

A Word From Our Bishop



The Rt. Rev'd William G. Cliff
Bishop of Brandon

What a strange year this has been! If 2020 stays "on brand" it will be a strange Christmas too. I have a yearly planner which is filled each year with appointments and plans and reservations. This year, if it weren't for the changeable nature of the calendar, I would reuse it but for the pages filled with cancelled events and crossed out meetings.

But shouldn't Christmas be strange to us? Taking a fresh look at the proclamation we make at Christmas, I am not sure it should seem so normal to us. At its core, the good news of Christmas is that God was not content to know us from a distance, but was willing to enter into the reality of what it is to be human by becoming one with humanity. There are any number of images that come to mind - of filling finite spaces with more than they can contain...let alone the infinite love of God being squeezed into the reality we share - come to mind.

This is precisely what Our God has done in Jesus. God has filled the finite created order with the infinite love and grace of God. As one source has said it, time has been entered by the timeless Son of God. This is probably something we ought to understand as beyond normal. It is beautiful. It is astonishing. It is profound. and it gives us hope that is beyond ordinary hope. This birth of a baby, which is really the intervention of the Almighty in his creation is a signal to us that we are no longer lost and orphaned. We have been found, adopted, washed, anointed and set upon a higher ground.

This audacious hope which we find in Christ is what can fuel our own future. Our own vision of the world can and should be formed by the God who has not left us abandoned, but has intervened in the natural order itself so that we might know his glory. Even in the midst of the profound disruption and fear of a Pandemic, the hope found in Jesus can lift us out of despair and set us on a straighter path which leads out of the fear and into the light of his presence.

While this season may seem dark due to pandemic restrictions and separation from loved ones, we must have in mind the vision of the world that God has already placed in our midst.

Where we are washed and anointed in the new Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and are set out to transform the world in which we live for the glory of his name.

This way, our careful adherence to pandemic protocols become part of a loving response to the world, and in some small way, our love and concern for one another can become a beacon of light to the helpless, the hopeless and those in every kind of need.

I wish you all a better 2021, a faith-filled Advent and a Holy Christmas, whatever shape that takes, but most of all I wish you to live in to the audacious hope of the Incarnate Word of God, born among us for our salvation.

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page! Search "The Diocese of Brandon" on Facebook, or go to <http://www.facebook.com/brandonanglicans>

You can find an electronic copy of the Mustard Seed there each month, as well as photos from recent events in the diocese.

The Mustard Seed

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7th Bishop of Brandon

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The Mustard Seed is circulated ten times a year (from September to June), as a section of the Anglican Journal, to all supporting households in the Diocese of Brandon.

Contributions to the expense of the paper are normally requested each March but donations are accepted anytime. Changes of address can be made through your parish or directly with the Anglican Journal. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Bishop or of the editor.

Deadline for submissions: the first of the month. *Please note:* All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, timeliness, appropriateness, or length. Submit writing to the Editor in Microsoft Word file format or in the body of an email. Photographs must be large, high resolution jpg files. Please ensure you have permission from parents or guardians of all minors who have their photos or names published in The Mustard Seed. If including a photo, please send a name of who took the photo along with it, so the Editor can give proper credit!

Even with an online/phone Synod, there is a lot of behind the scenes work that takes place! These two photos show all the voting packages ready to be sent out to members of Synod!

Photo Credit: Deacon Cheryl Kukurudz



News from the Pews

ST. MARK'S, MINNEDOSA

photo and text submitted by Lynne Tolton

After lots of planning with attention to detail, especially related to COVID-19 restrictions, the folks at St. Mark's, Minnedosa and St. John's, Bethany were very busy the weekend of Oct. 24 & 25. The result was a most successful "Take Out or Delivery Turkey Supper" held on October 25.

Orders for the meals were requested prior to the weekend & we were very pleased to have a "sold out" response. The community response was very much appreciated.

In the photo below, you can see five men of the church peeling potatoes before the supper.



ST. JOHN'S, RESTON

submitted by the Editor (aka: the Rector)

Hidden Treasures has been an active part of the community of Reston since its' opening in 2016. Not only does it provide a community hub for people to shop locally, but it also makes donations to different causes within the community, and provides a place for students to gain community service hours doing different jobs around the store.

At the beginning of October, members of St. John's made a donation to Reston School for their breakfast program and emergency fund.

The photo below was taken on a day where the grade 6 class visited Hidden Treasures (and helped with odd jobs around the store!)



ST. GEORGE'S, BRANDON

submitted by the Rev'd Jonathan Hoskin

The Rev'd Jonathan Hoskin baptized Alexander Ferdinand, son of Chris and Vanessa Ferdinand, on All Saints Day at St. George's, Brandon. Alexander's baptism had originally been scheduled for Easter, but was postponed due to Covid restrictions.

The Rev'd Jonathan Hoskin was assisted by the Rev'd Deacon Cheryl Kukurudz, as well as the Rev'd Dr. Iain Elliott, who anointed Alexander with oil during the baptism.

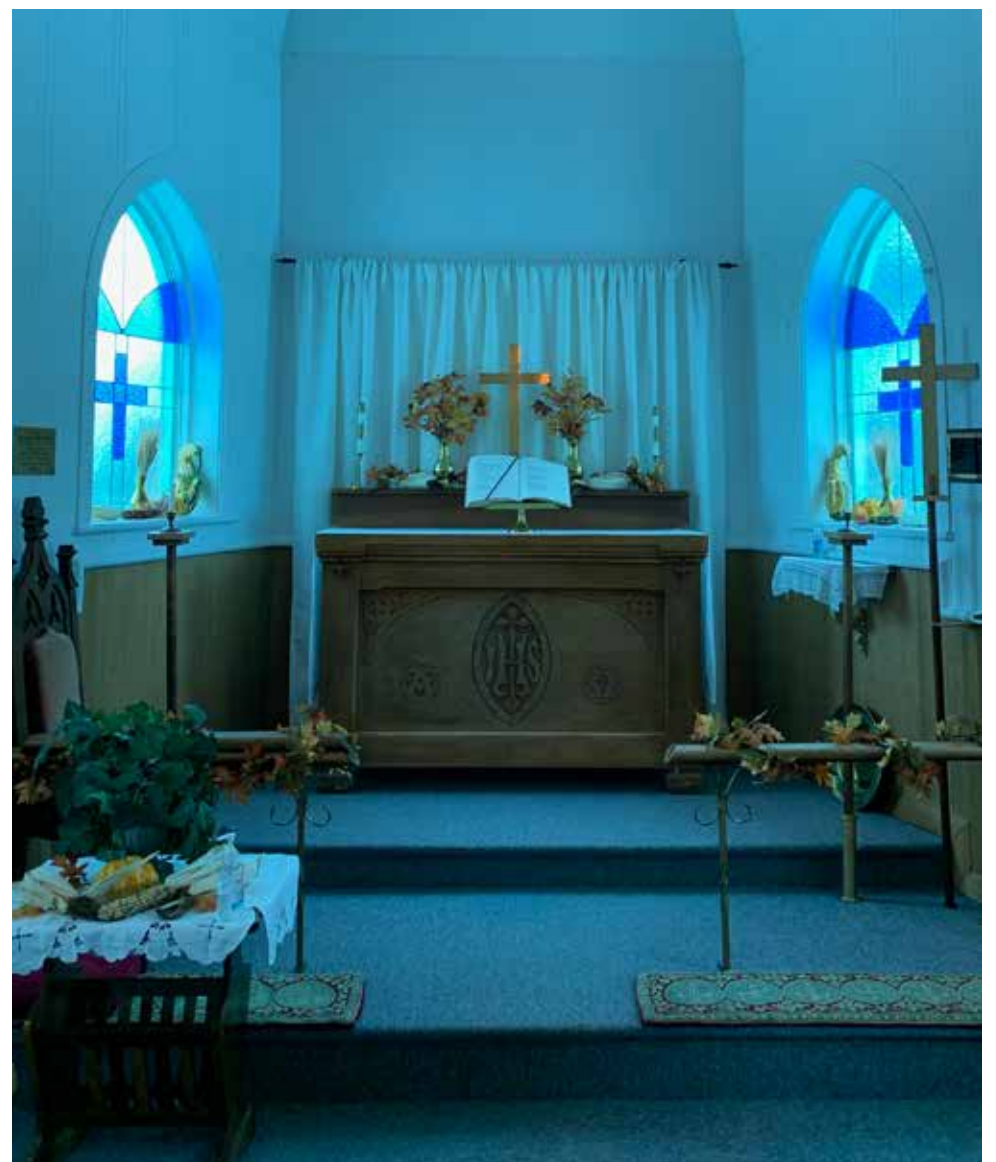


CHRIST CHURCH, MELITA

submitted by the Editor (aka: the Rector)

There is a certain rhythm to the church year in Melita. Sure, we have the same liturgical calendar as every other church in the diocese, but one of the things that Melita does well is that it marks the time in terms of the growing season.

In May, the church has the blessing of the seeds that are to be planted, in addition to the celebration of Harvest Thanksgiving, where some of the crop that has been gathered is blessed. The photo below was taken after the service, where some of the gathered crop is scattered in windows around the church.



Say Yes: Imagine More!

as written by the Rev'd Canon Dr. Judy Rois
Executive Director, the Anglican Foundation of Canada

At AFC we love, more than anything, to say Yes! and to help our parishes imagine more. The Foundation has been saying yes steadily and un-failingly – through good times and bad – for more than sixty years.

In the Diocese of Brandon, since 2010, we have said Yes! to nearly \$250,000 in grants and loans for your parishes. The vast majority of that investment has been in buildings and programs but it has also funded electrical and structural upgrades to the Anglican Memorial Camp. AFC's commitment to theological education has resulted in \$30,000 for a spiritual symposium at Henry Budd College, and indigenous student bursaries. The diocese has also benefited from emergency funding for clergy. This past May, in spite of the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis and the impact on AFC's investment portfolio, we said Yes! to Church of the Messiah, Opaskwayak Cree Nation (partial funding for a new parish hall), Christ Church, The Pas (for the parish hall in addition to a new furnace), and Henry Budd College (for a spirituality symposium, in addition to bursaries for indigenous students at the College.)

For nearly ten years now as Executive Director of the Foundation, I've had a front row seat to some of the Canadian church's best ideas: the ministries and programs parish visionaries might undertake if only they had some strategic funding to help them get started. Knowing what I know about the innovative and compassionate character of the church, nationally, I cannot help but feel hopeful about the future.

Synod 2020 Update

This edition of the Mustard Seed was produced in early November, before our Synod which is scheduled for November 23rd.

At this year's Synod, we had elections for different positions, and due to publishing deadlines, the results of these elections will appear in the January 2020 edition of the Mustard Seed.

For more information, contact the Secretary of Synod.



Receive a free festive stocking when you order a copy of *Dear God* (while supplies last).

anglicanfoundation.org

Please be assured that AFC will continue to be a force for stability: we have been there and will continue to be there no matter what the future may hold. In order for AFC to remain strong and vibrant, however, I am asking those who can continue to partner with us to do so. If you are a member I ask you to renew your membership. If you have never been a member of the Foundation before, please accept this invitation to pay-it-forward.

The social and economic impact of COVID-19 on people and communities will undoubtedly give rise to compassionate and innovative responses on the part of our churches. To those currently discerning how to meet a real and pressing need in their communities – faithful leaders in the Diocese of Brandon among them – we want to respond as generously as possible.

Join us and help AFC continue to be able to say Yes! to the dreams and aspirations of the people and parishes in your diocese, and to so many more across the country.

To donate to the Anglican Foundation of Canada visit anglicanfoundation.org.



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From all of us at Cathedral Centre, we wish you a blessed Advent,
a Merry Christmas, and a joyous New Year!

From Bishop William,

Dean Don,

Deacon Cheryl,

Greig and Teresa

