

THE MESSENGER

JUNE 2016

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Hearts and homes open to wildfire evacuees

Jodi Schmidt's view of her Timberlea neighbourhood as she and her family evacuated Fort McMurray on May 3. Though fire consumed 20 per cent of the city, the Schmidt's home did not burn.



MARGARET MARSHALL

The Sunday after the largest fire evacuation in Alberta's history, some of Fort McMurray's residents who had been forced to leave their homes on Tuesday, May 3, were reunited in Edmonton during a special worship service at St. Augustine of Canterbury Anglican Church. The service was led by Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton and clergy from All Saints' and St. Thomas, Fort McMurray and St. Augustine's.

The familiar liturgy provided comfort and a much needed opportunity for displaced community members, around 30 people out of a congregation of 100, to gather in one place, greet one another and tell their story of the event, said the Rev. Jonathan Crane, rector of St. Augustine's.

"We followed the *Book of Alternative Services* (BAS) pattern for Ascension Day, but gave room for clergy to speak. We allowed the prayers to be offered directly by individuals in the congregation," said Crane, who planned the service with his good friend, the Rev. Dane Neufeld, rector of All Saints', Fort McMurray.

Throughout the service and potluck meal organized by the host parish, people spoke of what they had seen, the grief they felt, what had given them hope, what they learned in the process, their fear for their homes, and how coping with the aftermath of the fire was affecting their life and work.

"It was stunning and amazing to hear such stories," Crane said.

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St. Timothy's Passes Waterbucket for Red Cross



Bruce Hogle passing bucket.

On his way to a gathering of the St. Timothy's Men's Club Saturday, May 7, long-time parishioner Bruce Hogle, former news director for CFRN TV (now CTV Edmonton) grabbed a bucket from his garage and covered it with newspaper headlines related to the Fort McMurray wildfire.

Members filled the bucket with \$360, which they agreed would be used to help Fort McMurray citizens.

The next day, at the suggestion of Canon Maureen Crerar, the "Hogle Bucket" was passed among the two Sunday morning congregations at St. Timothy's.

Hogle then handed the bucket off to a neighbour who was attending a Shriner's event and it has since made the rounds to several service and leisure clubs in Edmonton, for a grand total of \$1,500 by press time.

"I truly believe in giving back to all the communities in which I have lived," says Hogle, who started the CTV Good Neighbour Fund benefitting charities in central and northern Alberta.

"I know that eventually we will have the major fire problems in northern Alberta controlled. But we can't forget the people who will be going back and the people who can't or won't go back."



The Edmonton Synod Office delivers a truckload of drinking water to the Bold Centre in Lac La Biche, an emergency centre for fire evacuees.



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Anglicans unite over Fort McMurray disaster

We're tired at the end of the day, but it's a good tired.

This is ministry. *Deborah and Clive Scheepers*

Continued from front page.

At Northlands Expo Centre, the Edmonton Reception Centre for Fort McMurray evacuees, Edmonton City Chaplain, the Rev. John Dowds, coordinated a roster of volunteer chaplains, including Bishop Jane Alexander and clergy from the Edmonton diocese, to provide pastoral care.

The first point of refuge for thousands of the more than 80,000 people evacuated from Fort McMurray was found in the neighbouring communities to the southeast. Mere days after being ordained deacons in the Edmonton diocese, the Rev. Donna Gauthier and the Rev. Helen Northcott of St. John the Evangelist, Cold Lake, took action to help families arriving in their communities with little more than the clothes on their back.

Keen to help, Gauthier worked through the day connecting with the local Red Cross and Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), the local radio station, and other churches in the area, all in an effort to serve the evacuees. Upon hearing from a cousin who lost her home to the fire, Gauthier located more than 40 families at a Bonnyville hotel. Local stores had closed for the evening, so she brought a few essential items from home and stayed to hear their concerns. She found people were in shock and having difficulty getting information about what they were to do next. A quick and reliable means of communication was one of the first needs Gauthier discovered. When people rushed to safety, they left home without chargers for their phones - lifelines of information that last only as long as their batteries.

A local radio station announced

St. John's annual spring rummage sale, inviting evacuees to come and take what they needed and Cold Lake thrift stores opened their closets to evacuees. Gauthier and other members of the faith community met at Lakeland Lutheran Church to determine the most efficient way to collect and distribute food and essential items. The local food bank, run by the ministerial group, was chosen as the central drop-off and pick-up location.

The Rev. Helen Northcott, meanwhile, learned that members of the Fort McMurray First Nation had been evacuated to Lac La Biche. In response, the Edmonton Synod Office delivered a truckload of drinking water to the Bold Centre. More than 4,000 Fort McMurray evacuees registered at the Bold Centre. Some stayed in the facility and slept on cots, hundreds were billeted locally, and others moved on to other locations.

"Donations have been overwhelming and we have 500 people signed up to volunteer," said Jihad Moghrabi, Communications Coordinator for Lac La Biche County. He stressed the need for people to give monetarily through the Red Cross or Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF).

Diocese of Athabasca priests Deborah and Clive Scheepers began a ministry of presence at the Bold Centre as soon as it opened as an emergency reception centre. Alberta citizens for less than two years - the Scheepers came to Canada from South Africa in January, 2015 to minister to the parishes of All Saints', Athabasca and St. Andrew's, Lac La Biche - never before had they encountered a disaster of such magnitude.



Deborah and Clive Scheepers (left) talking with evacuees at the Bold Centre in Lac La Biche.

"People don't know what the future holds," said Clive. "They don't know if they'll have a home to return to."

"So we listen," said Deborah, "and give them a hug if they need one."

Dividing their time between the Bold Centre, the Athabasca Agriplex and the Boyle Community Centre, they invited evacuees to their Sunday service at St. Andrew's, offering a liturgy of comfort. Bold Centre staff announced the service and provided shuttle service to the church.

"We're tired at the end of the day," said the Scheepers. "But it's a good tired. This is ministry."

In Drayton Valley, some 500 kilometres southwest of Fort McMurray, the parish of All Saints' distributed welcome fliers at hotels and guest homes, providing evacuees with information about community resources, important contacts and a prayer by Bishop Jane.

The Rev. Miranda Sutherland, interim priest-in-charge of the parish, volunteered at the local Red Cross distribution centre where "great generosity from the community" was received. The parish collected its May offerings for the Red Cross, while also upholding the Fort McMurray community in prayer.

On May 8, Bishop Jane invited parishes in the Edmonton diocese to take a special collection for relief work related to the fires. "This is, of course, an extraordinary ask," she said, "but these are extraordinary times..."

Across Canada and around the world, people have given generously in response to the Fort McMurray fire, and the federal government is matching every individual donation to the Canadian Red Cross.

As of Monday, May 9, PWRDF had received more than \$24,000 in donations, and an immediate grant of \$15,000 was sent to Bishop Fraser Lawton and the Athabasca diocese for emergency relief. On May 12, PWRDF sent an additional \$6,000 to the Diocese of Edmonton for immediate relief needs for evacuees of the Fort McMurray fires. A Christian agency focused on international development and global justice, PWRDF was started by Anglicans and Canadians who wanted to help families stricken by the 1958 mining disaster in Springhill, NS.

At press time, more than 30 families had contacted the Synod Office in Edmonton to offer assistance and accommodations for evacuees.



Deacon Donna Gauthier, second from left, and members of the Cold Lake faith community are assisting evacuees through the food bank.

Holy God,

We give thanks for all the blessings of this life and for the indwelling of your Holy Spirit.

This morning we particularly lift up to you the people of Fort McMurray and the Wood Buffalo region. We pray for all those who have lost their homes, all who have been displaced, all those in distress.

Comfort them O Lord. Be present to them.

Send the blessing of rain upon this land that fires may cease.

Give rest and strength to all emergency support workers and their families.

Open our hearts to help. Inspire us with your generosity of Spirit to share what we have in the name of Jesus. We are one body in Christ, when one member suffers we all suffer.

Be with your children, Lord. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Walking together a changed community rebuilds



BISHOP FRASER LAWTON
Diocese of Athabasca

As with most of us, the events of the first week of May have changed the focus of my time and ministry. I want to begin with a word of thanks to so very many people. The Diocese of Edmonton and, especially, Bishop Alexander have been wonderful support for us. We have received

expressions of prayer and support from all across the country. I am not sure what will be happening by the time this goes to print. I trust that whatever stage we are at in terms of returning to Fort McMurray, we will continue to work together to support our brothers and sisters there.

The moment-by-moment news, mostly by text and messages, augmented by media reports during the evacuation of the city, was overwhelming. The next few days continued that sense of moment-by-moment changes and constant shifts of emotion. As I've considered what that has been like for me, I wonder what it has been like for you who lived it. So often, as I stayed in contact from a distance,

I was struck by the grace of God in the evacuation of so many people, the generosity and sacrifice of people bringing fuel, water and supplies, the attitude, mutual support, and the expressed and lived faith of the evacuees.

Even as we came to the place where most of the evacuees were finding someplace to stay and their first needs being met, my mind has also gone to the next phases. I am mindful of the experience of our people in Slave Lake, and what happens when people are able to return. They then face the reality of lost homes and businesses and jobs, as well as the reality of preserved homes and jobs. Decisions, some very difficult, must be made about

the rebuilding, or not, of houses and lives. With those come all sorts of emotions, challenges and changes. The community will never be the same. This is part of the long-term issue. People will need space to grieve and be angry and be grateful and be sad and to be allowed to be happy. All these decisions and emotions and actions will also need support. More than ever, this is when we will need to be family. I ask the rest of the diocese (and the wider church) to commit to those who return to Fort McMurray and walk into reality what is to come. I ask those who return to let us in. We want to be with you: to cry with you, laugh with you, remember with you, work with you, pray with you and worship with you.

These moments also bring us to think about our faith and relationship with God, even if we do not frame our thoughts in those words. God has not abandoned us. In the midst of the disasters of life, God is faithful. In Revelation (21:5), God says that He is "making all things new," something echoed in other places in scripture. It seems an appropriate verse for this time. In facing rebuilding, we can remember that this is part of what God does with us: remakes us from our brokenness. It also a good theme in how and what is remade. Let us let God use us, but with Him as the builder.

The Lord be with you,
+Fraser

Faith translates into acts of courage and compassion



BISHOP JANE ALEXANDER
Diocese of Edmonton

I was reminded yet again this week of the truth of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In talking of us all as members of the body of Christ, he says in chapter 12 that "when one member suffers we all suffer." But

I have seen how faith is stirring people to action whether it is by prayer, volunteering, firefighting, working as chaplains, giving up homes, etc. The body of Christ is on the move throughout this diocese in being present to our brothers and sisters from the Wood Buffalo region and Fort McMurray.

I think that we are all aware that this is a marathon and although we may feel a little out of shape to address the needs before us, we are all committed to the ministry. Since the fires first started I have met with people across this diocese and also with folks from the Diocese of Athabasca. SO

Prince Philip and I were shocked and saddened by the news of the wildfires that are causing such devastation to Fort McMurray. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been affected, and we send our heartfelt thanks to the firefighters and the other emergency workers.
Elizabeth R. (Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

many stories to tell. Stories that show the best of who we are called to be in Christ: in our compassion, in courage and in the strength that we find in Christ Jesus. Whether I was at the ACW annual, the Rev. Richard King's induction, the Spring tea at St. Augustine's – Parkland; worship at St. John the Evangelist, Edmonton, or the special welcome service at St. Augustine's of Canterbury, there were stories to hear and prayers to share. Friends and relatives of so many of us have been directly affected

by the fires. Like many of the clergy, time spent with people at Northlands is both challenging and humbling. The PWRDF has been in constant contact with us about the support they are able to provide for both emergency and long-term relief work. Two of our newly ordained deacons, the Rev. Donna Gauthier and the Rev. Helen Northcott were literally given a baptism of fire the day after their ordinations as they were called in to help in Bonnyville, Lac La Biche and Cold Lake and they rose

to the challenge beautifully. So many of you have asked how you can help and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I know how much your support means to those who are displaced and by Bishop Fraser in Athabasca. We will keep you updated with the information we have through the *Synod Scene* e-newsletter and through the website. Prayer goes without saying and, at the moment, monetary donations are best through Red Cross and PWRDF.
In Christ,
+Jane

<p>SUBMISSIONS DUE 1 MONTH PRIOR to PRINTING DATE</p> <p>DEADLINE for SEPTEMBER ISSUE: August 1</p> <p>submissions We welcome letters to the editor, news, stories (max 500 words), event notices, book reviews and photos.</p> <p>send to Margaret Marschall (Edmonton) anglicanmessenger@gmail.com or Peter Clarke (Athabasca) seens@telus.net</p>	<p>read online www.edmonton.anglican.org/messenger</p> <p>get weekly news www.edmonton.anglican.org/synod-scene</p> <p>find us on facebook www.facebook.com/anglican.edmonton</p> <p>subscribe www.anglicanjournal.com/subscribe</p>	<p>THE MESSENGER TEAM</p> <p>EDITORS Margaret Marschall (Edmonton) Peter Clarke (Athabasca)</p> <p>LAYOUT & DESIGN Margaret Marschall</p> <p>PROOFREADING Jennifer Wirun</p> <p>REPORTING Margaret Marschall</p>	<p>A \$15 annual donation is suggested. Please send donations to the Dioceses of Athabasca or Edmonton, c/o The Messenger.</p> <p>The Messenger is published under the authority of the Dioceses of Athabasca and Edmonton. Opinions expressed in The Messenger are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher.</p> <p>The Messenger is a section of the Anglican Journal, printed 10 times a year (no issues July and August) by Webnews Printing Inc. North York, ON.</p>
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Celebration of passionate witness to God's love

MARGARET MARSHALL

“Alleluia! Christ is Risen!” -- the celebratory greeting by Bishop Jane Alexander to the congregation gathered for a Service of Ordination at All Saints' Cathedral, Sunday, May 1, 2016.

“Alleluia! Christ is Risen!” -- powerful and passionate words repeated by Archdeacon Christopher Pappas, rector of Holy Trinity, Edmonton, during his homily address on the Eve of St. Philip and St. James.

“These words should drive every moment of your ministry,” Pappas reminded his fellow clergy and the newly ordained members of the Diocese of Edmonton, including the Rev. Barry Rose, St. John the Divine, Onoway, ordained to the priesthood, and Donna Gauthier and Helen Northcott, St. John the Evangelist, Cold Lake, and Judy Purkis, St. Thomas, Sherwood Park, ordained to the diaconate.

“That’s what you’re witnessing to the world. That’s why you have been called into this ministry. Each day of your life, you need to confront the world with the passion, the power, and the joy of that message,” Pappas said.

“God raised Jesus Christ from the dead! Despite all that the world did to the contrary, despite the worst that the powers of darkness threw out...love won in the end! It was as true on the first Easter as it is today. Never forget that. Never lose that passion or that purpose.”

Barry Rose’s journey to the priesthood began more than 40 years ago when he followed his passion for bringing lost souls to the love of Christ to become a Church Army (now Threshold Ministries) evangelist. It is where he met fellow clergymen, the Rev. Tim Chesterton, rector of St. Margaret’s, Edmonton, and the Rev. Rick Chapman, pastor of Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM).

Years later, as Site Chaplain at the Edmonton Institution, a maximum security prison, Rose started a cookie ministry to help bridge the gap between churches and inmates. He was ordained a deacon by Bishop Jane Alexander on October 18, 2015, and ever since has served the parish of St. John the Divine, Onoway, first as deacon and now as priest-in-charge. Whether leading chapel for hardened criminals or a Sunday morning café based on the teachings of Jesus and radical hospitality, Rose demonstrates a genuine willingness to be a witness to God’s love.

Three newly ordained deacons vowed they are ready to confront the world with God’s love. In their own words, the three women describe what led them to use their Christian faith to serve their community:

The Rev. Donna Gauthier

“I did not grow up in a family that talked about God and rarely ever attended church. The only time I entered a church was to attend a wedding or funeral.

It was after a major tragedy in February 2005, that I attended St. John the Evangelist church in Cold Lake. I selected the Anglican Church because I was told that my great-grandmother was Anglican. Whenever she had a chance, she would quietly teach me about God. She passed away when I was seven, but in that short time she taught me to love God.

In 2007, my eight-year-old son and I were baptized by Bishop Victoria Matthews. It was during my baptism that I received my call to ordained ministry. With a young family and a business to run, I did not have the time to immediately attend school. Several years passed, I was able to start taking courses and recently was ordained a deacon. God has blessed my life with many wonderful parishioners and priests, who have walked with me on



Bishop Jane Alexander and the newly ordained deacons and priest from left: Judy Purkis, Helen Northcott, Barry Rose and Donna Gauthier.



Clockwise from left: priest Barry Rose is vested by examining chaplains Arlette Zinck and Archdeacon Joanne Webster; Bishop Jane prays over deacon Helen Northcott; deacon Donna Gauthier receives her stole from Bishop Jane.

my spiritual journey. I am excited to continue to share with them the plan that God has for our amazing church in Cold Lake.”

The Rev. Helen Northcott

“On Sunday, May 1, 2016, I was ordained a Deacon.

I made a commitment to accept God’s Holy Word, and to convey His messages to those that I am committed to serve and help. My goal is to strive, in humility, to be God’s light among all people and to help them understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. The ordination, to me, means that those to whom I minister will see me as an example of God’s love and grace, which will assist us in our journey to remain on the path of Jesus’ blessed footsteps. Together

we can take small steps and build them into larger steps toward our goals.

“Creator, give us strength to live together, with respect and commitment as we grow in Your Spirit, for you are God, now and for ever Amen.” (A Disciple’s Prayer Book)

The Rev. Judy Purkis

“I sensed a call to ordained ministry for the first time in my mid-teens. At the time there was no expectation that women would be ordained.

However, the call resurfaced when I was in my early 40s. Over the years I have wrestled with this call, and whether it was real. I questioned ‘whose voice am I hearing?’ During the formal discernment process I struggled with the concept of leadership, and seeing

myself as a leader. It was not until I realized that this process was in God’s hands, not mine, that I was able to recognize that I was indeed a leader. I was finally open to hearing the affirmation people had given me over the years.

I do not have a clear picture of where God will lead me in ministry. However, I do know that God is working in my life, teaching and leading me through the ministry I am currently involved in at St. Thomas, and the current circumstances in my life.”

Hospital Expansion Underway



Expansion of Buyé Hospital is progressing well.

Photo: Dominique Ciza

Expansion of the overcrowded maternity ward in Buyé Hospital is progressing well. Funding from the Edmonton diocese's REACH Campaign and the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) will double the size of the ward from three rooms to six. There will

be a second delivery room and separate rooms for women who have C-section deliveries and complications of pregnancy. The walls and ceiling of the existing building have been repaired, modern windows installed and the roof and sidewalk replaced.

The ACW challenges parishes throughout the diocese to raise money for

30 beds, 30 mattresses, 60 sheets and 60 blankets.

"If our diocese can raise \$600 a parish for one complete bed and bed set, it will be an absolute blessing to our Christian brothers and sisters in Buyé, Burundi," says ACW diocesan president Sandra Arbeau.

For information and/or to donate, contact Sandra: arbeausg@outlook.com.

Richard King Inducted as Rector of St. Luke's



The church family at St. Luke, Edmonton has waited a long while for a new full-time rector and the Rev. Richard King has come a long way to fill the post. Richard moved from the UK at the start of this year, finding it ironic that his new neighbourhood (Holyrood) is named after the Scottish

Parliament! Richard and his wife, Shelly, are feeling very much at home at St. Luke and appreciate the welcome they have received in the diocese.

Good food and fellowship followed the Ascension Day induction service and Bishop Jane preached on Richard's favourite topic: mission!

Better birthing conditions for Buye mothers



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative

I have babies on the brain these days. We have recently been blessed with grandchild number nine, a lovely little girl named Rose, who was born in the Grey Nun's Hospital in Edmonton. Like most babies in Edmonton, she was born in a "birthing room." Shortly after the birth, they were moved into a room on the maternity ward.

At the Grey Nun's they have a choice of double occupancy rooms with a privacy curtain dividing the space, or private rooms. They also offer what they call "theme rooms." Somewhat like a small hotel room, these rooms include

a double bed and expanded menu.

Nowhere on that list of choices was a "shared bed." Unfortunately, that has been the reality for some women who give birth in the overcrowded conditions of the maternity hospital in our partner Diocese of Buyé.

The Buyé Hospital was built, equipped and is owned by the Anglican Church, but is operated by the government of Burundi. The maternity ward in that hospital was built in the 1940s by British Missionaries to serve a much smaller population than it does today. It is now overcrowded. Rooms designed to hold 4 patients, have 10 mothers in them. There is only one delivery room, which often results in people delivering babies in their beds in the common room. Adding to the health risks are poor ventilation due to small windows, cracked walls and a leaking roof.

As part of our role as a partner diocese, the Diocese of Edmonton has supported the Diocese of Buyé with projects like the distribution of mosquito nets. In 2012,

medical equipment and supplies were sent to Buyé hospital. Also in 2012, for the first time, PWRDF granted \$7,500 to match funds raised by the Diocese of Edmonton to support a Buyé diocese project on HIV and AIDS prevention.

As part of its REACH program, the Diocese of Edmonton has undertaken a project to enlarge and repair the maternity ward at the hospital in Buyé. Three new rooms will be added, as well as a second delivery room. The current facility has been greatly improved with a repaired roof and walls, new paint and windows.... however there is no plan to add a "theme room."

Once the project is complete, an estimated 5,400 pregnant women every year - at a rate of 15 women a day - will have access according to their needs, to more rooms and better health care in the maternity ward.

PWRDF is partnering with the Diocese of Edmonton, guiding Buyé regarding the requirements for project implementation and ensuring the requirements set by Canada



Dorothy Marshall, daughter Robyn and baby Rose at the Grey Nun's Hospital; two mothers share a bed in the Buyé hospital maternity ward.



Revenue Agency are met. PWRDF will also monitor the project, making sure the project and budget are executed as proposed.

The ACW groups in the Diocese of Edmonton have chosen to support this worthwhile project by raising funds to purchase the necessary beds, mattresses and bedding for the 30 maternity beds.

If you would like to see what other great projects PWRDF is supporting in the field of maternal and child

care, check out our website at www.PWRDF.org.

Donations can be made online or through church envelopes. If your parish does not have a PWRDF representative to share the message of great stories such as these and you would like to be involved in this ministry, please contact your rector or Dorothy Marshall, the Diocese of Edmonton rep, by email at camfarm@syban.net

Harvey says faith and fear formula for invitational action

JUDITH WEBER
St. John the Evangelist

How does one measure success in church growth? Imagine a motivational speaker with a business background who is not interested in measuring church growth on percentage points or graph levels.

Welcome to the world of Michael Harvey, British author and motivational speaker. Harvey is no stranger to this Edmonton community. He credits Bishop Jane Alexander's repeated invitations as, "unusual at that level." On this occasion he was invited by rector Don Aellen of St. John the Evangelist church and the diocese. Aellen spoke of Harvey's, "insight, faithful to his gifts." These insights measure success in church growth quite differently.

Harvey measures success by, "one person inviting one person" to church. That is it. The rest is up to God. It is this simplicity that we find hard to fathom. It is not easy to leave the "Yes" or "No" in God's hands. We are asked to rely on our faith. Harvey reminds us that in the church today we have exchanged faith for a societal success-driven model. "Well done, good and faithful servant" has been replaced by "well done, good and successful servant." It is God that provides the growth, emphasizes Harvey. It is the same God that still, today "nudges the church both individually and corporately."

Harvey challenges us not to embrace outcome results but, rather, to focus on what actually creates that outcome: the simple, individual invitation. Often our initial response to God nudging us and asking us to do things, says Harvey, is, "you are joking!" Apparently not, as in the 18 countries and 5 continents that Harvey has visited over the last 12 years, nearly a million invitations have been accepted.

Workshop participants at St. John's were asked to discuss the benefits of becoming a welcoming

church. There were many. Harvey summed it up by reminding his audience that there are people out there waiting for an invitation and, too, "a treasure trove" of undiscovered gifts and talents. The simple, but overlooked, formula to receiving the benefits of growth lay in just three letters: ASK.

If as a church we recognize the benefits in increased growth, why are we reluctant to ask? For "fear of rejection" – which, emphasized Harvey, is the main issue facing the church today. As a church we have focused on the wrong component and therein lies the problem. Instead of being focused on the person being invited, we focus on ourselves; the one doing the inviting. As inviters, Harvey urges us to face that fear of being rejected and instead, become an invitational church. It is not merely in receiving an affirmative response to the invitation. But, "for what it makes of you as an invitational church," he said.

Participants were reminded of God's powerful promise, "Don't be afraid, for I am with you." Harvey spoke of fear and the inherent characteristics of fear we may not have thought about. He described it as a beautiful thing and he reminded us of how many times fear had saved us and prompted us to take action. He asked us to consider the connection between fear and faith. Fear and faith both stem from the belief that something that has not happened, is going to happen, he said. Much of Harvey's message is presented simply and succinctly. He almost blindsides us with the profundity in each statement and the obvious, but not so obvious. Harvey reminded his audience that God does not remove fear. Rather, "fear is a compassionate alarm." It is what provokes us to rely on our faith and go into action. Harvey used the illustration of the seesaw with Faith and Doubt facing each other. It is at this time that we converse with God. We were reminded that throughout

time God makes doubting people, invitational people. Another reminder was that God uses the wounded and the sad through the graces of the Holy Spirit to help others. As a church we can

rely on God's promise, that if we plant the seeds, He will make them grow. "Don't complain about the harvest, if you haven't planted in the spring," quipped Harvey.

It had been a powerful learning experience for participants at St. John's that Saturday and the strong leadership of the Middle Space ministry team was evident in the days that preceded the event and on the day in particular. The organization and warm atmosphere, the bounty and the quality of the food, the richness in the music leadership of Owen Neiman, provided a perfect atmosphere for learning and sharing. Even the weather co-operated and many took their lunches to nosh outside.

Harvey's enthusiastic, humorous and thought-provoking presentation challenged old paradigms and provided new ones on becoming invitational. Participants had much to reflect upon. Under Harvey's tutelage we, the church, discovered new ways to measure and define success and improve our welcome. We faced the realities of our own fears and came to the realization of how fearful it is for newcomers to cross the threshold of the church for the first time.

Participants were encouraged to face those fears in the knowledge and joy of God's faithful promise that He would lead, guide and protect us, as we embarked on this invitational journey.

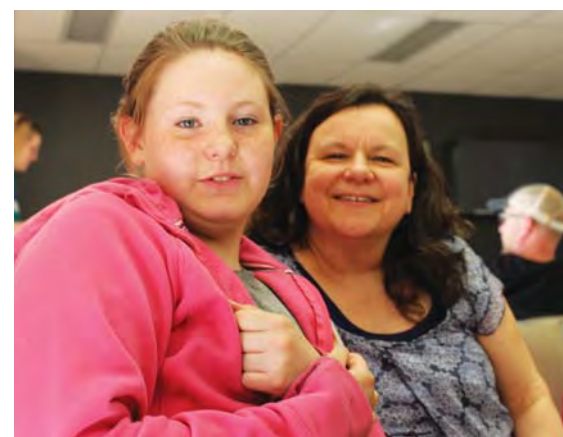
At the conclusion of most seminars and workshops, those involved are provided with an evaluation sheet. For Harvey, success was in the obvious satisfaction of each participant and in the learning and connectivity that took place. Rosalind Lane, one of the attendees summed it up by saying her mind did not wander through



During the Creating a Culture of Invitation workshop at SJE, Michael Harvey reminded his audience that God does not remove fear from our lives. Rather, "fear is a compassionate alarm." Photo: Cameron Beauvais

the day, as she was eagerly looking forward to what came next.

During St. John's church services the next day, Harvey spoke of the acorn and the oak that grew from it. He reminded congregants that sometimes things have to die before there was rebirth. The acronym of the acorn was used - Ask, Call, Obey. We were asked to think of someone God might want us to invite and place a sticky note with the person's name on the Invitational Cross. The church of St. John's has much to think about in this invitational process. But Harvey reminded us we are not alone. We need and have each other. And, like those early disciples who received Jesus' invitation, our faith in Him will guide us in creating a culture of invitation.



Above: SJE members Teresa Beauvais (left) and Amy Croy welcomed Michael Harvey to a youth event on Friday evening; the SJE courtyard was the perfect spot for lunchtime conversation on Saturday.



From left: Hugh and Christine Campbell discuss the benefits of being an inviting church with Owen Neiman.

Fort McMurray priest trusts God to help him help others

MARGARET MARSCHALL

The Rev. Christopher Tapera remembers the stillness and quiet surrounding his church's Thickwood neighbourhood on the unseasonably warm morning of May 3, 2016.

Working in his office at St. Thomas, one of two Anglican churches in Fort McMurray, Tapera, who had moved to northern Alberta from Zimbabwe just four months earlier, had spoken with his Bishop Fraser Lawton, assuring him that the city was in no immediate danger from wildfire. What he did not realize was that wind patterns had shifted sometime during the night, sending an inferno which had ignited 30 kilometres from town the previous Friday, raging toward Fort McMurray and its more than 80,000 residents.

By midday, he could see smoke in the air and by one o'clock in the afternoon, "all hell broke loose," says Tapera. Phoning from home, his office administrator urged him to leave as "the fire was very close and moving very quickly." Tapera headed straight home to his wife Juliette and their 16-year-old daughter Lisa and was gathering clothes and important documents when the phone rang a second time. His rector's warden said the family needed to leave right away and that the Rev. David Greenwood, honorary assistant at All Saints', was waiting outside to lead them to safety.

They joined a caravan of buses ferrying people to oilsands work camps north of the city. For the next

12 hours they stayed in a Syncrude work camp with 200 other evacuees. Though everyone was without food and blankets, they shared common stories in good faith and understanding and became, Tapera says, "like one big family. People were there for one another, smiling and generally cheerful."

The next evening, the Tapera family followed a group of Zimbabweans and St. Thomas parishioners to the Wapasu Creek Lodge near Fort Mackay, a first class facility catering to oil industry executives. "We were treated excellently by management," says Tapera. Over the next three days, he led morning prayer and devotions, sharing messages of strength, optimism and hope.

"I thought of the prophet Nehemiah who asked for the king's permission to rebuild Jerusalem after the destruction of the temple, and I said to myself and the other people, 'God has a special message for us. He has shown us he is very powerful and He is everywhere. More than 90,000 lives were saved and this is God's love. But, we must learn from this catastrophe not to put trust and faith in material things. God wants us to trust in Him and have faith in Him. We will go back to Fort McMurray – and we *will* go back – a changed people."

While it is estimated the wildfire destroyed 20 per cent of Fort McMurray (one in five homes burned), Tapera sees light shining through the smoky haze. "We will need human resources to rebuild our destroyed homes. There will be new



Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton inducted Christopher Tapera (center) rector of St. Thomas, Fort McMurray on February 14, 2016. When wildfire consumed parts of the city on May 3, Tapera and Dane Neufeld (far right), rector of All Saints', were evacuated from their homes along with David Greenwood (not pictured) honorary assistant

job opportunities for our youth and the unemployed."

On Friday evening, a week after the fire had begun to rage, the Taperas were flown to Edmonton on planes supplied by the lodge. They were met by Chris Pilon, community outreach worker for All Saints' Cathedral, and taken to stay with the Rev. Keith Denman, interim priest-in-charge of St. Mary's, and his wife Bev Middleton.

That Sunday, the Taperas joined Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton and other Anglicans, some of whom had been evacuated from Fort McMurray, for Sunday morning worship at St. Augustine's of Canterbury. Invited by host rector the Rev. Jonathan Crane to share their ordeal, Tapera spoke along with the Rev. Dane Neufeld and the Rev. David Greenwood from All Saints', Fort McMurray.

"At first, I wondered how one blind man can lead another blind man," said Tapera, who has been working from the Edmonton Synod Office to assist his parishioners and other evacuees. "But I draw strength and courage from God who is using me to help others. Canadians really care for each other. Even after being awake seven to seven, most people are still smiling and patient. On the road to Syncrude we met a family who had been stranded. They had run out of gas. Another man, a total stranger, gave them the keys to his car and said 'call me when you get to Edmonton. I'll stay behind with your vehicle.' That's a good Samaritan. I thank all Anglicans and Canadians for their support. I hope that we learn from this experience and that, if need be in the future, we will all be actively involved in assisting with disasters."

Must-have stewardship resource for parishes

DAVID BARNUM

Stewardship Committee

How can we be fearless in our stewardship? Charles LaFond, an Episcopal canon from New Hampshire and an experienced fundraiser, tells us how. He provides solid guidance and knowledge about stewardship and in particular stewardship campaigns.

This book is for people who believe a stewardship campaign should go beyond a single congregational letter from the rector. How do you help yourself and your fellow parishioners become more grateful and generous? What might be the strategic steps? *Fearless Church Fundraising* (LaFond, Charles, pp, 198, Morehouse Publishing, \$29.63) provides

insight that will broaden viewpoints and increase confidence. It is a worthwhile purchase for a parish. What the diocesan stewardship committee likes most about *Fearless Church Fundraising* is its organizational structure. There are five major sections that separate out into 16 chapters. Most chapters include resource pages. These resource pages are the most extensive we have ever seen. The questions within the chapters are themselves worth the price of the book. This structure allows a parish to pick and choose the parts of the book best suited to their needs and size.

The first part of the book is about fundraising and giving as a spiritual practice. What is the

difference? There is a story about the final stages of a cathedral's major fundraising campaign. The canon of the cathedral encountered the fundraiser manager and told him, "You folks are doing this all wrong." The fundraiser replied, "I do not understand, we are close to reaching our goal." The canon replied, "Success of the campaign is beyond the point, you are not teaching folks to give properly. By concentrating on the nuts and bolts and construction costs, you are encouraging people to give from the bottom of their financial resources and not the top. They don't touch the soul of the person. You need to explain how rare and glorious the opportunity is to build a cathedral. You need to tell them

how. They cannot build it with their own hands. They can be part of this accomplishment by simply giving a gift. This gift would not be reluctant, but one of the spirit."

Jesus talks a lot about money and possessions. We have to go back and grasp what he tells us, such as his critical little six-word sentence, "You cannot serve God and wealth." This book gives us the tools... here are the resources to talk about money and make a difference. Henri Nouwen tells us to look carefully at our relationship with money. He asks us, "What is the place of money in our lives?"

Fearless Church Fundraising is a rich resource—part handbook, part workbook, part spiritual guidebook.

International conference focuses on ways to witness the power and presence of Jesus in all spheres of life

THE RT. REV. JANE ALEXANDER
Bishop of Edmonton

This April, I attended the 16th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in Lusaka, Zambia. I was blessed to be part of the delegation from the Anglican Church of Canada which also included Ms. Suzanne Lawson and the Ven. Michael Thompson. The ACC is one of the four Instruments of Unity of the Anglican Communion. The role of the ACC is to facilitate the co-operative work of the churches of the Anglican Communion, exchange information and help to coordinate common action. It advises on the organization and structures of the Communion, and seeks to develop common policies with respect to the world mission of the Church, including ecumenical matters.

The overarching theme for the meeting was “Intentional Discipleship in a World of Differences.” This is in response to the challenges facing the Church today of articulating our faith in a way that enables us to demonstrate Christian ethics in all spheres of life. Focus on intentional discipleship has come as a response to Christian challenges such as failure to connect faith and professional life, low commitment and impact on community life, lack of confidence to share personal faith and pass it to next generation and, in some cases, decline in Church membership. This theme allowed us to focus on the essentials of our Christian witness as a call from the Kingdom of heaven. We discussed the ongoing need for life-long formation of disciples and not just programs. John Kafwanka, from Anglican Witness, guided us through a discussion around supports, opportunities, mentoring

and the creation of a discipling culture.

The meeting was grounded in worship and study. We had daily Bible studies in table groups on the Book of Ruth and we found incredible support and strength for one another and the different contexts of our home ministry in our time together. At the daily celebrations of the eucharist, local church choirs would come and



Anglican Consultative Council delegates gathered with Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby on the steps of the Holy Cross Cathedral in Lusaka. Bishop Jane was elected to the ACC Steering Committee.

Photo: Anglican Archives



I bring a passion for ministry and for the empowerment of the whole church as disciples through the Five Marks of Mission. I gave my life to Christ at age 25 and I love this expression of his body – the Anglican Communion. Bishop Jane

lead us in singing and it was an exhilarating and joyous experience.

The sense of the make-up of the communion was there and Archbishop (of Canterbury) Justin Welby reminded us that each of our own contextual histories overlays the history of the communion, and we can choose to be intentionally united in Christ or distracted by our differences. ACC 16 unanimously chose to be united in Christ because that is the ONLY way we can show to the world the power and presence of Jesus Christ who rose from the dead.

It was very clear from the reports of various networks of the Communion that it is networks

of relationships that makes possible communion with one another. Whether it was around issues of peace and justice, the role and status of women, the family, or the environment; we heard story after story of people from very different countries working together for the transformation of the world. The IAFN Family Network talked

to us about their six-point action plan for families; building strong foundations, building strong marriages, building strong parenting, combatting stigma and exclusion, welcoming the stranger and prayer. They also shared with us that over 230 million children in the world under age five have no birth registration and that this will affect their access to education health care and even citizenship. We were reminded that 2 million children would be born around the world during the course of the ACC 16 meeting. I hope to share more of this work here at home in the Diocese of Edmonton.

We were challenged to ask ourselves whether we were hesitating to provide leadership from a theological perspective on the issue of Climate Justice and that the time frame for being able to turn things around for our world is getting shorter and shorter; the assumption that we had until 2100 is probably off by 50 years. We were reminded that care for creation is part of intentional discipleship for the Christian, and the Environmental Network asked us to ‘love the world as much as God does.’

Coming out of the meeting there are many resolutions which will find their way into the life of churches

throughout the world. Some commended the work of ecumenical dialogues which reminded us that “unity and communion have nothing to do with uniformity” (John Gibaut), some were calls to action and some equip us all for the work of ministry.

Look for a full description in the September issue of *The Messenger* of the resources that are coming from the “Bible in the Life of the Church Project” – a virtual tool box for engagement in more than 100 tried and tested educational resources. **Thebilo.org** website will go live June 30, 2016. You will never want for Bible study resources again.

I take home from our time together the sense that we saw an incredible ‘enfleshing’ of the Marks of Mission with stories from around the communion about how we are living out our ministry as Anglican brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. There was a strong theme of reconciliation present in stories from South Sudan, Burundi, Canada and India – just to name a few. We heard about the work of the communion around the theme of gender-based violence and agreed that gender injustice is the most ingrained and pervasive injustice in the world and diminishes all our lives.

Continued on next page.



Bishop Jane participating in the ACC16 opening service, April 10, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka Zambia. Photo: Anglican Archives



The Compass Rose Society supports the Archbishop of Canterbury in maintaining and improving the unity of the Anglican Communion, represented in more than 160 countries around the world.

Each year, society members visit members of the Communion, sharing stories and exploring the roots of Anglican faith. They have an annual fundraising goal of

\$400,000 for the mission and work of the Communion.

May 9th, Bishop Jane Alexander hosted a wine and cheese reception at All Saints' Cathedral to honour the society's work and introduce its new chair, Bishop of Texas, Andrew Doyle (right). Bishop Doyle and Bishop Philip Poole (left) are travelling across Canada to promote the work of the Compass Rose.

Photo: Jeannette Madill

ACC 2016 continued

Continued from previous page.

We agreed that we will all find a way to mark 16 days of awareness for gender-based violence: 25th November to 10 December.

I will remember from one of our ecumenical presentations that "Protecting the intrinsic worth of each and every human being needs to be regarded as an obligation of the first order. We are called to support and protect the rights of all who are vulnerable, the refugee, the homeless, the orphan, the sick and the bereaved; and to ensure that all are provided with care, food, shelter and clothing and not left at risk of injury or death from neglect." ("In the Image of God" report).

We learned from Rev. Flora Winfield, the Communications representative at the United Nations, that there are more than 60 million refugees/displaced people worldwide and each one is so much more than a statistic. People from around the globe told their stories of welcome and transformation. We talked about how the church throughout the world is responding to conflict, religious extremism and climate change. We heard from indigenous people around the communion, and about

the work of the Anglican Alliance. In considering how we might work together we were reminded that "every part of the church has loaves and fishes to bring" and that compassion is a hallmark of our faith.

In the next issue of *The Messenger* I will talk more about the worship and about ways in which we in the Diocese of Edmonton can adopt some of the resolutions and

themes of the ACC meeting. Until then, this is what you should know: We prayed together, we wept together, we rejoiced together. The Anglican Communion is alive and well and we discovered many new dimensions to ministry and mission

throughout the world. I suppose the best way to explain this is that the Communion really is a family. We really love each other in our joys, sorrows and, yes, even in our disagreements. One of the members of my table made the comment "I have no right to choose my fellow travelers – God has made that choice." We discovered that the waters of baptism flow thicker than blood and that our baptismal identity trumps everything. There was a strong sense of joy, hope, identity and encouragement as we walk together in the service of God in Christ.



Bishop Jane Alexander presenting at ACC16 in Lusaka, Zambia.



Michelle Nieviadomy leads the KAIROS Blanket Exercise.

Cursillo Community News

CATHY PONECH
Cursillo Communications
Coordinator

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the KAIROS Blanket Exercise at our recent Ultreya event at St. Timothy's, Edmonton. It was wonderful to see so many new faces.

Michelle Nieviadomy, assistant director of the Edmonton Native Healing Centre, led an emotionally stirring and informative journey into the history of indigenous people in Canada. Michelle's singing and drumming, in addition to her inspired and insightful teaching, left few dry eyes in the room. She was presented with a blanket on behalf of the Cursillo community.

We give thanks for the recent ordinations of fellow Cursillistas the Rev. Barry Rose (to the Priesthood)

and Judy Purkis (to the Vocational Diaconate).

On Saturday, June 11, we invite you to a special day of teaching with Bishop Jane Alexander, who will be speaking on "The Christian Life and the Marks of Mission: Reflections from Around the Communion." This impactful day will be held at St. Matthias, 6210-188 Street, Edmonton. All are welcome.

If you have never been to the Cursillo Weekend, we hope you will prayerfully consider coming this November 10th through 13th, at the Star of the North Retreat Centre. No experience necessary, just come as you are! If you have experienced the Cursillo Weekend, please consider inviting someone to attend a weekend as well.

Stay tuned for Cursillo news in the *Synod Scene* and online at www.edmontoncursillo.ca

Edmonton Synod Office Welcomes New Admin Assistant



The first week of May, the Diocese of Edmonton Synod Office welcomed Shelly King as part-time office administrative assistant. Shelly grew up in southern Alberta where she later practiced and taught broadcast journalism at SAIT Polytechnic. Her background in communications, as well as her involvement in the Anglican Church, will be a great blessing to our diocese. Shelly feels it will

be a blessing to her, as well. She says she looks forward to meeting everyone and learning all about the diocese. Residing in the Canterbury diocese in the UK, Shelly returned to Canada in the New Year with her husband the Rev. Richard King. Bishop Jane Alexander inducted Richard as rector of St. Luke's, Edmonton, on May 5 (see page 5). Contact Shelly by email at reception@edmonton.anglican.ca

Alpha makes global space for faith, life and God conversation

"Globally, the Alpha Course has helped hundreds of thousands reawaken their faith in Jesus or come to faith for the first time, me included!"

THE REV. JONATHAN CONNELL
Rector, Good Shepherd, Edmonton

With the success of the no-cost Alpha Youth Film Series, the classic 16-session Alpha Course (still available for free!) has been combined with the interactive style of the youth episodes to create a new (free as well!) Alpha Film Series.

The classic apologetic talks are combined with new vignettes filmed in several countries around the world, taking you to important places in our Christian history, including the Holy Land. Travelling hosts Gemma and Toby interview

people on the street for their take on important topics like "Who is Jesus?" "How can I have faith?" and "Is there more to life than this?" Good Shepherd's evening congregation has begun watching this updated series and loves it.

You can have a look at the new film series, as well as the youth and classic series on alphacanada.org. The talks can be streamed or downloaded. Please register your interest on the website and also indicate if and when you are planning to offer a course.

Coinciding with the release of the new Alpha Film Series, Edmonton churches are invited to partner with Alpha Canada in a global advertising campaign this August. Backed by internationally recognized adventurer Bear Grylls and the coordinated effort of local churches, Global Alpha aims to be the most visible, widespread and exciting invitation in Canada for people to explore life, faith and God. Churches can choose whether to participate in a regional advertising campaign or simply run Alpha through their church. We are praying for thousands of Canadians



Jon Connell and Amy Croy (center and right at the Michael Harvey workshop) are local representatives of the Alpha Canada global initiative. Connell credits the Alpha Course with helping him invite the Holy Spirit into his life.

to attend an Alpha in their community.

If you have a heart for Alpha and wish to see the campaign flourish in the Edmonton region, please contact the Rev. Jon Connell at Good Shepherd: jonathan.d.connell@gmail.com

Food, faith and community - parishes encouraged to try Alpha

AMY CROY

Alpha Coordinator, Diocese of Edmonton



Image and text © Alpha Canada

Emotive, engaging and epic in scale and scope, the new Alpha Film Series releases on the heels of the 2013 Alpha Youth Film Series. Developed by Alpha Canada, the youth series has engaged more than 60,000 students

across Canada. It has been used by many groups in the Diocese of Edmonton to reach young people and prepare confirmation candidates. It is also being used in prisons and communities like the Good Samaritan Society's Dr. Gerald Zetter Care Centre for seniors.

What is Alpha?

Alpha is a free, easy-to-use, flexible tool that helps the church in transformation of individuals, families and communities. Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, typically run over 10-12 weeks. Alpha is run all around the world, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes, bars – you name it. No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three commonalities: food, a talk, and good, open discussion. 29 million people have tried Alpha in 169 countries and 112 languages, including over 698,000 in Canada.

What does the Alpha Coordinator do?

I am passionate about helping groups launch Alpha and invite people to explore faith. After helping many groups run Alpha for youth, I recently lead two adult groups (senior ladies and a diverse group of people at different ages and stages of faith) at St. John the Evangelist in Edmonton. Some participants who described themselves as skeptical before Alpha, identified as committed Christians at the end of the course. One participant who was already a committed Christian reported:

"Alpha has helped me in so many ways. The most significant thing is the way I have learned how to express or explain my faith to others, especially non-believers or those seeking answers."

How can Alpha benefit your church?

- **Evangelism:** Alpha is an easy way to invite unchurched people to explore the Christian faith. Many participants begin or renew a commitment to Jesus, and are baptized/confirmed, becoming part of the church community
- **Discipleship:** Church members grow by inviting others and exploring their own faith in a non-threatening environment where they are encouraged to examine their beliefs and grow deeper in faith. Many say it helps them articulate

their faith

- **Community:** Discussing faith in small groups forms friendships and helps people to feel they are part of the church community
- **Leadership Development:** Student and adult leaders are trained and given the opportunity to practise leadership skills without having to spend a lot of time preparing.

For more information, please contact Amy Croy at: alpha@edmonton.anglican.ca.



www.edmonton.anglican.org/ministries/youth/base-camp

Onoway parish hosts spirit evening for Alexis Nakota Sioux students



Alexis School students with teacher Angela Cassidy and diocesan Alpha coordinator Amy Croy.

SUSAN DANIELS
St. John the Divine, Onoway

In December, 2015, St. John the Divine, Onoway became involved in the Alpha Youth Program at the Alexis School at the invitation of Amy Croy, Alpha coordinator for the Diocese of Edmonton.

The Rev. Barry Rose, priest-in-charge of St. John's, asked members of the parish to prepare meals for the students and share their gifts in whatever way they could. Over the months, new relationships formed. Alexis School is blessed to have Angela Cassidy as a teacher as well as their Alpha leader. She has a heart for the children and lives and shares her faith with love and passion, an example for us all. School principal

Alethea Wallace is supportive and encouraging of Angela and the Alpha program.

In February, St. John's hosted a Holy Spirit Evening for the youth. After a good meal followed by the Alpha material, there was time for lots of fun and laughter, prayer and healing. We could feel the Holy Spirit at work. Youth who had been in crisis and were emotionally withdrawn began to open up. It was truly a privilege to spend the evening with these energetic and eager youth and to witness the grace of God at work in their midst.

Though the Alpha program has come to an end, we look forward to finding new ways to remain involved with Angela and the youth at Alexis. We pray that our involvement will lead to lasting relationships.



Members of St. John's lovingly prepared meals for the Alpha Youth program at Alexis School, including a Christmas Feast.



Barry Rose playing music during the Holy Spirit Evening. Below: Alexis School Alpha program participants having fun with food.



Holy Trinity Riverbend church invites friends to Alpha Youth Film Series

THE REV. NICK TRUSSELL
Priest-in-Mission
Diocese of Edmonton

We decided to run the Alpha Youth Film Series as an educational and community building event for youth at Holy Trinity Riverbend. It provided an opportunity for them to share their faith and church community with their friends. Amy (Croy) visited with the youth and some parents to show them what the series could be like. Even though they were a very small group and a bit young for the material, they loved each faith-focused night just for them and surprised everyone, including

themselves, with the depth of faith that grew from the evenings.

Amy led a leadership training that helped the youth envision and plan the Alpha they wanted to host but also inspired the adult leaders, most of whom had never been called to that role before. They were happy to discover they didn't need to know all the answers, just how to help people ask questions, be open about their faith and open to the Spirit. We were so excited for Alpha because it was an opportunity for one of our leaders to lead a major study and gathering for the first time. Supported by the Alpha training and materials and her church, her confidence to lead grew each week.

The youth and families that took part in Alpha were excited to invite their friends to share in the evenings. Our group grew for at least the first four sessions as more "friends of friends" came. It was a formational time for youth participants, and a powerful healing experience for one parent who had not set foot in a church since losing faith early in life. After the second session he not only came into the church but asked for prayer as he shared his story.

Before Alpha, the act of worship for one of our participants was considered a boring chore. When faith-based conversations with peers unfolded, prayer and worship at last made sense.

Campfire & Compline

A fellowship group that meets to roast marshmallows over a campfire, pray compline and get to know one another in an informal setting.

Sir Wilfred Laurier Park
Picnic Site #6 13221
Buena Vista Road NW
Fridays, 7:00 pm
June 10 and 24
July 15 (with Bishop Jane)
August 12 and 26



Athabasca ACW Conference sends support to Ibba

BETTY MacARTHUR
Diocese of Athabasca ACW

The annual Anglican Women's Conference for the Diocese of Athabasca was organized and hosted by St. Anne's Anglican Church in Valleyview April 22 to 24. The guest speaker and facilitator was the Rt. Rev. Fraser Lawton, Bishop of Diocese of Athabasca.

The theme of the conference was "Staying Uplifted in Trying Times." Bishop Lawton invited the group to suggest examples of trying times. He reminded us that just because we have lived a good and dutiful life, does not mean things cannot go sideways. Bad things do happen to good people. Life brings challenges and we have to cope.

The Psalms suggest there will be troubling times, but God will

be there for us. God assures us He has given us the tools to cope with trying times. He has given us the Holy Spirit who is our advocate and councillor.

Bishop Lawton used references from the Bible to show where God gives instructions to deal with distress in our lives. Paul's letters to the Corinthians and the Ephesians give advice on how to be equipped for life.

As Christians we are part of Jesus's body, we are a gift to each other and church should be a place where we can be totally honest. We need to trust and honour each other. We should be the church, not just go to church.

The conference concluded with a Holy Eucharist Service at St Anne's. It was presided over by Bishop Lawton who preached the sermon.

There were 43 women in attendance and they came from all parts of the diocese: Fort McMurray to Grande Prairie and parishes in between. The conference next year will be held in Fort McMurray.

Annual Meeting of Diocese of Athabasca ACW

The meeting was chaired by outgoing coordinator Joanna Muzyka. Joanna has served in this position for nine years and she will continue as Treasurer of the National ACW, which is a five-year commitment.

In 2015, Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton visited Ibba diocese in South Sudan and established contact with the Mothers' Union. Subsequently the Diocese of Athabasca ACW sent \$1,275 to the Mothers' Union of Ibba. At this 2016 conference membership voted again to support the Mothers' Union with our memorial donation of \$1,250.



Out-going ACW coordinator Joanna Muzyka with a handmade instrument from the women of Ibba diocese in South Sudan.

Carmen Heemskerk of Christ Church in Grande Prairie was elected ACW coordinator for a three-year term.



From left: Veronica Lawton, Anke Jadatz and Sonja Jadatz enjoying conversation after lunch; Veronica Lawton, Tammy McKeachnie, Sarah Craigen, Debby Reynolds and O.J. Shmyruk playing worship music.



Holy Easter season memorable journey for Athabasca Parish

MARY GISLASON
All Saints' Athabasca

Athabasca Parish entered into the Easter season with a two-day visit from the Ven. Terry Leer, Archdeacon for Mission Development.

On March 18, Archdeacon Leer engaged council and parishioners with a lively and informative presentation on church, God, the gospel, mission and stewardship. He then led the Palm Sunday liturgy, lifting the congregation with joyful singing and a moving sermon.

Following a Bible study on Thursday, a Jewish Christian Passover Seder was held to mark the solemn entrance into Holy Week. The supper consisted of roast lamb and many traditional dishes. The Rev. Clive Scheepers described each dish, its significance and meaning.

The Seder itself is based on the Biblical verse commanding Jews to retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt: "You shall tell your child on that day, saying, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'" (Exodus 13:8)

After the meal, the congregation processed upstairs for a foot-washing ceremony led by the Rev. Clive Scheepers and Holy Communion.

On Good Friday a wooden cross was leaned against an altar stripped bare of its linens. A progression of mournful prayers, hymns, meditations and readings marked the journey of Jesus to his crucifixion. Even the stained glass window was "dark."

Parishioners greeted Easter Sunday morning and Jesus' resurrection with great joy and light shining through the stained glass window and the glow of many candles. Infant William



Clive Scheepers washes the feet of parishioners after Seder Supper.

Minns was baptized before an altar newly draped in white and gold and adorned with Easter lilies. A

celebration cake and luncheon were enjoyed after the service.