

'Something holy is happening here'

Episcopalians mobilize against ICE raids in the United States

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Two stories are playing out in the United States amid ongoing raids by federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) targeting alleged illegal immigrants, according to bishops and clergy of The Episcopal Church who have participated in mobilizations across the country in response.

On the one hand, Episcopalians—who, like Canadian Anglicans, are members of the worldwide Anglican Communion—describe a climate of fear and repression in communities targeted by ICE due to increased deportations under U.S. President Donald Trump. Bishop of Minnesota Craig Loya says the U.S. government is “conducting a reckless and cruel campaign designed to intimidate and instil fear.”

Bishop of Washington Mariann Budde, who served for 18 years as rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis, Minn., says even before ICE agents killed legal observer Renée Good on Jan. 7, Minneapolis residents told Budde “story after story of people being dragged out of their cars, people's houses being broken into, parents being picked up as they were dropping their kids off at daycare.”

On the other hand, Episcopalians have joined their communities in powerful mobilizations against ICE raids. In



▲ **Dean Katherine Lewis (wearing red parka) at the interfaith protest at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport during the “ICE Out of Minnesota” Jan. 23 day of action.**

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Minnesota, which became a flashpoint after the ICE killing of Good—followed by the killing of nurse Alex Pretti on Jan. 24—Loya highlights “the story of our diocese and our state responding by mobilizing for love. There are these vast networks of care that have formed all across Minnesota and Episcopalians, lay and clergy all around the diocese, have been a critical part of those networks.”

The *Anglican Journal* spoke to Episcopalians in the dioceses of Minnesota, Washington and Los Angeles who described participation of church volunteers in rapid response teams,

tracking and observing ICE in their communities; in mutual aid networks, providing food and legal and financial support to migrant neighbours and driving them to work to avoid being detained; and even church safety brigades guarding the entrance of a preschool.

Tens of thousands of people in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, including hundreds of outside faith leaders such as Budde, participated in a Jan. 23 day of action that saw major work stoppages and hundreds of small businesses close in what *The New York*

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Northern Ontario Anglicans 'just keep giving' as homelessness crisis looms

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Peggy Morrison began working at the Open Arms Café at the North Bay, Ont. parish of St. John the Divine about 14 years ago, inspired by a recurrent dream she believed was God's call toward work in homelessness and poverty outreach.

She now serves as rector's warden at the parish and leads Open Arms. The program provides clients in need with a full-course meal every Wednesday night, along with health services and essential items. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Morrison says, the program has gone from serving about 100 people a week to around 200.

Despite that increase in demand, Morrison says the program's resources are holding up remarkably well. They had flagged down to almost nothing by the end of the pandemic lockdowns, she says, but thanks to donations from parishioners and the surrounding community, the program now has everything it needs.

Morrison's experience is common among parishes the *Anglican Journal* reached for this story. Homelessness in northern Ontario has grown three times faster than in any other part of the province, according to a report from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario



▲ **Volunteers Marion Berube (left) and JoAnne Jenkins work in the kitchen at St. Matthew's Cathedral, Timmins, a parish that provides food service and outreach to neighbours in need.**

PHOTO: GEORGE CRIBBS

(AMO), more than doubling since 2021. Parishes that responded to the *Journal's* call reported increases in demand met by equal will to help from both Anglicans and their neighbours.

“Christians in particular [are] to care for those who need care. I think that's just our calling,” Morrison says.

Still, both church and secular service providers warn that there are limits to what the system can absorb. The same AMO report predicts homelessness across the province could more than double by 2035 from about 85,000 to 177,000 people—and that assumes a stable

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Diocese of Niagara begins disability theology work

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

A study group in the diocese of Niagara seeks to initiate a conversation about disability and belonging in the diocese, which proponents say could begin a transformation in the way people with disabilities relate to the church.

Ryan Weston, General Synod's animator for social and ecological justice, says Niagara is the first diocese he knows of to begin such

work following General Synod's 2025 resolution to encourage disability theology work across the Anglican Church of Canada.

Jodey Porter, a parishioner at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is a member of General Synod's Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Committee, a litigator and advocate for people with disabilities and a member of the team working on disability

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Interfaith protests call for end to ICE operations

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Times called a general strike—the first in the United States in 80 years. A large interfaith protest at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, from which many flights departing immigrants take off, resulted in the arrest of approximately 100 clergy.

Dean Jered Weber-Johnson, rector of St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in St. Paul and regional dean of the East Metro Mission Area, was among those arrested at the airport, which he calls “part of the deportation machine.” He describes the movement against ICE as “a moment for the church to speak with moral clarity.”

Dean Katherine Lewis, rector of St. David’s Episcopal Church in Minnetonka and dean of Minnesota’s West and Central Regions, who was also arrested and charged with trespassing, says the protest required a great deal of organization and preparation. Clergy gathered on Jan. 23 amid record-breaking cold of -29 °C. They chanted, sang, and said the Lord’s Prayer, holding signs with images of people ICE had abducted.

Each protester also carried a slip of paper in their pocket, printed with the name and information of a person they were to represent as part of their prayer and public witness. Police arrested many clergy as they knelt and prayed.

“The extreme cold, the singing, the media, the public presence ... for me personally, it was kind of a mystical experience,” Lewis says, adding, “Something holy is happening here.”



▲ Dean Jered Weber-Johnson (red parka, green scarf) was one of approximately 100 clergy arrested at the airport protest against ICE.

PHOTO: SARAH WHITING / MINNESOTA WOMEN'S PRESS

Canadian primate offers solidarity and prayers

Archbishop Shane Parker, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, published an open letter on Feb. 6 to Bishop Sean Rowe, presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church, and all Episcopalians in the United States. Parker said it was “heartbreaking for us, your northern neighbours, to watch the growing unrest” south of the border.

“We have seen and heard alarming stories of aggression, intimidation and harassment toward targeted communities

and individuals, and the dehumanization of those perceived to not belong,” the primate said. “We have seen images of violence, brutality and even death for those willing to challenge these actions and call out for justice.”

“We have also seen the ways your church has acted with faith and resilience in response to the call of the Gospel to serve those in need, welcome those who seek hospitality, feed the hungry and challenge those who abuse power,” he added. Anglicans in Canada, Parker

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This Mother’s Day, celebrate women and girls



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The laundry facility at St. Luke’s Hospital in Nablus, West Bank, a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, needs major upgrades.

PHOTO: SHANE PARKER

Jerusalem & the Holy Land Sunday May 17, 2026

Like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. —1 Peter 2:5



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On this 13th Jerusalem & the Holy Land Sunday for the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, we celebrate faithful companionship with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Offerings of prayer, worship and donations will support St. Luke’s Hospital in Nablus, West Bank, in updating its laundry facility. St. Luke’s, the only charitable hospital in the city, offers a wide range of medical services—including neurosurgery, obstetrics and emergency care—to a population living in restricted, often dangerous circumstances. Donations toward the laundry facility will help provide access to clean, sanitized bed linens, towels, gowns, uniforms and surgical drapes, which are essential for preventing the spread of infection and keeping patients and healthcare workers safe.



▲ Episcopalians joined protests against ICE in Minneapolis-St. Paul on Jan. 23.

PHOTO: MEG WAGNER

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said, were praying for and upholding Episcopalians as well as full communion partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Moravian Church in North America.

Trump has called the influx of illegal immigrants an “invasion” of the United States and repeatedly described them as criminals, arguing that mass deportation is necessary to restore “law and order.” In a December 2023 campaign appearance, he said undocumented immigrants were “poisoning the blood of our country.”

In June 2025, the president ordered what he called “the single largest mass deportation program in history” and directed his administration to “put every resource possible behind this effort.” ICE raids in Los Angeles that month led to mass protests. Bishop John Harvey Taylor of the Episcopal diocese of Los Angeles, speaking at a prayer vigil outside city hall, condemned the raids.

After Trump’s first election in 2016, the diocese formed its Sacred Resistance ministry, which it says seeks to “open our congregations and communities to provide sanctuary for anyone targeted by state-sanctioned scapegoating” and to engage in “peaceful action towards ensuring recognition of the dignity of all people.”

Sacred Resistance ministers, Taylor says, have led training throughout the diocese on “knowing your rights, knowing when it was possible to say to ICE that they couldn’t enter private space.”

“We felt the eyes of the world on Los Angeles,” he says. “I think history will disclose that the people of our community, while unstinting in their fraternal support for the immigrant worker community, did not give Trump the narrative of violence he wanted ... Then he began to look elsewhere, and we know the consequences of that.”

Mutual aid networks proliferate in Minnesota

In December 2025, Trump deployed thousands of ICE and Customs and Border Patrol officers to Minneapolis and St. Paul to apprehend and deport undocumented immigrants. The operation saw an escalation of ICE tactics, including harassment and threats to observers, and has resulted in the detention of U.S. citizens and at least 3,000 arrests.

When ICE moved into the Twin Cities, Loya says, they encountered a population that had organized “networks of care, of advocacy, of resistance, of witness” after the 2020 police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, which gave rise to the largest mass movement in U.S. history.

“There is probably not another city in the United States that [was] better prepared ... When the current ICE occupation began, we didn’t have to build all of those networks,” Loya says. “In a lot of ways, the work that happened after the murder of George Floyd was simply reactivated and reignited in this moment.”

For the diocese of Minnesota, Loya says, “the epicentre of our efforts at supporting immigrants and resisting what’s happening” has been Casa Maria, a feeding ministry based at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church in the Minneapolis suburb of Richfield. Begun during the COVID-19 pandemic as an effort by the largely Spanish-speaking congregation of St. Nicholas to deliver needed food items, Casa Maria eventually grew to a walk-in food shelf and clothing closet that feeds an estimated 95 households per week.

Archdeacon Rena Romero, ministry developer at Casa Maria, says immigrants from Mexico and South America make up a large portion of those who frequent the food shelf. Many members of St. Nicholas, including volunteers who run Casa Maria, are also immigrants.



PHOTO: FRANCISCO GARCÍA

Interfaith clergy in Los Angeles, including Episcopalians active in Sacred Resistance ministry, confer during protests against ICE in June 2025.

► Bishop of Minnesota Craig Loya describes the Casa Maria feeding ministry as “the epicentre of our efforts at supporting immigrants and resisting what’s happening” amid mass deportations.

PHOTO: CYARA CARABARIN CARRETERO



“We’re feeding more people now than we ever have ... once word got out that we were a place you could trust with your name and address.”

—Archdeacon Rena Romero

When ICE raids began, Romero says, immigrants stayed home and the food shelf saw fewer people. In response, Casa Maria began organizing food deliveries. The number of deliveries per week, she says, immediately rose from 12 to 53, and then to 350 the following week. “We’re feeding more people now than we ever have ... once word got out that we were a place you could trust with your name and address.”

Many immigrant neighbours were also afraid to go to work, she says, since being pulled over for a traffic violation could result in detainment and deportation. Not going to work meant risking losing one’s job and facing eviction due to not being able to pay rent. Volunteers from St. Nicholas and supporting congregations therefore began driving people at risk to and from their jobs.

Casa Maria has also referred people to attorneys through the Minnesota Council of Churches. The Episcopal Church in Minnesota has established a Migrant Support Fund, with donations paying for legal and rent assistance.

Romero describes an “outpouring of love and compassion in the community” as mutual aid groups sprang up amid the ICE raids, bringing new people through church doors. “Our church is way more connected to the neighbourhood now,” she says.

Weber-Johnson’s parish has also seen increased food deliveries and begun teaching volunteers how to avoid monitoring by ICE agents, who track both food distribution centres and people delivering food. Parishioners at St. John the Evangelist, which has a preschool, even formed safety brigades to watch the entrance for ICE officers.

“One of the ways that rapid responders and constitutional observers have been deployed is to self-organize into battalions of parents and caring citizens standing in front of schools, ready to protect children who are coming and going, because children have been targeted in this process,” Weber-Johnson says.

Episcopalians in other parts of

the country are undertaking similar efforts. In the Episcopal diocese of Washington, church volunteers provide accompaniment to check-ins with ICE and its surveillance program, the Intensive Supervision Appearance Program, as well as to immigration court appointments. Congregations are also supporting family members of people who have been detained—from providing rides and delivering groceries to basic financial support for rent and living expenses.

“For those of us in the faith world, it’s really about walking with our neighbours,” says Michelle Dibblee, missionary for equity and justice, who helps support these efforts in the diocese of Washington.

‘As Christians, we obey the law of love first and foremost’

Asked how he would respond to the argument that ICE officers are simply enforcing the law, Weber-Johnson says Christians have often fought against unjust laws. He says the Trump administration is selectively enforcing laws and points out that ICE uses methods which are themselves illegal, such as entering homes without judicial warrants and denying people due process.

“As Christians, we obey the law of love first and foremost ... Everything else is subsidiary to that law for us,” Weber-Johnson says. Jesus’ greatest commandments, he adds, were to “love the Lord your God with all your heart” and to “love your neighbour as yourself.”

Taylor contrasts Christian nationalism in the United States with the message of Jesus, which he says “ruled out cruelty for cruelty’s sake.” Loya says Christians must be “clear and unambiguous” in pointing out how Christian nationalism “is a corruption of the good news of Jesus.”

Budde—who delivered the homily at the interfaith prayer service for Trump’s 2024 presidential inauguration, in which she asked him to “have mercy on the people in our country who are scared right now” including immigrants, refugees and LGBTQ+ people—says Christian leaders must “embody a vision of the gospel and a vision of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, in such a way that we actually look and sound like Jesus.”

Canon Scott Sharman, the Anglican Church of Canada’s animator for ecumenical and interfaith relations, says in addition to the primate’s letter to Rowe, “individual Canadian Anglicans have been reaching out with expressions of prayer, solidarity, and support” while “highlighting the strong ecumenical and interfaith witness of clergy and leaders from many traditions in protesting the violation of rights that is occurring south of the border.”

Episcopalians who spoke to the *Journal* thanked Canadian Anglicans for their support and asked for continued prayers, with Dibblee expressing hope that Canadian Anglicans are welcoming immigrants in their own communities. ■

Pentecost embodies spirit of listening, liberation across language barriers

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

When the *Anglican Journal* asked clergy and scholars to explain the significance of Pentecost, which takes place on the seventh Sunday after Easter, it heard diverse interpretations reflective of the biblical story behind the feast day.

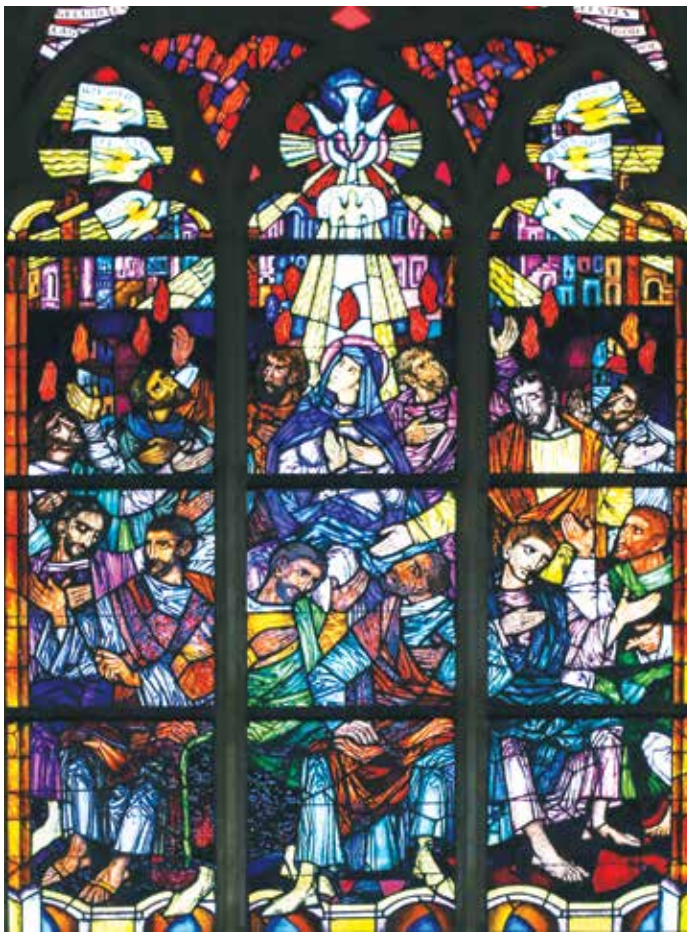
Those who spoke to the *Journal* variously described Pentecost as the “birthday of the church,” a time for listening and a symbol of empowerment and freedom. Woven through these interpretations is a common thread: the presence of the Holy Spirit transcending all barriers of language and identity and empowering believers to spread the gospel.

Pentecostal theologian Amos Yong, professor of theology and mission at Fuller Theological Seminary and author of the book *Mission After Pentecost*, says for many Christians, “Pentecost allows us to focus on, receive, acknowledge, welcome the Holy Spirit ... Pentecost gives us a window, at least for one Sunday during the year, for some churches saying something about the Holy Spirit.”

The narrative of Pentecost—which coincides with the Jewish festival of Shavuot—in the Acts of the Apostles follows the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, as his disciples gather in Jerusalem along with “devout Jews from every people under heaven.” The Holy Spirit fills each of the disciples accompanied by “a sound like the rush of a violent wind,” giving them the ability to speak “about God’s deeds of power” in the native languages of all the peoples.

Two Anglicans and former Pentecostals who spoke to the *Journal* describe Pentecost as reversing the Old Testament story of Babel, in which God prevents humans from building a tower to the sky by fragmenting their speech into different languages.

Robbie Walker, a researcher currently finishing his PhD in theological studies at the Toronto School of Theology, says that “Pentecost is the reversal of the power dynamics of Babel, because now all the languages are understood by the people.” The Rev. Derwyn Costinak, incumbent at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Calgary, says rather than “keeping people



▲ Stained-glass window in the Church of St. Andrew in Antwerp, Belgium, depicting Mary and the Apostles at Pentecost.

PHOTO: JORISVO/
SHUTTERSTOCK

from understanding each other, now God is taking the initiative to make the changing of languages irrelevant.”

Canon Preston Parsons, rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Kitchener, Ont. and a Canadian Anglican member of the International Pentecostal-Anglican Commission, an ongoing ecumenical dialogue, says the breaking of language barriers shows the universal interest of the Holy Spirit in communicating God’s work to all nations.

“This is one of the reasons why Christians have no trouble with the idea of translation,” Preston says, drawing a comparison with the role of the Arabic language in Islam.

“Muslims are quite strict about Arabic because that’s the word in which the revelation came in Islam,” he says. “But for Christians, we’re very happy to translate into different cultures and into different languages because of this founding story that tells us that the work of God can be communicated to all people and in all languages.”

National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper says the biggest lesson of Pentecost for the Anglican Church of Canada today is the need to listen to one another.

“Language is identity,” Harper says. “That’s one of the things we say in the Indigenous circles ... Not being able to speak your own language [as Indigenous people in Canada were prevented from doing under colonial policies] was a process of assimilation ... of being made into some other body or another form.”

For Indigenous ministries, “if the church doesn’t hear us, what we’re doing, then they hear separation,” he says. “They hear different things ... The biggest challenge before us, especially coming up to Pentecost, is that of listening to each other—and at the same time, hearing what we’re called to be as Christians, to be called into the body as one.”

In the Book of Acts, Peter addresses the crowd with a sermon that recalls God’s declaration that he would pour out his Spirit “even upon my slaves, both men and women” and describes the resurrection of Jesus. The book details life among the first Christian converts, noting, “All who believed were together and had all things in common.”

The Rev. Wilson Akinwale, national chair of Black Anglicans of Canada, says for Christians of African heritage, Pentecost is a symbol of liberation and empowerment.

Christians such as Martin Luther King Jr., Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Bishop of Washington Mariann Budde who have spoken out on behalf of the vulnerable and oppressed, Akinwale says, embody Pentecost’s “spirit of justice, of liberation, of making a difference in the world ... of working with other people regardless of their faith or religion. They are being guided with that spirit of Pentecost to do wonders.”

That same call from God, he says, applies to all believers. “Pentecost is not about us. It’s about who God is and how God is using us as an instrument of righteousness, of peace and justice and reconciliation in the world. And we have to go out there to make that impact.”

Christians observe Pentecost this year on May 24. ■

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Learning group shares experiences of parishioners with disabilities



PHOTO: COSMO CONDINA

Porter says changing the way the church thinks about disability would remove a barrier that prevents disabled people from feeling at home.

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theology in Niagara. Porter, who has been mostly blind since the age of five and lost her vision entirely as an adult, says she and many others she knows with disabilities have often felt like outsiders to worship communities.

“The issue is this: that our do-gooding theology tends to put disabled people in the [category] of those who need help, of people who are less than you. And it tends to, in many terrifying theological approaches, put people in the [category of believing] they’ve sinned or their parents have sinned and they’re being punished by God.”

The knowledge that people think of them this way forms a barrier that prevents people with disabilities from feeling at home in church communities, Porter says. The path to making church a home for them is to improve that theology, she adds.

The diocese put its working group together at the behest of Bishop of Niagara Susan Bell, Porter says. Bell also

invited Archdeacon David Anderson, rector of St. Jude’s, Oakville, to join the study group. He tells the *Anglican Journal* he wants the work to start conversations among parishes about how they can better foster community belonging for members of their congregations.

The group members have familiarized themselves with foundational works in disability theology, and Anderson sees the next phase of their work as collecting stories from parishes and people with disabilities whose experiences they can share to give parishes a clear idea of what to aim for—and what to avoid.

One example of the latter is a story he heard from the mother of a girl with autism he met at a family camp run by Karis Disability Services, a charity the diocese has partnered with for guidance in this work.

The mother contrasted the atmosphere of welcome at the camp that had brought her daughter such joy with an incident at their home church. The priest had told her their family was welcome to worship

there but asked that they not bring their daughter to church anymore, describing her presence as loud and disruptive, Anderson says.

“I might not ever make that phone call like that pastor did, but I can imagine in my own parish where I serve, that some ‘well-meaning’ person might actually say that to the family member,” Anderson says. “And that’s just not good enough.”

Bryan Gillmore, an organizational and spiritual life specialist for Karis, says there’s much about Karis’s role in the diocese of Niagara’s work that is still taking shape. But the goal is to address the uncertainty worship communities have about how to become places where people with disabilities are as central to life and decision-making as anyone else.

“I’ve never met a church that would say, ‘We don’t want people with disabilities to belong,’” he says. “There’s a barrier there of not knowing what to do. And so churches miss out on the gifts of those with disability.” ■

ARCHBISHOP SHANE WRITES ▶



Celebrate Pentecost joyfully and abundantly

By Shane Parker

IN MAY OF 2002, I travelled through parts of Germany and Austria. The trip was partly nostalgic as I sought out the places I had been when my family lived in northwestern Germany in the late 1960s because of my father's military posting.

My father had chosen to live "on the economy" in a rural community rather than on a military base. Unbeknownst to my mother, he had found accommodation for our family in a suite of rooms on the top floor of a massive old farmhouse, on a fully functioning hog farm, on a country lane near a small village, many kilometres from other Canadians. The farm was a truly wonderful place for three kids to spend their energy and exercise their imaginations. My mother also grew to love it and eventually forgave my father. It was good to find that place again and recall fond memories.

The journey continued south to Bavaria, where the nostalgia gave way to adventure. Armed with a guidebook but without prior reservations, we realized that a long weekend was about to begin, so we stopped in an ancient town called Bad Tölz, a well-known spa since the mid-1800s (darkly associated with the Nazis and the Holocaust during World War II).

We found a nice guesthouse and settled in for the long weekend, which I quickly realized was to mark Pfingsten, the end of Eastertide, known to us as Pentecost. This principal feast of the Church was the occasion of a two-day public holiday, celebrated in both sacred and secular ways. What a surprise!

On Sunday morning, the Day of Pentecost, we made our way to Mariä Himmelfahrt Church and were astonished to see it crowded, with a large orchestra squeezed into the front of the nave, lifting up this joyful, important feast



PHOTO: SHANE PARKER

For Pentecost celebrations at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa last year, people chose colours reminiscent of the tongues of fire that signified the presence of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1-4.

day. I thought to myself, "This is how Pentecost ought to be celebrated."

Pentecost is a celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. The collect in the *Book of Alternative Services* reads, "Almighty and everliving God, who fulfilled the promises of Easter by sending us your Holy Spirit and opening to every race and nation the way of life eternal, keep us in the unity of your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory."

The Holy Spirit galvanized the disciples of Jesus on the Day of Pentecost, uniting and empowering them to publicly proclaim the Gospel of the Risen Christ for the first time in human history. The same Holy Spirit revealed Jesus as the Son of God when he was baptized, and the same Holy Spirit is bestowed upon each one of us when we are baptized, marking us as Christ's own forever and nurturing faith in our hearts throughout our lives.

The collect for Pentecost in the *Book of Common Prayer* reads, "GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the

sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort."

When I came home from my travels in Germany and Austria and returned to my duties as the dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa, I shared the story of Pentecost in Bad Tölz. The following year, the cathedral began celebrating Pentecost as a day worthy of rich floral and fabric decorations, a full procession, lively choral and instrumental music, the gospel read simultaneously in many languages and everyone invited to wear something flame-coloured, followed by an abundant coffee hour.

That is how Pentecost ought to be celebrated—a major feast day, a joyful end to the season of Easter, filled with the promise of God's abiding presence, kindling in us the fire of indestructible love and hope, every season of our lives. ■

Archbishop Shane Parker is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

In a divided world, faith points to path of unity

By Chris Harper

FEATHER: Creator God, we your children lift our prayer to you today. We thank you for the diversity of this world we have been gifted; we thank you for the abundance of gifts seen and unseen and especially for your endless love and grace. We confess that we have failed and offended you and the world before us; we have sinned by our own will and way. Forgive us this day as we begin anew.

As the Sun rises on this new day, come into our lives, warm our hearts, that we may see the other before us as you see us, with grace, love and peace. Bless us this day that we may be a blessing to all. This we pray in Christ Jesus, amen.

SAGE: Read Galatians 3:26-28. We journey in a world so divided, conflicted and polarized, but amidst the storm of offence, faith whispers that we, the children of God, should walk a different path to seek peace, unity and life in Christ. Our separation begins when we start to see and hear only ourselves and not the other before us, when our voice, opinions and rights are more important than those of others.

What does it mean to be one in the body of Christ, where the left hand is no more important than the right hand but where both were meant to bless and consecrate the other before us? Where diversity was not meant to divide, but to unite, so that all members walking and working together as one in the body of faith may see the wonder and depth of God in all that is before us in creation?

As Indigenous Ministries seeks to make its voice heard amongst the many, we acknowledge that unity and the guidance of faith are the keys to blazing the path before us. Our nations and our ministries are not diminished by our diversity or geographical separation but are united by our connection with and through the Creator God. Indigenous Ministries can be a vital member of the body and a blessed voice in the choir glorifying God our Creator only if the rest of the body can listen and accept our gifts. Our voice and song rises in identity, strengthened by the fact that we are and always have been equally children of the Almighty.

So could we, the body of faith, transform the world if we together acknowledged and celebrated each other for what we bring and offer as children of creation? Would the body of Christ flourish if we but served in humility and peace? Could we go further and do more to reach out to the needy and suffering, if we could but look up from the mirror and truly see? Can we the church go forward as an instrument of healing and inclusion, and our faith be a living witness in truth and equity?

The month of May brings the planting of gardens, the cleaning and preparation of yards, all of creation beginning to sing anew. So may our life and faith witness be renewed and arise, as we reach out as a body of faith, blessing each other as one in Christ. ■

National Indigenous Archbishop Chris Harper is the Presiding Elder of Sacred Circle.

FEATHER AND SAGE



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BOOK



An English Country Utopian Garden

As a young child, Professor Greg Claeys, born in Paris in 1953, created his own little country with mountains, cities and oceans. He was the king and he ruled kindly. He called it Utopia, a land where everything ran smoothly and people all got along.

He grew up to write about Utopia and its opposite called Dystopia, which is something we see in some countries where wars dominate and nothing works out. His attendance at McGill University and the encouragement of his group of enlightened followers, pushed him towards his environmentalist tendencies to become the greatest of speakers in Europe and wrote on anything and everything. His concern for the planet grew and he saw where we might be heading as a world.

He returned in his mind to a Utopian ideal and spoke at Ted talks and taught in several countries as China, Britain and North American Universities. He became a British subject. He felt that the habit of taking over other countries was not the way to go and didn't help much in global environmentalism. He spoke to students of what was coming up and encouraged them to wake up. They are the future after all. To order his colourful biography, please contact Mary Shepherd at (514) 487-0126 or at marymathilda@hotmail.com.

Services under strain amid rising poverty

Continued from p. 1

economic outlook. Service providers say serious change is needed to prevent faith and government resources alike from buckling.

Like St. John the Divine, St. Thomas' Anglican Church in Bracebridge has seen a rise in demand for its services. Administrator Ann Marie Taylor says from 2024 to 2025, the total number of people it served each year increased from 136 to 160, the number of \$25 gift cards for food it gave out increased from 79 to 135, and the number of frozen take-home meals it gave out almost doubled, from 94 to 181.

The congregation at St. Thomas' has responded with generosity, Taylor says. "They just seem to keep giving," she says. "If we say there's a need for something, they seem to find it in their hearts to come up with stuff."

Janice Barker, coordinator of the Family Giving Centre at St. Thomas Anglican Church, Thunder Bay—part of the same parish in the diocese of Algoma—describes a similar experience.

Part of the centre's stability comes from a careful calculation of how much help they can sustainably deliver, she says. They hit that number of 80 households every two weeks about six months after they opened following the COVID-19 pandemic, Barker says.

They've stayed steady at that level since, she says, collaborating with other nearby programs to each cover a portion of the city's need. But Barker says they're also aware 80 to 90 people is likely their limit before they'll need to start referring clients to other resources.

Thunder Bay declared homelessness a humanitarian crisis in the city in February. The latest point-in-time count found 652 people unhoused on Oct. 9, 2025, according to the non-profit organization Lakehead Social Planning Council.

Brian Marks is chief administrative officer for the Cochrane District Services Board, which delivers financial support, housing assistance and ambulance and children's services in an area of Ontario stretching from Timmins to Moosonee. Asked how resources there were holding up to the increased strain of the past couple of years, he says, "They're not. Plain and simple."

"The service structure we have [in Timmins] is designed to serve a population of 41,000 based on what services needed to look like 10, 15, 20 years ago," he says.



PHOTO: ANN MARIE TAYLOR

Iris Jones, a volunteer at St. Thomas' Bracebridge, plays the harp for two Open Hearts Café clients, Jason and Joyce, in a hallway with supplies and clothing for those in need.

While the the opioid epidemic and lack of support for children aging out of the care system are contributing factors to homelessness, he says, the real driver of the crisis is poverty. The lack of affordability in everything from food to fuel to housing makes it harder and harder to get people out of homelessness and leads to more joining their ranks all the time, he says.

Marks believes there is enough money in the system now to provide adequate care but says it would need to be applied to projects that meaningfully address affordability and health-care needs over the course of decades.

Instead, he sees short-term thinking from politicians who are concerned with the immediate election cycle. Also disturbing is the attitude he says is prevalent in his service area that treats poverty as a fault of the poor.

"It's [not] that notion that somebody can just pull themselves up by their bootstraps or get to that bottom rung of the ladder. People can't even see the ladder today, let alone reach it."

Faith congregations already provide a source of volunteerism—exemplified by Barker, Morrison and Taylor—which Marks says has become a built-in and perhaps over-relied-upon part of Canada's support system. But they can also be a source of attitude change, he says.

Marks encourages faith-based

institutions to help promote a view of homelessness that treats people as individuals with their own stories. The contact they have with the people they serve can break down stereotypes and spread the will to help, he says.

Anglicans are also taking on more long-term projects to alleviate homelessness in their communities. Connie Knighton, a member of the diocese of Algoma's social justice committee, points to three examples across the diocese.

The smallest is a six-unit supportive housing facility proposed by Baysville, Ontario's St. Ambrose Anglican Church. It would be based on a Swedish model that encourages residents to be a part of each other's support structures, rather than solely recipients.

Another, at Thunder Bay's Gathering Table parish, seeks to replace a former rectory with a nine-storey, 64-unit affordable housing complex. A third, at Sault Ste. Marie's Holy Trinity parish, proposes another nine-storey, 108-unit building on the site of the parish's church, which will include a new worship space.

These efforts show the willingness and ingenuity of faith communities to fight the rising crisis of affordability, Knighton says. But she acknowledges their combined 178 units are a small number compared to the AMO report's projections for the next decade. ■

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READINGS TAKEN FROM THE DAILY BIBLE READING GUIDE 2025 CREATED BY THE CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Archdeacon Kathryn Otley elected bishop of Ottawa

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The Anglican diocese of Ottawa elected Archdeacon Kathryn Otley, formerly the incumbent at All Saints' Anglican Church Westboro, as its 11th bishop on Feb. 28.

Otley succeeds Archbishop Shane Parker, who is now serving as primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. Parker tells the *Anglican Journal* he has known Otley since he taught a class she was in at Saint Paul University, where her intelligence, confidence and inquiring spirit were immediately evident.

"After her ordination we served together in various contexts, and I consistently saw her as a capable, positive, and articulate leader who engendered trust and respect," the primate says.

Otley, who will be installed as bishop May 9, is the first woman to serve as bishop of Ottawa, though she tells the *Journal* she hopes that will not be what people see as the defining characteristic of her election at a time when Canada has 12 female bishops. "Having said that, I'm in no way dismissing the honour, and I would just say that I stand in solidarity with the strong foundation of leadership of all genders," she says.

Born in Montreal, Otley moved to the diocese of Ottawa in her 20s and has family ties to the Maritimes, with her mother and siblings living in Nova Scotia. She holds a degree in classics from Carleton University and returned to her studies when her children were in school to become a postulant at Saint Paul



▲ Archdeacon Kathryn Otley is set to be installed as the 11th bishop of Ottawa May 9.

PHOTO: CHRIS DUNN

University. She was ordained in 2006 and has served in the parishes of St. John the Evangelist, Ottawa; Fitzroy Harbour; and Christ Church Bells Corners.

Otley describes her ministry interests as heavily focused on social justice, with special emphasis on homelessness and affordable housing. She chairs General Synod's Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Committee and has served on several working groups and boards, both within the church and with outside partners. ■

Jonas Allooloo, key translator of first Inuktitut Bible, dead at 79

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Canon Jonas Allooloo, former dean of St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit, Nunavut and a key member of the translation team that created the first Inuktitut Bible, died on Feb. 23 in Ottawa at the age of 79.

Friends, family and colleagues mourned the loss of Allooloo, remembering him as a much-loved priest, teacher and translator over more than 40 years of service in parish ministry and the life of the church.

"Jonas' ministry was marked by love for God, his people, and the rich culture of the Arctic," the Anglican diocese of the Arctic said in an obituary. "He faced challenges with humility, grace, and a hearty laugh and bright smile. His work in obedience to his calling from Almighty God will continue to



PHOTO: ART BABYCH

Allooloo displays a copy of the Inuktitut Bible at the 2013 Joint Assembly of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

strengthen generations of parishioners and clergy, and his contributions to Indigenous ministry and biblical translation leave a lasting legacy."

David Parsons, retired diocesan bishop of the Arctic, called Allooloo "a faithful, consistent light and voice within the entire Christian family."



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