



PHOTO: BURAKGURALP

‘Glad tidings of great joy’

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.” (Luke 2:8) Former *Anglican Journal* staff writer Diana Swift reflects on the mystery and power of a story that resonates through time, and across communities of faith. See “‘Words that down the ages ring,’” p. 4.

Bishops attend grave search at Anglican school site



PHOTO: XXXXX
The Lac La Ronge residential school closed in 1947, but the cemetery also contains graves of community members.

Diana Swift

SPECIAL TO THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

Despite its pristine location in Saskatchewan’s boreal forest on the edge of the Canadian Shield, the town of La Ronge, Sask. (population: ca 5,700) has had its share of pain—experiencing, since 2015, a suicide crisis and evacuation for wildfires.

Recently this town, about 250 km north of Prince Albert, has been facing a new cause for grief: the discovery of unmarked graves of Indigenous pupils who died at a local former residential school—this one operated by the Anglican Church of Canada.

The Lac La Ronge Indian Residential School opened in 1907. It burned down in 1920 and was thereafter replaced with a new school, All Saints. According to Indian Affairs records cited in a University of Regina profile of the school, a 1937 government inspector expressed concern

See ‘VERY IMPORTANT,’ p. 3



PHOTO: STACEY NEWMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Rafeeh family, originally from Syria, waits to welcome Syrian refugees at Toronto’s Pearson airport in 2015.

COVID-19 challenges refugee work

By Amy MacLachlan

SPECIAL TO THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

The pandemic has dealt a massive blow to refugee sponsorship in Canada—but there’s some hope things will get easier soon both for those who hope to make Canada their home and those who help them get here, say some Anglican refugee assistance workers.

Tony David, refugee sponsorship coordinator with the

diocese of British Columbia, says trying to sponsor refugees in the time of COVID-19 has meant a “roller coaster” of challenges.

The pandemic has put many practical limitations on churches’ ability to sponsor, he says. Closed churches mean fewer donations, and the events congregations used to rely on to raise money—church dinners, picnics and yard sales—have been made nearly impossible by COVID-19. Meanwhile, the

federal government’s Blended Visa Office Referred Program (BVOR), with which private sponsors (church congregations, for example), used to partner to share costs, has been paused since the beginning of the pandemic. Before March 2020, BVOR provided roughly 40 per cent of the settlement costs in these partnerships; now the private sponsors have had to raise all the

See HOPE FOR REFUGEES, p. 13

‘Game-changing’ \$400,000 anonymous gift to Council of the North will fund ministry training

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

Shortly before its first in-person meeting since the start of the pandemic, held Oct. 4-6 at a hotel near Toronto’s Pearson Airport, the Council of the North was given an early Christmas present.

The council, a grouping of

nine jurisdictions (dioceses or diocesan equivalents) that receive financial assistance from the national church, received a \$400,000 gift from an anonymous donor in the diocese of Toronto, said David Lehmann, bishop of the diocese of Caledonia and council chair.

The donor, Lehmann said, had

initially contacted a local parish priest who said the Council of the North needed it more than his Toronto parish.

The priest, a former seminary colleague of Lehmann’s, “got some stories from me and asked what would I put it towards if I had a choice,” Lehmann recalled. “I said our training in ministry

fund, because as we’re coming out of COVID and we’re wanting to gather or do things, it is the fund that will be most important to bring us together for meetings and gatherings.”

The council maintains a training fund established through a previous donation, spending a portion of the principal and

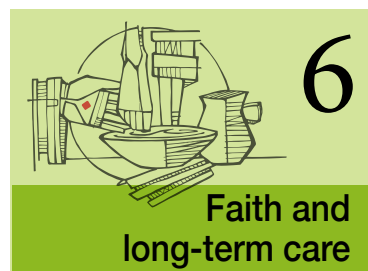
interest each year.

Lehmann described the \$400,000 gift as “game-changing, and just exceedingly generous and kind and thoughtful of both the parish priest and the donor.” The gift effectively extends the life of the council’s training fund for another decade, he said.

See NEW MODELS, p. 12



New bishop elected in Qu’Appelle



Faith and long-term care



Anglican-Lutheran youth ministry

ELECTIONS ▶

Helen Kennedy elected bishop of Qu'Appelle

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

Archdeacon Helen Kennedy has been elected the 13th bishop of the diocese of Qu'Appelle in southern Saskatchewan, winning on the second ballot at an episcopal election Oct. 17.

Previously rector at St. George's Anglican Parish (Transcona) in Winnipeg, Kennedy takes over as bishop from Rob Hardwick, who retired on July 31. Other candidates in the election included the Rev. Kyle Norman and the Rev. Ali Tote.

Kennedy described herself as "excited and terrified" upon learning that she had been voted the new bishop of Qu'Appelle.

"I think it's a good thing for me," the bishop-elect said. "I felt as though I needed a bit more of a challenge, and I guess I got it, because this is going to be a challenge."

Key issues facing the diocese, she said, will be the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the church's relationship with Indigenous communities following discoveries of unmarked graves in residential school sites across Canada.

"We're hopefully coming out of COVID, [but] Saskatchewan is not coming out quite so well as Manitoba has or is," Kennedy said. "How are we staying connected and how are we maintaining a life of community when isolation is what



▲ **Key issues facing the diocese, Kennedy said, will be the ongoing pandemic and the church's relationship with Indigenous communities.**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

we're being asked to do?

"The second [challenge] obviously is Indigenous residential schools and that tragedy that continues to unfold, and how that impacts the church and the relationship with Indigenous folks."

Originally from England, Kennedy moved to Canada in 1999 and lived in Winnipeg until her election as bishop. She earned theology degrees at the University of Winnipeg and Canadian Mennonite University and was ordained in 2007, beginning her service in November as a parish priest in St. George's Parish.

The bishop-elect said her time living

and preaching in Transcona, a small suburb of Winnipeg, helped prepare her to focus on supporting rural ministry in Qu'Appelle. The diocese has three urban parishes in Regina, compared to 49 parishes outside the city.

"I'm going to be on the road a lot and figuring out how to support rural parishes as they are struggling to maintain themselves," she said. "Within Manitoba, I've been to services in rural churches. You see the declining population where there are five people in the church, and they're desperate to keep it open."

"Although I live in the city ... I do know a little bit about rural [ministry], because I live in a little town which happens to be in Winnipeg," she added. "The sense of community that that small area has is extremely deep."

Kennedy's consecration as bishop is planned for Jan. 22.

Congratulations, blessings and prayers for Kennedy poured in on social media as she prepared to take up her new office in Saskatchewan.

"I went to St. George's as a student and I leave as a bishop," she said. "So I think that's going to be a very hard transition, because this community has become family and is home ... But it's a new and wide horizon that I venture into, and I do it with God's help." ■

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RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS ▶

‘Very important’ for bishops to visit site: Chief

“Reconciliation is a strong word but also a meaningful one ... I hope the whole of the Canadian church is willing to work with us.”

—Adam Halkett, Indigenous bishop for the diocese of Saskatchewan

Continued from p. 1

at how poorly the children were being fed. The inspector also described overcrowding of classrooms and dormitories, in which students with tuberculosis slept alongside their classmates. All Saints burned to the ground in 1947 after two boys set it on fire, and its students were then transferred to another school.

On Oct. 1, a day after Canada’s first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the diocese of Saskatchewan’s bishop, Michael Hawkins, and diocesan Indigenous bishop Adam Halkett attended a survivors’ gathering in the old cemetery across from All Saints Anglican Church, the town’s oldest building. They joined school survivors and members of the Woodland Cree Lac La Ronge Indian Band (LLRIB) to observe a search for unmarked graves at the site, an initiative which began in July.

Some grave markers for these deceased children (as well as other community members) still exist, but LLRIB chief Tammy Cook-Searson confirmed that a substantial number of unmarked graves had been found.

“We did have to do a lot of cleanup on the site. It was very overgrown,” she said. “The band used to have an elder, an archdeacon, who looked after the site but except for the front part, the cemetery hasn’t been kept up in recent years.” Aiding in the search is a ground-penetrating radar machine supplied by engineering firm SNC Lavalin.

The fourth volume of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, released in 2016, deals with missing residential school children and unmarked graves. According to the report, Christian burial was the norm at most schools run by the churches. However, government regulations around cemeteries were “non-existent or undeveloped” when many residential schools were founded, so that “most residential school cemeteries were established informally,” with, frequently, a lack of thought given to their continuing care once the schools closed. The commission attempted to document former residential school cemeteries but found that most were “abandoned, disused, and vulnerable to accidental disturbance.” The report also mentions that in some cases



▲ Hawkins (right) with Cook-Searson (centre) and LLRIB councillor Devin Bernatchez at the site in La Ronge

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

graves were marked by simple wooden crosses that have rotted to pieces over time.

It’s possible some of these sites are now lost to history. According to the report, when a residential school in Battleford, Sask., was closing, its principal wrote to the department of Indian Affairs to express his concern that the cemetery—in which students as well as some of his own family members were buried—would become a grazing ground for stray cattle if care wasn’t taken to preserve it. “These concerns proved prophetic,” the report states, “since the location of this cemetery is not recorded in the available historical documentation, and neither does it appear in an internet search of Battleford cemeteries.”

Halkett says his first instinct, on being invited to the gathering at La Ronge, was “to step back and not attend because I thought there would be a lot of anger.... But when Chief Tammy Cook-Searson invited me and the mayor and the town council, it felt welcoming.” The survivors indeed welcomed them without anger and seemed ready to start the healing process, he said.

And despite several threats, Halkett added, no Anglican churches in the area have been closed or burned down, in contrast with the situation in British Columbia over the summer and fall.

Cook-Searson, a third-generation survivor of the residential school system, said the presence of the two bishops at the

gathering was significant.

“It is very important for them to be part of these events, to be there to reconcile, support and apologize,” she said. And the Indigenous community, she added, is still loyal to the church. “Many of our weddings, funerals, and baptisms are still presided over by Anglican clergy.”

As part of his itinerary, Halkett holds services at All Saints, and the congregation includes LLRIB members.

Cook-Searson said the search within the overgrown cemetery was about 97 per cent complete, but SNC Lavalin was moving the operation outside the graveyard. “That’s because formerly suicides and miscarried children could not be buried in hallowed ground,” she said.

A report will be issued in the new year but specific numbers on unmarked remains will not be released, she said.

With regard to the way ahead for the church, Bishop Halkett said, “As I told the House of Bishops, reconciliation is a strong word but also a meaningful one. I said I’m willing to work with them, and that I hope the whole of the Canadian church is willing to work with us.”

“We can get through this. This is not the first hurt we’ve experienced,” he said. “We’ve experienced other hurts but we still want to move forward together and worship in the Anglican Church of Canada.” ■

—With files by Tali Folkins

Correction:

Mabel Martin died at Shingle Point residential school, Yukon, not at All Saints residential school in Aklavik, N.W.T. Incorrect information appeared in October’s *Anglican Journal*.

PEOPLE ▶

New *Anglican Journal* editor, Anglican Foundation executive director

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

Two experienced Church House staffers have been promoted to head the *Anglican Journal* and Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC).

Tali Folkins, who has been a staff writer for the *Journal* since 2015, was named editor Oct. 18, after serving as acting editor since Aug. 23.

Joseph Vesce, director of Communications and Information Resources for the national church, announced on Oct. 13 that Folkins had accepted the position. He said Folkins’s “experience and understanding of General Synod, its publications and the broader church will serve as valuable assets in his new role.”

The announcement follows staff shakeups at the *Anglican Journal* earlier this year. June saw the resignation of former editor Matthew Townsend and departure of staff



Folkins



Brubacher

writer Joelle Kidd.

A former reporter for the *New Brunswick Telegraph-Journal* and *Law Times*, Folkins has contributed pieces to *The Globe and Mail* and the former *United Church Observer* (now known as *Broadview*). His journalism career began at *The Coast*, a weekly newspaper based in Halifax. He also served for four years as a communications manager with the Royal Bank of Canada.

Folkins holds bachelor’s degrees in classics and journalism from the University of King’s College in Halifax as well as a master’s degree in

classics from Dalhousie University.

Scott Brubacher, who has served as executive administrator of the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) since November 2015, took over the leadership role effective Oct. 18, following the retirement three days earlier of predecessor Canon Judy Rois.

Brubacher plans to continue the foundation’s work of resourcing ministry through grants across the Anglican Church of Canada. Brubacher says his former position gave him a unique perspective into the AFC’s support for local ministry.

“Grants administration was my main work in the last six years,” Brubacher says. “So I’ve been able to work hand in hand with these groups across the country as they seek to realize their visions for ministry and what can happen in their communities.”

In a news release, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the

Anglican Church of Canada and chair of the AFC board of directors, said Brubacher “brings a thorough knowledge of the work and vision of the Foundation” to his new role.

Brubacher describes the Anglican Foundation as “consistently a good news story for the church.” He cites the AFC’s recent campaign to raise money for post-pandemic programming for children, youth and young adults, which had a target of \$100,000 but ended up raising more than \$110,000.

“It was just an absolutely overwhelming response,” Brubacher says.

Brubacher, who holds a doctorate in musical composition from the University of Toronto, is an award-winning composer and musician. He also serves as chair of the board of directors for Exultate Chamber Singers, a Toronto-based choir with which he sings. ■



Why does Luke's story of the shepherds hold us in such wonder?

By Diana Swift

EACH YEAR, I wait to hear the familiar words from the Gospel of St. Luke that for me are the portal into Christmas Eve. The opening line of the wonderful passage beginning at 2:8 has sent a chill down my spine since junior Sunday school at St. Nicholas Anglican Church in east-end Toronto:

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.”

T.S. Eliot's bleak 1927 poem, “Journey of the Magi,” may have celebrated the travails of the three wise men on the hard journey from the East to Jesus' rustic birthplace, but I wonder why no major modern poet has similarly immortalized this close encounter of the humble shepherds with the heavenly host.

Still, I'm thankful to England's 16th-century Irish-born poet laureate, Nahum Tate, for carolizing the passage in “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night” and to George Frideric Handel for setting its verses to the stately music of *The Messiah* in 1741 (what better oratorio librettist than a saint?).

There's also American novelist Margaret Deland's sentimental versification of 1895 with its feathery clouds and snowy lambs and, latterly, let's not forget blanket-hugging Linus Van Pelt's impassioned tribute to this passage in the 1965 film *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.

The scene on the ancient hillside is vividly cinematic. The enveloping black with the warm Middle Eastern day turned to the chill of night. The flock is somnolent; tangled together beneath the rocks, the snakes preserve their sun-gathered warmth; small mammals are curled up in their dens; songbirds are silent in the thorns, the great wings of the birds are folded. As they pull their shabby robes tighter against the cold, the herdsmen keep a wary eye out for the gleaming amber eyes of predators.

The hush is broken only by their whispering voices and perhaps the chip, chip of flint against metal, followed by smoke and the sudden roar of flames as a fire leaps up. The men pass around a skin of wine and make a simple late-night supper of rough bread and olives under the brittle gaze of the stars in the vast sky. At first they may fail to notice that one star is becoming perceptibly more dominant by the minute.

One is worried about a sick child, another about the rent unpaid on his family's one-room home in the little white-walled town nearby. How will they get all



IMAGE: ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS BY GIOVANNI BATTISTA CRESPI (1573–1632) / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

“ This passage is a study in contrasts, of dark versus light, of nocturnal quiet broken by a celestial chorus, of careworn men comforted by a preternatural message of hope.”

the shearing done in time to take the wool to the next market? Perhaps they discuss how they're going to spell each other off so that everyone can get a little sleep on the hard ground.

This mundane world of theirs is about to explode.

“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.”

But the “mighty dread” that had “seized their troubled mind,” in the words of Tate's carol, is soon assuaged:

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

In the words of Tate's carol, the announcing seraph directs the herdsmen to seek an infant “all meanly wrapped in swathing bands and in a manger laid” and is soon joined by Luke's “shining throng.” According to his gospel:

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

This passage is a study in contrasts, of dark versus light, of nocturnal quiet broken by a celestial chorus, of careworn men comforted by a preternatural message of hope.

And these words resonate across different religious persuasions. As Ruth, a Jewish friend in university participating in an annual performance of *The Messiah*, told me many years ago, “These words are a prelude to such a great compelling story.”

On a more theological note, Moyra, a Toronto Roman Catholic, said to me, “This passage brings me a feeling of transcendence—the spirit of God imbuing the natural world with awe and power and communicating with us through this. It makes me feel that God is indwelling everywhere in our world.”

She further commented, “The shepherds felt this through the heavenly hosts but we can feel the presence and voice of God and experience the same awe ourselves in quiet reflection and gratitude as we look about us and listen.”

And this from a Baptist-turned-Unitarian in Hamilton, Ont.: “Whenever I hear this story of the birth of Jesus, it takes me back to being a little girl, sitting in the pew in our neighbourhood Baptist church with my family. I always feel a sense of awe hearing it, imagining those shepherds out in the cold field, hearing the angel. How wonderful that they followed the angel, and their intuition, to find this new hope for their lives.

“One of the first Unitarian services I went to was at Christmas. The ‘sermon’ was on the character of Jesus and how he brought us such an example of the way to live our lives. Hearing this story from so long ago reminds me of the many thousands before me who have listened and been influenced by the shepherds and angel that night.”

A former member of both the United and Presbyterian churches, who is now an evangelical high church Anglican (a member of the Anglican Network in Canada), Joyce sent this comment from her home in Chatham, Ont.:

“The first time I heard *The Messiah* here in Chatham was the first time I heard those words as a born-again Christian—overwhelming!! What a perfect libretto! Now, when I hear those words, I realize they refer to Christ ‘tabernacling amongst us,’ as Christ was born at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, 20th October, 6 B.C.”

These verses—“the gracious words that down the ages ring” as Deland called them—are many centuries old. But the story of these men of lowly caste, chosen, emblematically, to be the first beyond the holy family to adore the newborn king, is always young. I am thrilled by its retelling in song and prose every year. ■

Diana Swift is a Toronto-based medical writer and a parishioner at the Cathedral Church of St. James. She was also a staff writer for the *Anglican Journal* from 2011 to 2013.

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SINGING WITH JOY ▶



Christmas and the seed of our hope

By Linda Nicholls

ONE OF THE gifts of our Anglican tradition is the liturgical calendar. Every year we cycle through its seasons following the life of Jesus and his teachings. Every year we are invited again into Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost and Ordinary time, ending with the Reign of Christ. We walk with Jesus and all those whose lives he touched to deepen our own understanding and life in Christ.

At the Reign of Christ we lean forward to a future time when all will be healed and restored under the reign of Jesus even as we live now in the painful reality that it has not yet come. The cycle then plunges us back into Advent, imagining that time when Christ will come again, even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming.

Our hearts long for the healing of the world and of our own lives. Sometimes we yearn for God to intervene with power and fix it now! This is especially so as the pandemic lingers on and the side effects of its power are felt in economics and global issues as well as mental and emotional exhaustion.



ILLUSTRATION: BERNARDO RAMONFAUR

Advent yearning for God's kingdom to come, however, is met with the paradox of the birth of Christ. He comes not in power but in the vulnerability and weakness of a baby. His coming is not in triumph but hidden amongst the stories of Elizabeth and Mary and Joseph, ordinary people of faith in God. The seeds of the kingdom are in the faith of Mary and Joseph even as world events swirl around them, buffeting their lives and sending them from Nazareth to Bethlehem to Egypt and back again.

The liturgical calendar takes us from the vulnerability of Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus through his ministry, life and death, to the power of his resurrection, in order to show us the power and potential of the reign of God through him—in spite of all we currently see.

The pandemic appears to be waning in its grip on our lives. Just as a receding tsunami leaves evidence of destruction in its wake, our communities will continue to see the aftereffects for many months to come. There is a deep concern for the mental health of many in our communities of all ages. The healing we long for and the vision of the reign of Christ in the face of all our losses seems so far away. Christmas draws

us back to the seed of our hope planted in the womb of Mary. It will still be thirty years before Jesus' ministry begins in earnest. Yet Mary echoes Hannah and Elizabeth in her song of trust in what God is doing, known as the Magnificat: "My soul magnifies the Lord..."

In the midst of our weariness with the pandemic and its long aftereffects, we know that God's kingdom will come—and in the meantime, in this moment, our liturgical calendar takes us back to see again how God works in the world, planting seeds of hope that may take years or generations to be fulfilled but will come to fruition as they have in the past.

Elizabeth, Mary and generations of disciples have known the truth of this promise. So we with St. Paul claim it in our worship when we proclaim:

Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen. ■

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

WALKING TOGETHER ▶



The birth pains of a new world

By Mark MacDonald

“HOW ARE YOU doing in these strange times?” I hear it often. The word “strange” suggests we are in a time that is out of ordinary and hard to interpret. I would suggest, however, that this is a time that reveals something we have forgotten.

Jesus described this age, between his first and second advent, as a time of labour pains (Mark 13:8). It is an image that Paul uses to describe Creation's yearning for the World to Come (Romans 8:22) and his own struggle to see Jesus become a reality in the communal life of discipleship (Galatians 4:19). We live in the time of the birth pains of the Messiah who will bring a New Heaven and a New Earth.

The image of birth pains illuminates every aspect of Creation and our life within it. It is a call for us to follow Jesus into his total identification with the suffering—human and otherwise—of this age. But it is also a word of hope. In it we can see a trajectory of life and light. We have become, we see in the Eucharist, the first-fruits of this New Creation (James 1:18).

Many of the Christian churches,



▲ Detail of a Greek Orthodox fresco showing Prochorus the scribe writing as John dictates the Book of Revelation.

PHOTO: THEASTOCK

especially in the West—and most especially in the West's colonial aspect—have walked away from this image. It is, however, an aspect of our life in Creation that is so powerfully revealed in our time. With the pain of the pandemic, we have seen the truth of our common humanity, the truth of our communion with Creation. It's a revealing that is also a calling to renewed discipleship and a renewed humanity.

John in his *Book of Revelation* sees

this mixture of suffering, glory, and hope as the shape of our life in Christ and the consequence of our following him. Like Jesus, we identify with the sufferings of humanity and Creation, show the miraculous power and love of God, and await and hasten the coming of God's reign in a New Heaven and New Earth—a reality that is pregnant in every aspect of this time (Revelation 1:9).

Indigenous peoples, here and around the world, are living close to the messianic realities of this time, in both pain and promise. The sufferings of the time of colonization—poverty, sickness, and marginalization—have, in many ways, accelerated in this pandemic. But, in the midst of it, there has been a birth of hope, a movement towards freedom and life. This is the call of the self-determining Indigenous Sacred Circle, but it is certainly not its call alone. May the life of our crucified and risen Messiah find in us a pathway, a way of life, that makes real, in this world, the life of the World to Come. ■

Archbishop Mark MacDonald is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

LETTERS ▶

Photo left reader wondering about burial of dead children

I read with great sympathy the heartfelt column by Jerry Adams in the October issue (“Grieving for our children,” p. 4). There is a picture of four unhappy looking little Indigenous girls at Shingle Point, Yukon, along with the information that two of them died at a residential school in Aklavik, N.W.T.

As someone who has travelled extensively in the North, I wondered how far away this was in practical terms back in 1930. Clearly they were sent away from their home community. When they died, was there any chance their little bodies would be returned to the place

they came from, or are they are in unmarked graves in Aklavik?

Lynda Lange
St. Dunstan of Canterbury Anglican Church
Scarborough, Ont.

Editor's note: According to General Synod archivist Laurel Parson, Mabel Martin died at Shingle Point residential school. Her body was brought to Aklavik, where her parents lived, and she was buried in the cemetery of All Saints Anglican Church in Aklavik. Mary Tukoluak, an orphan, was at All Saints residential school in Aklavik until she got sick. She died in the All Saints Hospital, and was also buried in Aklavik.

The returning of Martin's body to her home community was not typical residential school practice, however. The report of the Truth and Reconciliation commission states, "For most of the history of the schools, the practice was not to send the bodies of students who died at schools to their home communities." The point, according to the report, was to save money.

Vivian Seegers missed

It was good to see the obituary for the Rev. Vivian Seegers in the September issue (“Vivian Seegers lived out gospel through

pain and triumph,” p. 12). Vivian was one of my anthropology students at Selkirk College, and we remained good friends after she completed her courses. I supported her as strongly as possible in her chosen street work and her path to ordination, which was not made easy for her; and in her life thereafter. She was a great friend and I miss her accordingly. Her union of Indigenous and Christian traditions has always seemed the right path to choose, and perhaps the only one that will take us into the future.

The Rev. F. Mark Mealing
St. Mark's Anglican Church
Kaslo, B.C.

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.

Honouring life's final stage

Is there a role for Christian faith in the way we do long-term care?

Second in a two-part series

By Amy MacLachlan

SPECIAL TO THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

High rates of COVID-19 infection and death in Canada's long-term care homes have drawn increased attention to their quality of care, and have spurred announcements by provincial and federal governments of new measures intended to improve it, including billions of dollars in new spending.

But some Canadian Christians whose work has involved the pandemic, long-term care and reflection on society are questioning whether the situation calls for change beyond what money alone can bring.

The Rev. David Pfrimmer, a retired professor at Martin Luther University College's Centre for Public Ethics and a Lutheran pastor, doesn't think simply throwing money at the problem is going to solve anything. He says reform must be guided by principles of accessibility, social justice, ethics and comprehensiveness if true change is going to take place. He adds that there's a need for post-traumatic stress disorder training, more personal support workers to help with long-term care in people's homes, better palliative care, and in general, a more "human-resources" approach to care—one that includes the health and well-being of workers as well as residents. For example, most long-term care workers are women, Pfrimmer says, so staff child care and other gender-based issues should be key considerations for managers.

He also says "accompaniment and service" will be particularly important for churches moving forward, and helping to build community in a forever-changed world.

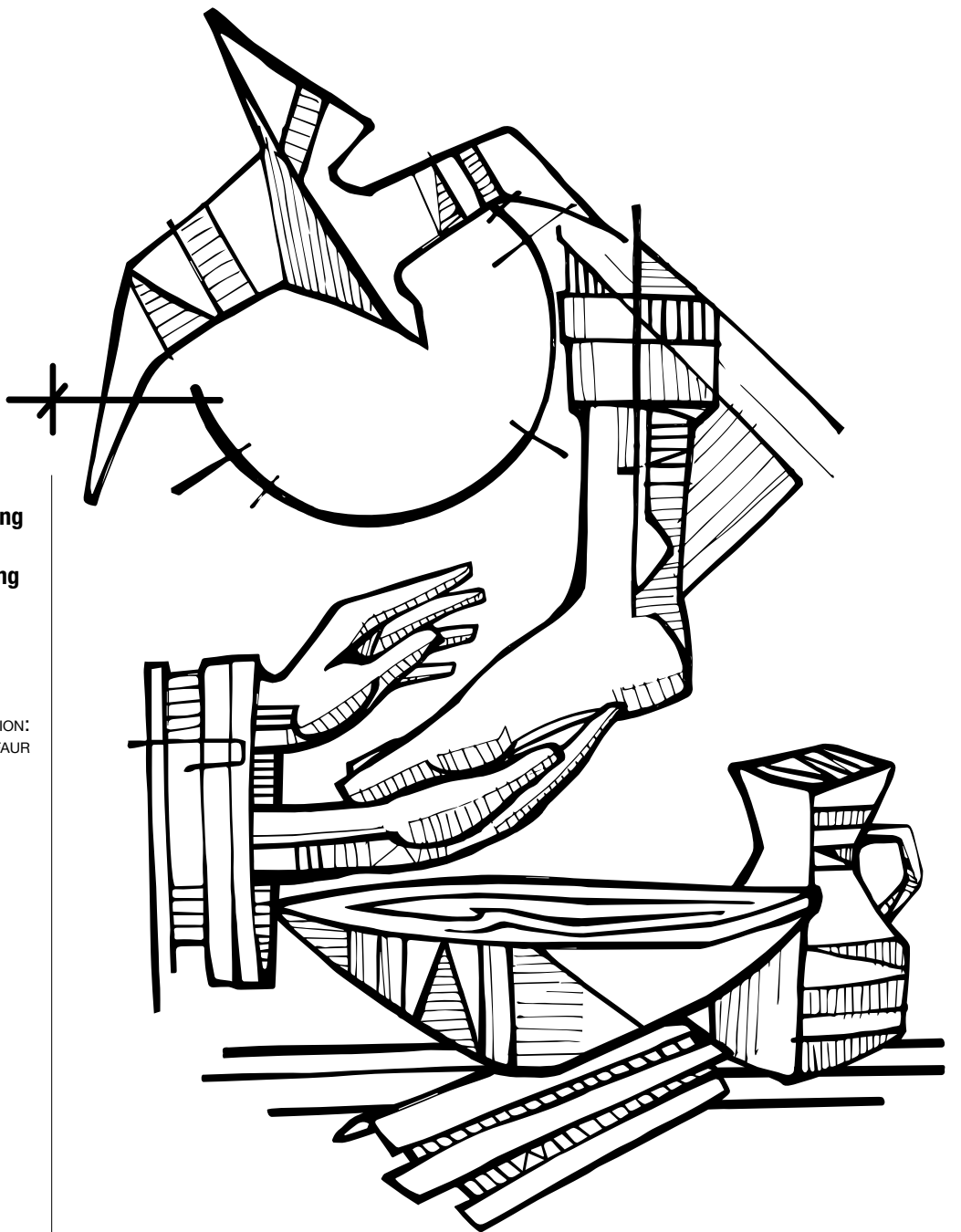
"There's a certain sense that there's a crisis of meaning due to the pandemic: 'What's my life about?'" he says. "As churches, we do have something to offer on the question of meaning and purpose. I don't know if we're doing it well.

"There is a healing that needs to go on—a collective healing. How do we put the world and people back together again after something like this? Churches can say something about that."

The Rev. Michael Garner, an Ottawa priest and former infectious disease epidemiologist at the Public Health Agency of Canada, wonders if cultural trends in recent decades have encouraged a certain self-centredness in society, which there could be a role for the

▶ "Getting in there and washing someone's feet, so to speak, being with someone dying—that's where I need to be," says Barr.

ILLUSTRATION:
BERNARDO RAMONFAUR



“There’s a crisis of meaning due to the pandemic: ‘What’s my life about?’ ... As churches, we do have something to offer on the question of meaning and purpose.

—The Rev. David Pfrimmer, retired professor, Martin Luther University College Centre for Public Ethics

church in addressing.

"I wish that selflessness and that care for others was common," he says. "I'm not against social media and TV—I don't want to come off as railing against culture—but I think there is a way that some of this stuff turns you in on yourself, and you become the focus of your life."

In contrast, Garner recalls a sermon he once heard in which the preacher spoke of Jesus's selfless way of living as truly human—and of the lives most of us take to be normal as actually subhuman.

The pandemic has shone a light, Garner says, on widespread indifference to the suffering of many in long-term care homes, as well as other marginalized groups. He hopes these people won't be forgotten once the pandemic recedes.

"I really worry that we're going to get out of the pandemic and just go back to ignoring the groups that don't have voices," he says. "And certainly poor, elderly people with diseases like dementia have zero voice."

The Rev. Ephraim Radner, a professor at the University of Toronto's Wycliffe College, has reflected publically on the pandemic and its effects on a number of occasions, including an interview published on anglicanjournal.com in June 2020. There, Radner touched on the pandemic in relation to one unique facet of modern life in Western countries—the segregation and isolation of the elderly, who now tend to live together with other elderly people instead of with their families, as they have through most of human history. He also said a movement toward increasing "atomization" of individuals in Western society today—that humans are seen increasingly as units bereft of essential connections to family or church—was one reason why so many died alone during the pandemic, a pattern he

called "blasphemous."

Asked in a more recent email interview about the pandemic, the elderly and modern society, Radner said COVID-19 had shown, among other things, the "existential threats" posed by grouping the elderly into homes. He also said the absence of any idea of sacredness, or divine giftedness, of life in society today was related to the way we segregate the elderly.

"Our larger culture does not approach individual lives in terms of their sacredness and limits ... but more in terms of this or that person's membership in a collective or group, whose value is ordered according to various utilitarian criteria (economic, political, etc.," he wrote. This grouping of people according to abstract criteria actually has the effect of reinforcing the isolation or atomism in which they live, he added.

It's noteworthy, Radner wrote, that Christians in the West today have largely entrusted the preservation of human life to the care of secular institutions—institutions guided by values that are not necessarily Christian.

"Christians have mostly passed this set of concerns off to the secular medical and political-economic establishment, ones that have their own set of (often shifting) values that determine policy. And Christian social thought has tended simply to follow their leads and methods of evaluation," he wrote.

"Perhaps we are being shown directions of concern that deserve renewed apprehension and pursuit," he added. "It will be interesting—and probably a matter of our future judgment in the eyes not only of our descendants but of God—whether we take them up."

The Rev. Deacon Michèle Barr is

See **AMID LOCKDOWNS**, p. 11



PWRDF

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ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA · FALL 2021



This year we're supporting goat programs in three countries. Turn the page to find out where!

Working towards a truly just, healthy and peaceful world



Plant it for the planet!

St. Jude Family Projects in Uganda has made great strides in improving the environment through tree planting. In the past year St. Jude's farmers planted 35,000 moringa seedlings, of which 12,850 were given through World of Gifts! Not only do trees provide fruit and shade, they also restore soil health, which is imperative for future crops and gardens.

1 Your gift of **\$50** provides 50 tree seedlings to Ugandan farmers.



Scan me



Esther plants tree seedlings in Uganda.



Growing green **NEW**

The Comprehensive Development Program of the Episcopal Church of Cuba is supporting families from 22 communities who are removing garbage, recovering recyclable materials and transforming community green spaces.

2 Your gift of **\$25** will supply a community with the tools needed to improve community green spaces.

Tree of life **NEW**

Rayjon Share Care Haiti empowers women to improve their health and livelihoods. Women are farming breadfruit and milling it into flour to improve local food security and earn an income.

3 Your gift of **\$50** will support a woman in Haiti milling 10 kg of breadfruit flour to sell or feed her family.



Scan me



Air time for clean water

High in the Andean mountains of Colombia, Grupo Comunicarte is training 10 radio journalists for environmental community programs about protecting the moorlands, source of 70% of the country's fresh water. They will each train at least five people in their communities to do the same. Last year \$1,050 was given to support this important climate action program in its first year.

4 Your gift of **\$50** will ensure the important message of protecting the moorlands is heard far and wide.

Be prepared

As climate-related disasters increase and become more extreme, the need for humanitarian responses continues. When disasters happen in Canada and around the world, Anglicans turn to PWRDF as their trusted relief agency. Through our membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, ACT Alliance and the Anglican Alliance, we are able to leverage your donations and get funds to where they are needed.



A Christian Response to Hunger



Scan me

Take it to the bank!

Last year donors raised \$27,324 for PWRDF's equity in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. When these funds are used for emergency food relief or crop restoration, they are eligible for a match from the Government of Canada.

Your gift matched up to four times!

5 Your gift of **\$100** builds equity in the Foodgrains Bank to reduce hunger everywhere.



NEW

Rapid response

Often PWRDF responds to emergencies with an emergency grant before we launch an appeal to our donors.

6 Your gift of **\$100** ensures we have funds on hand for urgent humanitarian crises.

Seeding the future

NEW

In Bangladesh, women farmers keep the seeds of varieties that they know well and replenish stores each year upon harvest. These seed banks have been maintained locally through training supported by PWRDF partner UBINIG. However, floods have devastated the livelihood and food security of many farming families.

- 7** Your gift of **\$50** will provide **Bangladeshi farmers with seeds to restore crops and to replenish seed banks.**



Shirin receives seeds from Asma in Bangladesh.

LAST YEAR YOU BOUGHT 752 GOATS!



Give a goat!

Goats are a great source of nutrition, food security and income for families who can breed and sell the animals.

- The Episcopal Church of Cuba is helping 22 rural communities acquire goats to improve nutrition.
- TSURO Trust is providing families with goats and agriculture training in Zimbabwe.
- Partners In Health Malawi is providing Community Health Workers with goats to supplement income.



- 9** Your gift of **\$50** will fund one of these three incredible goat programs. (Represents average cost from country to country.)

Scan me



Charles has improved his dairy farm operation in Kenya.

Cows coming home

Last year World of Gifts supporters gave \$4,100 to ECLOF's model dairy farms, helping hundreds of dairy farmers improve their operations. A well cared for cow produces more milk and increases family income!



Scan me

- 8** Your gift of **\$100** supports dairy farmers in Kenya as they learn about "smart" dairy farming.



A bushel and a peck

In Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, poultry farming is very popular. PWRDF partner NCKK (National Council of Churches in Kenya) is supporting refugees and members of the host community to mill corn into chicken feed for the chickens in the refugee camp. They also sell the feed to earn an income.

- 10** Your gift of **\$100** supports poultry feed production in one of the largest refugee camps in the world.



Hatching an idea

Chickens can provide a family with protein rich eggs and meat, which can be consumed or sold to improve nutrition and livelihoods. Last year World of Gifts supporters purchased more than 2,600 chickens for families in Colombia and this year we are supporting chicken farmers in Zimbabwe too!

- 11** Your gift of **\$30** will provide chickens and other materials to help families farm chickens.

Esthela collects the eggs from her hens in Colombia.

Support our conservation agriculture programs by giving five goats, restoring seed supplies, setting up chicken farmers, feeding chickens and training dairy farmers.

Buy the whole farm!

HAVE YOU HERD?

CHURCHES LOVE BUYING THE WHOLE FARM!

Last year parishes rallied together and raised funds to support farmers working with our partners all over the world.

- 12** Your gift of **\$530** will support farmers in Bangladesh, Cuba, Colombia, Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe!

Thanks to Christ Church Woodbridge in Ontario for sharing the clever title of their annual World of Gifts campaign!



- Holy Trinity Church's confirmation class from the Parish of Grand Bay, Nfld. purchased **one farm!**
- Trinity Anglican Church in Simcoe, Ont. purchased **six farms!**
- B.C. churches St. Andrew's in Langley and St. Dunstan's in Aldergrove worked together and bought **one farm!**



The World of Gifts supporters bought 99 whole farms. This year let's make it 100!

Pump it up!

Last year World of Gifts raised nearly \$40,000 to support Utooni Development Organization (UDO) in Kenya to build 15 shallow wells (14 with hand pumps and one with a solar-powered pump). This year we want to provide even more clean water for rural communities in Kenya to improve health, reduce travel time to fetch water and keep more girls in school.



A home run

15 Your gift of **\$185** will provide a family with a donkey to carry clean water home.



LAST YEAR YOU BOUGHT 84 DONKEYS AND 175 WATER TANKS!

13 Your gift of **\$2,600** will build a well with a solar-powered pump.

14 Your gift of **\$1,200** will build a well with a hand pump.

16 Your gift of **\$60** will provide a water tank for a family to store clean water.



Oh baby! NEW

Partners In Health Lesotho is making sure new moms and babies get the best start possible. By providing infant starter kits including blankets, baby vests, jumpers, hats and a set of cloth diapers, new parents have the resources they need to care for their new babies.

17 Your gift of **\$25** gives a starter kit to new moms who attend at least four antenatal care visits.



A new thread

Maison Dorcas in the Democratic Republic of Congo provides women recovering from sexual violence a place to restore their lives. Last year World of Gifts provided 92 textile kits to help women learn new skills and generate income.

18 Your gift of **\$100** provides sewing or basket weaving kits to women recovering from sexual violence.



A fresh start NEW

ARUWE in Uganda provides personal health kits to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. These kits include sanitary pads, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, underwear, toilet paper and more to restore dignity through recovery.

19 Your gift of **\$20** supports two women recovering from sexual and gender-based violence.

It's show time!



CoCoSI is a grassroots organization focused on advocating for LGBTQ rights in El Salvador. Using creative theatre presentations and radio shows they educate the community and provide tools for victims of gender-based abuse. Last year donors supported five plays and 17 radio productions, spreading the message.



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20 Your gift of **\$175** supports advocacy on the radio.

21 Your gift of **\$250** supports advocacy theatre.

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1 **Select your gifts.** (listed on page 4)
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Please make cheques and money orders payable to PWRDF and write Gift Guide in the memo line.

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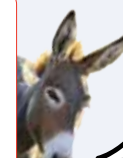
Your donations go directly to their stated use unless an item is overfunded, in which case funds will be allocated to an area of similar need.

Order online 24/7 at pwrdf.org/worldofgifts



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Together, we are working towards a truly just, healthy and peaceful world.



Thank you!

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To order: visit us online 24/7 at pwrdf.org/worldofgifts, call us at **1-877-936-9199** or mail the order form on p. 3/4

Moving forward

Introducing Indigenous Responsive Programs

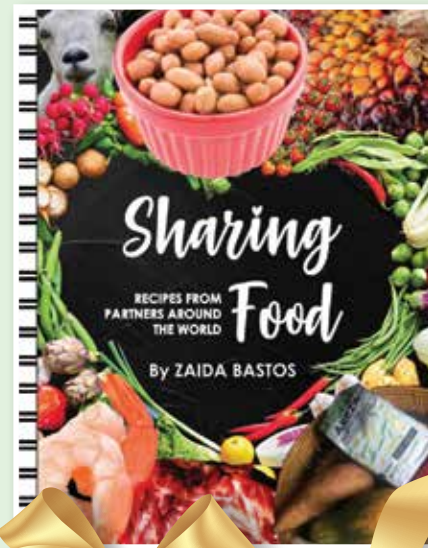
For 25 years, PWRDF has supported and accompanied Indigenous organizations in Canada working to reclaim their language and culture, to improve community health with clean water and safe birth, to support economic opportunities and to engage youth. This year we have launched a new grant to fund Indigenous groups working in these four areas:



- 22** Support our Indigenous Responsive Programs with a gift of **\$50**.
- 23** Support our Indigenous Responsive Programs with a gift of **\$100**.
- 24** Support our Indigenous Responsive Programs with a gift of **\$200**.
- 25** Support our Indigenous Responsive Programs with an amount of your choosing.

Learn more about this program at

pwrdf.org/IndigenousGrants



Sharing Food

Join Zaida Bastos, former Director of PWRDF's Development Partnership Program, as she shares stories and recipes from PWRDF partners around the world. Act quickly and order by November 25 to receive your copy of *Sharing Food* before Christmas.



Add to your order below or visit pwrdf.org/SharingFood to order your copy online.

26 Your donation of a minimum **\$25** will support PWRDF programs all over the world.

Cookbook makes a great gift!

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Item	Description	Price	Qty	Total
Page One				
1	Tree seedlings in Uganda	\$50	_____	_____
2	Tools for greening spaces in Cuba	\$25	_____	_____
3	10 kg breadfruit flour in Haiti	\$50	_____	_____
4	Climate action radio in Colombia	\$50	_____	_____
5	Canadian Foodgrains Bank emergency response	\$100	_____	_____
6	PWRDF emergency response	\$100	_____	_____
Page Two				
7	Seeds for farmers in Bangladesh	\$50	_____	_____
8	Dairy farm support in Kenya	\$100	_____	_____
9	Goats in Malawi, Cuba and Zimbabwe	\$50	_____	_____
10	Poultry feed production in Kenya	\$100	_____	_____
11	Chickens in Colombia and Zimbabwe	\$30	_____	_____
12	Buy the whole farm	\$530	_____	_____

* A Fair Market Value of \$10 per cookbook will be deducted from the gift amount of your tax receipt.

Item	Description	Price	Qty	Total
Page Three				
13	Solar pump well in Kenya	\$2,600	_____	_____
14	Hand pump well in Kenya	\$1,200	_____	_____
15	Donkey to carry water in Kenya	\$185	_____	_____
16	Water tank in Kenya	\$60	_____	_____
17	New mom starter kit in Lesotho	\$25	_____	_____
18	Sewing kits for women in DRC	\$100	_____	_____
19	Personal health kits for women in Uganda	\$20	_____	_____
20	Educational radio in El Salvador	\$175	_____	_____
21	Educational theatre in El Salvador	\$250	_____	_____
Page Four				
22	Indigenous Responsive Program	\$50	_____	_____
23	Indigenous Responsive Program	\$100	_____	_____
24	Indigenous Responsive Program	\$200	_____	_____
25	Indigenous Responsive Program (other)	\$ _____	_____	_____
26	Sharing Food Cookbook	Minimum \$25*	_____	_____
27	Every gift here (excluding Buy the Whole Farm and Sharing Food cookbook, with \$200 for Indigenous Program)	\$5,520	_____	_____

BONUS GENERAL GIFT TO PWRDF PROGRAMS \$ _____
Total \$ _____

LONG-TERM CARE ▶

Amid lockdowns, isolation—and accompaniment

“I really worry that we’re going to get out of this pandemic and just go back to ignoring the groups that don’t have voices ... and certainly poor, elderly people with diseases like dementia have zero voice.”

—The Rev. Michael Garner, Ottawa priest and former infectious disease epidemiologist

Continued from p. 6

spiritual care coordinator for the Fred Douglas Society, a United Church-affiliated non-profit that operates a personal care home and other long-term residences for seniors in Winnipeg. A Lutheran, Barr also serves as honorary deacon assistant, organist and choir director at St. Saviour’s Anglican Church. She says her work for the Fred Douglas Society became more hands-on during the worst of the pandemic, when staff shortages had the home’s leadership team taking on new tasks—helping residents connect online with family, for example, and conducting health checks when staff come to work.

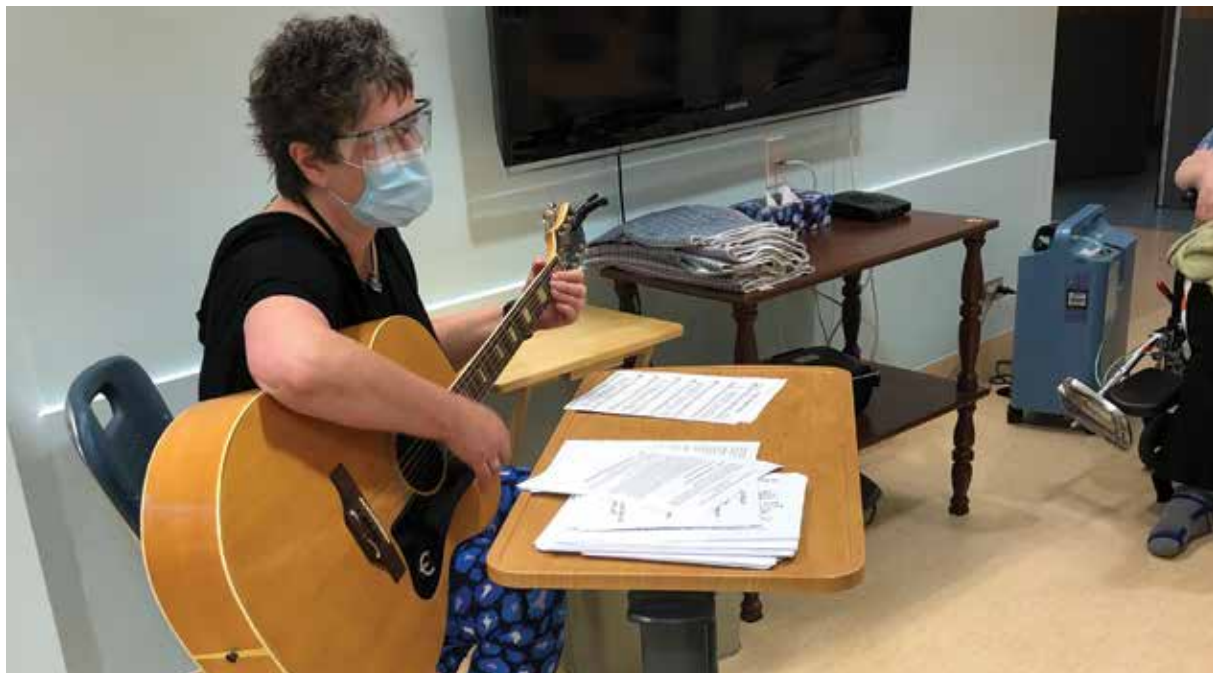
During a COVID-19 outbreak at the home last winter, loved ones would sometimes come to a resident’s window, so that they could at least see each other while they spoke on the phone. Watching them, Barr says, was both “sad and heartwarming.”

Barr, who normally leads weekly chapel services and group hymn sings, recalls Christmas Eve, 2020. The centre is normally buzzing with activity and visitors at that time of the year, and usually holds a full Christmas service. Last year, it was quiet. Visitors were not allowed. Residents stayed in their rooms. There was no gathering in the chapel, no singing side-by-side.

“So I sang over the PA,” she says. “By myself. In the chapel. It was very strange ... one of the loneliest, most profound services I’ve ever done.”

As this article was being prepared for publication in mid-October, Barr said she was hoping the home would be able to offer more in the way of yuletide festivities for its residents and allow them to worship together this Christmas, but the unpredictability of COVID-19 was making planning difficult.

One thing the pandemic seemed to reveal to her and her colleagues, she says, was the importance to residents of regular



▲ **“My goal in spiritual care is to have each resident find meaning and purpose in their life, and to be with them in the moment,” says Barr, seen here leading a group hymn sing.**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

family contact.

“We always knew it was important that the family connections be there, but when we couldn’t have them physically there we became aware of what a change that made to some residents, to how isolated they would feel, and confused,” she says. “We had to rethink how we do things so people aren’t feeling isolated, and we learned how detrimental that isolation can be for them.”

Some practices spurred on by the pandemic, like frequent video chats with family, will likely continue once the pandemic is over, Barr says. But it would also likely boost the well-being of elderly people in need of daily care if there were more financial support to allow them to live longer in their own homes, she said.

The fact that her residence is church-affiliated and puts a high priority on spiritual care seems to make a significant difference to its residents—even to those at such an advanced stage of cognitive decline that they might not appear at first to be receptive of it, she says.

“I find they really value that,” she says. “You can see somebody that looks like

they’re really just not with it, with their eyes shut. You start saying the Lord’s Prayer, or a particular hymn—boom, the eyes are open and it just comes out!”

“For me, my goal in spiritual care is to have each resident find meaning and purpose in their life, and to be with them in the moment. I’ve seen that with all the staff here—the extra time they spend.”


The leadership team now has a deeper connection to each resident’s family, as they sit with them during Skype visits, Barr says, and many have learned how to do things like feed residents who need assistance when the centre is short-staffed. “When you’re feeding somebody and they’re looking in your eyes like that—and some of them can’t communicate—it’s a pretty intimate thing,” she says.

“This is their home, and we’re here to serve them. This could be our own mother or father or grandparent,” says Barr. “As a diaconal minister, getting in there and washing someone’s feet, so to speak, being with someone dying—that’s where I need to be. I help them feel not alone, to feel loved, and to honour the end of life.” ■

—with files by Tali Folkins

Thank you from the Anglican Journal

I can’t tell you how grateful we are to readers like you who allow us to continue this ministry. Your donation to the *Anglican Journal* Annual Appeal is a big part of what makes it happen, and no gift is too small. Please consider giving, and know that every cent of it will help us as we engage, inform and connect Anglicans across this land.

In gratitude,

 Tali Folkins
 Editor, *The Anglican Journal*

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PHOTO: RUBEN M. RAMOS

A glacier in Fitzroy Fjord, Devon Island, Nunavut

New models of ministry training sought

'We need to train the next generation of clergy desperately'

Continued from p. 1

The Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh and diocese of Yukon both have training sessions planned, while the diocese of the Arctic plans to use some of the training funds for translation work.

Discussions on training at the October meeting delved into the relationship between council jurisdictions and seminaries, and how alternatives to today's three-year residential programs might make theological training more accessible. For example, the diocese of Caledonia recently launched a two-year certificate program with the Vancouver School of Theology (VST).

"One of the things the whole church is realizing is that we need to train the next generation of clergy desperately, and that the old model of going away to a three-year residential program isn't possible," Lehmann said.

The diocese, which requires all lay readers and future clergy to have training in Indigenous studies, chose VST partly

because of its Indigenous studies program, he said.

Strictly speaking, the gathering, held at a hotel near Toronto's Pearson Airport, was both in-person and online. Six of the jurisdictions that make up the Council of the North were represented by someone physically present in the room, three by someone attending online via Zoom.

The hybrid model reflected continuing restrictions caused by the pandemic. Representatives of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, for example, were unable to leave their communities due to a local health order. All bishops who attended in person were fully vaccinated and wore masks throughout. No singing was permitted.

The pandemic was also evident in the council's awarding of grants to support use of technology. From donations it had received, the council set aside \$60,000 and awarded a total of \$6,000 in grants to six jurisdictions to allow them to continue developing online worship and ministries.

Lehmann said that while some areas in the North have limited streaming capabilities and rely on radio, for others the internet has become an increasingly significant tool in ministry.

"There's a call to keep the online going

for some time longer, because not everyone is comfortable coming to in-person worship," he said.

Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, attended on behalf of the national church's Strategic Planning Working Group to gather feedback about how their work might affect the council.

The primate said she attended to offer a "second round of listening in light of the proposed framework that SPWG has worked on. There was very little presentation and mostly listening to the council" on questions such as the impact of a change in the block grant to the Council of the North, and emerging possibilities for collaboration with the national church.

Despite restrictions due to the pandemic and the fact that not all representatives could physically attend, Lehmann said it was "life-giving" to be able to meet people in person again. He expressed gratitude to Anglicans for continuing to support the Council of the North.

"We are so thankful for the generosity of the Anglican Church of Canada that empowers and enables the ministry across the North and remote communities," he said. ■

Note: A version of this article appeared in Contact, the newsletter of the Council of the North.

Let there be greening



ASSEMBLY 2022

JULY 2022 • CALGARY

Anglicans, Lutherans to meet for Assembly in 2022

Delegates to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Convention and the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod will gather together next July, for Assembly 2022.

Inspired by the theme Let there be Greening, delegates, special guests and partners will gather for worship, workshops, special presentations and business sessions.

The agenda for the shared meeting is in the process of being developed. The agenda will include time for meeting separately and for time together to explore and grow into the common life of our Full Communion relationship.

2021 marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Waterloo Declaration which brought the two churches into this Full Communion relationship. We may mutually share in each other's celebrations of the Eucharist, share liturgies, and Anglican and Lutheran clergy may serve in either church.

The Assembly 2022 theme will emphasize the importance of nurturing relationships, in particular the relationship between the two churches; with other partners; with one another; and with the Earth, alongside their role and responsibility as churches in the areas of social justice and advocacy.

The logo for Assembly 2022 includes a stylized image of the Earth with an abstract representation of leaves, trees and people. The layering of these elements references their interaction in relationship with one another.

Information on registration will be available in early 2022. Further details will be added to the Assembly 2022 website as available.



ROOM AT THE INN ▶



Hope for refugees seen as pandemic eases

“I don’t think the pandemic has changed people’s enthusiasm, but it has complicated their lives.”

—Tony David, refugee sponsorship coordinator, diocese of British Columbia

Continued from p. 1

money themselves. “People are requiring a longer period of time to raise the funds,” says David. “I don’t think the pandemic has changed people’s enthusiasm, but it has complicated their lives.”

There are 82 million displaced people around the globe, including 26.4 million refugees, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Canada has welcomed more than one million refugees since 1980, and in 2019, more than 30,000 refugees settled in Canada—the most of any country. Last year, Canada planned on welcoming even more, but when COVID-19 closed borders, the wave of refugees became a trickle, with only 9,200 arriving, according to the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website.

Seeing the challenges, the diocese of British Columbia reduced sponsorship applications for 2021 by 40 per cent—but numbers seem likely to be even lower. “We’ve been told not to exceed 100 [refugees],” David said in a September interview with the *Journal*. “Right now, we’re at 45.”

David says he still receives two to three calls a week about sponsorship—mostly families looking to bring other family members to Canada—“and we have to say, we’ll take your information but we have to put you on the waitlist for 2022.”

He says six years ago, many Syrian refugees came over through the BVOR. “That encouraged people,” says David. “I think people are anticipating that maybe the government will come up with a program similar to that. But we’re really not sure what’s going to happen.”

In Canadian society as a whole, changing attitudes toward immigration, plus concern about the spread of COVID-19, make it unlikely that levels of refugee sponsorship will return to what they were before, he says.

Restrictions have also made things harder for the refugees themselves, says Jane Townshend, refugee coordinator for the diocese of Huron. Visa offices have been in lockdown mode, or not operating at full capacity, slowing precious paperwork needed to travel. Church offices and embassies have been closed or working at reduced capacity, meaning documents

▲ **An Afghan family in India takes part in a protest requesting refugee status there or elsewhere, Aug. 24. “If we take a look at the world situation, there’s going to be more displaced people,” Townshend says.**

PHOTO: PRADEEP GAURS/SHUTTERSTOCK

can’t be signed. Travel allowances and border closures have in some cases been unpredictable. And there are stories of families selling their belongings, leaving their homes and arriving at the airport, only to discover they no longer have a flight.

“It’s tragic,” Townshend says. “They’ve sold everything, or given it away, because they were leaving.... If they came from refugee camps, they lost their space. Or if they had an apartment, that’s gone.”

Once refugees are given the all-clear to travel, more plans must be made for their arrival. Refugees often used to stay with family once they arrived, but things are different now. When they land in Canada, they stay in government-authorized accommodation for their first three nights, while they wait for the results of another COVID-19 test.

After their test, they can be taken to the place they will be living, or to a hotel, where they must quarantine for 14 days. Sponsors must have a quarantine plan, which includes where they will be staying, contact information, and how they will be supported during lockdown. Having to cover those 14 days in a hotel adds an additional expense to the sponsor, and refugees are basically left alone for their first two weeks in a new country.

Townshend says it can be difficult to tell refugees not to visit family during their quarantine period. “Imagine saying, I know you haven’t seen your wife in five years. You haven’t seen your kids. But don’t go see them. You can’t hug them.”

Other practical difficulties include registering for English language classes that have been shut down or moved online. People often go to libraries to access computers and wi-fi, but they’re closed. Settlement services that help with filling out forms, handling mental stress, trauma and other needs have been overwhelmed by people and trying to do things online, Townshend says. Kids’ English is not improving as quickly because schools have been closed. And driving people to appointments and being able to accompany them inside, or sitting separately is stressful.

“There’s an immense amount of problem-solving that has gone on,” she says. Townshend says when the Syria

crisis hit, Canada rushed to bring over refugees. Today—and rightfully so, she says—accountability has increased, and so has the amount of paperwork. Any funds given to refugees must be in forms that can be documented, such as cheques or e-transfer—another hiccup for immigrants who may have only operated in cash, have language barriers, and likely no bank account.

A heightening of anti-immigration sentiment among some people in recent years has also made refugee sponsorship different.

“What was not acceptable to say in everyday life became acceptable to say. A lot of people challenged the idea of refugees coming over,” says Townshend, noting the tragedy in London, Ont., where a Muslim family was murdered.

She says cases in her diocese began to decline as soon as the pandemic began and have dropped dramatically. As this story was being written, Townshend was estimating around 40 people would arrive in her diocese by the end of 2021—about one quarter of a typical year. “Cases are people. And there’s some guilt. It’s weighed heavily on us.”

Meanwhile, she says, demand is likely to increase.

“If we take a look at the world situation, there’s going to be more displaced people. Some of our concern is whether we’re going to be able to rejuvenate that parish base to be able to go forward,” she says.

“But the work has been going on very quietly. [I’m encouraged by] the perseverance of it all.”

Despite the challenges, Townshend says there are a number of parishes going forward with their plans for sponsorship, looking forward to the BVOR, or something similar, re-starting—something she says would be extremely good news for parishes. She says sponsors are always excited and heavily involved with the families they bring over, standing in line with them, driving them around, buying a crib and welcome gifts.

“Anglicans across Canada have something to be very proud of. We help each other and work collaboratively,” she says. “It’s a beautiful thing.” ■

—With files by Tali Folkins



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**COMPANIONS
IN FAITH ▶**

This is the third in a series of seven in which Matt Gardner, Anglican Journal staff writer, presents Anglican and Lutheran perspectives about matters of mutual importance.

Building with CLAY

Shared Anglican-Lutheran gatherings set framework for youth ministry

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

The Anglican Church of Canada had been looking at organizing a national youth gathering for some time when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) invited an Anglican cohort to Whitehorse in 2008 for its own youth conference. Unlike Anglicans, Lutherans had been holding such events for decades, with the Canadian Lutheran Youth Gathering tracing its history to 1966. The joint gathering in Whitehorse was so successful that the two churches decided to continue holding national youth gatherings together, and in 2010, the event was renamed the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) gathering.

CLAY and its accompanying National Youth Project (NYP) are among the most prominent examples of possibilities opened up by the Waterloo Declaration's full communion partnership between Anglicans and Lutherans.

Each CLAY event brings together hundreds of young Anglicans and Lutherans from across Canada, taking place every two years in a different city. Those who attend as part of a youth group have the chance to meet others who share their beliefs, participate in joint activities and learn about issues of faith and discipleship.

"We always tell people that [CLAY is] the largest thing we do where there are Anglicans and Lutherans participating in something together," says Deacon Gretchen Peterson (she/her), the ELCIC's assistant to the bishop for youth and leadership.

"There are things we've learned from each other that have been beneficial to both of our churches in youth ministry,"



▲ McGlynn, front left, and Peterson with bishops and archbishops at the 2018 CLAY gathering in Thunder Bay, Ont.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

she says. "To take the good from each other and figure out how to work together ... is so unbelievably amazing."

Between each CLAY gathering, youth return home and participate in the NYP, which involves raising awareness around specific issues and working to create positive change. Past projects have focused on access to clean drinking water, or homelessness and affordable housing. The NYP for 2022, More Precious, will seek to educate people about human trafficking.

Sheilagh McGlynn (she/her), youth animator for the Anglican Church of Canada, says drawing upon Lutheran expertise through CLAY and the NYP provided Anglicans with a framework for youth ministry.

"We are so lucky to have been able to hop on board with the CLAY planning, because [Lutherans have] been doing this for years," McGlynn says. "They know how to run a youth event. They have it down to a science. We didn't have to do all that exhausting learning to get to a really great product, and CLAY is an incredible product."

For its part, Lutheran youth ministry has been enhanced by full communion

with Anglicans, Peterson says. She points to the Anglican church's relationship with Indigenous peoples, which allowed elders in residence to attend the last two CLAY events. "Those connections are a huge benefit to us as a church and for youth ministry," she says.

As Lutherans had brought Anglicans on board with CLAY, Anglicans invited Lutherans to attend Stronger Together—an annual event bringing together youth and young adult leaders to build community, worship and learn about issues related to youth ministry.

Joint work in undertakings such as the NYP has produced resources embraced by the broader churches to educate members on justice issues. On National Housing Day in 2018, Anglican and Lutheran leaders signed an open letter directing their members to an NYP resource to help small groups reflect on homeless and affordable housing.

The friendship between McGlynn and Peterson reflects the growing partnership of their churches. McGlynn describes Anglicans and Lutherans as being like "siblings" and "family."

Peterson notes, "Oftentimes I even forget that it is a full communion thing, because it just is so natural now... Sheilagh and I have cultivated a relationship that is both a working relationship and an actual friendship."

"I think that if we can help model that for youth leaders to work together, that's a huge benefit for both of our churches at every level."

As this article was being written, Stronger Together was scheduled to take place online Nov. 19-20. CLAY 2022 is planned to take place in person at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont. ■

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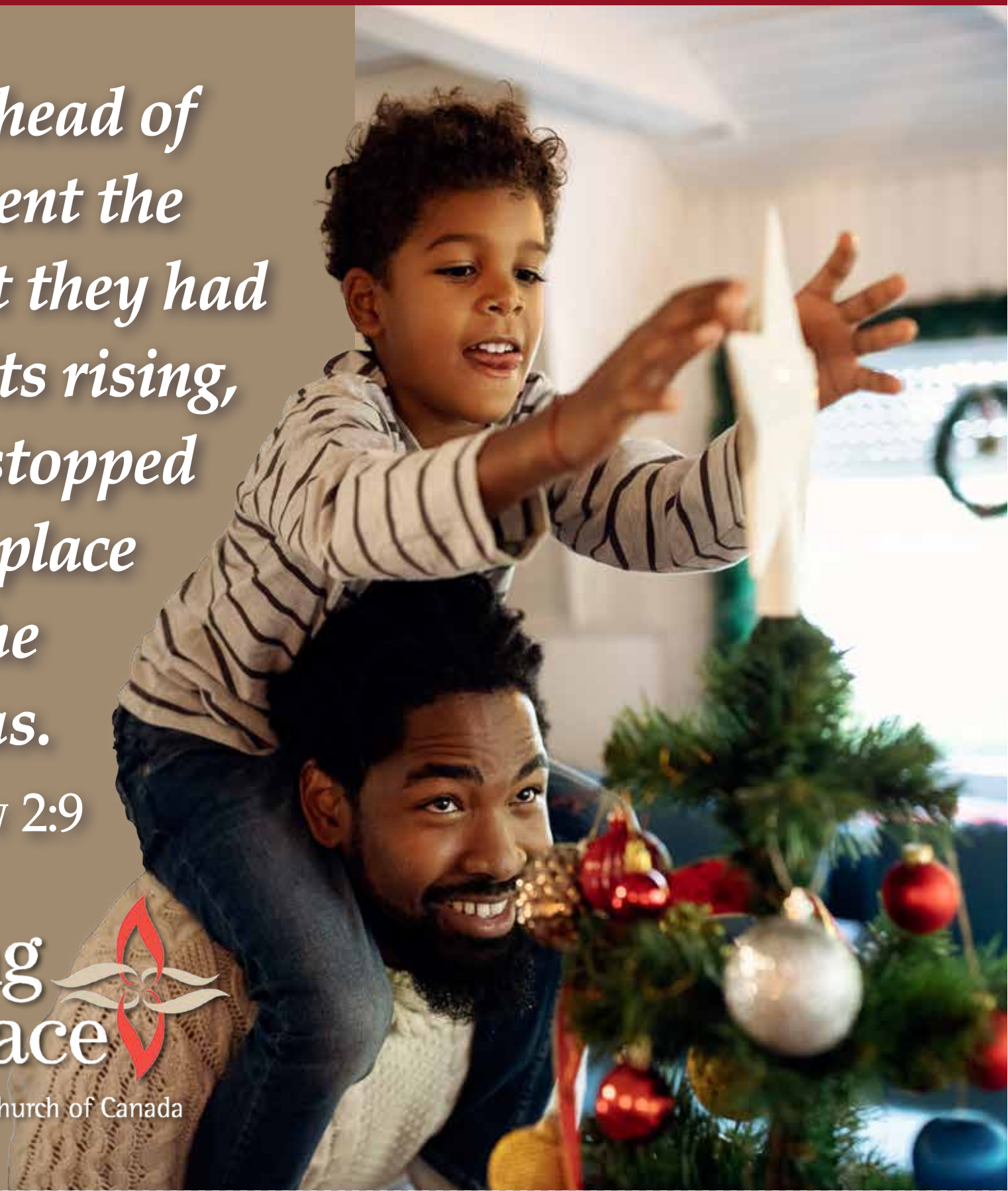
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—MATTHEW 2:9



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