

## Pastoral Letter # 53 – December 19, 2007

Dear Friends:

1. The Rev. Alex Parsons, a Master of Divinity graduate of the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, was ordained deacon on Advent Sunday, December 2 at St. Matthias Church, Colonsay. The preacher was the Rev. Canon Beth Marie Murphy. A dinner was held at the Odd Fellows Hall, Colonsay, in celebration of Alex's ordination.

Alex has been appointed Deacon Assistant in the Greater Watrous Parish under the direction of the Rev. Canon Colin Clay.

2. The Rev. Jonathan Hoskin has accepted the appointment of Assistant Priest of Holy Trinity Church, Calgary effective January 15, 2008. Jonathan served as Incumbent of Unity Central Parish since September 2005. He has also been part of the ecumenical ministry at Evesham and Senlac, and has assisted with Youth Discover Christ weekends.

Congratulations and best wishes to Jonathan and Cindy for their ministry in the Diocese of Calgary.

3. The Rev. Joanne Beacon has accepted the appointment of Rector of the Ridge Parish in the Diocese of Niagara effective February 1, 2008. She will be Rector of three churches: All Saints Anglican Church, Ridgeway, St. John's Anglican Church, Ridgemount and St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ridgeway.

Joanne was inducted as deacon incumbent at the Humboldt Parish September 12, 1999. She has been Regional Dean of the Eastern Deanery for the past three years. Joanne has been a hard working and enthusiastic parish priest, and has demonstrated creative and caring leadership. One of two feature articles on the Diocese of Saskatoon in the Anglican Journal in October and November 2006 focused on Joanne's ministry. The article drew affirmation and recognition from across Canada for Joanne's pastoral ministry.

Best wishes to Joanne as she prepares to make her way to Eastern Canada and her new ministry there.

4. The Rev. Sheila Martin has been appointed Regional Dean of the Eastern Deanery effective February 1, 2008. Congratulations Sheila and best wishes as you assume this additional leadership role.

5. Sympathy is extended to the Right Rev. Tom Morgan and Mrs. Lillian Morgan on the death of Lillian's mother, Mrs. Doris Textor, on November 19. Tom describes his mother in law as "quite a lady, feisty and generous". The Funeral service for Mrs. Textor was held at Turtleford on November 23.

6. Thank you for your prayers for those affected by the tragic accident near Borden last week. A funeral service will be held at Borden School on Thursday afternoon December 20 for Sandon Sutherland and Gregory Sargent. The Rector, the Rev. Dr. Janet Bigland Pritchard, joins me in extending thanks to so many who expressed their concern for the people of Borden, particularly the young people.
7. The Synod Office will be closed from December 24 to January 1, inclusive. The office will reopen on January 2 at 9:00 a.m.
8. The Very Rev. Terry Wiebe will be Commissary of the Diocese from December 27, 2007 to January 3, 2008 inclusive.
9. The Right Rev. John Privett, Bishop of Kootenay, will lead the Annual Clergy Retreat for the Dioceses of Qu'Appelle and Saskatoon. The dates are January 28 to 31 inclusive. All licensed clergy are expected to attend. Brochures and registration forms will be available soon. Arrangements are in the hands of the Diocese of Qu'Appelle this year.
10. In your parish planning, please try to hold your Annual General Meetings as early as possible this year. There is considerable planning necessary to prepare for our April 4-6 Synod. It would be very helpful if parishes could send in the names of their Lay Delegates well before the Synod.
11. The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, will be our special guest for Synod. Archbishop Hiltz has visited Saskatoon previously, but this will be his first official visit to our Diocese. It will be a pleasure to have our new Primate at the Synod.
12. With the assistance of the Partnerships Committee of General Synod, two lay leaders of the Mothers Union in our Companion Diocese of Guyana will be guests for Synod and for the Annual Meeting of the Diocesan ACW. The women will be our guests for approximately two weeks and it is hoped they will be able to visit extensively throughout the Diocese. If your parish would like to host them for a visit, an event or to provide hospitality please contact the Diocesan ACW President, Mrs. Lauren Jardine at 306-384-0229 or the Social Action/Missions Coordinator of the Diocesan ACW, Mrs. Elaine Hrycenko at 306-547-5401.
13. On November 28, I attended a Harvest Supper at Quill Lake where a significant contribution of approximately \$ 10,000.00 was made to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. A group of Christian farmers from Quill Lake raised hay and oats on 320 acres. With the help of fertilizer dealers and seed merchants, they raised \$ 60,000 over a two-year period. The money was donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, of which the Primate's Fund is now a member agency. With government grants, the money will become as much as \$ 300,000 and will feed 4,566 people for a year.

Congratulations to the people of Quill Lake on this significant donation to meet a real need.

14. Some pictures of work supported in our Companion Diocese with gifts from the Bishop's Tractor Trek, and a gift from our Diocesan ACW, are displayed on the Diocese of Saskatoon website.
15. A Pastoral Statement from the Primate and Metropolitans of the Anglican Church of Canada was released on November 29, 2007 and is available on the National Church web site

[www.anglican.ca](http://www.anglican.ca). The letter speaks to Canadian Anglicans about current controversies in the church and concludes, "We call all Anglicans to a renewed emphasis on mission and prayer for faithful witness in the service of the gospel within our parishes and across the world."

If you have not done so, please read the Pastoral Statement. I am not asking that it be read in our churches or reprinted for distribution, but I commend it to study and discussion in our parishes. If you choose to reprint the Statement, you should do so in its entirety.

16. There are opportunities for individuals and parishes to become involved in the pastoral ministry at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre. Mr. Peter Oliver, the Chaplain, would welcome Anglicans who could assist in the following ways:
  - a. To be Anglican representatives on a committee working at restorative justice and reconciliation both inside and outside the institution (educational, informative, etc.). Please speak to me if you are interested.
  - b. The Chaplain would like to hear from church groups who would like to visit the Centre on a regular basis to lead worship, Bible study etc. This could be a project for churches searching for an opportunity to minister in the community.

Peter extends an invitation to Parish Councils who might wish to tour the Centre and learn about the chaplaincy and ministry opportunities. He may be contacted at 956-8865.

17. A conference on Vital Church Planting 2008 will be held at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Bloor Street, Toronto from Tuesday, February 26 to Thursday, February 28, 2008. The speakers will be George Lings of the Sheffield Centre, UK and the Rev. Dr. Connie denBok of Etobicoke, Ontario.

Archbishop Rowan Williams says "At a time when we are frequently told that the Christian story has lost its competing power, countless new groups and ventures are growing up that show such claims to be deeply mistaken. Few people in the UK have as much awareness of this as George Lings . . ."

Connie denBok is a United Church minister who has planted three churches, and presently pastors a suburban congregation outside Toronto.

18. "Generation 2008", a National Anglican Youth Ministry Forum, will be held June 10-15, 2008 at Huron University College, London, Ontario. "Generation 2008 is a 5-day forum to renew, equip, and empower Canadian Anglicans who are engaged in ministry with youth: youth workers, young adults, youth ministers, Anglican camp staff, chaplains (school and university), clergy, diocesan staff etc." Information is available at [www.generation.anglican.ca](http://www.generation.anglican.ca).

I would like to see a few of our youth workers and young people attend this conference. Please give this serious thought.

19. A National Joint Anglican and Lutheran Worship Conference will be held in Montreal June 25-28, 2008. The speakers will be Gordon Lathrop "world renowned Liturgical Theologian" and Karen Ward who advocates "a future church with an ancient faith". An evening to promote the conference was held at Luther College on December 7. A warm invitation was extended for

people from Saskatchewan to attend the conference which promises to be a worthwhile event. Registration and information is available at [www.WorshipConference2008.org](http://www.WorshipConference2008.org).

In November, I was privileged to take the course *The Palestine of Jesus* at St. George's Anglican College in Jerusalem. My time in the land of the Holy One was inspiring and renewing.

The day of our visit to Bethlehem, we were told, "bring your passport." I wondered why I would need a passport to travel a few kilometres within the same country. The reason became evident as we reached the outskirts of Bethlehem. A formidable concrete wall covered with graffiti surrounds the city. Soldiers with machine guns are posted in a watchtower beside an ugly gate.

Our driver and guide negotiated the formalities and we were soon at Manger Square. As you walk toward the entrance to the Church of the Nativity, you observe that the entrance is only a few feet high. Worshippers are required to crouch down to enter the church. The entrance was changed a few hundred years ago to prevent Infidels from riding their horses into the church causing mayhem and death with their swords. Outside the church young soldiers, carrying machine guns are on constant patrol.

In the silence of the church, I asked myself "Is there any possibility of peace?" I recalled the words of a Jewish elder I met in a kibbutz on the Sea of Galilee forty years ago. "Shalom, it is the most beautiful word in the world. It is what we want most, but we cannot get it." I left Israel thankful that I live in Canada, but also with a renewed conviction that God came among us with a real message for our hearts and our lives. I believe we need to incarnate that message and reflect it in all we say and do.

One of the traditional prayers from the Festival of Carols and Lessons held annually at King's College, Cambridge says "We need not need to leave our homes to seek by starlight some far off shrine, for the Holy Babe is no longer Bethlehem's pride and Mary's joy, but the whole wide world's, and the blessed burden of every heart that makes him room."

May God bless you richly this Christmas and in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

+ Rodney

Rodney Andrews  
Bishop of Saskatoon