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PHOTO: JANET BEST

Good and faithful servant

Elizabeth Hutchinson, centre, one of four recipients of the Anglican Award of Merit for 2019-2023, enjoys a laugh during a presentation ceremony Sept. 10 with, left, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; right, the Rev. Benjamin Stuchbery, incumbent at Grace Anglican Church, Arundel, Que. where the ceremony took place; and, in the background, Bishop of Montreal Mary Irwin-Gibson. The award, which recognizes exemplary service by lay members of the Anglican Church of Canada, is presented every triennium. Other recipients are Canon (lay) Donna Bomberry, George Cadman and Dion Lewis.

Preaching the gospel to a wary world

SPLINTERED TRUST:
Rebuilding the church's public image

First of a two-part series



PHOTO: A MILLION HAPPINESS

Step one, some priests say, is making space for people's anger

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

When she was 15 years old, Danica Meredith wanted to be a priest.

But it was the early 1980s, ordaining women was new at the time and Meredith says she had a "mondo awkward" conversation with her parish priest in which he tried to delicately talk her out of joining the clergy. "Finally the dude [told] me that I couldn't and I really lost my pyjamas in the way that a 15-year-old hothead can do. And if you've ever wondered, those old wooden chairs in a church, they can splinter."

That moment of disillusionment and anger ended Meredith's association with the church for a decade and a half. And her story is not unusual. Some leaders in the Anglican Church of Canada say Christianity in the West has a serious public relations problem. Whether, like Meredith, they are "de-churched," having either walked away or stormed off from their previous experiences with the faith, or "un-churched," with no familiarity with church life, many people have developed a negative view of Christian institutions. Some have had personal run-ins with the church; others have seen Christians in the public eye associated with causes they disagree with, or news headlines about sexual abuse and colonialism. But whatever the cause, those leaders say, if the church wants to reverse its image, it won't be enough to consider

See CHURCH, p. 8



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Clara Plamondon named bishop in Territory of the People



▲ Bishop-elect Clara Plamondon

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Priest was sole candidate in B.C. diocese's election

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

B.C. priest Archdeacon Clara Plamondon was elected bishop of the Territory of the People, a diocese in British Columbia's interior, Sept. 16.

Currently the incumbent at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Nanaimo, B.C., where she has served since June 2018, Plamondon was the only candidate standing in the episcopal election. Lay and clergy delegates elected her on the first ballot and the provincial House of Bishops unanimously accepted the result.

Plamondon told the *Journal* there were two reasons she allowed her name to stand as a candidate. "One was a sense of call recognizing gifts and abilities that I have to offer, which aligned with the opportunity that presented itself in the Territory of the People," she said. "And I saw the possibility of ministry and service with the people there. That's what led me to want to be a bishop."

"I was thrilled and amazed that the people of the territory would so clearly say yes back to me," the bishop-elect said. "I had chosen to say yes to them, and it wouldn't be until the election that I realised that they too were saying yes to me."

Plamondon succeeds Lincoln McKoen, who was elected bishop in January 2020 but resigned and relinquished his exercise of episcopal ministry in June 2021 after allegations of sexual misconduct, which he acknowledged as well-founded.

Archbishop Lynne McNaughton, metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of B.C. and Yukon, said she was delighted with the election of Plamondon, with

See NEW, p. 11



9 Remembering Archbishop Bruce Stavert

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'No 'nominal option': calling Anglicans to discipleship

It's now essential for the survival of the church, bishop says

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

This fall, the diocese of Western Newfoundland will begin a campaign of discipleship designed to invite Anglicans into a more complete participation in the life of the church.

According to the 2021 census, 21.5 per cent of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador described themselves as Anglican, but Bishop John Organ says the numbers for Christmas and Easter services show only about a tenth of those 108,000 Anglicans in attendance. Those numbers have prompted the diocese to embark on a project of renewal, addressed at Anglicans who think of their religion only as a group to which they belong. The hope is to encourage them to see it also as something they live out with their actions, says Organ.

And once that project was underway, he says, the diocese discovered its theme concerned not just Canadian Anglicans, but the Anglican Communion as a whole. Though Organ and the diocesan research team didn't know it when they began their work in 2019, the Communion's Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) had declared a "global season of intentional discipleship" in 2016 to address the preponderance of what it calls "nominalism."

The Church of England's bishop of Hull, Eleanor Sanderson, was a member of the coordinating group tasked with responding to the ACC's call for a season of discipleship and gave a speech on the challenge of nominalism as opposed to discipleship at 2022's Lambeth Conference. The difference, she says, is between a form of Christianity that members belong to passively—in name only—and one where they make active choices to live out the principles of the gospel.

The work begun by the ACC is also reflected in the Lambeth call on discipleship, one of 10 statements discussed by the Communion's bishops at the 2022 Lambeth Conference and updated in 2023, she says. The call prompts Anglicans to think of their membership in the church as a process of constant learning in the formation of what the ACC has described as a Jesus-shaped life—one that is both moulded by and resembles the example set by Jesus Christ.

The call also lays out requests for local parishes and their dioceses to facilitate an increased focus on "gates" into discipleship in everyday life through programs like community small groups and increased emphasis during worship on the way the gospel can transform lives. In shaping what their discipleship looks like, the call asks Anglicans to let the five marks of mission—principles that define the Communion's vision of doing God's work—guide them. The marks include telling others about the gospels, teaching and guiding new believers, tending to neighbours through service and healing ministries, transforming unjust structures of society and treasuring the beauty and integrity of creation.

In the 2023 reissue of the calls reflecting feedback from bishops around the



IMAGE: SURIYA PHOTO



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

"The truth of the matter is in the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Church of Canada, I think none of us are ready to roll over and die."

—Bishop John Organ

Communion, the call on discipleship was placed at the top of the list. Sanderson says that move reflects the importance of discipleship to all of the other calls. In one way or another, each of the other calls describes an expression of discipleship.

"There was a sense that, actually, discipleship lies at the heart of all the other sorts of transformations in the world that we're wanting to see," she says.

Sanderson also stresses this call's connection to another call, on mission and evangelism. One of the key commands Jesus gave to his followers was to go and make disciples, she says, which puts any hope for the growth of the church and outreach to the rest of the world firmly under discipleship's umbrella. Sanderson, who served nearly 15 years in New Zealand, first as priest and then as assistant bishop, says she saw a pattern in New Zealand similar to the one the Anglican Church of Canada has observed: Numbers in the pews on Sunday mornings have been steadily declining at a rate that will eventually make it impossible for the church in both countries to continue with its existing structure and modes of operation.

There were once enough members for some of them to consider themselves Christians without getting actively involved in the work of the church because other people were doing the work needed to keep the organization running. "I think there's often in parishes a 20-80," she says. "Twenty per cent of people are doing 80 per cent of the work."

But now, she says, "There's no 'nominal option' for my generation ... there's not enough people to keep [the church] going by giving a little bit. So the church that will keep going will [do so] because it will be a huge part of our lives."

That commitment may take the form of leadership in the church and helping build up future leaders, she says. The

call on discipleship urges seminaries and educational institutions to prioritize teaching students the tools to pass on this type of faith formation in their ministry careers, for example. But Sanderson says it can also take root in any line of work. She gives the example of a young woman she worked with in England who set her sights on living out her role as a news reporter with an emphasis on being a positive voice for "the last, the lost and the least—for the poor and peacemaking." That care for the marginalized and forgotten is what the kingdom of God looks like, says Sanderson. And making it the priority is what makes any career path an act of discipleship.

The diocese of Western Newfoundland is planning to start a conversation about what it means to prioritize discipleship by first reaching out to as many nominal Anglicans as possible. Organ says in many cases, those people are still on parish rolls or donating to their local churches. They're part of the same communities and often still in touch with the Anglicans who do still attend. That makes them an easy group to reach out to, he says, but more than that, the fact that these people are still thinking of themselves as Anglican shows there's still some desire for what the church has to offer.

"I would say right across the Communion, there could be an openness to the gospel if we can be creative about it. I think people are no less in need of that good news today, everywhere, than in times past when perhaps churches were filled to overflowing," says Organ. "I would say that we've nurtured well nominalism and cultural belonging. We have not nurtured very well a deeper belonging and a deeper discipleship." The church has not always fostered in Anglicans a sense of their own significance and empowerment, and that's where its work lies now, he says.

The diocese has spent a year training

its clergy and lay people for this effort, for which it has set aside \$250,000 in funding. As this article was being prepared in mid-September, the diocesan staff were sending out a mail campaign including letters from local parish priests and bishops along with literature on discipleship and, most importantly, an invitation to a meal at their local church on Oct. 15. The diocese is ready to feed up to 20,000 people that day, he says, in as many parishes as it takes to serve everyone who responds to the invitation. The meal itself will be organized into seven courses, each themed after a fruit of the spirit, a format Organ says was inspired by the lovefeast tradition of the Moravian church.

"It's a teaching meal, you might say, to introduce what life in the spirit, what developed discipleship, can look like and feel like" and how it can transform both individuals and faith communities, he says. "And then that can extend out to serve the wider community and the common good. So that's where it's going."

Organ hopes the meal can help set people thinking about what it would mean to live out a deeper discipleship in their own lives. He says despite falling national membership numbers, there's still meaningful work to be done in the Anglican Church of Canada.

"The truth of the matter is in the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Church of Canada, I think none of us are ready to roll over and die," he says. "The gospel, the love of God and the person of Jesus: That is precious and valuable and of infinite worth. And no matter how big we are or how small we are, that's a treasure that we can lift up before people." ■

Sowing food security awareness

Diocese of Qu'Appelle, PWRDF join Grow Hope Saskatchewan

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The first year of Anglican participation in an agricultural famine relief charity is aimed at raising awareness first and money second, says an organizer. Earlier this year, the diocese of Qu'Appelle partnered with the Primate's World Relief and Development



▲ **Employees, volunteers and a farmer involved in Grow Hope Saskatchewan stand in front of a donated barley field. Left to right are Stewart Mitchell, Brian Hergott, Justine Shenher, Rick Block, Mike Leblanc and Dawn Kellington.**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Fund (PWRDF) and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank—a coalition of churches and church-linked agencies—on Grow Hope Saskatchewan. The project uses community donations to sponsor farmers raising money for a famine relief fund with an account at the foodgrains bank dedicated to PWRDF projects. Donors' money funds farmers' fuel, seed, fertilizer and other production costs on land they set aside on their farms, turning donors' initial investment into a larger return for the charities.

The size of the return depends on seasonal yields, price fluctuations and what crop they're growing, but according to a blog run by students and faculty at the University of Guelph's food, agricultural, and resource economics department, an acre of corn (0.4 ha) might be expected to produce an average of \$518 profit. Rick Block, a

Saskatchewan representative for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, says it costs Grow Hope \$350 to sponsor each acre of land.

Kim Umbach, volunteer coordinator for PWRDF, says the Anglican project's first year raised enough money to sponsor six or seven acres (2.4 to 2.8 ha) of farmland, not much compared to the 30 to 40 acres (12 to 16 ha) longer-running Grow Hope projects are sponsoring. But no one expected the project to keep pace in its first year with ones that have been operating for years.

In the meantime, Umbach says, the process of building awareness offers opportunities to get urban Anglicans thinking about the process of where food comes from, build ties between urban and rural parishes and promote the work PWRDF does to improve food security in regions like Kenya and South Sudan. In future years, says Umbach, PWRDF will be watching the project's growth with a view to seeking out other dioceses interested in signing on to Grow Hope Saskatchewan and possibly encouraging similar partnerships in other provinces.

The money raised through Grow Hope is deposited in PWRDF's account at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which it can draw from to fund its own projects or use to support the work of other members. Aside from making it easier to share funds, Block says, the coalition structure allows the churches to make their concerns heard as one voice with Global Affairs Canada, which matches funding for some projects funded through Canadian Foodgrains by up to four times. ■



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"There's not enough people to keep [the church] going by giving a little bit. So the church that will keep going will [do so] because it will be a huge part of our lives."
—Bishop Eleanor Sanderson

LETTERS ▶

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor.

Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to short correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.

Episcopalian parish's same-sex marriage discernment process: a model for the Anglican Church of Canada?

I recently received an email from a cousin at an Episcopal church located in the American Deep South, home to many conservative parishes, outlining his church's process of discernment regarding the biblical and theological nature of the sacrament of marriage. It strikes me as a well thought-out and simple process, and I'd like to share it with *Anglican Journal* readers.

The process, which lasted six months, began with the rector telling the vestry meeting he would like to offer the sacrament "within the canons of the Episcopal church," and requesting discussion. Before the next vestry meeting, current and past vestry, clergy, and wardens met provided their input to the rector and current wardens. After collaborative discussions a proposal was made to study how other parishes had dealt with the topic, and further, a letter was sent to parishioners inviting them into conversation, soliciting their input and opinions. Printed materials were distributed, and clergy, vestry and wardens made themselves available for



ILLUSTRATION: SANSOEN SAENGSAKAORAT

questions and informative conversations.

A luncheon meeting was held with the bishop to discuss the topic, soliciting the bishop's help and guidance in the deliberations. The following month, the letters from the parish, minus authorship, were reviewed. The study group reported back to vestry after meeting extensively with four other parishes, and several others. The study group recommended

study sessions led by professional facilitators to consider parish values, the theology of marriage, church history, and a session on listening skills, dedicated to better understanding a broad range of opinions. Three recommended multi-hour study sessions followed.

At the concluding vestry meeting, vestry passed a resolution to offer the sacrament of marriage to same-sex couples who are members of the parish, under the same conditions offered to heterosexual couples.

After much deliberation, education and facilitation of and for leadership, clergy and parishioners, each of the steps in the process gently led to a positive conclusion. It was a collaboration of the community.

I see it as a template for how a conservative diocese might approach the subject EFFECTIVELY—without feeling pressured to acquiesce. It is very sad that we Canadians cannot, on a national level, reach consensus on a current topic of such importance for our community of Anglicans.

Micahel Barbara Lavender, B.A., B. Th
Assistant Editor, *The HighWay*, Diocese of Kootenay

Article on Israel-Palestine did not present both sides

The four signatories of the letter, "Four church leaders disappointed by Israel-Palestine panel coverage" (September, p. 4) express their disappointment about an article published on your website. I too have concerns about how the *Anglican Journal* has, in recent articles, covered happenings in Israel and the Palestinian territories. I have serious (to me anyway) concerns about an article in the June 2023 edition of the *Journal*, "Church leaders urge Ottawa to act on Israel-Palestine." (p. 7) Three of the above-mentioned letter-writers were also cited in this article, having apparently had discussions with some MPs and others about some of the things Israel has done to people living in the Palestinian territories.

That article, like so many, does not present both sides of the story. I do not write to protest the innocence of all Israelis in how Palestinians have been, and are being, treated. However, Palestinians are not all innocent either. Israeli citizens have also been attacked.

My ultimate wish is that the violence in this area stops so that the concerned parties can get on with reconciling with each other. Unfair

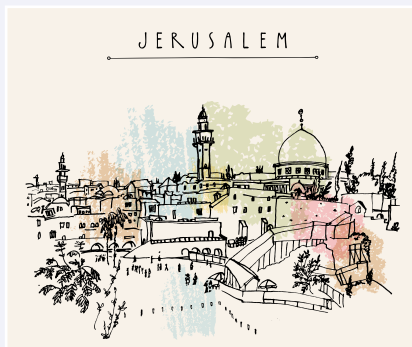


IMAGE: BABAYUKA

coverage does not help that effort in any way.

Mark Whittall
St. George's Anglican Church
Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Que.

'Canadian experience' is our point of reference

Regarding the coverage of the vote on Israel/Palestine in your September cover story ("Synod votes no to extending primate's term" p.1), we are struggling with a very difficult issue. Rabba Gila Caine admonished that "the whole world is not Canada and cannot be read through the Canadian experience." Well, isn't that our point of reference as Canadians?

N.H. Clarke
Kingston, Ont.

Primates' terms: Age discrimination?

The article "Synod votes no to extending primate's term" (September, p. 1) reported that Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, will not be permitted to continue in that position after she turns 70 years of age. For the life of me I cannot understand why the Anglican Church of Canada permits and practices age discrimination against those in its ministry. It is vocal in opposing such discrimination outside the church but not within!

If it were a question of competence it would and should be dealt with by other means, but to automatically infer that one day after 70 (or any particular age) a person is less capable in ministry than he or she was the day before is laughable and tragic.

Worse, it takes time to grow into any responsible role, but now after only a

few years, we are going to throw away all the experience Linda has acquired and start all over again. Where is the sense in all this? I see none!

The Rev. Derek Perry
Kitchener, Ont.

Primate's term hinged on technicalities

I'm so disappointed that a person with the track record of the primate could not complete her work because of two technicalities (exceeding by a few months the 70-year retirement time for bishops; and the disproportionate weighting of the laity/clergy/bishops voting on the proposed short extension: the people and the clergy wanted it, but the bishops didn't). Can our Church afford bureaucratic indulgence like this?

Peter MacKinnon
St. Matthew's Anglican Church
Tweed, Ont.

Corrections

Nearly 300 people attended this year's CLAY gathering, according to youth animator Sheilagh McGlynn.

Details about the hospitality of people in Peace River and High Level, Alta., and Fort Providence, NYT, towards evacuees from Yellowknife should have been attributed to Bishop David Parsons, of the diocese of the Arctic.

Incorrect information appeared in the October *Anglican Journal*.

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SINGING WITH JOY ▶



Discipleship is for every baptized Christian

By Linda Nicholls

IN SEPTEMBER THE internet was flooded with “first day of school” pictures—the photos parents had taken of their offspring standing on the porch, backpacks filled with lunches and books and faces filled with expectation, before they headed off for another year of learning. Baptism is our “first day of school” in discipleship—a school that continues for our entire lives. As we engage in new experiences, face new challenges or encounter suffering and joys, we learn by reflecting on the life of Jesus and his teachings and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We learn to listen to that guidance as we study scripture; engage in worship; pray; act and reflect in community with other disciples. There is no one right way to be a disciple! There are opportunities in every day to listen, learn, and grow—and to reflect when we fail to live into our calling. Then we repent and

try again, secure in the love and forgiveness of God. When I look back on my own journey of faith and discipleship I am amazed at the twists and turns, discoveries and joys and am grateful for other disciples who encouraged, nurtured, challenged and supported me. I am also aware that my journey has been shaped by the world around me. The ordination of women made it possible for me to discern an ordained vocation. The questions around human sexuality led me to consider, in my doctoral studies, how communities live together in the midst of hard-to-resolve differences, a continuing concern in many places. The truth about residential schools and Indigenous reconciliation is calling me to learn and grow in understanding of systemic evil and human dignity. New opportunities or challenges have called me to reflect and act in new ways. This past summer, General Synod 2023 affirmed five strategic commitments, priorities that Anglicans across Canada had identified for engaging through the gospel: championing human

dignity by, among other things, dismantling racism and colonialism; being mutually interdependent with the Sacred Circle; advancing justice while protecting and sustaining the earth; fostering right relationships with people of faith, at home and around the world; and, at the core of these commitments, deepening our life in Christ—discipleship! What new ways are we being called to act in these areas? Discipleship is not just for a chosen few. It is for every baptized Christian. It means asking ourselves each day, “How will I live so that the love of God in Jesus Christ is visible in the world today through me?” For Anglicans in Canada today we want to make a difference through our strategic commitments so that others might discover with us the joy and fulfilment of the life of a disciple. It asks of us intentional commitment to the daily school of life in Jesus Christ. What will we do today to make a difference? ■

Archbishop Linda Nicholls is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.



PHOTO: ODUJA IMAGES

FEATHER AND SAGE ▶



The church is lifted up by each of us

By Chris Harper

FEATHER: Today my feather prayer lifted up is that we together take a moment to close our eyes, take a cleansing calming breath, and empty our overwhelmed minds to the soothing peace of personal prayer, wherein we open our hearts and souls to a voice greater than our own, and where the rush and roar of the world around us are stilled. It is my prayer that together we in the stillness may have our being opened to truths newer than those we imagine before us. Our prayer ascends as a great chorus before the Almighty where voice and heart are heard, every need and cry known and acknowledged, every tear



PHOTO: PAM WALKER

lifted. This is the power of prayer, this is the strength in the humbling and diminishing of ourselves when we let go and lean on the Almighty in the true opening of ourselves in sacrificial prayer. **SAGE:** As my new ministry takes flight and as I see the need to pause more than ever and pray, I acknowledge that the Almighty has a plan and that all I need do is my small part to add to the greater whole. It is not about me, but about what we together are called to do to bless this world around us. I acknowledge and give glory to the Almighty that you my relations in the family of God are blessed to do something that I can't. I see this in my travels as I strive to visit and am blessed by the communities that I am

invited to. In my visiting, I see the glorious work of God being lifted up in service and ministry by all who serve the church in so many varied ways. We all have our calling and ministry, we all have our own offerings of skills and strengths, and the more I travel the more I see this. I acknowledge that, just as I cannot pilot an airplane, I cannot do what you do in your context. The Lord has brought us together to be better collectively than separately; we are a community and family in the Almighty's creation, a glorious choir of service and prayer to God. So today my prayer of thanksgiving is for what you do today. May you seek always the face of God in the other before you and may peace and blessing be in your steps as you go out into the world and may your smile of faith be a blessing to the world around you. ■

Archbishop Chris Harper is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Anglicans can learn from Moravians when it comes to nurturing community, priest says

Clergy from each new full-communion partner share thoughts

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

A signature Moravian custom is set to make its debut at an Anglican parish in Edmonton this November as Holy Trinity Anglican Church prepares to hold its first lovefeast.

Originating in the *agape* (“love,” in the Greek of the New Testament) feasts of early Christian gatherings and revived by the Moravian church in the 17th century, the lovefeast is a simple meal served during a *Singstunde*, or singing service. It involves serving food, usually a bun and coffee, to the congregation; worshippers may listen to the choir sing hymns or speak quietly with their neighbours. The point is fellowship; the Moravian Music Foundation, an organization dedicated to Moravian musical culture, says the lovefeast is “not a sacrament, nor a substitute for Communion.”

Participating in working group discussions that paved the way for full communion between the Anglican Church of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and Moravian Church in Canada this summer, the Rev. Danielle Key was inspired to bring the lovefeast to Holy Trinity, where she serves as rector. Her parish has planned to adapt the concept of a lovefeast during worship, Key says, to “show the community what it means to actually come together as one people.”

“Every church does community a little differently ... The actual physical, tangible demonstration that Moravians do during a lovefeast is what I think has been missing” for Anglicans, Key says.

“In the Anglican Church, we have a lot of beautiful words and liturgies, but not a lot of doing to show togetherness ... The Moravians ... come together in a physical, tangible way to share community.” Anglicans, she says, “can learn a lot from the Moravians about what it means to actually do community versus talk about community.”

One Flock, One Shepherd

Anglicans, Lutherans and Moravians are learning more from each other’s traditions and experiences following the establishment of their full communion, which allows them to share each other’s sacraments, ministry and clergy. The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and Special Convention of the ELCIC, which have been in full communion with one another since 2001, voted over Canada Day weekend to add the Moravian Church in Canada to their family, approving the declaration *One Flock, One Shepherd: Lutherans, Anglicans, and Moravians—Called to Walk Together in Full Communion*. The Moravian church had voted unanimously in favour of the declaration June 23.

One Flock, One Shepherd outlines common aspects of history, theology, and worship across the Moravian, Anglican and Lutheran traditions. Each church, the declaration says, was “shaped in many



▲ Moravians serve drinks to each other during a lovefeast.

PHOTO: MIKE RIESS, IBOC

▶ The Rev. Danielle Key, rector at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Edmonton.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED



ways by the reforming impulses of 15th and 16th century Europe.” It identifies shared beliefs of reformers like John Wycliffe, Jan Hus and Martin Luther who saw the need to “root out corruption in the Church and renew its evangelistic witness.” The Church of England also supported exiled Moravians who sought refuge from persecution.

Today, all three denominations are global, with, the declaration says, their greatest concentrations in Tanzania, South Africa, parts of Central America, England and North America.

Key says the working group drew upon the Waterloo Declaration, which established full communion between the Anglican Church of Canada and ELCIC, as an example of what a similar document that included the Moravians might look like. In their discussions, she says, the working group quickly agreed on two sacraments each of the churches held in common: baptism and the Eucharist.

“We also talked about how all three of our churches are based on faith, tradition and reason,” Key says. “None of us require blind faith from our parishioners. We actually are all able to have—and we encourage—open dialogues about where our churches came from, where our beliefs stem from, what is said in the Bible.”

“All three churches at the end of the day, with the Moravians leading the pack, are very missional in what they want to do,” she says.

The Rev. Matt Gillard, a Moravian pastor who previously served at Heimital Moravian Church in Edmonton and is now at Hanna Redeemer Lutheran Church in

Hanna, Alta., also participated in these discussions. He says the working group made a conscious effort not to dwell on differences in theology and organization.

On the contrary, Gillard says, “We actively sought to say that each tradition has innate beauty and history behind it and that we were going to celebrate that rather than purposely look at any of the differences ... We are not the people to debate those things. That’s for bishops and worldwide unity groups to figure out.”

Global churches

Key points out that disagreements persist even within each of the traditions, which she describes as “big-tent churches.”

Both the Anglican and Moravian worldwide churches, Gillard says, face divisions between provinces in the global North and South. “The global North has money, the global South has people, and somewhere theology is debated in between those two things,” he says.

The Moravian church in the global South has two or three times the members it has in the global North, and while its membership is in decline in North America and Europe, it’s “growing by leaps and bounds” in Africa and India, he says.

Key says Anglicans and Lutherans have much to learn from the Moravians, whom she says exemplify their motto: “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things love.”

“I think the Moravian church has been able to say, ‘We may not agree with you, but we still love you,’” Key says.

Often in the Anglican and Lutheran traditions, she adds, “We’ve lost what it means to [agree] to disagree ... whereas the Moravian church, I find, is very open to having a lot of different individuals coming together. In the Anglican church across the world, I feel like we want everyone to come together, but to just ‘do it our way.’”

Acknowledging residential schools

Meanwhile, Gillard commends Anglicans for “taking ownership of the past” by acknowledging their church’s role in the Indian residential school system. The Moravian Church, he says, is beginning to grapple with similar issues.

In 2017, Prime Minister Justin

Continued on p. 7

Anglicans, Key says, “can learn a lot from the Moravians about what it means to actually do community versus talk about community.”

Anglican agency pledges \$11.5 million for slavery reparations in Barbados

USPG ‘unreservedly apologizes’ for plantation’s impact

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

United Society Partners in the Gospel (USPG) an Anglican mission agency based in the U.K., pledged £7 million (\$11.5 million Cdn.) Sept. 8 to a reparations project intended to make amends for USPG’s participation in running and benefitting from a slave plantation in Barbados, according to a Sept. 11 news release. The funds will be allocated to the Codrington Trust, a governing body in charge of managing the affairs of the Codrington Estate, which sits on the grounds of the former plantation.

“It is expected that the work will cover the following: Community engagement and infrastructure; historical research and education; burial places and memorialisation; family research,” USPG said.

From 1712 to 1838, USPG, then called the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), owned and operated the Codrington plantation, which was bequeathed to the organization by its former owner, Christopher Codrington. The society, which had been founded only a decade before, profited from slave labour on the plantation, where conditions were “horrific,” said Archbishop Howard



▲ Codrington College, an Anglican seminary, was built on the estate of slave owner Christopher Codrington.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Gregory, primate of the West Indies and a member of the Codrington Trust, in a statement on the reparations project.

“In an irony of contradiction, the training of clergy for the proclamation of the liberating gospel of God in Jesus Christ was to be supported from the earnings from the labour of the enslaved who were regarded as less than human, and property held in trust by the SPG,” Gregory wrote in a statement on the project.

According to USPG, during the 112 years the organization ran the plantation, the managers they hired routinely used “physical abuse and severe punishments” to keep the people enslaved there in line. The agency estimates between 600 and 1,200 people lived and died enslaved at Codrington while it belonged to USPG.

“USPG recognises the impact of its history and the effect it has had; it accepts and understand[s] the generational trauma this has caused over the years and

unreservedly apologise[s] for this,” reads an information document posted on the USPG website.

After slavery was officially abolished in Barbados in 1834, SPG contributed £171,777—a tiny fraction of its equivalent in 2023 currency—to build schools and churches across the Caribbean region.

However, the USPG says, “Whilst this was clearly a substantial sum of money, decisions relating to how the money was spent were not made by those who had been recently emancipated, but by SPG and other actors in the context of colonial occupation by the British.” As a result, it says, the 1835 project “should be seen as, at best, a way to support and improve the situation rather than as reparatory in nature.”

The statement promises the new project will be a collaboration between the Codrington Trust and USPG, which will involve a process of listening with the descendants of the people enslaved at the plantation to ensure the work’s goals include their concerns.

Gregory called the project a milestone, but not an end point in the process of healing the harm caused by slavery at the Codrington Estate.

“Ultimately, forgiveness is the prerogative of the offended or victim and not the discretion of the perpetrator if there is to be healing and reconciliation,” he wrote.

According to USPG, the project’s work is expected to begin in spring 2024, with preparations and consultation with the community to be undertaken in the meantime. ■

“Ultimately, forgiveness is the prerogative of the offended or victim and not the discretion of the perpetrator if there is to be healing and reconciliation.”

—Archbishop Howard Gregory

Moravians see Anglicans as reconciliation leaders: pastor

Continued from p. 7

Trudeau visited Labrador to apologize to students who had suffered harm in boarding schools run by the Moravian Church. Thousands of Indigenous students attended these schools, which were left out of the national truth and reconciliation process that began in 2008. The federal government argued at the time that it was not accountable for these boarding schools, since they had opened before Newfoundland and Labrador became part of Canada.

In 2020, Memorial University scholar Andrea Proctor published *A Long Journey: Residential Schools in Labrador and Newfoundland*, which detailed trauma suffered by students at schools including those run by Moravians.

Before the book was published, Gillard says, Moravians might have said they had not run any residential schools.

“But we do have a lot of Moravians who also want to be fully Canadian and say, even if we didn’t personally participate in this ... we want to be a part of the reconciliation that happens, because I think that is an honest faith-based response to have,” he adds. “You [in the Anglican Church of Canada] are leaders in that and are going to be hopefully giving us the strength to figure out how we respond.”

Prospects for joint ministry

Each of the churches are also continuing to draw upon liturgies and resources from



▲ Above: The Rev. Matt Gillard is a Moravian pastor currently serving at Hanna Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hanna, Alta. Right: Moravian sugar cake served during a lovefeast

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED, MATT GILLARD



their full communion partners.

Gillard said Moravians often incorporate liturgies and resources from different traditions. “I have the ability to take something that I like from a Southern Baptist preacher if it seems good and right for me in my context and use it,” he says.

Key recalls the use of Moravian worship materials at her own parish last Advent.

“The Moravians have these amazing Advent calls and responses in their book of worship,” she says. “We threw [them] in the beginning of our advent services at the Anglican church and congregations were like, ‘That’s absolutely beautiful. Why haven’t we been using that forever?’ I said,

‘It’s from the Moravians.’ They go, ‘Well, they have some nice stuff.’ The ability to be able to share back and forth resources openly now is so much more fun.”

Gillard sees more possibilities for shared ministry among Anglicans, Moravians and Lutherans. Now it’s up to leaders in each church to take the initiative, he says.

Full communion “provides us with so many opportunities for joint ministry, being able to share clergy, do pulpit swaps, to host hospitality events, to do all kinds of mission work ... We just need to have leaders that are willing to work with people outside of their specific church,” he says. ■

Full communion “provides us with so many opportunities for joint ministry, being able to share clergy, do pulpit swaps, to host hospitality events, to do all kinds of mission work,” Gillard says.

Church must confront image problem: priests

Continued from p. 1

only what the people still in the pews want their church to be.

Canon Martha Tatarnic, rector at St. George's Anglican Church in Saint Catharines, Ont. and a writer on faith issues, says her children's school friends make for a good example.

"It's not just that [they] don't know about the church; [they] have a pretty vehement impression of the church—that it's a place of bigotry, racism, misogyny and homophobia," she says.

Canon Judy Paulsen, director of the Institute of Evangelism at the University of Toronto's Wycliffe College, sees the same trend.

"There's so much negative stuff in the press about the extreme right wing. There's stuff about the residential schools, sexual abuse by clergy, the church aligned with colonialist powers," she adds.

In a 2017 Angus Reid poll, researchers found that of Canadians surveyed, only 25 per cent said they thought the word "religion" had a positive meaning. Even fewer said the same about "evangelism," at eight per cent.

The hard truth, Tatarnic says, is that perceptions have fallen so low that it's unlikely many people will be willing to come into a church and see for themselves.

"I'm not sure that is a reasonable goal at the moment. As far as my kids are concerned, what they would like to see is a different message communicated," she says. "But I don't think that it can be with the expectation that they're going to file their peer group back into our church to sit in our pews."

Before there's any hope of bringing many people back to church, Tatarnic believes, it may take years or even decades of careful and caring communication. Christians will need to demonstrate God's love by example—modeling the beliefs that no one is alone in the world and that people ought to live for more than themselves—to rehabilitate the institution's public image before they can hope to soften or reverse the antipathy that has built up.

"We have some trust-building to do before people ever start to take the next step, which is to become curious," says Paulsen.

The Rev. Graham Singh, church planter at St. Jax Church in Montreal, is working on ways to do just that. St. Jax services are aimed both at people who have left the church and those who have never been in the first place. In Quebec, the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s made being "aggressively dechurched" a way of life for much of the population, Singh says.

St. Jax uses an informal style, light on liturgy, which makes few demands on attendees' pre-existing familiarity with church life, instead offering opportunities to learn and question. The model is based on the church planting tradition established by London, England's Holy Trinity Brompton, of which Singh himself (as well as Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby) was once a member. It means starting afresh in an existing parish building and working with the existing congregants to invite in people with less of a relationship with the church, or people who have stopped going. Using that model, Singh came to St. James the Apostle in 2015, and, together with parishioners and lay leaders, closed it, revamped it and reopened it the following year as St. Jax. Church plants of this type have been the source of some unexpected



▲ The Rev. Graham Singh (left) describes services at St. Jax as informal, liturgy-light and aimed at being accessible to people with little previous church experience.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

When somebody says the Anglican church will die numerically by a certain date, Singh says, the right response is to adapt, not say the researchers are wrong.

growth, he says—especially because they make space for the expression of something many Anglican churches don't: anger at the church. At clergy. At God.

Singh notes that throughout Scripture, especially the Psalms, wrestling with God is modelled over and over as a healthy and necessary part of religious life. This, he argues, is not effectively communicated in the established patterns of the Anglican church.

Yes, there are places in traditional liturgy where anger, grief and doubt are acknowledged, but part of the challenge facing the modern church, he says, is "the testing of that liturgy with people who are unchurched or dechurched.

"Are they in fact responding to it?" he asks. "And of course the answer is abundantly, no, they're not."

When resentment against the institution builds up, he says, the church has to make room for people to express it, or they will simply leave. Part of being a Protestant church, he says, is adapting the presentation of the gospel into a form that speaks to the wider culture.

"Now is the time, for heaven's sake, to adapt again," he says. "The opposite reaction is we say, 'Oh, this terrible culture, it doesn't seem to respond to what we're doing. Let's double down,' when it's absolutely clear that it's not working." When somebody says the Anglican church will die numerically by a certain date, he says, the right response is to adapt, not say the researchers are wrong.

In the fall of 2019, Anglican Church of Canada statistician Canon Neil Elliot released a report projecting that if current trends continued, there would be no members left in the church by 2040.

One of the tools St. Jax uses to acknowledge and engage with people's negative feelings about church is the Alpha program—a franchised catechesis curriculum that teaches adults the basics of the Christian faith. He describes the first session of the course as a place to air grievances and criticism in a way that isn't possible during a Sunday morning liturgy.

The first session in the Alpha program's course is titled "Christianity: boring, irrelevant, untrue?" Singh says the title often resonates with people who are bringing their own anger or pain to the conversation. A typical response he hears is, "Okay, that's

your intro? Good, because I'll go on: Not only is it boring, irrelevant and untrue, it's abusive," he says.

"If you try to do that in a Sunday service and say, 'Look, I'm going to give you a place to be angry, and then when you're done being angry, it will now be the time to stand up and sit down when I tell you,' it lacks integrity."

Paulsen agrees with Singh's ideas on making space for anger and criticism.

"If you look at Jesus's ministry, who was he most critical of? The religious people. He called out the hypocrisy and the fundamentalism," she says. "So, in following the example of Jesus, [the church] must be self-critical."

For Meredith, it was a moment of validating that criticism that interested her in going to church again. When her now-husband said he wanted to get married in a church, she told him, "Find me a priest I don't hate."

As it happened, she was visiting a yoga class at St. James the Apostle when she found one. A member of the class asked her whether she went to church, to which Meredith answered, "Not anymore. I don't like most priests." The woman laughed and said, "I don't like all of them either. They're humans. We don't like all of our neighbours."

Then the woman introduced herself as the parish priest, says Meredith. "And I went bright red. But I felt that she'd just seen me. It wasn't said with malice or spite. It was said with such love."

Drawn in by the priest's genuine attitude, Meredith went on to join the church, become a member of the corporation and help lead the church through its 2016 refounding as St. Jax. And in that process, she has worked to see St. Jax built into a place that is welcoming for people who aren't always comfortable in traditional church spaces: families with rambunctious children, people who aren't familiar with the subject matter—and sometimes people like the finance professional she met at a conference and invited to a circus event in St. Jax's building. He was so nervous about entering a church that he refused to come in until she offered to walk through the doors with him personally.

"I think the first step is getting people across the threshold and seeing they're not going to burn up," she says. ■

Former metropolitan of Canada remembered for ministry of presence, ecumenism

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Bishop Bruce Myers of the diocese of Quebec is still carrying the crozier that belonged to Archbishop Alexander Bruce Stavert, one of his predecessors in the role. Myers says the staff acts as a tangible reminder of the legacy he carries with him of a predecessor who encouraged him to get ordained and walked with him through much of his career.

Stavert, himself a former bishop of the diocese of Quebec and later metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of Canada, died Sept. 11 at age 83.

Born in 1940, raised and confirmed in Montreal, Stavert studied at Lower Canada College, Bishop's University and Trinity College in Toronto before becoming ordained at the age of 25. He served in a range of postings, beginning with a term in Schefferville where he became close with members of the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. After retiring from his later role as metropolitan, he returned to Montreal and served several parishes as an interim priest, including his childhood home church of St. Matthias, Westmount.

He was known for his comprehensive ministry of presence with Anglicans



PHOTO: DIOCESE OF QUEBEC

“You could see that he deeply cared about us and our wellbeing, not only spiritually but also with our integration into this fairly new life we had,” Kawawachikamach resident Ruby Sandy-Robinson said of Stavert.

across the diocese, says Myers—a major achievement in a diocese where being present for many parishes meant making yearly rounds across hundreds of kilometers by car, boat, snowmobile and float plane.

Another hallmark of his tenure was

his commitment to ecumenical relations, especially critical in Quebec, where the Roman Catholic Church is a much larger social force than the Anglican one, says Myers. Stavert served for several years as co-chair of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada and forged friendships with many of the Roman Catholic bishops he served alongside.

“For a long time in Anglican and Catholic history, there was a real enmity between Anglicans and Catholics and Anglican and Catholic leaders,” says Myers. “Bishop Stavert regularly and sincerely extended the hand of friendship and fellowship to his Roman Catholic counterparts over the years, I think [setting] a real tangible example.”

Stavert also had deep ties to the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, where he served as a newly ordained priest in the 1960s. Ruby Sandy-Robinson, a lifelong resident of Kawawachikamach and a member of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), was nine years old when he came to town and remembers her father, a Naskapi catechist, working closely with Stavert to minister to the newly settled nation, which had just transitioned from a nomadic way of life

and begun learning English as a second language. She remembers Stavert as a beloved member of the community who ran an after-school program to help the local children with their homework, gave them rides in his yellow Volkswagen Beetle if they missed the bus and made a regular practice of checking in on people around the community, at home or in hospital to see how they were doing.

“You could see that he deeply cared about us and our well-being, not only spiritually but also with our integration into this fairly new life we had. He was very well respected and would often be offered traditional food, which he graciously accepted,” she told the *Journal*.

And Stavert maintained a relationship with the community there for the rest of his life, she says. They celebrated when he became a bishop, and he recommended Sandy-Robinson for her second term in ACIP.

He also added his voice to the community's during the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's work in 2013.

Speaking to the *Journal* in mid-September, Sandy-Robinson said she and a group of other residents of Kawawachikamach had plans to travel to Quebec City's Cathedral of the Holy Trinity for Stavert's funeral on Sept. 30.

Stavert is survived by his wife, Diana, their children Kathleen, Rosamond and Timothy, and their grandchildren Miakim and Hendrick. ■

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“A Penitentiary Called the Beach”

In this book, a newly employed researcher, loosely connected to the police, tries to get a grip on information surrounding a mystery prisoner who is incarcerated at a local prison known as the “Beach”. Under the cover of darkness, she observes that the prisoner is able to escape from the penitentiary frequently to meet with his former victim. How he does this is hard to understand. As the plot expands, the researcher, while also caught up in her own bizarre mysteries that must be solved, is able to come to solid conclusions, some of which seem to parallel mainstream news. This new volume can be ordered by contacting Mary Shepherd, editor and illustrator, at 514-487-0126 or by emailing her at: marymathilda@hotmail.com

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*December
Bible Readings*



DAY READING

- 01 Isaiah 63:1-17
- 02 Isaiah 63:18-64:12
- 03 Psalm 85
- 04 2 Peter 2:1-16
- 05 2 Peter 2:17-3:7
- 06 2 Peter 3:8-18
- 07 Isaiah 40:1-17
- 08 Isaiah 40:18-31
- 09 Mark 1:1-8
- 10 Revelation 21:1-14
- 11 Ezekiel 16:44-63
- 12 Isaiah 61
- 13 Psalm 126
- 14 1 Thess 5:12-28
- 15 Luke 1:39-56

DAY READING

- 16 John 1:6-18
- 17 John 1:19-34
- 18 2 Samuel 7:1-17
- 19 2 Samuel 7:18-29
- 20 Psalm 89:1-18
- 21 Psalm 89:19-37
- 22 Psalm 89:38-52
- 23 Psalm 97
- 24 Luke 2:1-14
- 25 Hebrews 1
- 26 2 Corinthians 7:2-16
- 27 1 John 1:1-2:2
- 28 Psalm 148
- 29 Isaiah 62
- 30 Luke 2:15-21
- 31 1 Chronicles 29:10-30

SOURCE: CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

PEOPLE ▶

New bishop wants to build on role of Indigenous elders

Continued from p. 1

whom she has served on Council of General Synod and for the past two years as prolocutor of the ecclesiastical province—a role in which, she said, Plamondon had given “stellar” service to the church.

“She brings many gifts,” McNaughton said. “The provincial House of Bishops is enthusiastic to have her as a colleague as the province continues its work on new ways of sharing ministry.”

A self-described “prairie kid” who grew up and lived in various parts of Alberta, B.C. and Saskatchewan, Plamondon was ordained as a deacon and priest in the diocese of British Columbia, also known as the diocese of Islands and Inlets, in 2013. She has an MDiv degree from Vancouver School of Theology (VST). In 2020 she received the VST president’s Thoughtful Engaged and Generous Leadership Award, which recognizes “leading practitioners in the Christian faith.”

Plamondon said her first priority as bishop is “to build relationships to strengthen community,” adding, “I’m hoping to reach out to the various First Nations that the Anglican territory is situated on, so that I can ask to be welcomed and to have permission to be



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Plamondon, who was priested in the diocese of British Columbia in 2013, describes herself as a “prairie kid.”

there as I take on this new role.

“I think that that will be a model for the kind of work I think is really important for us in the territory.”

The bishop-elect stressed the importance of having Indigenous voices at the table in governance of the Territory of the People, saying she wanted the diocese to build on the role of “pastoral elders who offer support and wisdom and insight teaching, [who] come alongside parishes through ceremony and ritual in the church and outside the church.” ■

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And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

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1 CORINTHIANS
12:26-27



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