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A Newsletter for the Council of the North

Advent 2019

Responding to God's Call to mission and ministry in the northern regions of Canada



PHOTO: NANCY BAUER/SHUTTERSTOCK

Glory to God, Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All

By Archbishop Linda Nicholls

In my experience there is something both ordinary and profound in the way that people close to the land live daily. Farmers and shepherds know the patience needed to tend the land or animals, knowing that they cannot control many of the factors they depend on—the sun or rain, the predators or growth. They have endurance and perseverance in the face of uncertainties and also have capacity to see beauty in the world around them in the most ordinary moments.

Some years ago I tried to encourage a very small congregation—which needed lay leaders to step up to lead worship—that each of them had the capacity to speak about their experience of God to others. I asked them to name a moment of encounter with God in their lives. One after another struggled to find the words except a taciturn farmer at the end of the table. In a few spare sentences he described a moment of encounter with the glory of God in nature as he stood at the fence of his fields—a moment both ordinary and profound.

Imagine the shepherds on the night

of the birth of Jesus, tending the flocks as they have always done. Sitting or dozing under the stars, they kept one ear tuned for the wolf or thief and the other listening to the sounds of the flock at night. Was it the brilliance of the night sky? A song humming on the wind? Whatever it was that drew their attention, in that moment they took notice, and the night sky was filled with the song of the angels inviting them to seek the reason for this moment.

They leave their flocks to search, and find it in a baby. An ordinary night turned

See GLORIUS on p. 4



■ Diocese of Saskatchewan

The Diocese of Saskatchewan is putting its synod office up for sale, and will be moving its offices to St. Alban's Cathedral. The 5,689 square feet building has been occupied since 1998, and housed the bishop's offices and archives department. It is hoped that the move to St. Alban's will provide the space needed for hosting larger events and eliminate the number of trips made to the cathedral.

■ Diocese of Athabasca



Canon David Greenwood

The Diocese of Athabasca has a new bishop. Canon David Greenwood was elected on the third ballot on November 16 at St. James Cathedral in Peace River, Alta. Greenwood was ordained as a vocational deacon in 2004, and

joined priesthood in 2012. He succeeds the previous bishop of Athabasca, Rt. Rev. Fraser Lawton, who resigned in September of this year. As bishop, Canon Greenwood has set his sights on drawing in a younger generation of worshippers as well as finding ways to nurture and develop relationships with clergy and parishes.



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Bishop Barbara Andrews receives blessings and well wishes during her retirement party on November 15.

■ Territory of the People

It was a momentous month in the Territory of the People. The newly elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, visited from November 15-17. Over the course of the two days,

Archbishop Linda Nicholls attended Bishop Barbara Andrew's retirement party; learned more about the mission and ministry of the Territory at St. Paul's Cathedral, and presented the Anglican Award of Merit to Melissa Green.



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

[From left: Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Archbishop Anne Germond, Archdeacon Paul Feheley]

■ Diocese of Moosonee

The Diocese of Moosonee will have a familiar face take over the duties of Bishop Tom Corston upon his retirement later this year. Archbishop Fred Hiltz, former Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, will serve as the new assisting bishop of the diocese of Moosonee. Archbishop Anne

Germond's announcement, which was made on the diocese's Facebook page, called on Moosonee to make 2020 the year of 'Holy Discernment.'

■ Diocese of Caledonia

The Diocese of Caledonia will be having a Diocesan Synod on May 8 - 9, 2020 in Terrace, B.C. It has been five years since the diocese last had a synod, and one of the agenda items will be the election of lay delegates. Bishop Lehmann is currently looking for a sponsor to cover the cost of dinner on May 8th and lunch on May 9th. Please reach out to him at bishopdavid@telus.net if you can support this much needed synod. ☞



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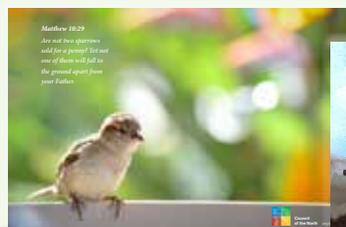
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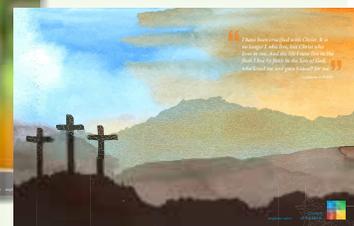
The Anglican Church of Canada



RESOURCES

Placemats from Council of the North

Place your order on the CoN website: anglican.ca/cnorder



Looking North

By Archbishop Mark MacDonald

AROUND THIS TIME of year, the millions of Canadians who live in the south are reminded that Canada is one of the great northern countries. Though it doesn't appear to come to mind very often—it was largely missed in conversations that accompanied our recent election—the North is an essential part of our land. A great deal of the future of Canada and of our planet is unfolding in the North.

The Anglican Church of Canada is not unlike Canada in its relationship to the North. There is some awareness of our presence there, but it is not an active part of the identity of most Anglicans. Despite the challenges in the North, the churches there continue to bring an essential element to the whole of the region, providing gospel-based spiritual community and pastoral care. With that work, we are arguably one of the most northern churches in the world, but our denomination attention is usually elsewhere. That is about to change. Forces, social, legal, and environmental, are making Northern Canada, especially the Arctic, the place where a number of dangerous trends are coming together. The Anglican Church of Canada will be morally and

spiritually tested by these trends.

The Arctic is warming three times faster than the rest of the planet. While many contemplate the horrific consequences of melting ice and permafrost, others contemplate the opportunities a warmer Arctic provides to create wealth. Because of Canada's colonial policies, the people of the North are neither able to sufficiently control what happens on their land, nor are they able to participate fully in the wealth that is produced there. This is bad for them and the planet.

In addition to these issues, a few centuries of colonial social policy have left deep wounds among the people. Coupled with climate injustice, these conditions are a particularly toxic mix. Without full authority to oversee their land or their people, wealth, weather, and economic expansion could intensify the social problems of the area.

It would appear that those least responsible for climate disaster now carry a heavy load of its consequences. This is a great problem for the planet, since the people who have been guardians of the Arctic for thousands of years are also the carriers of an environmental wisdom that could be a substantial contribution to a livable future for all. Furthermore, it seems

certain that without the guardianship of the People of the Land, there will be no good way to slow down a melting Arctic and its consequences for the planet.

The Arctic will provide much of the framework of our global future. It provides a vivid warning of the coming consequences of a warming planet. It is a call for meaningful action. Close to a quarter of the world's remaining usable land is now under the guardianship of Indigenous Peoples around the globe. Many of the moral, legal, and social principles that will decide the future of the Indigenous peoples of the world and their protection of their lands are being debated in the Arctic. Canada will either play a positive role in this conversation or frame it in a negative way.

During my time in the Arctic, I have heard many prophecies about a revival in the churches of the world that would begin there. I believe these prophecies. This revival will have many consequences - moral, political, and spiritual. It means that we are all called to a deeper and more faithful commitment to Jesus. It also means that we are, right now, called to defend the peoples and land of the North, in the name of our God, in defence of our planet, and in a commitment to justice and truth. Ω



PHOTO: TYLER OLSON



THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH is a grouping of financially assisted dioceses, supported through grants by General Synod, that serve sparsely populated areas in the Arctic, Yukon, Northern and Central Interior British Columbia, Alberta, northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba; and northern Ontario.

Specifically:

- Diocese of the Arctic • Diocese of Athabasca • Diocese of Brandon • Diocese of Caledonia • Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh • Diocese of Moosonee • Diocese of Saskatchewan • Territory of the People • Diocese of Yukon •



PHOTO: DK SAMKO

10 ways to green your church without breaking the bank

Adapted with permission from the Anglican Journal

1. Weather strip and caulk around windows and doors.
2. Insulate attics and other areas that may not yet have been insulated. (But note that this might not always be advisable with stone walls—see above.)
3. Get setback, or programmable, thermostats, which automatically reduce heating and cooling in rooms when no one is present. Set the temperature to 14 C in winter or colder areas, and 29 C in summer or hotter climates.
4. Install automatic lights or dimming switches, or post reminders by light switches to turn off lights when they're not being used.
5. Host a green conversation after worship, or start a green team to brainstorm new projects.
6. Use a portable fan and/or ceiling fan together with your air conditioner.
7. Unplug appliances that aren't in use, and turn off unused power bars.
8. Open and close window blinds depending on the season. In the summer, turn on fewer lights and rely on natural light. In the winter, keep blinds closed to keep heat from leaking out through windows.
9. Switch to LED light bulbs. Replacing light bulbs in exit signs can be particularly effective in saving energy, because these lights are on 24 hours a day.
10. Get rid of energy-wasting appliances, or replace them with Energy Star appliances or appliances with high EnerGuide ratings.

Adapted from: "Top 10 Green Actions Under \$10"; "Reduce Your Ecological Footprint: Faith Community Tips"; and "Do-It-Yourself" Faith Building Energy Audit Guide", all by Faith & the Common Good. Ω

Glorious and powerful

Continued from p.1

glorious and powerful enough to send the shepherds to seek the child, becomes infinitely ordinary and vulnerable again when they arrive at the manger. The feeding area for animals, such as they daily tended, holds just a baby—a wriggling, noisy baby boy watched by a young mother and father, nervous and new to their role as parents. And God is here.

This very ordinary moment contains

the extraordinary promise of God. This child will carry the message of God's love to any and all who will hear. He will become a shepherd to his people and change the world. For now, these shepherds simply enjoy the miracle of a new baby, the joy of his parents, and this moment of promise. Then they leave to tell the story and become the first evangelists of this part of the Good News that they have seen.

We now retell their story as a miraculous event with delight and awe. Yet every part is rooted in the activities of

daily life of ordinary people open to the extraordinary possibilities of God at work around them.

God is always present. The possibilities of participating in God's creating activity in the world are only limited by our willingness to see God in our daily lives, inviting us to see—to wonder—and to tell the Good News we know. May this Christmas be a celebration of God in the midst of our lives here and now—filled with possibilities when we look and see God at work around us and are ready to hear the angels singing. Ω