

**5 Honouring Legacies of Black Anglicans in the ACC**

**8 Which Violence? Whose Safety?**

**10 Anglican Journey**



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[Rupert's Land News](#) is published 10 times per year (September - June) by the Diocese of Rupert's Land, in the Anglican Church in Canada. It connects churches and communities from Portage la Prairie, MB, to Atikokan, ON, by offering news, events, opinions, and ideas to 4,000 readers per month. RLN is available in a variety of formats:

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RLN exists to explore issues at the intersections of faith and life. In doing so we solicit and publish a range of opinions, not all of which reflect the official positions of the Diocese. We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1, 2, and 3 Land, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, and Dakota people and the homeland of the Metis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work, and serve God the Creator here.

RLN welcomes story ideas, news items, and other input. If you want to be involved in this media ministry, please [email the editor](#).

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Cover: *Quail and Autumn Flowers*, Tosa Mitsuoki, late 17th century, source: [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)



# Harvests

Photo: [Tristan Hess](#)

Fall is a time of change. In Autumn, we gather the harvest of the past year and prepare for a winter under the snow. A harvest is both a celebration of our work and a promise for the coming season – that even through the dead of winter, there will be enough.

I've been thinking about Psalm 65:11 – *You crown the year with a bountiful harvest; even the hard pathways overflow with abundance.*

On September 20th, I went to a demonstration against an anti-2SLGBTQ+ protest. Faced with the hateful shouting of the protestors, and threats of violence, it was a struggle to see abundance. Building community and taking care of one another is a hard path when our voices begin to be drowned out.

Theologian Marika Rose's new book *Theology for the End of the World* is about how our desire to save others can go awry. She writes, "we are not things to be possessed, even by ourselves; we are what we do with what we are given, what we create with and for each other." When our Autumn harvest begins to look like control over possessions, it becomes a defence against our own fear, rather than an openness to each other.

Many of us are facing difficult times right now, and rising anti-2SLGBTQ+ rhetoric is making this acutely felt in queer communities. Rather than hoard our harvest to ourselves, God calls us to share our abundance with each other, trusting that there will be enough. In difficult times, when resources are scarce and the harvest looks meager, we are challenged to accept our fundamental vulnerability. In times of plenty, we, like the rich man in Luke 12:16-21, may be tempted to build larger barns to store our surplus. Rather than keeping ourselves and our possessions stored away from the world, we must recognize that we, our relations, and our goods belong to God. We are not our own, we

find abundance in our care for each other.

In this month's issue, Bishop Geoff explores the radical hope expressed in the passover story in Exodus, comparing this to other readings in the Epistles and Gospels that come after Pentecost. In the face of difficulty and oppression, sometimes the most important thing we can do is come together over a meal.

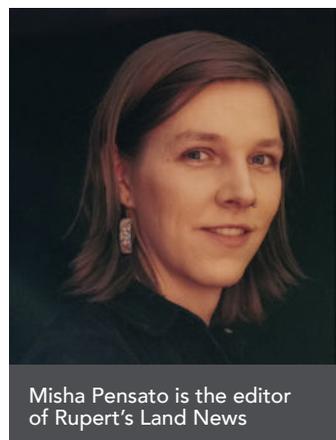
A second part of the interview with the Black Anglican's of Canada, Diocese of Rupert's Land Chapter explores the question "why stay?" given historic wrongs and ongoing anti-blackness within the institutional church. This conversation delves into members of the chapter's impressive legacies of community building work. This work is an example of the difficult task of coming together and sharing in abundance that Christ calls us to.

Pastor David Driedger calls us to reflect on how political rhetoric and assumptions around violence and criminality relegate the most vulnerable in our society even further to the margins, in his opening remarks for an event at First Mennonite Church on September 26th titled *Which Violence, Whose Safety?*

Mark Friesen, a parishioner at St. Margaret's, reflects on his journey to Anglicanism. He talks about gaining a sense of community and connection to God through the sacraments and liturgy of the Anglican church.

Finally, a few pages of news bring together important messages from members of the diocese. New appointments and retirements mark a season of change, and a new trial run of a pastoral support program for 2SLGBTQ people offers hope.

I hope readers encounter the difficult and necessary work of letting go of our sense of possession this month – over others as well as ourselves. In this season of harvest, let us open up to the possibility of sharing abundance.



Misha Pensato is the editor of Rupert's Land News

## Who are We to Give Thanks to Almighty God?

GEOFFREY WOODCROFT

Photo: [Caroline Hernandez](#)

Local religious and home celebrations of thanksgiving are abundant, and that should tell us something. We often offer thanksgiving prayers and hospitality at an individual level. This is very good. Yet, does not God desire more from Christ's disciples?

Meditating upon the Sunday readings through the season after Pentecost, it is curious how portions of Torah, Psalms, Epistles, and Matthew speak together at any given celebration of the Eucharist, that Great Thanksgiving. While the narrative(s) include fantastic events and surprises, admonitions and calls, what lays beneath each is the genius of faith expressed in story.

The reading of Exodus 12:1-14 on September 10, the Passover, initiates and contextually centers Maundy Thursday worship. As Sept 10 was certainly not Holy Week, we all processed how this narrative fit into the harmony of that day, how its awe-striking rich formula is juxtaposed with the life of God's Church, Jesus Body. Today, it speaks to at least two things: first, that our Church remains in a constant state of exodus, and secondly, that for which God requires the One Body to prepare for such an Exodus. We are constantly re-learning how the narrative is timeless, telling all who have ears to listen and discern that in the face of oppression, slavery, dysfunction and terror, God's gift of hope signals an exodus from normalcy and resignation.

We read that the preparations for Passover were anything but a secret. They were bold expressions of hope for God's children. Consider 155-275 lb animals kept living in homes for 4 days and the bleating and cleanup

that entails. Consider also that, on the day of slaughter, blood is spattered on doorposts and lintels, visible and terrifying signs of the Israelites' hope in God's saving acts. The aroma of thousands of whole slow roasted animals with bitter herbs permeating entire neighbourhoods, whilst the Israelites girded their loins in expectation of a great saving migration. They would have eaten the roasted meat in large groups (remember the size of the beasts), perhaps with those new relationships attracted to them by the slashes of blood on their doors, all the while learning again they are one people under God. The oppressor would most certainly have been aware that something out of their control was happening.

To escape the normalcy of mass murder, utter hatred, oppression, dysfunction, persecution, and prejudice: HAVE SUPPER and do it up so all can see and all may be welcome! May we now understand that Moses and Aaron reclaimed the covenant between God and Abraham for the people, that all might be at home freely flourishing. Abraham's faith in God was that which assured the life of Isaac, and continued through to Jesus. By faith Christian disciples live the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

His Body, his narrative(s), his life constantly move in neighbourhoods across the globe. In faith, WE, His Body, are God's welcome in the midst of chaos, love in the face of estrangement, and hope in the face of overwhelming odds. It is because of all that God does through our faith-filled labour and joy that WE rise in one voice giving God thanks.

Thankfully, we open doors and set the table. Thankfully, we continue in Exodus until all are free to flourish in God's home.

May we discern in God where we are to lead the Exodus and where to set the table next.



Geoffrey Woodcroft,  
Bishop of Rupert's Land

# Honouring Legacies of Black Anglicans in the ACC

JUDE CLAUDE AND MISHA PENSATO

Photo: Maud Slats

This article is a continuation of the feature “Dismantling Anti-Black Racism: An Interview with Black Anglicans of Canada, Diocese of Rupert’s Land Chapter” published in [RLN’s September Issue](#).

## Black Anglican Experiences

Given the [many instances of anti-blackness experienced by Black Anglicans in the Anglican Church of Canada](#), the question arises, why stay in the Anglican Church? Members of the Black Anglicans of Canada, Diocese of Rupert’s Land Chapter have diverse backgrounds and experiences, and varying responses to this question. Cynthia Manswell, Dr. June James, and Rev. Wilson Akinwale all express a *rootedness* in the Anglican church, and experiences of *belongingness* in the Anglican church in their countries of origin. This is in contrast to experiences of ostracization upon immigrating to Canada and becoming members of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC). Below are a few accounts given that speak to these experiences.

### Cynthia Manswell:

“In the Anglican Church in Trinidad, for many years we had only white priests—from England and from Ireland—even though our congregations were made up of Black people.



Photo: Daniel Seßler

Only in the fifties did we start to have Black priests. There was racism in Trinidad: before the fifties, to work in the bank you needed to be white or to look white, but at school or at work, we were all Black. It was only when I came here to Canada that I really began to experience and recognize racism. I was christened in the Anglican church. I was confirmed in the Anglican church. I was married in the Anglican church. I came to Canada as an Anglican, I was not looking for a new church denomination. That is why I’m still here. I do have questions, and sometimes I get frustrated with the Anglican church, but I have not had any real reason to leave it.”

### Dr. June James:

“My mother was Roman Catholic and my father was Anglican. I went to church with my grandmother. I was her first girl grandchild and she taught me to pray. On Good Friday, during the Triduum, we would go in the morning, then again in the afternoon to another where we did the stations of cross. I also went to Bishop Anstey, an Anglican High School in Trinidad. We had daily prayers in the gym, and once a week in the chapel which was bigger than some of the churches in this city. We were all Anglican, mainly Black, some were other People of Color, Chinese, or Caucasian. My first communion was celebrated held in that chapel. The family moved to Woodbrook in Trinidad and attended All Saints, whose Minister was the priest for our school. When I arrived in Winnipeg, I lived in the Women’s Residence at U of M so naturally I went to St. John’s Chapel. I also attended St. Margaret’s Anglican Church during summer before starting medical school. In one Winnipeg church community, I was told by a white male member making a comment about

how there were ‘too many of those people’ (my friends) attending events at the church. I thought: ‘I am Anglican. I can’t move to another church. Why don’t you leave?’”



**All Saints' Church in Port of Spain (near Woodbrook), Trinidad. Photo by Jeffrey Wong Sang The National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago**

### **Rev. Wilson Akinwale:**

“I was born and baptised in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). My father was an archdeacon and folks often referred to him as a ‘Quintessential Archdeacon.’ He was such a very venerable man indeed! Obviously, I miss him for not being here with us anymore to see the blessing he has been, sharing this story of his good work, through which I am called to be a blessing to others regardless of who they are: their sexual orientation, colour of their skin, culture, language, or identity. He supported women as priests when many thought that women should not be ordained, and he was discriminated against for his positions on women’s ordination and for not being from a central area.

I grew up in the Nigerian Anglican community and followed my father to various churches, especially into the deep end of rural communities in Western Nigeria. People from my hometown of Abeokuta are known for their Anglicanism. The first Anglican Church in Nigeria was established there after the abolition of slavery. I have the gene of Anglicanism. When I was exploring my call to ordination, my father told me ‘If God has called you to do this, follow that path and do it passionately. If God

has called you, be faithful to Him.’ I can still remember way back in the day as a young lad growing up in the Church how my beloved father would passionately explain the importance of being a good neighbour. Often times he used the parable of the Good Samaritan, which even today evokes the whole essence of my daily living and calling. Anytime I thanked him for helping others he would say, ‘my son go and do likewise’” (Luke 10:37).

Remembering this often brings tears to my eyes. For me to have such a man as a father who was a blessing, so selfless in service to humanity, not just for personal gratification, but for the sake of who God is as a mirror in every one of us. That is the reason for me being an Anglican. It is a story I have to share and tell anyone who cares to listen. That is why I am here. There is so much Black Anglican history—people whose legacies should be shared. I want to honour them and their memories. And I believe, posterity is waiting to show forth everyone who shows compassion to those who are willing to be a blessing to those with minority voices.”



**Sign for the “First Storey Building” in Badagry, Nigeria, which contained the first Anglican Church in Nigeria, Wikimedia Commons**

### **Experiences of Black Anglican Immigrants in the ACC**

Manswell, Akinwale, and James recognize the Anglican church as their own and are assured in their identities as Anglicans. They also recognize that many Black individuals in the ACC end up leaving. In addition to overt



**The first Yoruba Bible, translated by Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, displayed in the First Storey Building in Badagry, Nigeria [Wikimedia Commons](#)**

instances of anti-blackness experienced in the church, members of the group speak to the disorientation Black Anglican immigrants feel when first encountering the ACC.

Manswell notes that immigrants from Caribbean Anglican communities often find the styles of worship in Canadian Anglican communities somewhat lifeless. She says that “Trinidadian choirs are made up of people of all ages, some of them robed, some of them not. We have choirs that sing and clap, no big organs, but piano and our hymns have rhythm. Our preaching is different too. We refer to the bible more frequently and some priests do not use notes. And visitors are welcomed.” Manswell is careful to note that her home church in Winnipeg, All Saints, has a great choir, but that limited styles of worship may exclude immigrant communities.

Akinwale says similar dynamics are at play for Nigerian immigrants to Canada. He notes that, “Over 8 million Nigerians are Anglicans. When they come to Canada, the Anglican church here does not meet their expectations. It is very different. When they come here and see the way things are, they say ‘no.’ They often don’t know how white people will feel if they say ‘We want to do it this way.’” Akinwale suggests that to counter this marginalization, church leadership should invite newcomers to be a part of the worship team. “Support them, so that they will be a part of the community. Get them involved. The moment we do that we will begin to see new things,” he says.

### **The Work to Be Done: Directions Forward**

Discussing how to dismantle anti-black racism in the ACC, Rev. Edmund Laldin says, “It’s not necessarily clear what we’re working towards.”

For Laldin, having clarity on this would require a large scale analysis of the ACC’s policies. Laldin says the national Black Anglicans group is trying to hire someone who could do precisely that: “That would help determine what our goals will be. There needs to be evidence and foundations to work with. And there has to be a conversation at general Synod.”

Laldin does note some specific actions which can be taken. For instance, he thinks there should be an apology from the national church for histories of systemic racism, and specific acknowledgment of anti-black racism. He stresses the importance of naming the particularity of anti-blackness, alongside other forms of discrimination.

Akinwale anticipates new developments in the Black Anglicans of Canada network. “We have a platform now,” he says, “We have a community and a structure. We have to extend our reach.” Akinwale has himself now been appointed Outreach and Partnership Coordinator for Black Anglicans of Canada, and he is eager to be engaged in the work of welcoming more people into the community.

Recently, Black Anglicans of Canada also received a grant from the ACC’s national office to recruit a consultant whose task is to put together a conference or series of events for the Black Anglican community. Akinwale says that the group is hoping to receive more grants to support their work in the future.

Manswell and James express that they would like more support from the diocese. Both say that they would like to see more Black people participating at all levels of church governance. Akinwale emphasizes this point: “If we want an inclusive church, we have to not just talk, but walk the talk. That’s what Christ did.”



Photo: [Stephen Rheeder](#)

## Reconsidering What is Sacred

DAVID DRIEDGER

This reflection was given by pastor and theologian David Driedger as the opening remarks for an event titled [Which Violence, Whose Safety?](#) hosted by First Mennonite Church. The event was a non-partisan discussion of the political rhetoric around “violent crime” in the lead up to the recent Manitoba Provincial Election. Speakers included Bronwyn Dobchuck-Land, professor of criminal justice, and Levi Foy, the executive director of Sunshine House.

I consider it important to rehearse our deep tradition of liberation recounting the civil disobedience of the Hebrew slaves; the centrality of jubilee which runs through the Law, the Prophets and the Gospels proclaiming and legislating the forgiveness of debts, the restoration of traditional lands, and the release of captives.

I love the words of the prophets who tell the people that their worship is worthless and rejected by God if they refuse to address matters of suffering and injustice.

Just a couple of weeks ago I came across these words from Micah 3:5:

*Thus says the Lord to the leaders who guide my people astray,*

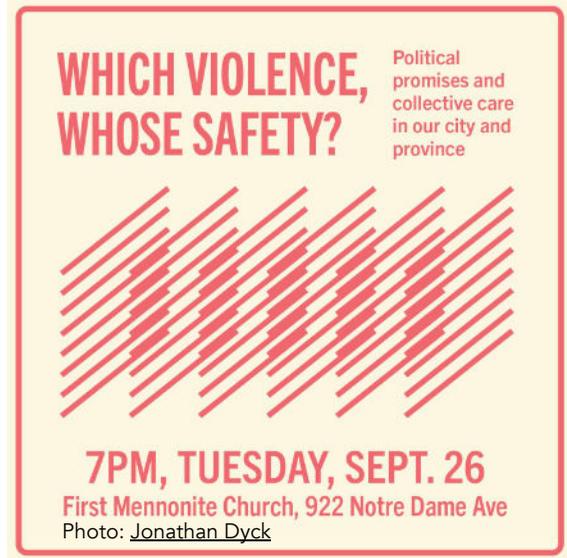
*Who proclaim ‘peace’ when they have something to eat.*

*But declare war against those who put nothing in their mouth.*

According to this prophet, a system of unjust inequality is a declaration of war against the poor.

It is important to remind people that Jesus said it was basically impossible for the rich to get into heaven. He even tells a story of one rich leader who was sent to hell for neglecting care when he had the power to make a change.

These are important and central traditions and I usually take some encouragement from them. Rather than find strength in this tradition in preparation for tonight, I started to feel its



weight. I began to think of the nearly 3000 years of people naming injustice and abuse within the Jewish and Christian traditions.

It is easy to opt for cynicism, despair, or defensiveness in the face of these realities. It is easy to think there is nothing we can do.

But before I turn it over to our speakers, I want to begin with a very brief theological statement for those who came here from a church background. For those who didn't, I want to make a public statement that may differ from a lot of what usually emerges from churches in public.

In the biblical tradition, idols are objects that have been extracted from nature and what is living and turned into dead symbols of power and control. When prophets rail against idols, it is because they believe idols steal life from the living.

I think it is fair to say we live in a society



Photo: Joban Khangura

based on the constant and even accelerated extraction, accumulation, and concentration of power, in the form of wealth and capital. We have created our own object or currency of power and control that takes life away from the living.

It is hard to care collectively because everything is driven towards producing profit and return on investment. The problem is that many of the things that matter most about being human are not profitable in this system. This leaves people and organizations committed to this work of care constantly fighting for whatever scraps of funding they can get.

The prophets of the Northern Kingdom of Israel had an interesting way of speaking about such a society. When a nation was based on idols, that is, when a country is founded and operates by taking life from the living, the prophets said the king *caused the people to sin*.

It didn't matter if one king, one political leader, was a little better or a little worse than another. The order of that society was unjust and so the people were complicit in it, but responsibility for this injustice was laid squarely at the feet of those with power.

I believe most of us truly want to do more to help each other. Many of us feel guilty because we feel like we're not doing enough. But we live in a society that makes so many demands pulling us away from what matters most.

I think the church should become more comfortable understanding and naming our society as idolatrous. I don't mean this in some conservative moral depravity sort of way, but rather because our society is willing to sacrifice so many in order to accumulate, concentrate, and

protect its symbolic forms of wealth and power.

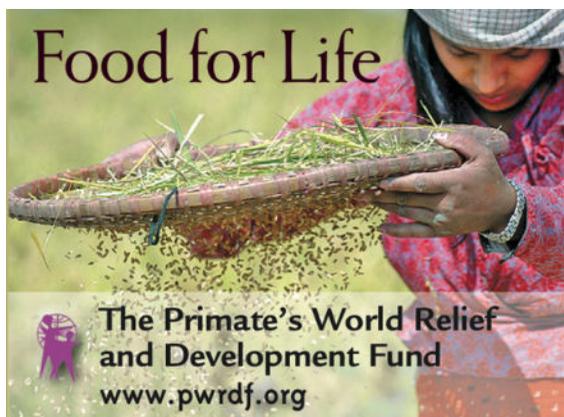
Whoever wins the election will make a real material difference in people's lives. For this reason, the election is important, but we will also need to remind ourselves that our next leader will continue working within a system that is working against the values so many of us hold.

In light of this, the church must reconsider its idea of what is sacred. So much suffering in our society is cast off and framed as moral failing, or even criminal. Markers of class and race, which drugs one uses and where, how and where one expresses their sexuality all play a part in how our society allocates dignity and support through laws and wealth.

If our system actively works against certain forms of collective care, then we need to be willing to support people who have rejected or been rejected by our society. This is not to be romantic or naive about the struggles some are forced into. It is simply to say that perhaps places dismissed or discarded by society are also places we can learn about love and care and kinship and intimacy in ways that are not determined by dominant notions of collective care based on blood or the succession of wealth.

It can feel patronizing to hear Jesus' words saying, 'Blessed are the poor.' Perhaps this statement only makes sense when we understand that places deemed poor in the eyes of the world might also be places that can escape some of the corrupting influences of our society from which something new might emerge. These might be sacred spaces.

The church by and large has also neglected and even condemned such places. We are in no place to lead but can perhaps learn and repent and follow and support rightly valuing what matters most.



David Driedger is Leading Minister of First Mennonite Church of Winnipeg. David lives in the West End of Winnipeg where he spends some of his free time supporting local activists and organizations as well as working as an independent scholar and writer.

## Anglican Journey

MARK FRIESEN

Photo: [Kentaro Toma](#)

I was raised in an evangelical Mennonite church in Winnipeg, and in my teen years made this faith my own. This included being baptised in the church and being active in its youth group. This commitment continued into my adult life although at a more youth-oriented congregation within my denomination. When I was in my late 20's, I lived in Wycliffe College dorm, an evangelical Anglican seminary at the University of Toronto. The dorm was available for those studying at the college and also for graduate students in other fields who wanted to live in a Christian environment.

During this time I had many opportunities to engage or otherwise explore the Anglican tradition including Wednesday chapels before supper, and going with Anglican dormmates to local Anglican parishes. Yet I did not attend a single chapel, and I only attended one Anglican service in the entire two years I was there. I remember reacting negatively to the sermon which suggested that regular engagement with both the bible and communion were two keys to growth in the Christian walk. I saw the bible as God's word, but communion as merely of symbolic significance. I did not have the conceptual categories to see communion as imparting spiritual life in a way similar to the bible.

I eventually found the closest thing to a Mennonite church that I could find in downtown Toronto: a Baptist church. I very much appreciated the Anglican Christians that I met at Wycliffe and considered them fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. But my own identity was as an evangelical Anabaptist, and it was as such

that I lived my life while at Wycliffe. I really had no curiosity in exploring the Anglican tradition for myself. Fast forward 20 years and in my late forties, I made the decision to become a member of the evangelical Anglican parish of St Margaret's. Sometimes I have reflected back on my time at Wycliffe College and wonder: how did I go from a place of disinterest to full embrace of the Anglican Christian tradition?

As I grew older, I found myself reading more and more from Christian writers who drew from a wide range of the Christian tradition. I found that it was often Anglican writers who spoke to me most powerfully. Anglican writers such as Leanne Payne, Agnes Sanford, and C.S. Lewis combined an openness to the Spirit, a love of Scripture, and powerful engagement with sacrament and liturgy. They seemed to see sacrament and liturgy as means by which God's Spirit moved powerfully in people's lives. Their views and experiences challenged my Anabaptist understanding of sacraments as mere symbols that had no power in themselves. In other words, I was encountering a more sacramental way of viewing the world.

Because the Christians who were presenting this worldview to me were broadly "in my tribe" as evangelical protestants, I was willing to be open to their ideas. For example, Agnes Sanford wrote of mystical experiences where she could see the light of Christ's presence in the consecrated elements of bread and wine. At first, I was not sure how to understand these experiences. But they planted the seeds of beginning to think in a more sacramentalized way.

As time went on, I began to desire for a deeper, more grounded, rooted faith than I had experienced up to that point. I also got a devotional book that followed the Christian Liturgical year. One year, I went to Saint Margaret's church for Ash Wednesday. It was my first time at this church and I noticed the church was packed for this marker at the beginning of the season of Lent. I also noticed how much we used our bodies during the service: the extended time on our knees as we prayed "The



Photo: *Honeysuckle*, 1874, By William Morris, via Birmingham Museums Trust

Great Liturgy"; the leaders processing around the congregation with banners; and of course, the imposition of the ashes on our foreheads. The seeds planted during that Ash Wednesday service started to work their way into my heart, and prompted a desire to explore further.

I started to visit Saint Margaret's Sunday evening service. I eventually reached out to the pastoral staff and met some of them for lunch periodically such as Kurt Armstrong, a pastor of community life. I really appreciated that as I continued to attend Saint Margaret's Sunday evening services for a number of years. I experienced the presence of Christ in a powerful way in the liturgy and sacrament. I also appreciated the theological depth of the preaching.

Eventually, I started to attend more and more regularly until I came to the place where I wanted to make Saint Margaret's my home church. Around the same time, I started to engage in the Liturgy of the Hours. I had discovered *The Divine Hours*, a book based on the *Book of Common Prayer* by Anglican writer Phyllis Tickle. I started to pray the morning, noon, and evening prayers in *The Divine Hours*

everyday. In some ways, I found them to be a more helpful sustainable template for daily prayer than trying to put in a long period of time in the morning for prayer that was supposed to sustain me for the whole day. It felt like a flexible structure to my prayer life throughout the day. At this point it felt like my conversion to a sacramental, liturgical life was complete. A few years later, delayed by the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, I would participate in the rite of confirmation and be fully received into the Anglican communion.

So, what had changed in my life from the time in my late twenties where I had been benignly disinterested in Anglican tradition to my late forties where I made the move to become Anglican? The short answer is I found that the Anglican theology and practice of sacrament and liturgy provided a more solid basis for me to live my Christian life than the tradition I had grown up with and identified with so strongly in my youth. I still appreciate many aspects of the Anabaptist faith tradition including a love of scripture and its historic peace witness. Saint Margaret's is a church with a lot of people just like myself, people who grew up in Mennonite churches who made the journey to a deeper connection to the ancient church. I found myself among like-minded people who appreciated both their Mennonite heritage and the depth of the ancient faith found at Saint Margaret's. I am thankful for God taking me on this journey. He has led me to a place where I can grow in my daily walk with Him in ways that I could not have imagined. Thanks be to God.



Mark Friesen is a parishioner at Saint Margaret's Anglican Church. He lives with his wife Maryann and two teenage boys in Winnipeg. He works as a hospital pharmacist. He is grateful to Kurt Armstrong (Community Development Pastor) for making space Saturday mornings for writing during which this article was written.

# Diocesan News Roundup



## Moving Towards Reconciliation

*A message from Marlene Smith, Refugee Coordinator for the Diocese of Rupert's Land*

The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) Association, of which the Diocese of Rupert's Land is a member, is committed to upholding the values, principles, and calls to action that came out of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As we try to live out the Third Mark of Mission – Responding to Human need by Loving Service, and “Welcome the Stranger,” doing the work of re-settling the oppressed and vulnerable refugees of the world, we seek to inform ourselves of the past, acknowledging the wrongs that were done to Canada's First Peoples. In welcoming newcomers to this country - their new home - we recognize that they too should know about the history of Canada as we all learn of the past, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation and learning to live in community. As we undergo the process of building safe, healthy, and inclusive communities, we take this journey by building relationships, so that we can all live in peace and harmony with each other while respecting our individual beliefs.

The SAH Association recently established a collective of settlement organizations dedicated to promoting the work of the TRC with Indigenous Communities. The collective provides a space for discussion, reflection, mutual learning, and critical action. “Our collective responsibility is to educate ourselves about the truth of the oppression of Indigenous Peoples and ways the settlement sector can best work in allyship with Indigenous communities.”

### Truth and Reconciliation

On June 1, 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was created to document the history and

lasting impacts of the residential school system in Canada on Indigenous individuals and their families. The Commission held several meetings across the country, providing survivors of the residential schools the chance to speak about their experiences.

After several years of meetings and documenting these stories, the TRC released its report detailing its findings and 94 Calls to Action towards reconciliation.

The report notes:

It is due to the courage and determination of former students—the Survivors of Canada's residential school system—that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (trc) was established. They worked for decades to place the issue of the abusive treatment that students were subjected to at residential schools on the national agenda. Their perseverance led to the reaching of the historic Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

**All Canadians must now demonstrate the same level of courage and determination, as we commit to an ongoing process of reconciliation.** By establishing a new and respect-ful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, we will restore what must be restored, repair what must be repaired, and return what must be returned.

Justice Murray Sinclair, *Chair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*  
Chief Wilton Littlechild, *Commissioner*  
Dr. Marie Wilson, *Commissioner*

Below are two documents published by the TRC: **The Survivors Speak** report where residential school survivors detail their experiences, and the **Calls to Action** towards reconciliation. It is important that we read these documents, learn about the impacts of these schools, and commit to reconciliation.

[Calls to Action](#)  
[The Survivors Speak](#)

## Appointments and Departures

Bishop Geoff is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev. Wilson Akinwale as Incumbent of the parish of St. Bartholomew, Winnipeg (1/2 time) and Incumbent of the parish of St. George, Transcona (1/2 time). Wilson's appointment will begin on December 11th. Please join with us in upholding Wilson, his family and these parishes in your prayers as this new relationship begins.

Bishop Geoff is pleased to announce the hiring of Mr. Ryan Turnbull as the Diocesan Discipleship Developer. Ryan will begin his work in the diocese on October 1st. A bio will follow in due course. This is an exciting time for our diocese and we look forward to Ryan's ministry in our midst.

### Saint benedict's table minister, Rev. Jamie Howison retires

This past weekend Jamie celebrated his retirement following 20 years as minister at saint benedict's table. The staff and parishioners of saint benedict's table are offering an online option to record 'well-wishes and fond memories' for Rev. Jamie Howison. Anyone interested is welcome to contribute at [tiny.cc/sbtparty](http://tiny.cc/sbtparty) Please note: while there is an option to include an email address, feel free to press "skip" to avoid sharing any contact info.

### Pastoral Care for 2SLGBTQ+

In response to the threats to Trans and Queer rights and lives throughout Canada, concerned 2SLGBTQ+ leaders in the Diocese and their allies have organized a two-week pilot pastoral care program to offer confidential pastoral care and prayer for trans and queer folk in Winnipeg. The group believes that the need for pastoral care is urgent for people whose very lives are being threatened. The group does not offer mental health care, but will offer referrals should this need arise. Instead, over ten ecumenical clergy have volunteered their time to serve as pastors to those in need. These priests and

ministers are on call on a rotating basis from 8 a.m. to midnight daily from September 24 - October 7. Although this pilot project lasts only two weeks, the pastoral care team will do a needs assessment at the end of this period in order to determine the ongoing needs of the community and how the church may be of support.

If you are queer or trans and would like to talk to a member of clergy, please call or text 431-275-5039 to be connected during these hours. Messages left overnight will be checked in the morning.

If you are clergy and you wish to volunteer, please contact Cass Smith at [csmith\\_1388@hotmail.com](mailto:csmith_1388@hotmail.com).

If you would like more information about the program, please contact Andrew Rampton [andrew.rampton@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.rampton@gmail.com), Theo Robinson [teejayrobinson27@gmail.com](mailto:teejayrobinson27@gmail.com) or Jane Barter [janealexandrabarter@gmail.com](mailto:janealexandrabarter@gmail.com).

The leaders of this project gratefully acknowledge the support of the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

## This is a Safe Space

As more anti-trans/queer protests take place, we have been asked for a way for parishes to identify to the public that they are a safe, inclusive and accepting place.

Posting this sign is optional and we ask that before you post this at any of your entrances, please ensure to have discussions among your vestry and within your congregation to ensure that all parts of your parish are safe and accepting. If you would like to add your logo to this flier, please request an editable copy from [general@rupertsland.ca](mailto:general@rupertsland.ca)





## Parish Profile: St. Matthew's Anglican Church

Photo: [Markus Spiske](#)

### How does your church community understand "place"?

We are located in the West End neighbourhood of Winnipeg, Manitoba on Treaty One territory. Our location is significant to our identity as our church has been shaped by our surrounding community.

In the 1950s and 60s when many British families who had been members of [St. Matthew's](#) moved to the suburbs in the south side of the city, the parish was faced with the decision of whether to close and relocate. Instead, the church decided that its mission and ministry should remain West Central Winnipeg. In 1972, in partnership with Maryland United Church (then also worshipping in the building), St. Matthews-Maryland Community Ministry was founded as an outreach ministry to the neighbourhood which has now become part of the non-profit organization 1JustCity's initiatives.

By the turn of the century, managing the large building had become difficult for the small

congregation. Committed to continuing to serve in this neighbourhood, St. Matthew's entered into a partnership with another church worshipping in the building, Grain of Wheat Church-Community, to establish St. Matthew's Non-Profit Housing Inc (SMNPH). Together, they also developed the WestEnd Commons, which provides supportive housing and community to low and mid income community members. St. Matthew's gave a 50 year lease of its building to SMNPH and is now a tenant in the building and an active member of the WestEnd Commons.

Our community is also actively aware that we live and worship on Indigenous land, and that the formation of our church is entangled in histories of Christian settler colonialism. As Indigenous and settler people worshipping together, we aim to honour the history of Indigenous leadership and ministry in St. Matthew's past (for instance, the Friendship Sewing Circle with Rev. Phyllis Keeper, and the neighbourhood feasts hosted by Indigenous community members) and present, and to honour Indigenous communities outside our parish.

### What are three words members of your church community might use to describe your church to a stranger?

Community  
Acceptance  
Diversity



St. Matthew's community on Easter morning

### Who is a part of your church community?

Our current church membership includes people of diverse ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, faith backgrounds, and occupying different class statuses. Our church has been gifted and shaped over the years by Indigenous and Caribbean communities within our congregation. More recently our congregation has grown to include a number of Berundian members. We also have a number of older white members, several of whom have been involved in various forms of social activism. We have also been shaped by LGBT+ members of our congregation.

### How would you describe your church community's worship?

Our worship is rooted in Anglican tradition, but we try to have it be as accessible as possible. We select hymns from the *Book of Common Praise* which resonate with our mission and with our community. Worship services are liturgical, but are also relaxed. It is hard to do *the wrong thing* at St. Matthew's. We have a lot of room for messiness. We also highly value community. When sharing "the peace," many congregants make a point of sharing with every other member of our small community. Lay members provide healing prayer with anointing some Sundays, and coffee times for catching up and friendship some Sundays as well.

### What do you value about your church community? Where do you see life in your community?

The life of St. Matthew's is best expressed through our church prayer and our community aims.



St. Matthew's Anglican Church. Photograph by Nathan Kramer, accessed via Manitoba Historical Society

### Our prayer for our congregation:

*We pray for our parish, St. Matthew's, here in the heart of the city in the heart of God. Let our church be like a living tree giving shade and shelter to all who come. Under its branches let the people rest in your grace and be re-rooted in your kin-dom's work. May the streets of our community be holy ground beneath our feet.*

### Our aims:

Our parish strives to be...

- a community of belonging, dignity and honouring of each other's gifts
- a people of compassionate action and engagement with our neighbours
- a space of healing for ourselves and all our relations
- an opportunity to celebrate our faith with joy and intellect; and
- a community of collaborative decision-making and table fellowship



An outdoor Communion service in Agnes Green Space

  
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