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THE DIOCESE OF QU'APPELLE *Anglican Church of Canada*

Bishop's Christmas Message and Advent Diocesan News

December 2016

A common phrase I hear is that we are too busy, especially at Christmas: too caught up in our work, family celebrations, or parties. The Inn Keeper was like that and failed to notice the significance, and the desperate need, of the strangers that knocked at the door. Don't get me wrong, being busy is not necessarily a bad thing, others were also busy at their work in the Christmas story. The difference was that they were also attentive to the signs, significances and the God moments that happened around them:

...the shepherds (with a 24/7 job if ever there was one) were ever-vigilant and ever-watchful for thieves and wild animals, yet also able to notice, to hear, and to respond to the angels!

...the Magi, on observing a new star, could have catalogued it, named it, and maybe even wrote an article about it. Instead they saw a significance that caused them to travel hundreds of miles to worship the 'significant One' for whom the star shone.

...Anna and Simeon were in the temple going about their daily tasks. However, unlike the others that day, they recognized the One promised. *'Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'*

I wonder, in our places of work, education, or homes, in our busyness, are we also expectant to notice, to see, and to respond to the unexpected in our midst? Are we open to the God moments? Are we alive to the God incidences? Or, are we too busy, too stuck in legalities, too set in our ways, to respond to the '*God With Us*', or to those in need, or to the heralds of glad tidings?

In John's gospel we read, *'Jesus came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh, but of God.'*

The word Christmas derives from 'Christ Mass', a Eucharistic celebration; a thanksgiving; a remembrance of the baby - the flesh and blood presence of The Christ: *"this is my body which is given for you - this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you"*. Christ Mass is God's initiative; God's salve for a sinful and often too busy world.

Don't miss the opportunity to gather 'in awe and wonder' and to ponder this Christ Mass. Furthermore, as a diocese, let us be thankful and ever mindful that what is received in love is to be lived out in love, and what is given so freely is to be shared as freely, with all.

May God bless you with many a God moment this Christ Mass and grant you a happy, expectant, peace-filled, and blessed New Year

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DIOCESAN NEWS AND NOTES

Clergy Updates

The Rev. Arthur Anderson (Diocesan First Nations Elder) has been in the Pasqua hospital for the past few weeks with a broken leg. His recovery is progressing well and he anticipates being released from hospital in the very near future.

Pastor Val From (part-time at St Andrew's Trinity, Rosetown) has announced her resignation as of January 1, 2017. Val and her husband Paul will be moving to Winnipeg as he begins a new ministry.

The Rev. Mark Osborne (incumbent at St Giles, Estevan) has announced his resignation as of February 28, 2017. Please pray for Mark and the parish as they transition into new ministry opportunities.

The Rev. Nancy Yee will begin her full-time interim ministry in Regina in mid-January. She will divide her time between the congregations at St James and St Philip.

The Rev. Nathaniel Athian Deng Mayen (from the Episcopal Church of the Sudan and South Sudan) has been given Permission to Officiate in the Diocese of Qu'Appelle. Nathaniel's ministry has been warmly endorsed by Bishop Daniel Deng Abot, who visited with us in August.

Your PRAYERS are requested for these clergy persons in their various circumstances, as well as all clergy who are actively enabling us to experience a blessed Advent and Christmas. We also ask you to remember those who face challenges at this time. We especially remember the Coptic Church in Egypt in their attempt to recover from the recent bomb attack of St Mark's Cathedral in Cairo.

Qu'Appelle School for Mission and Ministry (QSMM) 2017 Schedule

January 6-8	Introduction to Liturgy
February 24-26	God and Creation
March 31-April 2	The History of the Church and her Mission Diocesan Readers Formation weekend
June 9-11	Old Testament - Part 1
July 10-13	Summer School: Old Testament - Part 2
September 15-17	Theology of Paul
October 13-15	Preaching

All sessions will be held at Wood Acres Conference Facility in Moose Jaw. More details will be available on the diocesan website: quappelle.anglican.ca

Other News

Mr. Malcolm Tait (All Saints, Regina) has agreed to become the diocesan representative for the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer. Malcolm is deeply committed to prayer ministry and is available to lead Prayer Workshops. His role will include taking the leadership of the Lay Retreat as well as providing prayer support for diocesan gatherings.

Diocesan ACW Report from Edith Maddaford, President

Once again I was blessed to be able to attend the National President's Conference in Langley, BC. This is a time you should all experience and you can!!! by attending the National Gathering for all Anglican women to be held June 15-18, 2017, in Ancaster, Ontario. I do have more information for you if you are interested. Please contact me. Do pray for this gathering. Registration forms will be coming January/February.

"Change is in the air" and to talk to us about what is "going on" across Canada, we will be blessed to have Terri Parrill from the National executive attend our gathering at St. Matthew's in Regina on April 22, 2017. She is a long time National executive member and will be able to talk/discuss and answer our questions. There are changes happening and we need to understand them, and have an input into them. We are hoping for a good representation of Anglican women from across the Diocese to join us for this important gathering and this is "not" just for functioning ACW groups but for all our Anglican women. Our theme is "I am the vine, you are the branches". Mark your calendars for our gathering in April. We all want to be fruitful and grow!

Our Diocesan prayer partner till June, 2017 is the Diocese of Edmonton. Please keep them in your prayers.

At St Cuthbert House

We will be closing the office on Friday, December 23 at noon as we begin our Christmas break. On Tuesday, January 3, 2017 we will return to work but our office will remain closed to the public until Thursday, January 5 at 9 am. This will allow us to catch up on some outstanding office duties as well as prepare for the tasks that lie ahead.