the start of the day means a quick meal before a run or a spin on a bicycle. As a person of Indigenous ancestry and a follower of Jesus, my day starts differently. Grateful for the gift of each new day, I sit to express my gratitude to Creator in prayer.

Each day starts with the smudge. Mixing a little sweet grass with sage and tobacco, I light the sacred medicines with a match and fan the small flame with my prayer fan to ensure that the smoke rises. I fan the smoke over my head so I can think good thoughts; I fan the smoke over my eyes so I can see things in good light. I fan the smoke over my ears so I hear good things and listen to what others say with respect and understanding. I fan the smoke over my mouth so I will say good things and only speak the truth. I fan the smoke over my chest where my heart is so I approach each day with love for my fellow human beings. As I am doing this, I pray to the Creator asking that I walk with a good heart and a good mind. I ask for his blessing on all who walk this earth so we can live in harmony with one another. I pray my heart is opened to



receive the wisdom of his word as I settle down to read Scripture and pray the Daily Office (Morning and Evening Prayer) from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

To some, combining the smudge with the Daily Office may seem contradictory. I can understand that view given our colonial past and how the Church failed to see how there are similarities in some of the spiritual practices of my ancestors and Church liturgical practices. After all, Indigenous ceremony is another form of liturgy used to pray to God. I believe that, while they are indeed different, they also complement one another.

I find Anishnabe author Richard Wagamese's insights into smudging speak to the truth of the effect smudging has when used as part of prayer. On page 47 of *Embers: One Ojibway's Meditations*, he writes:

"Three strands in a braid of sweet grass. They represent three spiritual qualities – maybe love, kindness, humility. When I smudge myself, I purify myself in those qualities. I prepare myself for my day with the strength of those spiritual qualities. The smoke clings to my hair, my clothes, and it remains in the air of my home. As I move through the day and smell that fragrance, I am reminded of how I have chosen to live-and in that is power of greeting each day with reverence, calm and prayer. That is how I learn to direct my humanity toward peace, equality, and harmony: one day, one person, one circumstance at a time." As my prayers rise to the Creator with the smoke of the smudge, I am made ready to meet God as I read and meditate on his word given to us in the Scriptures.

My ancestors learned through

the passing down of oral traditions and stories recorded using wampum belts. For some, they were recorded using petroglyphs on buffalo robes. Lessons on how to love and live were passed on to children from generation-to-generation. If we look at how we came to have the Bible, this is not much different than the Hebrew Scriptures, passed on from generation to generation until they were documented on scrolls during the exile in Babylon.

Daily devotions have long been a part of discipleship, and even though we cannot meet together in public worship, it is important we continue to hold onto what keeps us connected to God. For some, it is meditation. For others, it may be praying using prayer beads. For me, it is the smell of the sage, sweet grass and tobacco, and beautiful rhythm and language in the prayer book. For me, walking the Red Road and being a follower of Jesus are complementary on this journey of being in relationship with our Creator.

Fred Matthews is an Indigenous Anglican the Edmonton diocese. He worships at St. Thomas', Sherwood Park and at St. Faith's, Edmonton. Fred continues to be an active member of the Messy Church Reconciliation Team and assisting with the ministry at Frog Lake First Nation.

ICPM a presence at Expo Centre and in urban core

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

In these extraordinary days when so many are being asked to self-isolate and stay home, what happens to those who don't have a home? Edmonton is trying to answer that need, using the Expo Centre at Northlands as a day shelter where 4-500 people experiencing homelessness can still access the things they need for daily life.

Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM), an interdenominational Christian ministry of presence in Edmonton's urban core, plays a significant role in the city's response to homelessness. Like other social service agencies coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, it has had to adapt its services to continue to safely meet the needs of the city's vulnerable population.

Ordinarily based out of the Bissell Centre, ICPM is now part of the centralized operations at the Expo Centre. An ETS shuttle runs

back and forth between Boyle Street and Northlands. People are able to come in to the centre each day, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, to use the washroom, have a shower, take a nap or have a meal. Services such as a tax clinic, clothing storage, chaplaincy and counselling, as well as an opportunity to connect with Housing First are also available. At the time of printing, more services were being added daily.

ICPM team members Jim Gurnett, Michelle Nieviadomy and Rick Chapman maintain a presence with the Bissell Centre in Hall A, from 10:00am to noon, Monday to Friday. They offer spiritual care, quiet conversation and distribute essential items such as socks and



Volunteers hand out drinks and bagged lunches on Sunday mornings at the Bissell Centre. ICPM is temporarily relocated to the Expo Centre.

underwear.

ICPM pastor the Rev. Rick Chapman reported during the first week of operations that emergency relief workers at the EXPO Centre were doing their best to maintain a safe environment and prevent the spread of COVID-19. People coming into the facility have their temperature taken to assess their health. Patrons who do not have an elevated temperature then register and proceed to Hall A, a large, open, well ventilated space with high ceilings.

People lining up for

services are kept at a safe distance from one another by standing within tape boundaries on the floor. Tables are set up with barriers in place to maintain social distancing when people sit down. To the rear of the

hall, 35 day cots are set up for people needing a rest, again with proper distancing.

At night, Hope Mission, the George Spady Centre and the Kinsmen Centre in the river valley are open for people to sleep.

"The site is well organized on every level, including staff care," said Chapman.

"The Bissell team and other agencies are partnering in this venture, which the social care professionals say, 'seems to be working.'"

He said, "Security

is present throughout the building and Bissell staff maintain a friendly supervision of the site. The atmosphere is congenial and the patrons, as usual, are thankfully appreciative of the services offered."

Meanwhile, ICPM has found a way to continue its year-round (52 weeks) Sunday lunch program, which is provided by volunteers from more than 80 local churches, synagogues and a mosque. Instead of patrons being invited to the Bissell Centre to worship with the Emmanuel community and enjoy a sit-down meal and fellowship, the ICPM ministry team hands out bag lunches through the door from 10:30am to noon, with any leftover lunches to be distributed at the Expo Centre.

ICPM continues to connect with people on the street throughout the week, asking for prayer, and acknowledging these are still early days in dealing with this pandemic.

Cathedral food ministry feeding neighbours in uncertain times

CANON BARBARA BURROWS
All Saints' Cathedral

At All Saints' Cathedral we are all trying to adapt to our new 'normal' created by the Covid-19 crisis. It is important we continue, as long as possible, our food ministry to our neighbours who rely on us in downtown Edmonton. We have made significant changes to these programs to provide for the health and safety of both the volunteers and the community members.

At Manna Market, which runs every Wednesday afternoon, we now pre-pack bags of fresh groceries which customers can pick up for \$10. Before the crisis, our neighbours, many of whom reside in the low-income seniors residence next door, could choose their own produce from baskets set out in our indoor market. In mid-March, when social

distancing became a reality, we began packing bags with popular food items and/or items that might last a while, such as potatoes, apples, oranges, pears, onions, carrots, tomatoes, cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower or bananas.

At first, it worked for people to come in one door, pay, pick up their bag, and exit out the other door of the hall. Then we streamlined distribution further and, with fewer volunteers, we tried selling the bags of produce outside. Our system seemed to worked well, enabling everyone to maintain the appropriate physical distance from one other. We hope to continue this routine as outdoor temperatures increase this spring.

In mid-March, 60 bags of groceries were distributed, reflecting our weekly average number of



Quinn Strikwerda greets Manna Market customers outside All Saints' Cathedral. Packed bags replace the open market.

Manna Market patrons. The next week, we distributed 35 bags. The bags hold quite a bit of produce and some may still have had food left from the week before. As always, we keep any leftover produce to sell the following week, if it is still sellable, or we donate it to St. Faith's PrayerWorks Community Meals program. We also order extra bananas and oranges to give away at our Friday breakfasts.

The Cathedral Friday Breakfasts feed our friends, including many people who live on the street or in

shelters, a free, nutritious meal. In the past, we have concluded our annual breakfast ministry at the end of March. As a result of extraordinary circumstances this year, we will continue, along with a new Tuesday breakfast, as long as we can during the Covid crisis. These meals have also taken on a different form. Instead of inviting our friends in for a sit-down breakfast of pancakes, ham and porridge, the team prepares a take-out container with a toasted ham sandwich, hard boiled eggs, fruit and coffee. When we

started, because it was cold outside, our friends were invited into the church to eat (keeping the correct physical distance of course). This was very moving to see, and our dean and vicar sanitized the pews afterwards!

We hope to continue to run these programs as long as we can throughout the Covid crisis. We will continue to adapt to the new and ever-changing safety protocols, endeavouring to provide a safe and healthy environment for our volunteers and our community.

Edmonton diocese and international partners hold each other in prayer

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

On March 14, the Diocese of Edmonton received word from Audace Kwizera, Diocesan Secretary, Buyé Diocese, that the COVID-19 virus had not yet reached Burundi, but it had reached neighboring countries.

“Let us pray for each other during this unprecedented time,” said Kwizera.

But by April 1, the Synod Office had also received news via an email from the Rev. Dominique

Ciza, former Diocesan Secretary for Buyé diocese, that the first positive cases of Covid-19 had been recorded in Burundi. (On April 3, there were 7,080 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Africa.)

“We need your prayers,” said Ciza who is currently at seminary at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.

Fr. Michael Lapsley, our Honorary Canon for Healing and Reconciliation and resident of Cape Town, South Africa, also reached out the Edmonton diocese

at the beginning of April. He requested prayers for the people of South Africa. On Thursday, March 26, the government there began a three-week, nation-wide

lockdown. All South Africans are required to stay in their homes. Please pray for the thousands who live in depressed areas where

it is not uncommon that 10 people might share a small shack with no running water.



Pictured above: Fr. Michael Lapsley speaks to parishioners during a visit to Edmonton diocese, November 2019. Pictured right: Bishop Sixbert and Bishop Jane sign an agreement to walk together, to uphold each other in prayer and to work for the Kingdom of God in Buyé and in Edmonton, May 2009.



PrayerWorks Community Meals Continue through Crisis



Pictured above left: Meredith Watt, Paul Chu, Carmen Chu and Treena Chu, volunteers with the St. John the Evangelist PrayerWorks team, prepare sandwiches for a hearty and nutritious lunch on April 4, 2020. St. Faith's PrayerWorks' volunteers prepare and package take-away lunches from Wednesday to Saturday each week. Pictured above right: Greg Hendricks and Treena Chu from the St. John the Evangelist team hand out lunches with St. Faith's rector Travis Enright. Lunches are passed to community members through the doors of the church hall, ensuring physical distancing for the safety of all, and enabling volunteers and lunch recipients to exchange greetings. Some meals are delivered directly as well, always holding safety as a priority. Photos: Jennifer Stewart, St. Faith's Anglican Church

St. Luke's Messy Church finds creative way to celebrate Easter

SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

Social distancing did not stop Messy Easter at St. Luke's Anglican Church in Edmonton. It is true, families and friends were not able to gather around tables in the usual fashion, working on their crafts and enjoying a meal together. Still, the Messy Celebration of Easter found a way to go ahead.

Through research and planning after the Covid-19 crisis hit, the St. Luke's Messy Church Team was inspired to put together “Messy Church To-Go” bags! They filled the bags with six Easter crafts, plus crossword puzzles, colouring pages,



an Easter story booklet, the Easter jellybean prayer, and a few treats. The bags contained everything needed for making the crafts,



including pencils, crayons and glue dots. The team then emailed the St. Luke's Messy Church congregation



to let them know when to pick up their Easter bags at St. Luke's or to arrange for delivery if needed.

Bishop connects with Athabasca friends and rich history

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca



Young, second Bishop of the Diocese of Athabasca, left Fort

The weekend of March 15, I had the privilege of returning to the parish of Athabasca. This would be my last in-person visit for a while, and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I attended a congregational meeting with the wardens, and visited some of the parishioners with the Rev. Christobel Lines. I enjoyed more fellowship at a lunch following the Sunday service. Even though I had only been away from the parish for three months, it felt like a long time had elapsed, and it was great to see old friends again.

Athabasca has a rich history in our church. As early as 1879, missionaries passing through Athabasca Landing held services in teepees or buildings belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). In 1893, the Rt. Rev. Richard

Vermilion to reside in Athabasca Landing. He was the first clergy in residence. In 1894, HBC transferred land to the Anglican Church for a church and residence. The first church (St. Matthew's) and Bishop's residence were completed and opened on September 20, 1896. A new church was completed in 1908. As a memorial to all the pioneer Christian workers, known and unknown, in the north, the church was named All Saints.

The Rt. Rev. Edwin Robins was Bishop from 1912-1930. When the railroad expanded into the Peace River region he moved the See from Athabasca to Peace River, in 1916.

Since its beginning, Athabasca parish has always made education and outreach priorities.

- In 1895, a Day School was started at Bishop's Court (the residence of the Bishop). This continued until 1904 with the start of the public school district.
- The same year, a printing press was used to produce scripture and instructional materials in English and Cree Syllabics.
- In 1920, Sunday school by post was started, as was the Sunday school traveling mission ("The Van Ladies").
- In 1938 a boys' hostel was opened for school-age children, with a girls' hostel following in 1941. These continued until 1966, and were a place where children from across the north could

- live while they attended school in the town.
- Camp Matawawin on the northeast shore of Baptiste Lake started in 1943. The grounds were closed in 1980. Many of the congregations around Athabasca were originally started as mission outposts of clergy based in Athabasca. Clergy and lay readers would regularly make trips to Smith (90 km away to the northwest), to Rich Lake (145 km away to the east), and many points between.

Today, the parish provides a vibrant food ministry to the homeless through All Saints' Kitchen (ASK), a soup kitchen open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; regular services at the extended-care facilities in town; a prayer chain and pastoral visiting to the hospital.

I greatly enjoyed my visit to Athabasca. Please keep the parish in your prayers as its members serve God in this beautiful area of our diocese.

In Christ's Name;
+David



Bishop David and the parishioners of All Saints' Church in Athabasca.

St. Thomas' vestry goes virtual

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca



delicious meal and great conversation.

St. Thomas' was the first of my virtual visits. I met with several members of the Vestry via Zoom conference call, and had a very good visit with the Rev. Christopher Tapera. Benita and I also had the pleasure of having supper with Chris and his wife Julliette and daughter Lisa, where we were treated to a

Of all the parishes in the Athabasca diocese, St. Thomas' is the one I have spent the most time in. Our family attended St. Thomas' from 1988 to 2015, and I count many of the members as good friends. It is a comparatively young parish; being established in 1983 as a "daughter parish" of All Saints'. The parish has been

through highs and lows in its brief life, and at present is re-establishing itself.

I was encouraged in discussion with the vestry, as our honest and fruitful discussion I believe God has great things in store for our diocese, and St. Thomas' is no exception: His hand is upon them. Please keep them in your prayers as they follow Christ in doing His will.

All glory be to God.



Screen capture of St. Thomas', Fort McMurray vestry meeting with Bishop Greenwood (pictured top row, center).

Love of Christ Abounds in Lac la Biche

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca



St. Andrew's, Lac La Biche was founded in 1915,

I was greeted warmly by the members of St. Andrew's, Lac La Biche, on March 7-8, just as I had been when visiting in Fort Chipewyan the week before. I wish to thank the Rev. Terry Francis and his wife Pat for hosting me at their house, and engaging in wonderful (and wide-ranging) conversations.

We were able to celebrate at St. Andrew's on Sunday morning; gathering afterward to exchange ideas and get to know one another better. We had a fairly frank, and healthy, discussion about the parish which, though presently small in numbers, is full of the presence of Christ. Their love of Christ is self-evident as shown by their graciousness to myself and each other.

and together with St. Mary's Rich Lake (50 km to the south east), forms the Parish of the Living Water. The church centre and rectory are on the south side of the lake with beautiful views of sunsets over the water in the summer.

Lac La Biche has a population of around 2,300 people (2016 census) and is in a beautiful country of lakes, rolling hills, farms and forests. Please keep the members of the Parish of Living Water in your prayers, that they continue to be filled with the presence of Christ more and more, and that they get to witness Christ doing wonderful and amazing things in their beautiful community.

Glory to God,
+David

PWRDF plants seeds of hope with Canadian Foodgrains Bank



I was recently invited by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) to join a “learning tour” of India, meeting with partner

organizations and seeing supported projects. Our Anglican Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) is one of 15 church-based member agencies of CFGB. I had no idea what an adventure India would be!

Realising I knew very little about the country, I decided to do some research. I read a book about the history of India, and followed that by watching an excellent YouTube video series called “The Story of India” by historian Michael Wood. I was given two guide books, full of helpful hints on traversing the culture, by my daughter, and I also read a couple of novels set in that country. I was ready!

In spite of all my pre-travel diligence, I was not prepared for what I saw when we arrived in the Kolkata. I could not have imagined the cacophony and mayhem of traffic. I had no real concept of the poverty I would see; people living on the streets and in makeshift shelters wherever there was a bit of space. I didn’t realize how crowded it would be – with people, vehicles of every



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton

description, and animals wandering freely about.

I also hadn’t anticipated the lasting impact the wonderful people I met would have on me. Upon our arrival, we traveled north through the state of West Bengal for several hours by train to visit projects with our partners.

We ventured up into the foothills to remote villages perched on the sides of steep hillsides;

home of the Malto people.

After a very warm welcome, which included colourful dancers and drummers leading us into the village, we were told about the ongoing project to teach local farmers conservation agriculture techniques. Lives had already been dramatically changed. We heard of efforts to build stone berms across the hillside fields to minimise soil loss during the rainy season and retain moisture; to plant in rows rather than scattering seed; to abandon the practice of burning forest when new land was cleared for fields. We learned of healthier livestock due to the practice of crop rotation; and healthier people who were growing fresh produce in their gardens. I was surprised to learn that the idea of growing garden vegetables had been until recently unknown to these people, and they had certainly embraced the idea.

We were invited into family homes to have conversations (with interpreters) about how their lives had been impacted by the project. It was here that I met Raju and



Dorothy and her team members with Raju, Devi, and their daughters in front of their home.

Devi who live with their two young daughters live in a small mud hut. Raju told us how he grows a variety of crops like maize, pigeon peas, lentils and mustard on the two acres he farms. With the addition of a variety of vegetables he no longer struggles to feed his family. He grows tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, okra, pumpkin, flat beans and papaya in the family garden. The village had received a male goat that was larger than the local breed, and now Raju’s goats were producing larger kids that he could sell for much more money.

When asked about his dreams for the future, Raju replied, “Me and my wife are illiterate. We hope to have our children be educated. We want to grow our food in a better way.” He also told us that 9-year-old Biji’s dream was “to be able to go to school. She wants to be a doctor and be able to give medicines to the people in the village.” With pride, he shared that he had recently sold a

goat and would now be able to send her to school!

Knowledge transfer is a powerful tool with tremendous possibilities. People’s lives are transformed by the opportunity to learn basic techniques to gain food security. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank and PWRDF working with local partners who are aware of the challenges and can envision viable solutions. I saw firsthand the results of this working model! Together, our goal is “a world without hunger.” Your donation to the PWRDF through the CFGB will enable the continuation of projects with our partners, similar to those I saw in India. Every donation is matched by the Government of Canada by up to 4:1.

Go to www.foodgrainsbank.ca to learn more about the work of the CFGB, and for more about projects supported by Canadian Anglicans visit www.pwrdf.org.

Affliction or Opportunity: a Reflection



This photo of an empty church is apparently both a reflection of present reality amidst the Covid-19 pandemic and also (according to the January, 2020 issue of the *Anglican Journal*) a glimpse of church in 40 years. I know that with God all things are possible and he will bring people to the church, but it is

also our responsibility as members of the church to shine our light in the world. We have no better opportunity than now to share our stories.

In the last few weeks, thanks to digital technology, I have been able to worship with the Archbishop of Canterbury, my Bishop and my rector on the same

Sunday. It is the season of Lent and, without the distraction of going here or there, I have more opportunity to open the Book of Common Prayer and Book of Alternative Services I keep in my nightstand and read and pray.

I am also aware of other opportunities to connect with people. Our phone prayer chain is holding up more people in prayer, I have participated in Zoom virtual meetings and I Face-time with my family. After weeks in isolation it was beautiful to see and be seen, to hear and be heard.

In all situations, I believe God challenges us to seek opportunities to be our best and love all people – both the seen and unseen.

Submitted by
Candace Mahaffey,
Christ Church,
Grande Prairie



ANGLICAN
FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Annual General Meeting

Due to COVID-19, the Board of Directors is working diligently on an alternate plan for its 2020 AGM originally scheduled for May 20 in Edmonton.

We invite you to check the website for an update on the date, time and how you can participate.



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