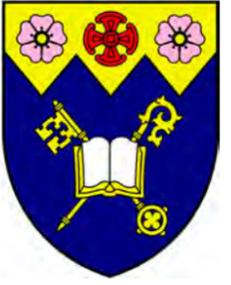


THE MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2016

www.edmonton.anglican.org



All Saints' Drayton Valley Sunday School Teachers: Kathy (blue at left), Mary-Ann (grey at centre) and Rita (blue at right) lead the Crafternoon activities.

We all need each other Housing Ambassador

MARGARET MARSCHALL

To walk alongside one another is a common, if not expected practice in Christian circles. The Interfaith Housing Initiative's newly appointed Housing Ambassador will step beyond the church sphere to help community members become better neighbours.

As an associate youth pastor, then senior pastor, Mike Van Boom has been sharing his passion for social justice with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in Lethbridge and Edmonton for more than 10 years.

But is there room for compassion in a culture that breeds isolation by promoting self-comfort and individualistic thinking? Books like *The Life-Changing Magic of Not Giving a F*ck* (Sarah

Knight), would have us believe that the secret to a simpler and happier life is to care less, especially about people we don't like or don't know.

"The reality is we all need each other," says Mike, who has no qualms about venturing into Edmonton's more than 200 neighbourhoods, where neighbours may or may not want know each other. "No one of us is self-sufficient."

In a city where approximately one in four families live in housing they can't afford - meaning they spend more than 30 per cent of their income on rent or mortgage costs - there are many in need of a helping hand. Last March, the Edmonton Food Bank was accessed by no fewer than 14,794 Edmontonians. (*End Poverty in a Generation*)

Continued on page 2.

RITA STAGMAN
All Saints', Drayton Valley

Feeling the spirit, All Saints' Anglican Church in Drayton Valley found creative ways to proclaim Christ during the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

On December 4, the parish hosted their annual Christmas "Crafternoon," bringing together 10 children, 3 babies, 3 moms and 3 grandmas for an afternoon of crafts and fun. Under the leadership of Sunday school teacher Kathy Mills, families painted, glued and tied three fabulous Christmas crafts. Santa's face was fashioned from a paint brush, a twig was transformed into a Christmas tree of bows and bells, and a star became the backdrop for Jesus in his manger. Singing and snacks were shared between activities and then the excited children headed home to decorate their trees with their handmade treasures.

"Our teachers are very artistic, caring and compassionate," says the Rev. Miranda Sutherland, interim priest-in-charge. "It's a great ministry."



Golden anniversaries p. 4



Happy Birthday Jesus! p. 6-7



Maritime visit p. 8

Housing Ambassador encourages dialogue

Continued from front.

An extremely low rental vacancy rate and an average rent of \$1,200 for a two-bedroom apartment have resulted in high demand for affordable housing, especially among the 19.5 per cent of working Edmontonians who earn less than \$15/hour, as well as seniors, teens, single parents, people battling mental illness or addictions.

President of the McCauley Community League for the past two years, Mike has participated in important conversations around housing-related issues at both City Council and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. His experience is that smaller gatherings lead to healthier conversations and more informed decisions. Conversation cafes and sharing circles, for example, enable more voices to be heard, versus town hall meetings which tend to be dominated by strong, opposing voices.

As Housing Ambassador he aims to reduce some

of the fear, stereotypes and antagonistic feelings associated with affordable and/or supportive housing projects. He will aim to strengthen community relations by providing information through media and social media, the Internet, presentations, workshops and coffee conversations.

Several positive models for affordable and supportive housing exist within Mike's own inner-city neighbourhood. One bright spot is Ambrose Place. Named for Ambrose Daniels, who succumbed to pneumonia while living on the streets, it has become a place of healing for chronically homeless people of Indigenous ancestry. While the community initially resisted another supportive housing project, it has become a safer place to live with fewer slum landlords and homeless residents seeking refuge in alleys and backyards.

Mike's ministry, funded by the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton, the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton

Community Foundation, draws on a broad base of support from the Edmonton interfaith community. The Anglican diocese provides



Mike Van Boom is the first Housing Ambassador, a position created by the Interfaith Housing Initiative.

administrative support and hosts both Mike, who has an office at Christ Church, and his supervisor, the Rev. John Gee, who works part-time as Housing Coordinator, in addition to being Community Development Facilitator for the diocese.

At an early age Mike learned the value of supporting neighbours in times of need and hurt, and sharing in each other's joy.

"My parents practiced radical hospitality," he says. "People who had fallen on

hard times were always coming and going in our home."

Mike and his wife Heather have imparted the same belief to their own children, Yana (9) and Jonas (6).

The family shares their home in McCauley, a landing pad for immigrants for the past 100 years, with a single mother from Kenya who lives on the top floor. Two formerly homeless people, one approaching senior citizen age, occupy the basement. "These are mutually giving and supportive relationships," he says. "One of the ladies - a grandmotherly type - helps take care of our children."

When Yana was just four she invited her neighbourhood to tea by drawing chalk arrows pointing from her church to home on the sidewalk.

"We had people dropping by for the next three hours," says Mike. "Italian ladies bringing cookies, people out walking their dogs."

Mike subscribes to the Neighborhood

Life movement, a CRC ministry model that fosters neighbourliness by being passionate and intentional about incarnating Christ's presence in our own backyard. It is a simple concept supported by the adage that it takes a village to raise a child. Rather than driving to a playdate on the other side of the city, why not organize a skating party at your community rink? "Children tend to do the best when surrounded by at least five invested adults," he says. "That can't be done without the village."

"There's always risk in loving others," he says. "But if we're unwilling to stick our necks out, who's going to come to our aid when we need it?"

For more information about the Interfaith Housing Initiative, visit: www.interfaithhousinginitiative.wordpress.com. You can contact Mike Van Boom by email at: housingambassador@outlook.com

Background image from the Interfaith Housing Initiative.

Pray for better understanding

Amidst media reports of escalating violence in Bujumbura, the Edmonton diocese received Christmas greetings (see page 3) from our partner Diocese of Buyé and also a request to continue our prayers for amahoro (Kurundi for peace), and inclusive dialogue and understanding from all sides.



THE REV. DOMINIQUE CIZA

dialogue because fighting doesn't work at all.

Recently the African Union decided to send 5,000 people (soldiers and police) to help us to maintain peace and protect

civilians but yesterday a joint meeting of parliaments and senate was conducted in Bujumbura saying that the population doesn't validate such an idea. (Burundi's government rejected the African Union's plans to deploy a 5,000-strong peacekeeping force to stop escalating violence triggered by President Pierre Nkurunziza's extended tenure in office. www.cbc.ca)

It is a paradox to send soldiers to Burundi while we have 7,000 soldiers in Somalia, Haiti, Central Africa to help them keep peace. They also said that the African Union should condemn Rwanda which is supporting rebels that are attacking our country.

So please pray for a better understanding from all sides.

Concerning the political situation, after the camps attacks on the 11-12th of December, calm was restored in Bujumbura. I would like to tell everyone pray for the inclusive

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your son Jesus Christ our Lord. BAS

City approves poverty elimination strategy

MARGARET MARSCHALL

Ten days before Christmas, faith and political leaders rejoiced over support for an ambitious initiative to end poverty in a generation. Bishop Jane Alexander and Mayor Don Iveson were present at Edmonton City Hall December 15, 2015, to witness City Council give unanimous approval to the *End Poverty in a Generation Strategy*.

The strategy, outlining 28 priority recommendations and six "game changers" to eliminate poverty in Edmonton, is the final report of the EndPovertyEdmonton Task Force. For more than a year and a half, Bishop Alexander and Mayor Iveson have led

the task force, co-chairing meetings and roundtable discussions and making numerous presentations to community stakeholders and organizations.

"The 22 members of our Task Force are pleased that Council has shown faith and confidence in our strategy," said Bishop Jane. "But now, the next stage of work begins in completing our road map that will guide our actions over the next 10 years, and set us down the path to achieving our bold goal of eliminating poverty in our city."

In mid-September, the Task Force presented its initial strategy to City Council.

Continued on page 5.

Living as we believe in changing world



BISHOP FRASER LAWTON
Diocese of Athabasca

These are very busy and interesting times! This month, in several locations around the diocese, we are carrying out conversations with regard to the proposed changes to the Marriage Canon (Canon XXI). The focus of these conversations will be on the issues surrounding the proposed changes and the impact they could have. Canons are the “rules”

that guide the way Anglicans live out our life together, and many of them, including this one, touch on the doctrines we share. The consideration of the changes at this summer’s General Synod also comes with the backdrop of changes in societal and cultural thinking. It raises for us the question of how we live as Christians when what we proclaim doesn’t fit very well with the world around us. It is a good thing for us to think about this, especially in a time when many things are under review and change.

Another of these topics is the changing laws around Physician Assisted Dying. This raises a number of issues for us, including how best to care for those in need and in great pain, our understanding and theology

of suffering, and what we believe about the value of all life. We need to be careful that we don’t get caught up in a world-view that believes “good” is identified with comfort, ease, happiness, instant gratification, and self-centredness. It isn’t always easy to see these things in our own lives, however often we are able to see them in others.

Lent, soon to be upon us, is an opportunity to engage with the Holy Spirit that He might re-orient our lives to God’s ways instead of the world’s ways. This doesn’t have to be a time of drudgery and self-flagellation! It is an opportunity for increasing joy, grace and peace as we submit ourselves to God and allow Him to shape our lives and attitudes. I encourage



Fun times during Youth Daze ‘15.

Photo: Amy Croy

you to take advantage of every opportunity for prayer, study and being with the Christian community.

This is also a time to put our intentions into action. There are a number of opportunities for this, including helping the Cathedral parish as it sponsors two refugee families. We also are hoping to see the practicalities come together (as they may have by press time) for the Parish

of the Northern Lights to sponsor a family. There are other ways, too, to support the work of the church and to give some attention to the Kingdom of God (and away from building our own kingdoms). We are already looking towards the possibility of Youth Daze ‘16. It is not too early to think of a young person you might encourage, and even sponsor, to attend.

We are also working at having Bishop Kamani and one or two others from the Diocese of Ibbá join us for a diocesan gathering in the fall. Again, it is not too early to start planning to attend that (including saving some holiday time!). One of the devil’s ways of undermining our faith is to convince us we are too busy to pray and too busy to be a part of the community. He also loves to destroy our unity and fellowship. Let us take this time to not fall into those traps, and to make a point of gathering together to pray, for fellowship, and to grow together in Christ.

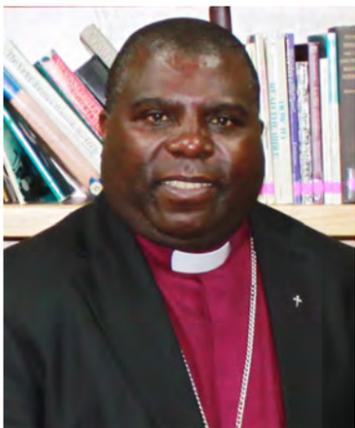
The Lord be with you,
+Fraser



Editors Note:

In 2013 the General Synod passed a resolution directing the drafting of a motion “to change Canon XXI on marriage to allow the marriage of same-sex couples in the same way as opposite-sex couples, and that this motion should include a conscience clause so that no member of the clergy, bishop, congregation or diocese should be constrained to participate in or authorize such marriages against the dictates of their conscience.” Such a motion will be considered by the 2016 General Synod. More information can be found at www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/cmc/submissions.

You can read more about the Diocese of Athabasca’s preparations on page 10.



BISHOP SIXBERT MACUMI
Diocese of Buyé

A word of peace

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He Favours.” (Luke 2:14)

This comes to wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and God’s blessings for 2016. Please do find the attached Christmas card. The word “Amahoro” written on it is a Kirundi word meaning “Peace.” Please keep praying for peace in Burundi.

God’s Blessings,
+Sixbert Macumi



SUBMISSIONS DUE 1 MONTH PRIOR TO PRINTING DATE

DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE: FEBRUARY 1

submissions

We welcome letters to the editor, news, stories (max 500 words), event notices, book reviews and photos.

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seens@telus.net

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Strategy digs to root of poverty

Continued from page 2.

Over the fall, input gathered from more than 3,000 Edmontonians (including those who experience poverty) through public open houses, stakeholder engagement sessions and an online survey, indicated support for the priorities on housing, education and collaborative community engagement.

As a result of the consultations, the Task Force made key amendments to the strategy, which included: ensuring that addictions and mental health services were identified as going hand-in-hand; explicitly referring to discrimination experienced by immigrants and refugees, those with abilities challenges, and age and gender groupings; and ensuring that the needs of youth at risk and isolated seniors are addressed in the implementation road map.



Bishop Jane Alexander launches the End Poverty Edmonton Strategy at McCauley School.

"I want to thank everyone who played a role in developing this important strategy. We have worked very diligently over the past two years to come up with an approach we think is achievable," said Mayor Iveson. "When you realize that more than 100,000 people in our city live in poverty, we know it is important to genuinely address the root causes and lift these citizens out of poverty so they can enjoy the same prosperity so many of us experience."

The Task Force strategy is unique in its approach to ending, rather than managing poverty. From the

recommendations six key areas were identified as critical starting points and for their likelihood of making a significant difference to those residents living in poverty. They are:

- Eliminating racism

- Livable incomes
- Affordable housing
- Accessible and affordable transit
- Affordable and quality child care
- Access to mental health services

Over the coming months, the Task Force will continue its work on fine tuning the 10-year road map that will guide the actions of the community as a whole toward the goal of eliminating poverty in a generation. In spring, 2016, the final road map report will be presented to City Council for approval.

Priests reach golden milestone

MARGARET MARSCHALL

Three long-serving priests in the Diocese of Edmonton marked golden anniversaries in 2015.

The late Bruce Aylard, Fr. Tom McKnight and the Rev. John Rushton were all ordained to the priesthood in 1965.

Last spring, the parish of St. Thomas in Sherwood Park gave thanks for the ministry of the late Bruce Aylard. Ordained 50 years ago on June 13, 1965, Aylard was serving the parish as an Honorary Assistant at the time of his death on November 25, 2015.

Fr. Tom McKnight, former rector of St. Michael and All Angels, Edmonton, was celebrated by the parish on the second Sunday of Advent. Leading up to his ordination on December 6, 1965, McKnight served in many roles as a lay person at St. Michael's

The Rev. John Rushton was recognized by his parish community on December 20. St. Augustine's Parkland said a prayer of thanksgiving for his service to the Anglican Church and to the people of Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and Parkland County. Following his ordination on December 19, 1965, Rushton served Anglican parishes in British Columbia and Onoway. After retiring from full-time ministry, he helped amalgamate the parishes of Stony Plain and Spruce Grove into St. Augustine's Mission, later renamed St. Augustine's Parkland, where he continues to serve as an Honorary Assistant.

Editor's note: You can read more about John's dedication to church ministry and community service in an article by his wife Elizabeth on the parish website: staugustinesparkland.org

Food security begins with access to clean water



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton

A few days ago I noticed one of my big dogs lapping up snow as he ran around the yard; his version of a cold drink "to go." That got me thinking about water, and reminded me of recent research concerning livestock and their winter water requirements; beef and sheep can rely on snow for their water needs, except

during periods of lactation. Unfortunately the snow needs to be light and fluffy with no crystalized crust, which our weather doesn't always provide.

The fact is, I have been thinking a lot about water this winter – especially since my barn water froze in the last cold spell! Drinking water is something we take for granted, not just for our livestock, but when we turn on the kitchen tap we expect clean drinking water to come pouring out. The average Canadian uses approximately 250 litres of clean water every day! Just imagine how many trips that would be if we had to haul it in pails from a well, which is the reality for many people in our world.

That has always been life for women in rural Tanzania, but change is happening. The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

(the development arm of the Anglican Church of Canada), has partnered with the Diocese of Masasi in Tanzania, with matching funding from the Government of Canada. Initially women in 12 villages in the Diocese of Masasi were walking an average of 7 kilometers round trip to get water for cooking, cleaning, and even watering their crops. Thanks to the drilling of 17 borehole wells they now have clean potable water in their villages.

A borehole is a relatively simple, cost-effective way to dig down to the water table and provide water for up to 3000 people. A simple hand pump is attached at the top of the pipe. A hand pump is easier for the local people to learn to repair, and doesn't require electricity to operate.

Two people in each village have been trained

as pump operators, learning how to do maintenance and repairs on the hand pumps, ensuring that the pumps will last well past the end of the project in the village.

To date, these wells provide water within easy walking distance for 65000 people and a further 16 wells have been rehabilitated, providing clean water to another 33000 people. Over the next two years 13 more wells will be dug in 6 villages to provide clean water to thousands of more people. This clean water – something we all take for granted – is the first step towards food security for these people of Tanzania.

To learn more or support this project, visit www.pwrdf.org. You can



A boy pumps water at a bore hole well in Tanzania.

also donate through your church envelopes. If you are interested in becoming involved in the important ministry of PWRDF in your parish please speak to your rector or contact Dorothy Marshall, Diocese of Edmonton Rep. at camfarm@syban.net

Preparing to welcome Syrians to Rocky Mountain sanctuary

The town of Jasper and parish of St. Mary and St. George are busily preparing for the arrival of two refugee families from Syria.

Nancy Addison, a retired teacher and the People's Warden at Jasper, spoke to CJFE's Kevin Sexton about her decision to help sponsor a Syrian refugee family. Here is an excerpt:

"How it all started for me was just an idea in my head. Watching everything on television you just get tired of seeing it and thinking the world's going belly up and you just wish you could do something.

"I started researching it and I discovered that if you go to an Anglican church, or I suppose any church probably, a synagogue, anywhere, and ask for help, usually some sort of

religious institution will help you. I went there and told them what I wanted to do. ... The people that were there offered to help me and they gave me a motion, which I needed to proceed.

"Then I drove into the city to visit a woman who works for the Anglican Diocese, her name is Gail Millard, and she's been working with refugees for the past 22 years. Her house is more like a command centre. She has applicants' papers there all over; she's missing pieces of furniture because she's given them away to refugees who've arrived in the country.

"We went through the applications all together, and she steered me in the direction of two (families). One of them had children and this other one - which I eventually picked - didn't.

She told me that children are very easily sponsored; people want to help children, but this family, because they're older, probably would languish over there and never get any help. I picked up the letter from Reham, and by that time they'd ... ended up in a mountainous village in Lebanon. She was writing from there saying, please help us, we have no options. So after reading that, you know, I just said, 'I'll take these guys.'"

The 30-minute interview (available at www.canadalandshow.com/podcast/bringing-refugees-rockies) also includes thoughts from Gail Millard, refugee coordinator for the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, as well as Farah Malik, a Pakistani refugee who came to Canada about

three years ago.

After the program aired, Nancy says the community decided to sponsor a second family consisting of a husband, wife and their three sons. At press time, she did not know exactly when the two families would be arriving.

"We are still putting the finishing touches on the apartment and, of course, we are still fundraising like fiends!" Addison writes in an email. "We need approximately \$70,000 to accommodate both families."

A "Sweets for Syria" dessert and silent auction fundraiser was held on January 14th and on February 4th, the community will hold a concert with the band "Red Moon Road."

"We have lots of work ahead of us but it's been really enjoyable, too," she says. "This town has come out in force to assist. We are making new friends! Our new rector the Rev. Keith Marsh is busy all the time!!!"

Several parishes in the Athabasca and Edmonton dioceses have sponsored or are in the process of sponsoring refugee families and are an integral part of the federal government plan to resettle 25,000 Syrians in Canada by the end of February. Read more about the local faith community's support efforts in the Edmonton Journal article: "Church groups play vital role in bringing refugees to Canada, bridging cultural gaps."

Prayer as reconciliation Going the extra mile



SHARON PASULA
Oskâpêwis/ Aboriginal
Cultural and Educational
Helper

A small but significant change was made in May of 2015 to the Prayer Cycle of the Diocese of Edmonton. In this diocese

we now formally give thanks for local First Nations. Because of Bishop Jane Alexander's inspiration we pray together each week for the 18 member nations of Treaty Six.

In November, I visited the parish of St. John the Evangelist in Edmonton. That Sunday Daniel Westfall led the Prayers of the People and included a bit of history about the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, whose main town site is on Lac St. Anne - traditionally called Wakamne, or God's Lake. Drawing on the Alexis Nation motto: 'Blessed by God. Cultivated through prayer and the spirit of the

drum,' Westfall prayed: "as they live by your lake, may they know your presence and blessing through nature, prayer, and music. Lord in your mercy."

Enthused and surprised, I expressed my gratitude to Daniel for his prayer for Alexis First Nation. He explained, "When I do prayers of the people, I usually surf the website of the First Nation and try to incorporate something of their experience into my prayer. To me this is 'going the extra mile.'" (Matthew 5:41). Daniel offered to send me a copy of the other prayers he had made for First Nations. Perhaps your parish would like to use these prayers as a template when you pray for the First Nations in your area:

From May 2015 - we pray for the Whitefish Lake First Nation, located in northeastern AB at Goodfish Lake. We invite you to lift them into resurrection life from whatever hurts and dysfunction and sin remains from residential schools and other injustices in their

Miwasin Healing and Learning Gathering

(Miwasin means "It is good" in Cree)

Purpose: To draw people together, both lay and ordained, to experience and celebrate Indigenous Christian spirituality.

February 6, 2016, 9am - 4pm.

All Saints' Anglican Cathedral
(10035-103 Street, Edmonton)

During the day we will:

- Explore nation-to-nation relationships and take part in the Kairos Blanket Exercise to gain understanding
- Learn about reconciliation through sharing circles and Q&A
- Engage with guest speakers Harold Roscher (Executive Director of the Edmonton Native Healing Centre) and Joanne Pompana (Director of the Red Road Healing Society)
- Finish the day with a traditional Round Dance

Register online at:
www.miwasinhealingandlearninggathering.eventbrite.ca

For more info, contact Sharon Pasula at 780-717-8379 / oskapewis@edmonton.anglican.ca

All our First Nations people of Treaty 6

At the *Truth and Reconciliation*: a special exhibit on the legacy of the residential schools in 2015, the name of each Treaty 6 First Nation was posted in the sanctuary. Can you name all 18?

history.

From September 2015 - we pray for Frog Lake Nation, north of Lloydminster. Bless their programs: education, counselling and job creation. Grant them freedom from the sins and oppressions of white men and aboriginals. But most of all grant them freedom from the inner

weight of sin that besets us all.

From October 2015 - we pray for Saddle Lake First Nation, northeast of Edmonton. May they stir up the gifts you have given them, that will empower them to build hope and faith and community.

Continued on page 12.

From sanctuaries to store fronts - Anglicans sing in anticipation of Jesus' birth



Members of All Saints', Athabasca gather around the Advent Wreath.

Beauty and spirit of Advent

MARY GISLASON
All Saints', Athabasca

With whole hearts, All Saints' Church, Athabasca observes the Advent Season (the four-week time of preparation before the Nativity) with the traditional readings and candle wreath. When children and families are present, they are invited to help the minister or lay reader light the candles in anticipation of the arrival of the Christ Child.

Adding to the beauty and spiritual meaning of the holiday season, the evergreen-covered Advent Wreath, features five candles: three lavender, one pink, and one white. The circle importantly represents the care of God with a love so real it has no beginning

and no end. The evergreen symbolizes the hope Christ brought to the world – hope unchanging throughout Eternity.

The first lavender candle represents prophecy: Christ as the light of the world. Next is the Bethlehem Candle - remembering the time and place of the birth of Christ in the flesh. The Shepherd's Candle is one of repentance; remembering the joy the shepherds felt as they journeyed to see the promised King.

The pink candle, representing angels and lit on Christmas Eve, is the candle of Peace on Earth.

The large Christ Candle at the centre of the wreath is white for purity. Christ is born. White appears to possess no color, but it reflects every colour of the spectrum.

Lessons and carols shared with friends old and new

MARY GISLASON
All Saints', Athabasca

Audience members packed the pews of All Saints' Church to raise more than \$1,000 for a local non-profit group.

The ecumenical Community Festival of Lessons and Carols, held December 17, 2015, featured 87 performers under the musical direction of event organizer Marvyn Rogers. This was the fourth year a free-will offering was collected for "Road to Hope," a not-for-profit organization which helps transport cancer patients to the Alberta Cross Cancer Institute, offering comfort and support to patients along the journey to and from Edmonton.

The crowd sang together between scripture readings by the local Ministerial Association, dignitaries

and community leaders, and musical performances by soloists, groups and church and community choirs. These included: the Athabasca Community Handbell Choir, Marion Singers, United Church Choir, Roman Catholic Church Choir, Mary Olson's Golden Memories Choir, Ecumenical New Horizon Singers, the 3 Wise Women. Comprised of the Rev. Christobel Lines (Anglican), along with Rev. Monica Rosborough and the Rev. Cecile Fausak (Athabasca United Church). The Rev. Hong K. Nguyen (Roman Catholic) gave the final blessing.

At the conclusion of this joyous evening, a true celebration of community spirit in celebration of the birth

of Jesus, festival participants were treated to refreshments provided by All Saints' Church.



Mark Murray, rector of St. Saviour's, Vermilion, welcomes St. Nicholas (Christopher Thomas).

TRICIA POLOWY
St. Saviour's, Vermilion

The Feast of St. Nicholas was celebrated December 6, by the parish of St. Saviour's, Vermilion. The Rev. Mark Murray shared the story of a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance a woman had to find a husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. As this poor man's daughters had no dowry, they were destined to be sold into slavery.

Then, mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home-providing the needed dowries. Each bag of gold, tossed through an open window, is said to have landed in stockings or shoes that had been left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, to be filled by St. Nicholas.

St. Nicholas' wealthy parents, who

raised him to be a devout Christian, both died in an epidemic when he was young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his entire inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need and his love for children.

Where St. Nicholas is prominent, his day, not Christmas, is the primary gift-giving day. Parties may be held on the eve, December 5, when shoes or stockings are left for St. Nicholas to fill during the night. Children find treats of small gifts, fruit or nuts, and special Nicholas candies and cookies. St. Nicholas gifts are meant to be shared, not kept for oneself. The Rev. Murray brought a pair of wooden shoes filled with chocolates and oranges for the children. We were reminded of the message to be generous to those in need.

Carolling in the streets

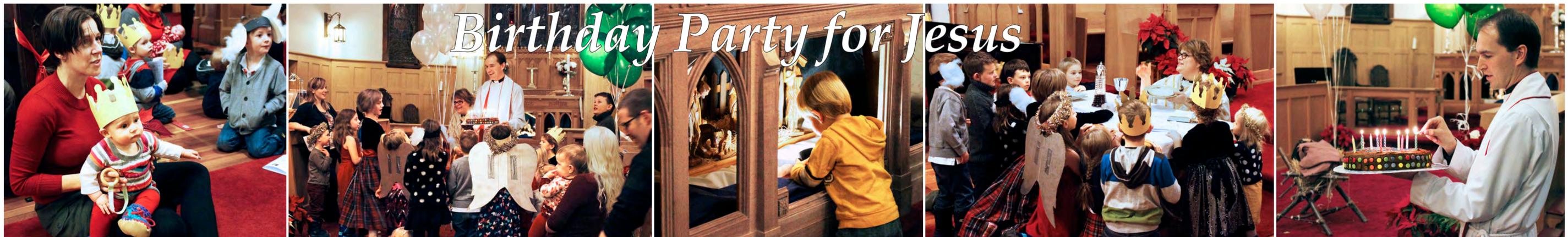
Carolers from All Saints' Cathedral and the Synod Office gathered on the chilly evening of December 17 to bring Christmas cheer to downtown Edmonton shoppers. The group shared the gift of music during a customer appreciation event along the trendy 104th Street Promenade. After warming their vocal chords and stomachs with steaming mugs of Wassail and bowls of chili, the singers strolled one block west down Jasper Avenue where they were welcomed by several local shops and restaurants. As



the winter's eve drew to a close, the group huddled around a bonfire to serenade Santa Claus and sip ginger cream. Carolers received a Mandarin Orange from appreciative staff at this organic grocery store in downtown Edmonton.



The ecumenical Community Festival of Lessons and Carols collects an offering for "Road to Hope," a not-for-profit organization which helps transport cancer patients to the Alberta Cross Cancer Institute.



Filled with excitement and wonder children placed baby Jesus in a manger, as red and green balloons floated to the rafters high above Christ Church on Christmas Eve. Adults also took part in this lively celebration of the birth of Jesus, the first of three services in the parish that evening. However, as rector Susan Oliver noted when welcoming the multigenerational congregation, "this service belongs to the children." Gathered around a kid-size altar, angels, sheep and kings broke bread with Sue, before helping associate priest Nick Trussell bring out a chocolate birthday cake decorated with Smarties for the Prince of Peace. Photos: Margaret Marshall

Lest we forget



On November 11, 2015, 40 singers robed in white formed an ecumenical choir to honour Veterans at the Athabasca Multiplex. At the request of the Athabasca Royal Canadian Legion Branch 103, a group of ecumenical massed singers under the direction of All Saints' Church Musical Director Marvyn Rogers, performed songs popular during World War I and II.

by Mary Gislason

Retired teacher blesses parish with leadership and musical talent

MARY GISLASON
All Saints', Athabasca

The Athabasca Parish is grateful for the many talents of retired music teacher Mary Olson, a longtime member of St. Alban's Church.

Not one to put up her feet in retirement, Mary regularly plays the organ at St. Alban's and, when needed, substitutes at All Saints'.

In fact, much of Mary's work for the Lord has been centered at All Saints'. Every spring for 40 years, Mary has prepared students, including her own grandchildren and great grandchildren, for the Athabasca Music Festival. The festival, which began at All Saints' as an ecumenical group in 1975, has brought great joy to the parish.

Over the years, All Saints' has played host to performances by the Golden Memories, an ecumenical seniors' choir, assembled by Mary. She also started the Senior High Choir at Edwin Parr High School where she taught music courses for many years. In the fall of 2015, Mary and the Golden Memories Choir sang the "Colours of Broadway." Following the show, a 24-page calendar featured choir members dressed as Broadway characters. The popular photos of Mary Poppins, Davy Crockett and Pocahontas – to name a few – were taken by none other than Mary



herself.

Mary entertains residents at senior and extendicare lodges and is also a handbell instructor. Every week from September to spring, Mary journeys though the Bible with her ecumenical study group.

When the organizer of the St. Alban's Church Centennial Weekend passed away suddenly before the event, Mary was the saving grace. She used her leadership talents to carry on in his absence, and also authored the St. Alban's Church Book (1915–2015).

Mary Olson's teaching career may have come to a formal end, but she continues to bless the Athabasca Parish community with her dedication to public work. Thanks be to God.

Cadet confirmed in Athabasca Parish

MARY GISLASON
All Saints',
Athabasca

It was a pleasure and a joy for the Athabasca Parish to take part in the confirmation of 13-year-old McCartney Howard Paul Banks by Bishop Fraser Lawton on November 28, 2015.

Bishop Lawton held communion and delivered an outstanding message, ushering in Advent, the season of Jesus' birth, by reminding us of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Attending church regularly since arriving in Athabasca from Newfoundland, McCartney prepared for confirmation under the direction of ministers Christobel Lines and Debra and Clive Scheepers. It was wonderful to witness the first communion of this young lad, who also serves his community as a cadet.

May God grant McCartney a happy, prosperous life as he completes his schooling and steps out into the world as a contributing member of society.



From left: Deacon Terry Francis, the Rev. Debra Scheepers, Bishop Fraser Lawton and the Rev. Clive Scheepers at the confirmation of McCartney Banks.

Atlantic Canada visit addresses common needs

A compilation of Archdeacon Terry Leer's newsletters to the Diocese of Athabasca.

Field Trip to Newfoundland and New Brunswick

Clergy from the Diocese of Athabasca recently made the long journey to St. John's, Newfoundland and Saint John, New Brunswick for a unique opportunity to converse with bishops and clergy from five dioceses. The impetus for this field trip was to explore ministry with our shared parishioners (people from the Maritimes working in the oil sector in northern Alberta, who divide their time between both regions of Canada).

Accompanying the Rt. Rev. Fraser Lawton, Bishop of Athabasca, were four members of Clericus



Diocese of Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton (right) in Newfoundland.

involved in ministry to the shared parishioners and in the mission development of the diocese. They were: the Very Rev. Iain Luke, the Ven. Terry Leer, the Rev. Fariborz Khandani (Rector of Christ Church, Grande Prairie) and the Rev. Dane Neufeld (Rector of All Saints', Fort McMurray).

Continued on next page.

Athabasca Anglicans journey to Atlantic



Visiting Cape Spear, Newfoundland are (left to right): Archdeacon Terry Leer, Dean Iain Luke, Bishop Fraser Lawton, the Rev. Dane Neufeld. Missing: the Rev. Fariborz Khandani.

Continued from previous page.

Their days were filled with intense conversation, and the hills they climbed were literal - Cape Spear, Port de Grave and downtown Saint John - as well as metaphorical: comprehending the differences in culture and expectations among the dioceses of Athabasca, Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, Central Newfoundland and Western Newfoundland.

At the November meetings in St. John's Nfld., participants, including five bishops and more than 30 clergy and lay people, talked about how to work together to meet the spiritual needs of Newfoundlanders in northern Alberta. The trip was encouraged and supported by the national church, and facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Eileen Scully, Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry, and to the Ven. Dr. Michael Thompson, General Secretary of General Synod.

The Future for Ministry

We have long known that workers migrating to the oil and gas

fields of northern Alberta quickly lose connections with the Anglican Church. The stresses of maintaining two homes, long work hours and the isolation of the north quickly dampen the hopes for relationships with Anglican Christians. Frequently, the first time an Anglican parish hears of a newcomer in town is when that person experiences pastoral need or tragedy, or to request baptism or marriage preparation. Our shared parishioners, when at home in Newfoundland or New Brunswick or working in Alberta, often "fall through the cracks" and only surface in times of need. This makes for ineffective ministry and poor support.

Following this field trip, initiatives taken up by the participating dioceses will

- strengthen inter-diocesan communications
- use existing pastoral relationships as a bridge to creating new ones
- share expectations amongst the dioceses and with the shared

parishioners.

It is hoped that reciprocal visits may be organized with the bishops of Newfoundland and that resources may be shared amongst the five dioceses.

The chief benefit of this trip is the increased awareness of the pastoral issues concerning shared parishioners and of the cultural differences that complicate those issues.

The Anglican Diocese of Athabasca: A World Apart

Throughout the field trip it was obvious to the participants from five different dioceses that the Church may be "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church" but can never be considered uniform. The culture of the Church in northern Alberta is as much formed by its history as is the culture of the Diocese of Fredericton.

The Diocese of Athabasca covers the northern half of the province of Alberta and it is intimately associated with the history of the western expansion of Canadian settlers across the prairies. The earliest ministries of Anglican bishops and priests were with First Nations communities, isolated and spread across great distances, reachable only on foot, by dogsled and by canoe. As more European settlers immigrated to the north, the Anglican Church began to organize itself into provinces, dioceses and

parishes. St. Paul's Parish, Fort Chipewyan, survives today as the oldest continually inhabited parish church in the province because of the courage and tenacity of its people since 1880.

The pioneer experience demanded that individuals and communities

join together to survive. One proved one's value by community support and involvement. The stranger needed support to survive and everyone at one point was that stranger.

Even today, when cities like Fort McMurray have citizens from more than 120 countries, individuals are expected to join the community and demonstrate their commitment through involvement. Living in work camps geographically isolated from the population inhibits such involvement and creates tension in the community.

Community involvement is essential to the prairie experience and helps to define expectations in the Church as well.

The Diocese of Athabasca currently has 17 parishes with about 23 congregations. Long distances separate them. It is a drive of more than 11 hours to travel from Fort McMurray in the northeast to Fort Vermilion in the northwest.



Fredericton Bishop David Edwards speaking in Miramichi NB.



Clergy and bishops from northern Alberta and Atlantic Canada.

Marriage Canon proposal encourages open dialogue

THE VEN. TERRY LEER
Diocese of Athabasca

The Diocese
of Athabasca
is facilitating

a series of regional conversations (Feb. 2-3, 16-17) to help prepare delegates for The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which will meet in Richmond Hill, ON, July 8-13. Delegates are encouraged to think theologically about current National Church issues such as the proposed amendments to Canon XXI, the Canon on Marriage.

The conversational process is designed to take participants through a five-stage journey:

1. Theological reflection on the nature of the Church, on marriage, and on the role of scripture, tradition, reason and inspiration on our theological reflection
2. The history of same gender issues in the Anglican Church of Canada
3. Parish-based conversations informed by the regional ones

4. Intentional training for the General Synod delegates

5. Follow-up conversations following General Synod.

Athabasca Bishop Fraser Lawton, Dean Iain Luke and Archdeacon for Mission Development Terry Leer will shepherd participants along this journey. The goals are to share information, encourage discussion and to provide General Synod delegates with sufficient background that will enable meaningful involvement in the debates of General Synod. Notes and summaries of each of the four regional conversations (Fort McMurray, Athabasca, Peace River and Grande Prairie) will be distributed to the participants and the delegates. The notes and summaries will provide a focus for the training session to follow. Delegates to General Synod for the Athabasca diocese are: Bishop Lawton, Dean Luke, Archdeacon Leer, Jeremy Munn, Danielle McKenzie and Nate Day. Online registration will open in February.

Parishes will be encouraged to follow-up the regional conversations with their own talks, for which the diocese will provide resources. In addition, all parishioners are encouraged to read the report of the Commission on the Marriage Canon and to use its accompanying study guide. These are available at www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/cmc/submissions.

It is our understanding that Synod organizers aim to provide tablet computers preloaded with all synod documents; enable diocesan delegations to sit together as units during the substantive debates; use digital devices to record balloting results and provide sufficient time for the debate on the proposed changes to the marriage canon. The Council of General Synod is working towards a process for the Synod meeting that will encourage respectful debate and uphold the unity of the Church. Only time will tell if the Council has been successful in achieving these difficult goals.

Cathedral welcomes community support for Syrian refugees

Twenty-one Peace River citizens gathered at St. James' Cathedral in December to discuss how they can best support and welcome a Syrian refugee family. This followed vestry's recent decision to sponsor a Syrian family and to set up a separate fund for community donations.

Working in groups, participants discussed some of the challenges facing newcomers such as finding housing and setting up a household, learning English, preparing for employment, obtaining all the cards a Canadian resident requires (ID, health card, driver's license, library card, etc), finding schools and healthcare and overall mental and physical wellbeing. The group also looked at fundraising options and ways to facilitate cultural awareness.

Notes from the sessions will be shared in the new Facebook group created for this project "Peace River #WelcomeRefugees". This is where details of the family's size and composition will be posted

when available. Donations of winter clothing and household items will almost certainly be needed.

"Community involvement is key to the successful integration of new families," said the Ven. Dr. Iain Luke thanking meeting participants for their interest.

Prior to the meeting, St. James' refugee settlement coordinator Deb Prothero met with local agencies at Peace River Town Hall to discuss potential service needs. The Province of Alberta has set aside \$1 million to assist municipalities, agencies and community groups bridge service gaps. Other northwestern Alberta communities considering Syrian refugee sponsorship include Grande Prairie, Fairview and Boyle.

St. James Anglican Cathedral (located at 9709-98 Avenue, Peace River) welcomes, accepts and encourages ALL people in the name of Christ. Our mission is to be a Christ-centered community reaching out in service and love.

THE DIOCESE OF ATHABASCA prepares for GENERAL SYNOD 2016

The Diocese of Athabasca is hosting conversations with special emphasis placed on the proposed changes to the Marriage Canon (Canon XXI).

**All Saints' Church,
Fort McMurray**
Tuesday, February 2
2016
7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

**All Saints' Church,
Athabasca**
Wednesday, February 3
2016
7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

**St. James' Cathedral,
Peace River**
Tuesday, February 16
2016
7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

**Christ Church,
Grande Prairie**
Wednesday, February 17
2016
7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

These conversations will enable parishioners and our delegates to General Synod to think theologically and in-depth about the issues which will confront the General Synod meeting in Richmond Hill, Ontario, in July, 2016.

The conversations are part of our preparation strategy, which also includes parish-based conversations and training for our delegates.

**PARISHIONERS ARE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED
TO ATTEND THESE IMPORTANT REGIONAL EVENTS.
THANK YOU**

ATHABASCA DIOCESE CONNECTIONS

Diocesan website: www.dioath.ca

(includes sermons for lay readers for each Sunday)

The Anglican Centre (archives for the Diocese of Athabasca)

Phone: 780-624-2767

Fax: 780-624-2365

Email: dioath@telusplanet.net

Parish websites

- Peace River -
- Fort McMurray -
- Grande Prairie -
- Boyle -

www.stjamespr.org

www.allsaintsanglican.ca (All Saints')

www.sttom.ca (St. Thomas')

www.christchurchanglicangp.org

www.parishnorthernlights.org

Are parishes welcoming or uncertain spaces?

ROB GOETZE

The sign in front of your church says “Everyone Welcome.” But how many people passing by question this truth?

Between their own negative experiences with church and the high association of Christian beliefs with words like “judgmental,” “hypocritical” and “anti-homosexual” (source: *unChristian*), they are not likely to give you the benefit of the doubt. Whether you realize it or not, your parish and how it values people, is an uncertain space to most. Will it be hostile or indifferent? Will it be welcoming and embracing? Most people just can’t tell.

“My parish is welcoming; it’s not an ‘uncertain space.’”

A few years ago, we attended a lively parish full of people who loved Jesus and were very supportive of one another. The parish welcomed newcomers warmly and had much positive neighbourhood involvement. Sounds embracing, right? After belonging to the parish for eight years, that’s exactly what we thought.

When diocesan synod granted priests the option of blessing same-sex couples, all hell broke loose. Parish membership plummeted by 50 per cent. Half the congregation left, some people calmly and peaceably, but others with anger and what could only be perceived as hatred toward gay people.

Based on our experience of the

parish, this reaction was completely unexpected. On the surface, people appeared to be warm and accepting. Yet, when under pressure, a different reality emerged. Embrace was selective and conditional, and uncertain.

Uncertain and Declared Spaces

A space is deemed to be “uncertain” when it has not declared and openly communicated how it values and embraces diverse people. A declared space, on the other hand, has clearly defined and articulated values. It might be embracing, it might be hostile, or it might be somewhere in between. But whatever it is, is clearly known and seen.

People entering uncertain spaces do not know what disclosure of information or what transgression against unwritten behavioural codes might result in shaming, marginalization, discrimination, rejection or physical harm. For some, entering uncertain spaces requires vigilance and compartmentalization. Their intuition warns them that their experiences and innermost thoughts are too “other” for this community. As a result, uncertain spaces present significant barriers to living an authentic, open life, and dwelling in such spaces is spiritually and emotionally unhealthy.

People who might benefit from involvement in a particular church might be unable to cross the threshold due to the uncertainty of a true welcome or embrace. Others go reluctantly, in some cases so desperate for the gospel that they endure not only uncertainty

and stress but actual harmful environments for it. The unconscious question that some ask themselves is, “Will I be blessed by being here, or cursed? Will I be perceived to be a blessing or a curse?” In uncertain spaces, one does not know which way it will be.

In our day, if people who call themselves Christians are despising anyone, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people tend to top the list. With this in mind, I called the diocese and asked, “Are there LGBTQ+-friendly parishes?”

They gave me the names of four parishes. Their websites said nothing about LGBTQ+ and had no specific statements of embrace. I called them and asked if they are LGBTQ+ friendly. It turned out that they are, both in terms of the leadership and the parish culture. A few months later, I discovered two more LGBTQ+ friendly parishes.

Here’s the point: six parishes of twenty in Edmonton are LGBTQ+ friendly, but the fact that they are is not at all obvious to those outside of the parish! For the person who looks at their websites or exterior signs, there’s no indication of this, making these churches uncertain spaces. For the person who simply says “tell me about your parish,” I’m not sure that being LGBTQ+ friendly would be

mentioned. Thus, someone looking for an LGBTQ+ friendly Anglican church would have difficulty finding one.

Uncertain spaces, lacking clear statements regarding if and how they value and embrace people, are stumbling blocks to those who are seeking and stifle the spiritual growth of those who have found. It is vital that congregations desiring to be welcoming and hospitable move from being uncertain spaces to becoming places that are truly embracing of all and declaring this reality. This journey stretches a congregation as it works through what it means to be the body of Christ and what it means that all are created by God, defining and declaring the value of people and discovering what it looks like to follow Jesus’ example of embrace, not only in words but in the everyday reality of its life together.

Rob Goetze is a member of vestry at St. Timothy’s Anglican Church. He writes a blog about invitation and inclusion. You can read the full-length “Uncertain Spaces” article at: www.exclusionandembrace.blogspot.ca/2015/10/uncertain-spaces.html

Diocesan Quiet Day

Exploring Your Own Journey with Christ

Saturday, March 5, 2016

9:30 a.m. (for coffee) to 3:45 p.m.

All Saints Anglican Cathedral

10035-103 St. NW, Edmonton

Led by *Sr. Elizabeth Rolfe-Thomas, SSJD, Reverend Mother, and Sr. Susanne Prue, SSJD. The Sisters will be visiting Edmonton March 4-6.*

You will have an opportunity to think about your own personal spiritual journey and to reflect on God’s transforming love, and what God might be nudging you to do at this time in your life.

Please bring a bag lunch. Soup, coffee and tea will be provided.

During lunch, the Sisters will speak about the new Sisterhood of St. John the Divine Companions Program, beginning September, 2016.

To register:

Barbara Burrows (barbarab@edmonton.anglican.ca) or the Synod Office (780-439-7344)

Cost: by donation

Youth Winter Camp

Feb 19-21, 2016

Want to have a great weekend with friends, God, and the great outdoors? All youth in grades 7 and up are welcome!

- FACEBOOKS: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EVENTS/936554303047732
- REGISTER BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8 AT: WWW.EDMONTON.ANGLICAN.ORG/UNCATEGORIZED/WINTER-CAMP-2016
- \$50/YOUTH. LEAD BY MARK ARMSTRONG, CHRIS PILON & HEATHER LIDDELL.

Diocese of Athabasca Women’s Conference

April 22-24, 2016 - Valleyview

Hosted by: St. Anne’s

Guest speaker: The Rt. Rev. Fraser Lawton

Watch this space for more details

Reliving the “Fabulous Fifties” in Wetaskiwin

FIONA BROWNLEE
Immanuel, Wetaskiwin

One hundred and fifty people relived the “Fabulous Fifties” in Wetaskiwin, raising more than \$6,000 for local food banks.

Sponsored by Immanuel Anglican Church, the event reflected the parish belief in sharing blessings with its surrounding community and commitment to working toward neighbourly reconciliation. The November 28 fundraiser was generously supported by many donors and sponsors. Funds raised benefitted local food banks in Millet, Maskwacis and Wetaskiwin.

On Tuesday, December 15, Carol Blair, chair of the organizing committee, along with the Rev. Hugh Matheson, rector of the parish, were delighted to share cheques and gifts of food with representatives from four different food banks: Elda Lightning (Samson Cree Nation Food Bank), DeAnne Lightning (Ermineskin First Nation Food



L-R: The Rev. Hugh Matheson, rector of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin; Debbie Herman, manager of the Millet Food Bank; Lieutenant Dae-Gun Kim with the Salvation Army, which runs the Wetaskiwin Food Bank; Elda Lightning, manager of Samson Cree Nation Food Bank; DeAnne Lightning, manager of Ermineskin First Nation Food Bank; and Carol Blair, chair of the Fabulous Fifties organizing committee.

Bank); Lieutenant Dae-Gun Kim (Wetaskiwin Food Bank) and Debbie Herman (Millet Food Bank). Debbie Herman says this gift will help the food bank with operations into the new year when donations tend to be

slower.

The four food bank representatives were also given a blessing written by the rector as an expression of thanks for the ministry that they are doing:

*As you serve those who are hungry,
know that you are serving God.
As you serve those who are broken,
know that you are bringing
healing.
As you serve those who are destitute,
know that you are giving the
courage to stand.
Our gifts of necessities and dollars,
we offer.
Our encouragement in a difficult
ministry,
we offer.
Our prayers to God for your sakes,
we offer.
We bless you in the name of God,
in the name of God who creates,
in the name of God who
sojourns,
in the name of God who sustains.
Amen.*

Immanuel Anglican expresses its deep appreciation and thanks to all community and business donors and sponsors who, in partnership with the church, helped to make the Fabulous Fifties a most successful event.

St. Saviour's welcomes new rector

TRICIA POLOWY
St. Saviour's, Vermilion

On December 12, 2015, the Rev. Mark Murray was inducted as rector of St. Saviour's, Vermilion. The service was officiated by the Ven. Alan Perry, Executive Archdeacon for the Diocese of Edmonton.

Murray's friend and colleague the Rev. Robin Walker, Honorary

Assistant of Holy Trinity, Edmonton, delivered the sermon. Focussing on Jesus' ministry, Walker highlighted the importance of the rector's role to guide parishioners and the community. St. Saviour's has a long history in Vermilion (established in 1903). The congregation and community look forward to this exciting new chapter in the life of our parish.



L-R: guest preacher Robin Walker, rector's warden Jo-Ann Mones, executive archdeacon Alan Perry, people's warden Judy Misick, incumbent Mark Murray, and honorary assistant Aubrey Bell.

A new year in Wainwright



St. Thomas, Wainwright ushered in the Christian church year in a festive way. Led by rector Ann Marie Nicklin, the parish embraced the New Year's tradition of donning colourful party hats, making merriment and singing “Auld Lang Syne.” The congregation spoke of hope, while lighting the first candle of Advent in preparation for the coming of the Christ child.

Photo: Allan Samm

Prayers for reconciliation

Continued from page 5.

From July 2015 - we pray also for the Montana First Nation, the smallest of the four First Nations located around Maskwacis (formerly Hobbema), and for their chief Bradley Rabbit. Give them wisdom and grace to live in the present, even as they focus on restoration of land rights surrendered in 1906

and on healing from the residential school harms. And this summer, as we head south on vacation, driving past the closed and boarded up Bear Hills gas station and restaurant on the QEII Highway, give us a heart of prayer and compassion for our brothers and sisters in the four area First Nations.