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# the messenger

A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL SERVING THE DIOCESES OF ATHABASCA AND EDMONTON

NOVEMBER 2009

## Athabasca's new bishop-elect

BY PETER CLARKE, ATHABASCA EDITOR

To God be the Glory! We have a new Bishop-elect in the Diocese of Athabasca.

There is a process to obtaining a new Bishop, that of necessity takes time, lots of prayer and seeking of the Holy Spirit before it concludes. Many months ago a search committee was struck, names of prospective candidates were sought. Those approached to let their name stand presumably went through a time of prayer and discernment and talking with their family, before detailing a curriculum vitae and then submitting to the needed checks that such a position demands. When all was collated by the search committee and sent to the standing Synod members, they too got to spend time in prayer and discernment for God to guide them in their deliberations.

So it came to pass that on the evening of Friday September 18 that members of Synod started to gather in the hall of St. James' Cathedral in Peace River for a time of fellowship with each other and the new Metropolitan David Ashdown, whom many would know from his tenure here as Archdeacon. The tone of the gathering was set that evening. The Metropolitan would chair the Synod the next day.

The next day, Saturday September 19, members of Synod gathered in the Cathedral for the usual business part of the process... People were appointed to various duties, the credentials committee reported that a quorum was present. There was a brief detailing of the candidates names, as all the relevant information had been circulated to members of Synod several weeks prior.

There were five candidates from across the country and one from abroad. The Rev. Andrew Hoskin from Thunder Bay was raised in this diocese and served Christ as both Curate and Priest in the Diocese of Athabasca from 1976 until 1982. The Venerable Daryle Kerr who is the present Executive Archdeacon and Diocesan Administrator has been serving Christ in this diocese since 2001. The Rev. Canon Fraser Lawton of Fort McMurray has served Christ since 1993 in this diocese at a total of 3 parishes. The Dean and Rector of St. James' Cathedral Iain Luke with service to



**New Bishop elect Rev. Canon Fraser Lawton from St. Thomas' Anglican Church in Fort McMurray, moments after the ballot results were made known.**

Christ going back to 1992, the last 2 years in this diocese. The Rev. Stuart Mennigke from South Africa had served Christ in that country since 1980 and could cite working alongside Archbishop Desmond Tutu among other duties. The Rt. Rev. Larry Robertson a Suffragan Bishop from the Diocese of the Arctic had given service to Christ since 1975. So it was that a variety of candidates from all places and experiences that followed God's call to them to let their name stand for consideration as our new Bishop. Soon after the names were announced and the business ended for now it was time to adjourn the business and talk to God.

Duly robed, Archbishop Ashdown processed in for the start of the Holy Eucharist. With wonderful singing, as is the case at our synods, this was certainly a praise offering to our God. The Holy Spirit came amongst us to lighten our souls and give us Gods' peace.

In his sermon, delivered from the high pulpit, Archbishop Ashdown reminded us that 9 years and 8 months prior he had stood in that same place saying farewell from his work here as Archdeacon. When he left he never thought how his own life would change, becoming a Bishop, more recently becoming Metropolitan, and now coming back to oversee this process to select a new Bishop. >> SEE NEW BISHOP PAGE 3



### Ordination celebration

**Chelsy & Jonathan:** The Rev. Jonathan Crane and The Rev. Chelsy Stevens were ordained to the priesthood on Sunday, October 4, 2009, at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral.



### ACW Life Members

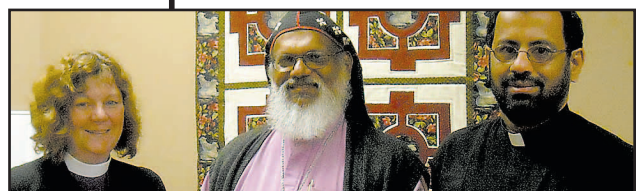
**Corporate Communion:** The Corporate Communion for Life Members of the ACW of the Edmonton Diocese was held at the All Saints Cathedral on Saturday, September 12, 2009.

>> See ACW Page 5

### Question of the month

**Addiction:** We are surrounded by obsessive and compulsive behaviour that reflects excessive psychological dependence on almost everything but God. How do we help a generation redeem itself from addictions of drugs, alcohol, pornography, spending, compulsive overeating, dieting, online additions or gambling, and invite people to come to church as they are? How does your church offer an authentic impact on a person's everyday struggles?

### Bishop's calendar



**An invitation:** Bishop Jane was very pleased to meet with the Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius in October.

>> See FROM THE BISHOP Page 2

## bishop's corner

# From Bishop Jane

Dear Friends,

Life is certainly moving very quickly. There is a great deal going on in the diocese as we look to developing our ministry in urban and rural settings. There is a fantastic opportunity coming up in November to join Christian Schwartz, the founder of Natural Church Development (NCD) to talk about becoming more passionate about our spirituality. There is a theological seminar coming up, the Primate is visiting the diocese, we are celebrating centennials. But right now I am taking a few minutes of quiet reflection in my office.

As I write this message I am preparing for the Symposium on Homelessness. I've been looking into the photographs from "The Project" and finding a different view of life on the streets of Edmonton. My prayer for the next two days is that hearts will be softened and wills made stronger. Homelessness is a problem in all our towns and cities throughout Alberta. It is one of those issues which a great many people would prefer not to notice or forget. Ready to forget, because of course, it's not just a single problem that we're talking about. Homelessness carries with it any number of subsidiary issues. It carries with it that loss of a sense of dignity and identity which drives people into downward spirals. "It's not just the raw physical experience of vulnerability, of cold and hunger; it's also that sense of exclusion and that sense of lasting stigma which affects so many people." (Rowan Williams)

As a church I believe that we have a big job to do in taking this issue to heart. We must not allow anyone to become invisible. We must all fight against the complacency that can come with having so much and thinking it is all due to our own efforts and not recognizing that we are blessed so that we might share. We are called to work ourselves out of those reactive jobs that homelessness gives the rest of society. Not because we don't want to serve meals and run clothing drives, food kitchens etc etc. But because we dare to imagine a world where none of those things are necessary because we all have what we need. Don't get me wrong we will always feed the hungry and clothe the naked and give shelter to those without any but let's be honest...God's children should not be naked, hungry or shelterless in such a land of plenty.

So this symposium is a way of having the conversation that allows us to ask one another the right questions such as 'how can we help equip people, to regain control of their lives, to reintegrate into family, friendship, community, how can we help to create a society where everyone has a place to call home?' If we believe that God's love is transformative, and we do, – that means that we are called to be part of transforming society so that lives



Bishop Jane was very pleased to meet with the Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius in October. Mar Theodosius is presently the Episcopa of the North America - Europe Diocese and was visiting the Trinity Mar Thoma Church, of Edmonton. The Diocese of Edmonton has had a close relationship with the parish for many years. Internationally there are strong links in the Anglican Communion with the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church and their bishops were present at the Lambeth Conference in the United Kingdom in 2008. To read more about the history of the church please visit <http://www.marthomasyranchurch.org>

are changed for the better for ever – not just for today. As you read this message the symposium will have come and gone, I hope I will have met many of you here and that in the ensuing weeks we have continued the conversation.

**Present like a poor man**

**Lord Christ, you remain, unseen,  
at our side,**

**present like a poor man who  
washes the feet of his friends.**

**And we, to follow in your  
footsteps, we are here,**

**waiting for you to suggest signs  
of sharing,**

**to make us into servants of your  
Gospel.**

**~ Brother Roger of Taizé, Trampled  
Vineyard**

### One Voice CD Now Available

One Voice, a double CD compilation set of inspirational music celebrating PWRDF's 50th features recordings by many renowned Canadian solo artists, ensembles and choirs including, Bruce Cockburn, Loreena McKennitt, Blue Rodeo, the Oscar Peterson Trio, sells for \$20, and is sold in cases of 10. For further information, please contact Sheilagh McGlynn, Public Engagement Associate at (416) 924-9199 ext. 316

## the messenger

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.

The Messenger is a section of the Anglican Journal, published 10 times a year (no issues July and August) and printed and mailed by Bowes Publishing, London, ON.

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**submissions** ~ The Messenger welcomes letters to the editor, news, stories (450-500 words maximum, please), brief commentaries, calendar notices, photos and story ideas. Please e-mail photos to the editor with a full explanation of the photo.

Parish events are advertised free of charge in the newspaper. Display advertising for commercial parties is available in accordance with our ethics and advertising policies. Please contact either editor for more details.

**circulation** ~ The Anglican Journal and The Messenger section go by subscription to those on parish rolls within the two dioceses. For all circulation inquiries, including address changes, new subscriptions and cancellations, please call the Circulation Department at (416) 924-9199, ext. 302, email [circulation@national.anglican.ca](mailto:circulation@national.anglican.ca) or write to the Circulation Department, Anglican Journal, 60 Hayden Street, Toronto, ON, M4Y 3G2.

The Messenger is available on-line at [www.edmonton.anglican.org](http://www.edmonton.anglican.org)

## Save the date!

### Installation & celebration

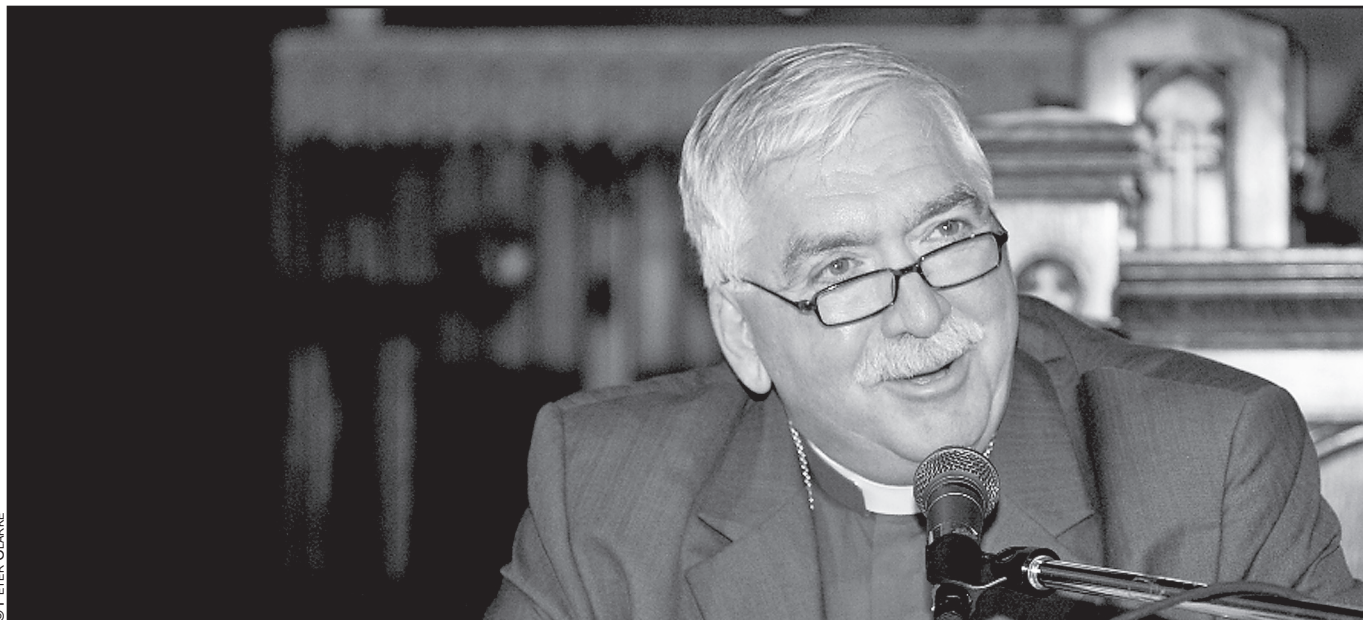
Everyone is invited to join the Diocese of Athabasca at the Installation of Bishop Fraser Lawton. The celebration will take place on January 2, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the St. James Cathedral in Peace River. To God be the Glory!

**December deadline:  
November 15,  
2009 Please send  
in your stories, ideas  
and photographs for  
the December issue by  
November 15, 2009.**

diocese & beyond

# New Bishop

>> CONTINUED FROM COVER PAGE



© PETER CLARKE

**Archbishop David Ashdown, Metropolitan of Ruperts' Land, announcing the result of the final ballot to the Synod members.**

All of this we were told was because the Archbishop had let God lead him on his journey, not knowing where it might take him. We were reminded how the call by God is important and how God is faithful in our lives if we trust Him. In a powerful statement the Archbishop reminded us that Jesus was in our midst. This days call was to us as individuals to open up to the Holy Spirit, that collectively as the body, will lead this place to the faith filled individual that we need to both lead and support us in proclaiming the Gospel. We are all sent to transform this world and a Bishop is to draw out this community we call a diocese for the people to use their gifts in this work. Our new Bishop will need our ongoing prayer. Pray and do not cease to pray for our Bishop - and also say a prayer for the Metropolitan. At the conclusion of the service the process of election was started.

With a final report from the credentials committee stating that 18 of 21 Clergy (85%) and 49 of 51 Laity (96%) were present, we could proceed. The ballot process was explained. We had a time of prayer, then the first ballot proceeded. After the ballot, it being noon, the delegates went to eat lunch in the hall whilst the vote was tallied. Upon return from lunch the synod learned that all had voted without any spoiled ballots, but there was not an election. In accordance with Province of Ruperts' Land Canons one name was removed as they had not garnered the needed 20% of votes and had received the fewest votes. Thus it was time for a second ballot. Once the voting was complete we spent time in both prayer and praise music. Lots of music. During all the times when votes were being counted there was a lot of music and prayer. We were very fortunate to have Barry, Sarah and Joshua Craigen bringing us a varied selection of music to uplift the delegates in song and praise. Soon the result of the second ballot was announced. No one candidate had received the needed 10 clergy votes and 27 lay votes. There was not an election and again the name of the person with fewest votes was removed from the next ballot.

The Archbishop lead us in prayer before the next ballot. During the count of the vote those candidates not present were contacted to see if they wished to continue to let their name stand.

This time the counting was quicker and without error. However, there was still ample time to sing praises to our God. By now the sense one had was of a moving of the Holy Spirit among us, enabling the synod to gently move forward to a resolution. There was a gentle calmness throughout. When the result of the third ballot came in one could see a pattern emerging. There was not yet an election but all had garnered the necessary number of votes to stay on the ballot, so a fourth vote was taken. We all got to sing and pray more, some took the opportunity to get out in the sun, whilst others went in the hall for refreshments for the body.

After a time of prayer the Archbishop gave the results of the fourth ballot, then announced that one name would be removed for insufficient votes and that another candidate had asked to have their name removed from the ballot. This latter news did bring a gasp to many present. Again we moved to prayer, we were now down to two candidates. It would likely be the final ballot. The vote was taken and during the counting of the votes it seemed that the singing got even louder and more comfortable. Arms were waving in the air, voices were fully charged, it was an amazing experience. Of course, eventually the result was ready. Synod members took to their seats and all was made known. We had an election. The Rev. Canon Fraser Lawton had been elected to the office of Bishop of the Diocese of Athabasca. As he was sitting across the aisle from me I can say that the look on his face changed a lot in those few seconds of announcement. Veronica, Frasers' wife came to him, and for a while it must have seemed that time stopped.

Bringing us back to this new reality with some words of reflection, Archbishop Ashdown asked the new Bishop-elect to come forward, say a few words and offer the final blessing of this Synod. Soon it was over, there was the normal sense of elation and relief that this had been a spirit lead process. We had opened up to God and He had not failed us. A new Bishop Fraser Lawton will be installed at St. James' Cathedral Peace River on Sunday January 2, 2010 at 7 p.m. and all are welcome to be present for the start of this new ministry.

*To God be the Glory!*

## Canada briefs

### 'I think we should get out more' says Toronto bishop

Most city folk walking down the street would hardly pay attention if someone wearing a hotdog suit handed them a flyer. But three men and a woman dressed in church vestments and mitres handing out invitations to church? Now that's different!

Strange as it may seem, this is how four bishops from the diocese of Toronto surprised (and delighted) commuters on Sept. 24 as people streamed out of Toronto's Union Station during morning rush hour. Their goal? to personally people to Back to Church Sunday, celebrated by Anglicans around the world on Sept. 27.

Bishops Colin Johnson, Philip Poole, Linda Nicholls, and Patrick Yu handed out 2,000 cards in just over an hour. The cards read: *This Sunday, be our guest. The Anglican Church welcomes you back to church. Visit your place of worship this weekend.* It also provided the diocese's telephone number and website address.

"While some people did not take the cards, many others did, some even going out of their way for one," the diocese's website reported.

"I think we should get out more," said Bishop Yu, area bishop for York-Scarborough. "The faith belongs in the public square and the marketplace, so let's get out of the churches and do that."

### Sounds of silence allow word of God to be heard

The diocese of Niagara's Christ Church, Flamborough, is offering an alternative to a world overrun by noise pollution.

On Wednesday evenings, September through November, the cathedral opens its doors to give people a chance to explore the spirituality of silence for an hour-and-a-half. Last September, attendees examined the use of silence and ways to come to silence. They explored chanting and learned how to walk in silence.

"Contemplation and meditation will help us to listen quietly and allow scriptures to speak to us," said the church's rector, Canon Barry Randle.

### Landing of the Mohawks at Tyendinaga re-enacted

Anglicans took part in a re-enactment last May of the landing of the Mohawks on the shores of the Bay of Quinte, in eastern Ontario. The Mohawks landed at Tyendinaga on May 22, 1784; the Anglican parish of Tyendinaga was founded after the first church was built that same year. A highlight of the 225th anniversary celebration was a liturgy of thanksgiving at the landing site, a procession to Christ Church, and a feast at the Mohawk Community Centre.

## parish news

For eleven days last summer a stately Anglican church in the heart of the Old Strathcona arts district became a Mecca for theatre patrons and performers alike.

Four thousand Fringe goers found entertainment and refreshment in Holy Trinity, Edmonton, during North America's largest theatre festival in August. Outside the church, passers-by stopped to sip lemonade with Father Tom. Inside, ticket-holders laughed their way through a Shakespearean murder mystery and hummed along to, "Sunshine on My Shoulders." Still others satisfied their appetite for history and scones, while touring the 96-year-old clinker-brick building, and stopping for tea-time in the Greenroom afterwards.

The church has served as an official Fringe venue for years. At first, it was a fixed venue, meaning the parish had little input into the productions chosen to take place there. However, in recent years Holy Trinity has served as a "Bring Your Own Venue" (BYOV) location. This change gave the parish the option to choose which performances it would host.

Each of the presentations selected for the 2009 lineup was suited to the church venue in its own unique way. A musical review of John Denver's "Rocky Mountain Memories," by local quartet, SWAK, and "Maltese Bodkin," a charming comedy written and directed by Fringe veteran David Belke, fit perfectly into the lower hall. The sanctuary was the ideal location for "A Final Whimsy," a second comedy by Sterling-award winner Belke.

Though BYOV performances are part of the main Fringe schedule and tickets to them are sold through the box office, all additional details relating to staff and advertising are left to the independent producers to sort out. Fortunately for SWAK and David Belke, an enthusiastic crew of Holy Trinity parishioners was ready and willing to lend a helping hand.

Beyond providing a locale for the artists and companies using its space, the parish saw a unique opportunity to serve the surrounding arts community.

"We've been opening up to the arts community in a variety of ways in the 10 years I've been here," says Holy Trinity Rector Eileen Conway. "But this was the first time that we really blitzed the hospitality and service to the arts community - specifically the 'artistes,' musicians, actors, and crew of the three productions that took place here." She credits her Honorary Assistant, and arts outreach coordinator Father Thomas Brauer with having, "the vision, the energy and the mandate, to bring volunteers out of the woodwork."

"We put out a call to the congregation, and were immediately blown away by the response," says Brauer. "We had folks partnering together who had never said hello to each other before. People were constantly looking to make one another's work easier and better."

Volunteers worked diligently to ease pre-performance anxieties by handing out playbills, selling last-minute tickets to the shows, striking sets, ushering patrons to their seats, and manning a concession stand for hungry theatre goers.

## Heartbeat of a community

By MARGARET MARSCHALL



After each show, cast members were plied with homemade sandwiches and trays of fruits, veggies and cheeses, all graciously prepared by members of the congregation.

"It takes a great deal of effort to put together a Fringe show," says SWAK member and Holy Trinity parishioner Dwane Kunitz. "The volunteers allowed us to concentrate on the performance, rather than worry about all the front of house duties that usually fall to the cast of the show."

Special measures were taken to ensure that everyone visiting Holy Trinity during the Fringe received the red carpet treatment.

**"Our primary focus was NOT you should be coming to church here," says Conway, but rather, "Welcome. How can we help? Are you hungry, thirsty, sunburned, tired? How about a scone and a cup of tea?"**



During the day, Brauer donned his clericals to serve lemonade on the sidewalk. Once inside, visitors could walk among the grand white pillars lining the nave of church to the chancel. Music, photographic imagery, uniquely textured bowls, grapes and incense, were used to appease the five senses, and create an atmosphere of contemplative prayer. Also popular with Fringers was the Greenroom Tea House, where freshly-baked scones, clotted cream and homemade jams and jellies were served alongside a warm cup of tea.

Because most of the materials, food and labour

for the Fringe project were donated, the parish was able to better the goal it had set, which was to break even. Though expenses for the project totaled \$1,500, revenue from the concession, lemonade stand, tea room, and donations actually exceeded \$1,850. The parish still has \$1,000 in donated seed money, plus \$350 in profits to carry over to the budget for next year. According to Brauer, the attitude of the congregation isn't, "so if we do this next year?" Rather it is, "so next year when we do this..."

In the meantime, Holy Trinity parishioners are channeling the positive energy generated during the Fringe into on-going arts-related initiatives.

The church's fine acoustics and grand piano make it a sought-after rehearsal and recording venue, says Conway. Under the guidance of artistic director John Brough, the parish has gradually added more concerts and recitals to

its programming repertoire, often in partnership with the Edmonton Recital Society, and its emerging artists program.

The curtain has been raised for the first act of Holy Trinity's latest production, revealing a parish that has become a Mecca for theatrical writers, too. David Belke has accepted the role as Holy Trinity's very

own Playwright-in-Residence.

And the show goes on.



parish news

## ACW Life Members, 'Corporate Communion'

By JEANNETTE FLESHER

The Corporate Communion for Life Members of the ACW of the Edmonton Diocese was held at the All Saints Cathedral on Saturday, September 12, 2009.

This was a bit of a departure from having it as part of the regular service on a Thursday. Parking and attendance concerns precipitated this change, and it seems to have been a positive move. Fifty-five people attended and participated in the service led by the ACW Chaplain, the Rev. Coleen Lynch. Bishop Jane presided at the grand piano, as well as delivering the sermon which urged us to "stir up" our ministries, whatever they may be.

The hearty lunch, catered by Melissa Lee and Willa Gorman, was in the form of a "stew and

bannock" meal suggested by the Council of the North. The meal was completed by a fruit salad, adeptly made by our very own Bishop Jane. Donations for this meal netted \$356.00 which will be forwarded to the Council of the North for the furtherance of its work.

Following the meal, the Diocesan Board of the ACW met to begin its fall term. We were pleased to learn that the National ACW President, Marion Saunders, of Toronto, hopes to visit us at our Annual Meeting in May. Meantime, Jean Anderson of Wainwright will be our representative to the National Conference of ACW Presidents, to be held in Newfoundland this October. We look forward to her return, with news of the work being done in other dioceses.



Bishop Jane Alexander helped prepare the ACW meal by adding her fruit salad.



## The "Phoenix has landed" at Good Shepherd

By ART VANDERLEER

A new Phoenix PT340 organ has arrived at Good Shepherd and was professionally installed! An online organ forum dubbed the Phoenix as a "digital pipe organ."

As a classical organ buff, I chaired the Organ Committee and have to say that this instrument is the closest sounding to a pipe organ of any electronic organ I have heard. Our organist and music director, Cathy Smith, finds it wonderful to play and comments from parishioners are, "WOW," "Long overdue," "Sounds like a pipe organ," and so on.

These are exciting times around Good Shepherd with the 100th anniversary planning going on, and we were worried that the old organ might act up during the celebration. It had been making odd noises at times and Cathy has been coaxing it along for a while. It wouldn't co-operate during Canon Maureen's induction and had to be turned off so that the sermon could be heard over the buzz, and then it didn't want to turn on again right away! How to impress the Bishop!

The old organ, which we got second-hand when we bought our church building, was 35 plus years old and parts weren't available anymore. It was recommended to vestry that the organ be retired. Art Vanderleer, the People's Warden who also heads up maintenance at Good Shepherd, was asked to team with Cathy and lead the charge. After much research, joining "Organ Forum" for feedback on several models we were steered to Phoenix Organ of Peterborough, Ontario.

The nearest location of an installed Phoenix was in Calgary, so we went to St. Laurence Anglican Church to see, hear and play their organ.

The committee was impressed and recommended purchasing a Phoenix. And what an organ we chose: a custom made digital electronic organ built by Anglicans with 3-manuals, a full pedal board, an 8-channel sound system, four custom specifications, Phantom Sequencer, programmable presets, toe pistons, crescendo pedal and more. It also has a record and play back feature that will allow us to record hymns and service music to be used in the absence of the organist.

The new organ and its 14 speaker cabinets were installed by members of Good Shepherd under the direction of Phoenix Organ. The organ was then voiced on site to match building acoustics by Don Anderson, Phoenix Technical Director and organist at St John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Peterborough. It was a three-day undertaking requiring the use of a man-lift in the church but it was worth every bit of the work.

Did anyone mention recital? We hope to have at least a couple of them as part of the 100th anniversary celebrations. We would also be happy to hear from an organ student who would like to use our organ for practice in exchange for occasionally substituting for our organist.

If anyone is interested in seeing the organ please contact Art at 780-457-4727 or visit [www.PhoenixOrgans.com](http://www.PhoenixOrgans.com) for more information.



## Harvest Thanksgiving at St Philips, Westlock

By GWEN DOHERTY

***Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hand and voices  
Who wondrous things hath done  
In whom the world rejoices***

Amidst an array of fruit, flowers, grain and vegetables these words of praise and thanksgiving rang out loud and clear at our harvest thanksgiving service on Sunday, September 20.

A large amount of canned goods and other items were also collected for the food bank. Having been spiritually nourished at the great high banquet, we retired to the parish hall for pot luck lunch and fellowship.

Thanks be to God for such abundance and generosity.

## your thoughts

## Parish Events

**Christ Church Centennial** The parish of Christ Church, Edmonton, 12116-102 Avenue, is nearing the end of its centennial year of celebration. There are still several special events planned in this final month. **November 7** from 5:00 - 10:00 p.m.: A parish family party with great food and fellowship. Tickets are available through the church office: (780) 488-1118. **Sunday, November 8**, at 10:00 a.m.: Second Century Eucharist. Bishop Jane Alexander will celebrate and Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of The Anglican Church of Canada, will preach.

**St. Faith's Benefit Concert** Ladies vocal quintet MEIDD will perform "Music through the Ages," a benefit concert for St. Faith's Anglican Church, 11725-93rd Street, on Saturday, **November 14**, at 7:00 p.m. A reception, featuring homemade pies and Christmas candy, will held after the concert. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Call (780) 477-5931 or (780) 459-6719 for tickets, or more information.

**NCD Founder to Lead Seminar at St. Matthias** Christian Schwarz, author and co-founder of NCD International, will present a seminar in Edmonton on Wednesday, **November 18** from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Anglican Church, 6210-188th Street. The seminar will be based on Schwarz's latest book in the 3 Color Series, *The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality*. A registration fee of \$50 covers the full-day seminar, a copy of the new book, *The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality*, and lunch. You can find additional details, maps and registration instructions at [www.ncdcanada.com/christian-schwarz.htm](http://www.ncdcanada.com/christian-schwarz.htm).

**Christmas Bazaar** There will be a Christmas Bazaar Saturday, **November 21** at The Anglican Church Of The Good Shepherd, 15495 Castle Downs Road, Edmonton, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. All are welcome! Come to have lunch and try our delicious pies.

**Holy Trinity Concert Series** Holy Trinity, 10037-84 Avenue, Edmonton, is back with even more fantastic music. Upcoming performances include **November 21** (7:00 p.m.) – violinist Carissa Klopoushak (Egre competition winner); **December 13** (3:00 p.m.) – violinist Frank Ho; **December 20** (3:00 p.m.) – ERS collaboration, violinist Edward Cheung; and **January 10** (3:00 p.m.) – John Brough, conductot "Project Choir."

**Pilgrimage** In the Footsteps of St Paul & the Early Church - A Christian Pilgrimage through Turkey and the Greek Islands. Rev Joseph Walker and the Rev Sally French will be leading another Christian Pilgrimage through ancient Asia Minor in the Spring of 2010. Dates will be **April 19 - May 1**. For information and registration materials, please contact the Rev Joseph Walker at 483-5506, by email at [joe@shawbiz.ca](mailto:joe@shawbiz.ca), or visit <http://joewalker.blogs.com/pilgrim>.

## Spiritual or Religious?

BY SCOTT A. SHARMAN

*I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. (Rom. 12:1)*

Whether it is on a census form, a social networking site, an internet dating profile, or simply in casual conversation, many people – as many as one in five in North America according to some statistics – now classify their religious beliefs with the ambiguous tag "spiritual, but not religious." A number of books have been written in recent years attempting to describe both the sociological and philosophical significance of this phenomenon. There is even a website ([www.sbnr.org](http://www.sbnr.org)) devoted to the subject. At the risk of oversimplifying the distinctions, the spiritual person is generally assumed to be more inclined to seek spiritual enlightenment privately and according to their own individual quest, whereas the religious person is thought to be more likely to believe in the established doctrines and publicly practice the sacred rituals of a particular tradition.

Many people have very good reasons for distrusting established religion; be it the historical use of violence against dissent, the stubborn resistance to change, the inflexible legalism, the blatant hypocrisy, or an experience of some form of abuse. There are also some solid theological grounds for this kind of attitude. The Christian theologian Karl Barth asserted that all religion – including Christianity – was fundamentally opposed to true faith. Certainly Jesus himself could be called as a witness against the thoughtless adherence to humanly constructed religious laws and empty rituals, and indeed some Christian communities are calling for an end to religion of sorts. People like Deepak Chopra or Eckhart Tolle have become household names by appealing to the spiritual but not religious worldview.

Interest in spirituality is something to be celebrated by Christians, not feared or opposed. There are, however, some basic assumptions common to many of these popular spiritualities that I believe must be questioned. Many of them depend upon some form of the claim that true spiritual life ultimately means distancing ourselves materiality and our bodily lives. Chopra, for example, advocates the elevation of consciousness through meditation in order to reach a higher or more universal (i.e. less bodily localized) realm of existence. Likewise Tolle seeks to promote an awakening of the person to the true nature of reality by detachment from the unreal phenomenal world around us.

The Judeo-Christian tradition is deeply at odds with this. Built into the fabric of the biblical worldview is the conviction that material reality is not something to be frowned upon or transcended or escaped from. Materiality and physicality are good; human bodily life is very good. It is immediately and abundantly clear that the Torah makes no distinction between material concerns and spiritual concerns. People are called to be in relationship with God not on the basis of a private

inner dialogue, but rather through the grounded stuff of human, material, creaturely life. And of course this notion is extended beyond the human community. All of creation is to be brought into conformity with God, not just people. So for the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures, everything from our work and eating and worship and sex and even what to do with our waste is all linked together in such a way that our relationship with God actually fits within the landscape we inhabit.

And of course there is no dichotomy between the materiality of God's covenant with Israel and the spirituality of the New Covenant, as the fact of the Incarnation of God in Christ and the out pouring of the Spirit upon all flesh at Pentecost attest. The sacramental life of the Church also shows us that spirituality must never be disconnected from our bodies and our actions and our day to day living. Tangible things like being washed by water, the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, conjugal love, or the eating and drinking of bread and wine play an essential part in Christian spirituality. The Church is also the place where we are reminded that God desires relationship with us not in isolation, but together. Our individual journey with God is always meant to be deeply connected with everyone else's. To be spiritual as a private individual with no connection to others or to the world around us is to miss something about what it means to be human.

A thick theology of a historically particular Incarnation assures us that God is actually interested in the particulars that come along with our bodily lives and does not ask us to set them aside in order to find God. A robust ecclesiology reminds us that spiritual life is never something exclusively about the interior person, about the spirit, or the soul, or about something you believe in or give mental assent to but always requires the whole person, including our relationships and our resources and all the messy details of our day to day living. Sacramentality opens our minds to the potential for all material things to be mediators of God's presence and gracious activity, even the most seemingly mundane things. These down to earth ideas are not religious antiques that we should be eager to discard in favour of more universal principles and less grounded practices. In fact, they seem to provide the basis for a response to some of the most pressing issues of the world in which we actually live – how we treat our bodies, how we treat others, the meaning of sex, what we eat, the way we steward our planet, why we work, how we generate wealth, etc. Detached or individualistic spiritualities do not have the same kinds of rich resources to draw on.

It is undoubtedly true that Christians need to learn from the accurate critiques of religion offered by popular spirituality. But the Christian tradition also has something essential to contribute the spiritual conversations going on all around us – what I think may in fact be a more holistically human spirituality. There is a time to be humbled by our many failures and shortcomings; but there is also a time to boast in Christ. The world cannot afford to have us be silent.

your thoughts

# As I See It

By Rev. Martin Hattersley

A couple of events in the past few weeks have intrigued me. The first was, having been impressed by the success of one of our Victims of Homicide members who had, in a week's course, been transformed from depression to radiant self assurance, to encounter a website ([www.emofree.com](http://www.emofree.com)) dealing with such transformation. It outlines in detail a technique of handling emotional problems, phobias, addictions, neuroses, and several physical complaints that have emotional causes, by a very short physical drill. This is a combination of positive affirmations confirming the specific problem but which also emphatically convey self-acceptance, combined with systematic tapping on various acupuncture points in the body. This apparently corrects imbalances in the energy flows in the body disturbed by previous emotional trauma, so relieving the identified problem.

My first reaction to this kind of approach is that it cannot be anything but a hoax. The only difficulty is that it seems to work. Several hours of DVD's showing seminars where the technique



has been demonstrated display remarkable cures in a very short time of such things as fear of heights, fear of water, fear of public speaking, cigarette or chocolate addictions - the list goes on and on. One of the most dramatic is coverage of a week spent at a Veterans hospital in the States, where Vietnam veterans with traumatic memories who had been unable to sleep for twenty years undisturbed by nightmares, within half an hour were reliving and calmly talking about the distressing incidents they had been through, having lost all the negative emotions concerning the incident that had made a hell of their lives up to that point in time.

A later DVD in the series, exploring other "far out" techniques, bowled me over with a do-it-yourself lesson on how to use mental powers to bend spoons - a parlour trick for which Uri Geller was once famous. It involves "tuning in" to the frequency of the vibrations of the metal, and then firmly and repeatedly mentally commanding it to soften and bend. At some point it will indeed soften, and stay soft for perhaps 30 seconds, during which time it can be easily manipulated by a power not our own. No, I haven't done this yet myself, but out of a class of forty beginners who tried to do this for the first time in the demonstration, a good half dozen came up with impressive

and obvious results. So I was less sceptical than I otherwise would have been when an aboriginal member of our same Victims Society arranged a healing circle for our members, led by a couple of very friendly native Elders. After smudging ourselves with tobacco smoke, and a number of other symbolic actions, we learned of the healing power of tuning in to nature and the world of spirits, including talking and listening to stones, and being aware of the presence of our own deceased loved ones. Certainly, I came from the evening relaxed and refreshed, with a small stone as a keepsake, But talking to stones still seems a bit much. Except that it's obviously not much different from communicating with a metal spoon to bend it!

Our secular society, and far too often the Church also, lives confined in a four dimensional world of time and space, cause and effect, forgetting or not relying on a fifth dimension, the spiritual one that gives power, meaning and purpose to the whole. Yet it was precisely this close contact with the spiritual world that gave Jesus the miraculous wisdom, power and appeal upon which our whole Christian religion depends.

As Hamlet said: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

## Peace Thoughts "Make me a healer"

By Dr. Adenike Yesufu



Mark 6:5 says Jesus laid hands on a few sick people and healed them. Of course we all know that Jesus healed more than a few sick ones. Healing was central to Jesus ministry, a major part of His mandate which He fulfilled. With Jesus, healing was very dramatic and very diverse. Jesus healed all sorts of people, men, women, children, the young the old and lots in between. Jesus cured a variety of diseases, blindness, and paralysis, bent back, fever, epilepsy, leprosy, dumbness, demon possession, flow of blood, and even raised the dead. Jesus methods were unique to Him. He healed mostly out of compassion. In many cases He made the first move without the people

asking Him. In some cases those who needed healing called out to Him, at other times some walked up to Him and asked if He was willing to heal them. Jesus would lovingly respond that He was willing and He would heal them. Jesus even healed by proxy, not physically present, He would just say the word and the people would be healed. At times, Jesus forgave sins before healing. At other times, He demanded faith before healing. Jesus even threw out skeptics and doubters before raising Jairus daughter. Jesus used things to heal, sputum, clay. Jesus healed anytime of the day, morning, noon, evening and even on Sabbath day. Jesus healed in critical moments, at the time of His arrest, Jesus stylishly restored Malchus ear that had been sliced off by Peter in anger.

After all these, Jesus called His chosen Twelve and sent them out in twos to continue His work of healing. Before He died He gave a final instruction. He said in Mark 16:18 Go into the wide world and part of what they would do is to lay hands on the sick and they would be healed. Jesus included an addendum. He said that those who believe, you and me included, would have the signs following us. This means we are all commissioned to bring the healing touch of Jesus to all peoples, to be His hand extended. Carrying out Jesus command may not be as dramatic as Jesus' but can take many forms.

Any action on our part can be a true

expression of Jesus' command. A Samaritan act can not only mend the body, it can repair a broken heart, and it can also renew hope in the disenchanted, the skeptical, and the suspicious. A loving gesture can bring peace to the disturbed soul. The skilled intervention of a surgeon can bring healing. The careful management of a sensitive family physician can work miracles. The ordered guidance of a psychiatrist, a psychologist or a counselor can bring relief to the mind. The deliberate humane legislation of law makers, even with its politics, can bring solace to many. The love and patience of committed parents can relieve the stress and strum of the troubled teenager. The strivings of activists for social justice, equal rights for all, peace in a violent world, movements against wars can restore equilibrium to distressed and ailing societies. The sympathetic listening to someone else's private torment can effect relief. A prayer, a smile; a kind thought can bring consolation. Food for the hungry can restore life. These many actions can sooth pain and restore goodwill in a desperate world. At the same time, the toxic sharp tongue of a Christian, the uncaring attitude of an ascetic can bring hurt and pain to others. Jesus has called us all to be healers. We can all be healers. We are also urged to encourage others, to go out and fulfill the Masters vision for the world: heal the broken hearted. O Thou Great Physician, make me a healer for Thee.

## the last word

# Alberta cookbook found

By REV TED EDEN

In 2008, on the 20th anniversary of their Lenten Lunch soup and sandwich program, the ladies of Immanuel Anglican Church in Wetaskiwin put together a new Cookbook entitled "Soups and More". Included was a recipe for their famous "Christmas Pudding", which they had stopped making in 2004.

This summer, after a phone call from former English professor Gary Draper of the University of Waterloo, it was discovered that over one hundred years earlier the ladies of Immanuel had published a first "Souvenir Cook Book" of "Tried! Tested! [and] Proved!" recipes in May 1905. It appears that according to professor Draper this earlier cook book published "fully four months before Alberta entered Confederation" is the "earliest known community cookbook" in the province. Professor Draper had acquired a copy of the Cookbook along with a number of others, and wrote about it

in this summer's issue of "Culinary Chronicles". Although the City of Wetaskiwin archives has a partial copy, they were missing a number of pages including the cover, and therefore were unable to identify the source until now.

Included in the 1905 Cookbook, produced ten years after the first Anglican Church was built in Wetaskiwin, are recipes such as Mrs. Macleod's "Oyster Cromesgies", which turns out to be what others have called "Pigs in Blankets" (oysters wrapped in bacon); and recipes from Mrs. C.G. Austin, the second rector's wife, which includes "Excellent Stuffing for Baked Fish", and "Chinese Fruit Cake".

Mr. Draper concludes his article in "Culinary Chronicles" by saying that "Unless and until an earlier example is discovered, this is the first community cookbook published in the territory that would become the province of Alberta. Stand up and take a bow, Wetaskiwin."

## Silent retreat

The Wisdom Centre at St. Laurence Calgary, St. Michael's Spiritual Centre Canmore and the Fire & Grace Contemplative Society of Hillhurst and Wild Rose United Churches Calgary are coordinating a 9-day silent retreat entitled, **Following in the Footsteps of St. John of the Cross: A Silence and Awareness Retreat**. The retreat is being held from March 5 – 14, 2010 and we would like to give interested individuals time to plan this into their yearly schedule. Register prior to December 1, 2009 to receive a saving of \$100. Register at [www.wisdomcentre.ca](http://www.wisdomcentre.ca). For more information contact: Barb Simoes at (403) 678-8749 or [bjsimoes@shaw.ca](mailto:bjsimoes@shaw.ca).

## Quote of the day

'Who you are is wrong' is never a good starting point for faith. It places a never to be fulfilled obligation on the believer to get 'right', to win divine acceptance and approval, forever falling short, forever trying to please, never 'right', always 'wrong'. The God of conditional love is not a good God but a tyrant, a guilt inducing, life denying, confidence draining impostor, with whom none of us, not one of us, can ever be 'right' or in right relationship. ~ Peter Macdonald, Iona Community

## Used digital cameras needed

Do you have an old digital camera you don't use anymore? Here's a great opportunity to let it do some work again. The Project@Holy Trinity is currently seeking donations of used digital cameras for use in a photography project for homeless and street involved youth in the Old Strathcona area of Edmonton. To donate, or for questions and information, please contact The Rev. Thomas Brauer at (780) 908-6144.

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## Star of the North - programmes for everyone

**AWAY DAYS with Sandy Prather** Sometimes it is good to get away, to step back from the ordinary routine. We rest and relax; we allow ourselves to be renewed. We have time for listening and learning, sharing and reflecting. We invite you to take advantage of the peaceful space at the Star and join us for 'Away' Days. Each 'Away Day' will focus on a different contemporary spiritual book. Through a combination of presentations and reflective time, we will explore the themes and ideas of the author, and apply their insights to our lives (it is not necessary to have read the books).  
Thursday, **November 26**: 'The Holy Longing: The Search For a Christian Spirituality, by Ronald Rolheiser, OMI, 1999. 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. \$25.00 in advance or \$30.00 at the door.

**Heart Spa: Retreats for Women** Treat yourself to a retreat experience for the Heart! It's a time to relax, to make connections, and rejuvenate your spirit. This is a special time to focus on your personal growth and learn practical skills that will help you embrace life with a renewed sense of spirit, joy and purpose for life. Facilitator is Michelle Jensen; *Boundaries: Creating a Safe Place to Live Life*. Friday, **November 27**, 6:30 p.m. to Saturday, **November 28**, 4:00 p.m. Cost per retreat: \$159.00 (includes Fri. night accommodation, and breakfast & lunch Sat.)

**ACTION for the EARTH** What can we do as people of faith to respond to the needs of our continually emerging universe? Increasingly, Christians are recognizing that our faith mandates embarking on new directions in the earth-human relationship. The Star's Action for the Earth programming is designed to provide a foundation for conscious, spiritual living as we contribute to positive action for the earth. Facilitator is Rev. Geoffrey Wilfong-Pritchard; Monday, **November 9**, 7:00 p.m. *Greening Your Faith Community* \$15.00/session

**Advent Wreath Making** Advent wreaths have long been used as a focus for family prayer and celebration of the Advent season. As we begin to prepare our hearts for Christmas, learn the history and symbolism of the Advent wreath, and make this beautiful Advent symbol for your home. We will use the wreath in prayer, and provide a blessing for your Advent wreath. Please bring scissors and a glue gun if you can. Monday, **November 23**, 7:30 p.m. Early reg. \$13.00 + \$35.00 supplies = \$48.00.

**Nurturing Body, Mind & Spirit: A Purna Yoga Weekend Retreat** Come stretch your body, mind and spirit. The retreat consists of yoga and meditation, providing a wonderful opportunity to take care of your body, quiet your mind and go deep within. Teacher: Cassie McColl. Some yoga experience recommended. Wear comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat and a blanket. 6:30p.m. Friday, **November 27** to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, **November 28**. Cost: \$125.00