

Pastoral Letter # 54 – January 18, 2008

Dear Friends:

1. Saskatoon has been selected as one of four venues for the Aboriginal and Church Leaders Canadian Tour to promote the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The date for the Saskatoon event is the afternoon of **Sunday, March 9**. Please mark this date in your calendar now. I urge you to attend, to publicize this significant event, and to invite others to attend. The location and start time will be announced later.

The following is a brief statement from Dr. Ellie Johnson, Director of Partnerships for our Church: "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is part of the work of addressing the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. The four churches that were involved in running the schools hope to help Canadians, and in particular, members of the churches, to prepare for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The churches are planning a tour of Aboriginal and Church Leaders during the 10 day period from March 1 to 10, with events planned in four centres, Ottawa, Vancouver, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg."

Our Primate, the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, and our National Indigenous Bishop, the Right Rev. Mark MacDonald, will be present for this event that is intended for members of the Roman Catholic, United, Presbyterian, and Anglican Churches. Church leaders from other denominations will also be present. It is hoped this event will draw church people from across Saskatchewan, with a good representation from aboriginal people.

The Saskatoon stop on the tour came in response to an invitation from the Director of the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, the Rev. Dr. Janet Bigland-Pritchard, supported by Ethel Ahanakew and Mary Ann Assailly. Ethel and Mary Ann recently travelled to Toronto for a conference of people representing our church at Alternate Dispute Resolution hearings.

The Prairie Centre for Ecumenism will be arranging and publicizing this event. As you know, the Anglican Church of Canada has given strong leadership to the residential schools settlement. Our Diocese contributed \$ 300,000.00 to the fund. Individuals in our diocese have contributed generously towards this. St. Luke's Church, Saskatoon contributed \$100,000 towards the \$ 300,000 total when their church closed. The Diocese made up the difference from reserves. This was a significant beginning. The next stage is described in the words 'Healing and Reconciliation.' I see this visit from Aboriginal and Church leaders as vital to the process.

I strongly urge maximum participation of our clergy and laity in the March 9 event.

2. We welcome the Rev. Gordon Lines and his wife Delores to our Diocese. Gordon is originally from Athabasca, Alberta, and is a graduate of the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad. He was ordained in the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior and has been Rector of Lytton B.C. for the past few years. Gordon and Delores will be living in Saskatoon.

3. The Rev. Gordon Lines has been appointed Interim Priest for Unity Central Parish and the Parish of Humboldt and Watson. He will be conducting services in Unity Central Parish two Sundays each month and at Humboldt and Watson two Sundays each month.

If any clergy are available for services in Unity Central Parish and the Humboldt Watson Parish, please contact me. We will need clergy to fill in on the Sundays when the Rev. Gordon Lines is not available.

4. If any of the clergy have not yet registered for the Annual Clergy Retreat, please do so as soon as possible.
5. Sympathy is extended to our Diocesan Chancellor, Dr. Beth Bilson, on the death of her father Thomas 'Tommy' McLeod. Services for Dr. McLeod will be held in Victoria on January 26.
6. Mrs. Elta Fae Marlor is resting at home after surgery on January 8 for a detached retina. Best wishes, Elta Fae.
7. Please continue to pray for Jordan Weiland, the last boy still in hospital from the Borden High School Basketball team vehicle crash December 13. Jordan is now out of intensive care and making some progress.
8. Please remember to update your Anglican Journal mailing lists on a regular basis. Changes are to be sent directly to the Anglican Journal circulation department in Toronto.
9. Officials of the Primate's World Relief and Development fund have issued a scam alert. Apparently a telemarketing company is misleading people by soliciting donations on behalf of the "Primate's Fund". PWRDF never solicits donations via telemarketing and PWRDF does not share its direct donor list.
10. Information is available at the Synod Office on a couple of upcoming conferences:
 - 'Human Sexuality and the Nuptial Mystery' led by Prof. Oliver O'Donovan and Prof. Ephraim Radner will be held April 20 to April 22 at St. Margaret's Church, Winnipeg. The website is SaintMargarets.ca/Consultation.
 - The Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada is offering a program that will provide leadership development for clergy and laity in the area of stewardship. The event will be held at Kananaskis, Alberta March 27-29 with the theme speaker Diana Butler Bass, author of Christianity for the Rest of Us. Information is available by contacting kjackson@anwconf.com.
11. I am approaching the mid-point of my ten-month schedule of Sunday visits and 'Parish Days.' I am grateful to many hosts and to all who have participated to date. A highlight of each Parish Day has been a 'circle' time where there has been energizing dialogue about the diocese and the national and international Anglican Church. These events have allowed me to meet and to chat with many of our members. The experience reaffirms my faith in the commitment of our clergy and laity, and is evidence of the love people have for their church.

I look forward to the next round of visits. The clergy are reminded that I would like to meet with the Church Wardens, with the youth group, and with the confirmation class during the Parish Days.

Here are some words from the New Zealand Prayer Book (p. 114). They spoke to me in this season of Epiphany.

“The time has come; the kingdom of God is upon us.
Let us repent and believe the gospel.

The kingdom of God is like yeast:
A woman takes it and mixes it with flour until the dough is risen.
The kingdom of God is like a buyer looking for fine pearls.
When he finds one exceptional pearl,
He sells everything he has, and buys it.

When we set our minds on God’s reign,
Our hearts on God’s justice,
Everything else will be ours as well.

Listen to Jesus who proclaims good news,
Which he alone fulfills.”

Yours sincerely,

Rodney Andrews
Bishop of Saskatoon