

The Anglican Church of Canada
Diocese of Athabasca
The Anglican Centre

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Dear People of Christ in the Diocese of Athabasca:

As the days get shorter and cooler, I pray that you have been able to enjoy the beautiful colours of our fall. God has truly given us a beautiful world, in so many ways – despite everything else that is going on, please take time to enjoy what God has given us.

After discussion with the clergy, I am designating October as a month for us to pray together for Ibba – a diocese in the South Sudan. As you may know, Bishop Fraser became personal friends with Bishop Wilson Kamani of the diocese of Ibba, and a relationship has since grown between our two dioceses. I want to thank you for praying for Ibba each week, as I found out when I had the honour of participating in many of your worship services. Recently Bishop Wilson has notified us that Ibba has, like us, experienced major flooding (like Peace River, Fort McMurray and Fort Vermilion), and are under stress due to covid-19. In addition, they have also been approached by local government groups to pursue reconciliation between the political parties, as bloodshed and enmity are common amongst them. They definitely have their plate full.

With the assistance of the Rev. Deacon Danielle McKenzie, materials have been prepared and are being sent to each parish. Please pray each day for reconciliation and peace, recovery and health, for the people of the diocese of Ibba. If everyone could say a short prayer every day at 7 pm, then all across our diocese God would

be having conversations about Ibba, as part of our daily evening prayers. Please also pray each week in your worship services, as a joined community of all of us together. Then, on Saturday October 31st, if we could have a day of prayer and fasting (there are many ways of fasting, for those concerned about food) focussed on Ibba and God's ministry for them, that would be wonderful. May they be blessed in the tasks that Jesus is giving them, and may His kingdom be evident through them.

I have the following story for you:

A cultural-events reporter was interviewing a person from our diocese, and the interview went something like this:

Reporter: "Why do you think you're here on earth?"

Member of our diocese: "To love, so that every person in northern Alberta can receive the Kingdom of God."

"What demonstrates the Kingdom of God?"

"First, the presence of shalom: peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, wellness and tranquility. Second, displaying the fruits of the Holy Spirit, regardless of my present mood or emotional state: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Third, being filled with Christ."

"How do you do that?"

"Love God with all we are. Everything we have, everything we do goes towards glorifying God and helping God realize His vision of walking with humanity in shalom. Love ourselves as Images of God and adopted siblings of Christ. We realize the huge gift that God has given us in making us His image, and adopting us into His household through Christ. What a huge value He puts on us! We are overwhelmed by the love He shows in this way, and so we strive to care for ourselves in respect of that love. Love others, especially those who do not already realize that they are images of God, just as much as we love ourselves."

"That sounds really hard."

"We accept others as they are, and the task Christ gives us with them."

"What tasks does Christ give you?"

“He tells us to love as He does, to follow His work in transforming the world to our Father. He tells us to have integrity within ourselves so that what we say and do is consistent. He tells us to have integrity with Him, so that what we say and do is consistent with what He says and does. He tells us to be open, honest, and true, and vulnerable in accepting attack from others. He empowers us to do His work in the specific contexts and persons we are with. Following His guidance, we empower others to overcome their separation from God, so God can walk with them and they can be in shalom with God.”

“What do you expect to happen as a result?”

“A strong and supportive relationship with Jesus the Christ and with each other. The redemption of those around us. A loving, joyful community. Worship of the one and only true God. People living in health, wellness, and freedom from fear. Jesus recognizing us as His disciples. Others whom we meet walking this path with us and also becoming disciples of Christ. Becoming self-sufficient, self-governing, and self-evangelizing.”

“Wow. There’s so much to understand and dig into here.”

“Yes. That’s what our lives are all about.” 😊

The above story is my attempt to put forth one vision of what we’re all about. We are not an organization which just brings in money to self-perpetuate itself. Our purpose is so much greater than just ourselves. We are not a social services agency, though we do social work. We are not a concert-provider, though we provide music and speeches. We are not a pastoral care agency, though we do pastoral care. We are not essential to the functioning of the world, though we provide much of what it lacks.

We are the church. We are the bride of Christ. We are a people who have encountered God in Christ, recognized our salvation, and live to please God. In living our lives to please God, we find that people are healed, the sin of the world is redeemed, the rift between God and humanity disappears – all through Christ. We live in the miraculous, being a people the world does not understand, nor wants to.

As such, we provide what gifts we can, for the glory of God in His Son our Saviour. I pray we use these gifts wisely. This letter is to help us (hopefully) re-focus on what we’re all about, and give a quick update of the gifts we have

received and used in financial measure. Financial measures are not the full picture! The full picture is given above. Truly, of all people we are so blessed.

With love in Christ;

David  

David Greenwood, Bishop

Financial Highlights to date (*thank you to our Treasurer for the below*):

We have more than we thought we'd have at this point:

- a) From beyond the Diocese – we did not get a New England Company grant this year, but that is largely offset by an unexpected grant from the Diocese of Huron through the Council of the North.
- b) Proportional giving is down about \$53,000 – the pandemic has closed our church buildings and congregations are experiencing declines in their revenues, which in turn reduces parishes' ability to contribute to Diocesan operating expenses.
- c) Investment income has arrived earlier than was expected in the year
- d) Donations – the donations amount is a significant anomaly
- e) Life insurance – with the generous agreement of the person involved, DEC decided cash in an insurance policy to improve our current cash situation

We have spent about \$50,000 less than we planned to:

- a) In view of our financial position, DEC decided not to send our Diocesan assessment to General Synod, leaving \$33,000 available for our own operations.
- b) Parish financial difficulties resulted in the Diocese picking up about \$21,000 in parish clergy payroll costs, and about \$15,000 in heating costs.
- c) Significant cost reductions came from the cancellation of Diocesan events and travel due to Covid-19.
- d) Further cost reductions came because we did not have a Bishop in January, and a change was made in Diocesan office staff.

While it may appear somewhat comforting to not be in a deficit position, we have missed out on significant events, training, and development, and we have not met our plan to contribute to the work of General Synod.

We can certainly thank our Heavenly Father for providing for us in the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. Money tucked away in the past, as well as unexpected money that arrived during this year. Maybe our Father has more surprises for us!

As of August 31, 2020:

Net Operating surplus (deficit) Stmt

INCOME	Actual	Anticipated	
From beyond the Diocese			
General Synod grant	50,000.00	50,000.00	
New England Company grant	0	15,000.00	We didn't get this grant this year
Other grants	13,426.76	0	Unexpected \$11K from Diocese of Huron
Total	63,426.76	65,000.00	

Diocesan Apportionment Giving

	Actual	Anticipated	
Athabasca	5,556.65	12,084.00	
Beaverlodge	6,200.00	5,000.00	
Northern Lights	11,375.00	12,996.00	
Fairview	4,054.85	4,990.64	
Fort Chipewyan	0.00	0.00	
All Saints', Fort McMurray	30,933.00	35,354.00	
St. Thomas', Fort McMurray	0.00	4,905.28	
Fort Vermilion	7,823.51	5,215.28	
Grande Prairie	6,094.71	23,700.00	
Grimshaw Berwyn	6,928.00	6,928.00	
High Prairie	2,965.64	11,862.64	
Lac La Biche	0.00	666.64	
Manning United Anglican	4,427.68	2,952.00	
Peace River	19,096.00	19,099.36	
Slave Lake Ecumenical	0.00	7,854.64	(\$2000 received in September)
Emmanuel Parish of East Smoky	0.00	3,333.36	
Wabasca	0.00	1,336.00	
Total	105,455.04	158,277.84	

Donations

Unspecified Donations	25,163.00	2,000.00	Unanticipated personal donations
Life insurance policy	28,888.65	0	Cashed in generous gift
Total	54,051.65	2,000.00	

Rental income 11,895.00 18,400.00

Miscellaneous 3,504.78 2,333.28

TOTAL REVENUE 254,167.50 246,011.12

EXPENSES

	Actual	Anticipated	
Beyond the Diocese			
General Synod	0	33,336.00	DEC decision to defer
Provincial Synod	783.00	1,566.00	
Total	783.00	34,902.00	
Support of parishes			
LOS grants	7,310.58	4,275.50	
Unfunded payroll/insurance costs			
	21,135.56	0	Parishes unable to pay benefits
Parish utilities	15,211.65	0	Parish unable to pay utilities
Clergy moving	17,347.60	20,000.00	Moving Bishop
Mission and ministry	335.20	6,666.64	Events cancelled
Clergy development	0	2,030.00	
Lay training	0	7,000.00	Lay Reader training via Zoom
The Messenger	240.43	2,666.68	
Total	61,581.02	42,638.82	
Administration	16,785.75	18,216.68	
Episcopal resources			
Bishop's Lodge	3,735.65	9,333.28	Not occupied until July
Malvern House	3,678.93	6,079.92	
Synod Office	3,692.63	4,333.28	
Property taxes for all	11,625.19	12,000.00	
Total	22,732.40	31,746.48	
Office Operations	10,310.75	17,415.84	No accounting fees, no extra staff
Travel	7,996.83	16,005.28	In-person meetings switch to Zoom
Salaries and benefits	115,671.34	125,603.12	No bishop in January
Total	133,978.92	159,024.24	
Small rural properties	6,406.62	4,333.28	
Other	6,299.00	0	Non-recoverable portion of GST
TOTAL EXPENSES	248,567	290,862	
NET	5,601	(44,850)	