NEWS FROM THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF BRANDON

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The Mustard Seed.

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Anglican Memorial Camp 2026

By Bishop Rachael Parker

This past summer Anglican Memorial Camp hosted our 76th year of Camping opportunities for Anglican Youth and other Camper Groups who rent the space for their own programmes. The Diocese has been blessed with a superb space, and it has been much loved and well used for decades. As was shared in the March edition of the Mustard Seed, the Camp is in a season of discernment and consideration of "where do we go from here, how do we best serve the Diocese, and who is it that we are called to serve."

Over the past few years, we have noticed a continuing decline in campers at each of our Junior, Intermediate, and Teen weeks. We have also had significant challenges in finding people who are ready, willing, and able to act as Volunteer Leaders (adults) and Cabin Counsellors (older teen alumni). It was determined that a few things needed to be tweaked that the Diocesan Camps might run more effectively and appropriately given the challenges the young people often come to Camp facing.

CCC #1 (Camp Committee Challenge) was in finding age-appropriate Volunteer Leaders who were able to give a week of their time to the Camp, living with the campers, preparing and leading programming, and doing so simply out of the goodness of their hearts. Just as our churches are finding it more challenging to find volunteers to take on roles within our Parish communities, so too is it a hurdle to find people who have both the charisms to work with young people at different stages in life, and who have the time, ability, and family permission, to leave home for a week in the heart of the summer to play with children and fight the mosquitoes!

The Committee was almost in panic mode as we finally coordinated the Volunteer Leaders for the Junior Week which was to have taken place the first full week of July. Due to the catastrophic rainfalls in the mid to northern areas of the Diocese, both of our Volunteers had to pull back as they dealt with the trials of flooding and potential damage to homes and properties. In the end, the Junior Camp was cancelled, and a couple of the oldest Junior campers were enrolled in the Intermediate Camp. Truthfully, even had the Junior Volunteers been available, there were only five campers registered, with at least one of them being younger than we would normally allow.

As we had already engaged the six Cabin Leaders (formally known as Counsellors) to work for the full three Diocesan Camp weeks, the Cabin Leaders spent that first week of July assisting the Camp Coordinator and the AMC staff with grounds preparations like building picnic tables and beginning the exterior painting of the Rec Hall. While it was certainly a shame that Junior Camp was unable to run, the Camp Committee discovered the importance of having a full week for the Cabin Leaders to come together as a team, to learn how best to do their jobs, and to establish a sense of what the summer should be. A significant learning from that first CCC#1 has been the need to engage the Cabin Leaders a week ahead of the Junior Camp so that they can continue training, develop their team, and be better prepared to assist the adult Volunteer Leaders as the three camps unfold!

Continuing in the concerns with how to find appropriate Volunteer Leaders, the Holy Spirit graced AMC with an energetic crew for the Intermediate Camp. Fr Innocent from Virden and the Tri-Valley Parish participated as Chaplain, and Ms. Cindy Hoskin and Miss Adriana Hoskin were able to volunteer as the Leaders. The Intermediate Camp had twelve young people, including a couple who were "bumped up" from Junior.

The Teen Camp proved challenging to staff as well. While the Diocese has an enduring and talented gift in Archdeacon Jonathan Hoskin, who is the perennial Teen Week Chaplain, there were no volunteers available to serve as Volunteer Leaders. Canon Rob Parker, who served as Medical Officer for all three weeks, did double duty as Volunteer Leader, and was joined by the Bishop as the second Volunteer.

That CCC#1 led directly into CCC#2 as we better began to understand the absolute necessity of remunerating the Cabin Leaders rather than simply providing numerous honorariums for unspecified roles. The tradition which the Bishop received three summers ago was that the Bishop's Discretionary Fund would provide a $100 honorarium for each of the teens who "volunteered" to work at the various camps. This became quite cumbersome as it became obvious that many teens were considered volunteers but there were few parameters as to what these roles looked like. After the first two summers, it became clear that (1) the Bishop's Discretionary Fund could not maintain this practice, and (2) fewer teens were interested in coming to Camp if they were only provided with $100 for their time, particularly when most of these "volunteer" campers were not paying to come to camp.

In efforts to tighten up budgetary expectations and work expectations, the Committee discovered (thanks to Mr. Greig Scott) that the Diocese still has a Trust Fund for Anglican Youth Ministries which had not been used for some time. The Bishop directed Mr. Scott to fund up to eight Cabin Leader positions (one for each cabin) with an honorarium of $1500, if each leader were to commit to serve for all three Camp weeks. This would draw the fund down by $12 000 and would leave some monies available for the 2027 Camp year, if necessary. In the end, the Camp Hiring Committee was only able to hire six Cabin Leaders, leaving more money available for next summer.

CCC#3 arose earlier in the spring as the Committee recognized that the Camp faced a two-fold concern: fewer teens interested in coming to Teen Camp, and the difficulty in finding appropriate teens to "staff" the camps as Cabin Leaders.

A reality of the lives of many campers is that of mental health concerns and the realities of home environments. It has been noticed over the past few years that more and more of our campers are arriving at AMC with medical prescriptions, and other non-doctor diagnosed concerns; having dealt with close relations who are struggling with addictions; and a growing awareness of the prevalence of suicides and suicidal ideations amongst the young people in their communities. Our young people are coming to Camp with heavier emotional, spiritual, and physical burdens than campers of past decades, and they are still in need of

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The Bishop's Message

"The Challenging Angel and the Glorious Feast"

This summer I had the incredible opportunity to spend a full week at Anglican Memorial Camp with our first ever Teen Leadership Camp. While the campers were all in their teenage years, I quickly discovered that the best interactions (in which learning occurred) were through storytelling. Not necessarily the "once upon a time" style of stories but through the honest telling of the "way back in the dark ages when I was your age" kinds of stories. While there were plenty of reminders that I am an "old person" now, there was a real sense of interest in discovering truth through lessons learned and shared, and opportunities to discover how my lessons learned could become life's lessons for those preparing to venture out into their own futures. I rediscovered the age-old truth that storytelling is an ageless gift to be both shared and to share!

Considering all that our Teen Leaders have taught me; I am going to share with you a story in this month's "Bishop's Message."

Once upon a time, in a land close to here, there were more than forty communities which each hosted a beautiful building. Some of these buildings were very, very old. Some were quite young. Some had professional "leaders" to take care of the buildings, but many didn't. All the buildings were loved and appreciated but most of them had begun to fall apart. Roofs were leaking and stairs were crumbling. Bell towers were leaning and basements were flooding. Much hand wringing was happening but so was much praying. The communities all knew what they believed needed to happen, but none seemed to know how to get these things done.

In every one of these communities, the people looked to each other, and they looked up to God and cried out, "Oh God in heaven, Creator of all things, what are we going to do? We don't have a roofer. We have asbestos. We don't have contractors. We have no money. We can't do this on our own. Have you abandoned us?"

And God looked upon them and saw that the faithful people in these communities were scared, overwhelmed, and tired. God decided to share with them in a new way. God looked to the angels and said, "The problem is that my people are hungry. They have forgotten what a Feast can do, what a Feast can taste like, and look like, and what a Feast can bring to them. We shall send them a Feast!"

At God's command, the angels began whispering in community leaders' ears, "Prepare a Feast!" The leaders looked at each other perplexed and said to one another, "but how do we prepare a Feast? We have no money. We have no perfect place to share a Feast to honour God. The peoples and communities are scattered near and far. How can this Feast be done?"

The angels looked at one another and shook their heads. The wisest angel said, "They have forgotten so much of God's goodness and taken in so much of the strain and worry of the "other one." We need to remind them of what God has been doing for all eternity." The youngest of the angels suggested that they simply plan the Feast themselves to remind the people of God's goodness and dreams for them. Other angels disagreed and suggested that making it easy would stop the people from understanding that they were the ones God had commissioned to do the work of Feasts.

Suddenly the most challenging of the angels shouted out, "I know! I will walk among them and remind them how easy it is to plan and prepare and share a Feast!" The wisest angel recognized God's influence over this challenging young angel and said, "Yes! Indeed, you must move among them. Lead, teach, encourage them! Help them to grow back into the people they have always been and to discover the faith that will lead them to where they are called to go." And with that the most challenging angel moved into this land that is close to here and began to whisper and shout, to worship and play, to plant seeds as ideas, and push where resistance was felt.

The angel first came among the leaders and reminded them subtly that they were long overdue for a big Feast. While the leaders thought the idea of a big Feast was theirs, the angel knew the truth that his work had just begun. Invitations needed to be sent. A venue found. Food and drink arranged. The purpose of the Feast discerned. At first the leaders were overwhelmed. They wondered and worried about how this Feast could come about with so few resources and such a scattered peoples. And yet the challenging angel kept moving through the communities, encouraging people to be willing, pushing, and pulling people out of their "but what's the point and why should we attend" attitudes. Little by little communities began to prepare, and people began to get excited.

Questions began to arise. Those who remembered the days of big Feasts began to share with the younger ones the stories of Feasts of the Past. The younger ones began to wonder what a big Feast might mean for them. The wise ones considered the hope a Feast might bring back to their communities. And slowly at first but picking up steam, RSVPs for the big Feast began to roll in as curiosity was growing as the challenging angel moved in among the peoples of all the communities.

The leaders were perplexed. Where could such an important and powerful Feast be held. So many people from so many places needed a safe, dry, comfortable place to gather for this big three-day Feast. No one place was ready or perfect enough for such an honourable gathering. The angel, anticipating such a conundrum, whispered in the ear of the leader of the biggest building and said, "Do you have space? Chairs and tables? A place to worship and work?"

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The Mustard Seed

Publisher:
The Rt. Rev'd Rachael Parker
Eighth Bishop of Brandon
Editor: The Rev'd Canon Robert Parker, CD1

Email:
mustardseed@brandon.anglican.ca

Mail:
Diocese of Brandon
403 13th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 4P9

Phone: 902-476-9833

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Deadline for submissions:

The first day of the month preceding publication.

2026 PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Issue	Deadline
Sept 2026	*Aug 1, 2026*
Oct 2026	*Sept 1, 2026*
Nov 2026	*Oct 1, 2026*
Dec 2026	*Nov 1, 2026*
Jan 2027	*Dec 1, 2026*
Feb 2027	*Jan 2, 2027*

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!

AMC 2026 Continued

opportunities to simply be children.

Camp rules do not allow for underage drinking, smoking, vaping or marijuana use. As can be seen in any community throughout our Diocese, these are all struggles that teens face and with which institutions such as AMC are challenged. The question arises: why would a teenager want to come to camp if they will be unable to participate in many of the very things which are daily "norms"? A concern that had to be addressed by the Bishop was do we allow these behaviours, which are normal and acceptable at home, while at AMC? After much prayer, consideration, and consultation, the Bishop determined that, except in case-by-case scenarios, the rules must be upheld for the safety of all campers, the integrity of Anglican Memorial Camp and the liability of the Diocese of Brandon.

In efforts to address the CCC#3 concerns, it was decided that the third full week of July this summer would find AMC doing a new thing. Rather than simply offering a week of games and water sports for our teenagers, the Camp Committee discerned that we needed to engage the teens in a more challenging and life-skills developing programming. A "once in a while" model of Teen Camp was introduced as Teen Leadership Training. A format of teaching leadership skills for the teens was established.

Over the Teen Leadership week, concentrated efforts to teach the teens how to become leaders, particularly in the AMC context, became the backbone of the programme. From sharing the responsibilities of "Cabin Leadership" through groups taking leadership for all aspects of logistics, honoring timings, gathering people as they watched the clock and schedules, to sharing the late night "duty" as campers were preparing for bed and lights out, to planning and leading their own worship, planning devotions for cabin groups at night, and how to plan, teach, and lead games for younger campers, the teens all had many opportunities not to simply participate as campers, but to plan, facilitate, and reflect on their own leadership. They were also given the opportunity to receive Emergency First Aid Training, and most participants received their Red Cross First Aid Certification. Many of the campers were able to go home with new skills, real leadership training, and most importantly, a greater sense of their own abilities, competencies, and even a good sense of what they still need to learn.

While this programme for Teen Camp would not be recommended on a yearly basis, it is a programme which should be considered every few years, in one form or another. This Teen Leadership Camp also provided an opportunity for the Volunteer Leadership to scout out potential Cabin Leaders for future years. Indeed, a number of "graduates" of the Leadership Camp were noted and will be invited to apply for positions for next summer's Camps. This Leadership Programme may help the Committee to develop potential personnel resources for the future.

A gift and a strength shared with AMC this year was a grant from the Council of the North for $8500 to fund the Teen Leadership Camp for the purpose of strengthening the youth of the North, specifically Indigenous youth. This Grant allowed the third week portion of the Cabin Leaders' Honoraria to be taken from this money, freeing up $3000 from the Anglican Youth Ministries Fund. The Grant also covered the almost $3500 cost of the First Aid Training and covered most of the costs of transportation of getting the teens from Easterville to and from the camp.

CCC#4 is an ongoing challenge for the Camp Committee. Each year we experience significantly more difficulty in hiring appropriately trained staff. The switch from referring to Cabin Counsellors to Cabin Leaders was an intentional decision this year. As has been noted, many campers of all ages are attending camp with increasingly complex backgrounds and issues. The inference of the meaning of "counsellor" for some people in the Church world is the idea that counsellors are trained in formal counselling. While this may seem like a ridiculous hair to split for a church camp, the Bishop found herself spending a fair amount of time dealing with issues of grief, addiction, family disharmony, and reverberations from suicide attempts, and violence within the community back home.

"Cabin Leader" was chosen as the new title for the teens who are leading the Cabin groups. This removes any assumption n that they will be expected to do any sort of counselling and better describes their actual job description. These Cabin Leaders may indeed only be in their mid-teens themselves, and their roles and remuneration need to be appropriately reflected in their titles.

Our experience this summer, particularly with the teens, with discussions with the Bishop, and in the medications handled by the Medical Officer, have brought a new reality and potential need to the Committee. Archdeacon Jonathan suggested the very good idea that we investigate hiring nursing students as Medical Officers or even Programme Leaders in the future. We are coming

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Bishop's Message Cont.

"Yes," the leader said, "but it isn't ready yet. Our work of making this place ready for God has only just begun!" The challenging angel reminded the leader that God does not ask for a perfect place in which to be worshipped but rather a gathering of hearts who are willing to worship. And the leader simply said, "yes, we can hold the Feast here." And so, another leader was commissioned to send out gilded invitations for all the forty plus communities to come to the Feast.

As responses trickled in, the leaders who would host worried that the roof might leak if it rained during the Feast. Others scrambled to find enough food and drink for all who would journey to the Feast. Still others scratched their heads to plan the events that would surround the Feast. After all, you can't invite members of forty plus communities to simply gather and eat for three days! Ideas need to be shared. Prayers need to be prayed. Laughter needs space to erupt and tears need tissues and gentle hands to wipe them away. So much work was needed and the leaders were worried that there was more work than hands to plan this Feast to honour God.

As the challenging angel peered over the shoulders of the local leaders and realized their fears were slowing them down, he was inspired to move back out to the communities in the North and the South, the East and the West. "Surely," the angel said to himself, "these further out communities also have gifts they can share." And so, the angel went searching and listening for the gifts the others could bring to the Feast.

Much to his dismay, the challenging angel felt himself being challenged. In the North he heard sounds of despair as the people struggled to find leadership for their buildings and their young people. In the South he discovered apathy as the people looked around the others in their communities who didn't care about the buildings or what went on in them. In the East he was surprised by a fear that kept people from even trying to try. In the West he saw a lack of faith as people believed that God had simply given up on them. What seemed to be on the surface of each of these communities was a strong sense of loss – the loss of purpose that was a part of their very fabric, a part of every building: buildings that were crumbling and falling apart.

The challenging angel, feeling quite challenged himself, went home to the Counsel of Angels and shared what he had found. After some time consoling the challenging angel, the Counsel sat him down and shared with him the truth that he had accepted the commission to share. They taught him that what he was witnessing was not hopelessness. It was a need for a Feast. All these communities had been working so long in isolation that they had forgotten the gifts they had to share; the lessons they alone could teach. The time had definitely come for the communities to gather for a Feast, not so that the leaders could tell them how to Feast but so that they could teach one another how to Feast.

The challenging angel went back to the country that was close to here and began moving and whispering in the ears of the peoples from North and South, East and West. He hovered over the leaders and their helpers who were trying so hard to make a Feast worthy of the God who inspired it. Back and forth, to and fro, the angel moved. Inspiring quietly, reminding the people of truths they had forgotten, the angel encouraged and enlightened and prepared the people for the Feast being prepared for them, and prepared the Feast for the people preparing for the Feast.

As the time of the Feast grew closer, and the leaders saw their plans unfold, a sense of "okay, we can do this" began to emerge. Decisions were made, menus settled, washrooms coordinated, and RSVPs continued to flow in. And yet, something was missing. The details for the Feast were set and settled but there was something else … People began to recognize that it wasn't bricks and mortar that they were concerned about anymore. It was more those things the angel had discerned. There was still a sense of despair and apathy, fear and lack of faith. The people were coming to the Feast, but their hearts were heavy and their minds were bleak. They had all RSVPed to a feast, but they didn't understand that it was a Feast they had been invited to … yet!

The night before the Feast was to begin, the leader of the leaders sent them all home to rest as the big three days were coming. As the leaders went home, the challenging angel floated in. Through the night he prepared the biggest, oldest building which seemed to be crumbling all around him. He didn't fix the roof. He didn't switch out the windows. He didn't even ask the visitors who slept in the cloister to leave. He simply did what challenging angels do. He prayed and he worshipped and he asked God to bless not the space but the communities who would gather.

As the night went on he began to have hope that God's word would inspire all who would gather. He became determined that apathy would be expelled. He planted courage at every table and on every chair that those who came with fear would be overcome with courage. And everywhere he went he whispered "faith" that the faith of all the angels would be palpable in the very air that was breathed during the Feast.

The next day, as the Feast began with a feast of worship, the challenging angel was surprised to see that the Counsel of Angels had joined him. And with them were the Great Three. God and God's Son and God's Spirit each tucked themselves in a quiet spot with the Counsel as they witnessed the work the challenging angel had done.

The communities from the North walked into the Feast and were overcome by a sense of hope. As they walked to their chairs and greeted others who were arriving. The Northerners emanated a hope that many had forgotten but which seemed to be contagious. As the Southerners meandered in they shook off apathy as if taking off a heavy coat. They were surprised to feel a sense of determination welling up within them and then flowing out from them as well! The Easterners entered the Feasting space and found their fears of what might happen evaporate as they breathed in the courage of those who have found new will. The Westerners swaggered in but found their swagger shift to a gentle dance as they recognized that the music to which they were swaying was a tune of faith.

None were able to see what was happening. None of the communities anyway. (The Counsel of Angels and the Great Three knew exactly what was happening and what was about to happen!) As the people prepared for the feast of worship, the leader of the leaders asked that each community consider what gifts they would offer at the offering time. The people put their heads together and discussed what they might share. They looked around and realized they had nothing to give for the building. What was obvious to their eyes as needs, they had no way of fixing. The people were beginning to fall back into their despair and their apathy and their fear and their lack of faith, but the challenging angel began scurrying among them, causing a holy breeze to make them all look up and at one another, and something changed …

They remembered the gifts they were given when they came to the Feast: hope, determination, courage, and faith. And they knew what they had to give.

At the time of offering, the baskets were filled with pieces of paper upon which prayers of hope were written. Determined promises of what they would take back home were written down. Lists of fears were torn in pieces and the word "courage" was written instead. And every hand that held the baskets as they were passed from person to person, community to community, held out their newly found sense of faith as they sent their true gifts forward to contribute to the Feast.

As the feast of worship continued, all wrapped up in the True Feast, which was happening all around them, the leaders who had worried about how this Feast might come together, finally understood that their contribution to the

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Bishop's Message Cont.

Feast was simply trust. The challenging angel had been moving among them, reminding them every step of the way that when you gather for a Feast that God has called, then you must simply trust that God will lead you through every step, each decision, all determinations. God's Feast can be nothing but complete and filled with hope, determination, courage, faith and trust.

The three-day Feast continued and the lives and hearts of every person, every community, every leader was changed for the better as they began to recognize and live the truth that every day is a Feast in God's service and the reality of God's call is on the people and not the buildings. As the communities went home to the North and the South, the East and the West they went as a changed people. Sure, the buildings were still falling apart and the people around them still held despair, apathy, fear, and lack of faith but they knew that the Feast they had just shared in was one which gifted them with all they needed to go home and change the world. Now they had hope, and determination, and courage, and faith, and trust to share with all whom they would meet. They went home knowing that they had the gifts God needed them to have to do the work God was calling them to do: to bring Revival to all whom they met, a revival of hope, determination, courage, faith, trust, and most importantly reviving peoples' knowledge of Jesus in their communities.

You see, the theme and the purpose of their Feast was just that – Revival. Revival of faith in Jesus for themselves and the desire to revive other's desire to know Jesus as well.

All forty plus communities in this place that was close to here were forever changed and they grew and they multiplied as the years went by. Some of the buildings were fixed up. Some of them crumbled to dust. But the people came to know that the Feast they had shared in, and the Feasts they continued to share in were never about the buildings. They were about the relationships they had with the Great Three and with one another!

Before our tale ends, there is a final change to be noted. The challenging angel was called before the Counsel and the Great Three and was given a new name and a new identity. From that Feast on, the challenging angel stopped being known as the angel that was so difficult to work with and became the Challenging Angel because his purpose had been found. In calling the communities and the leaders to truly appreciate and participate in that great Feast, the angel found his calling – to be the Challenging Angel who would forevermore challenge God's people into embracing their true calling. And to this day, the Challenging Angel can still be glimpsed working in and through the communities that are close to here …

+ Rachael

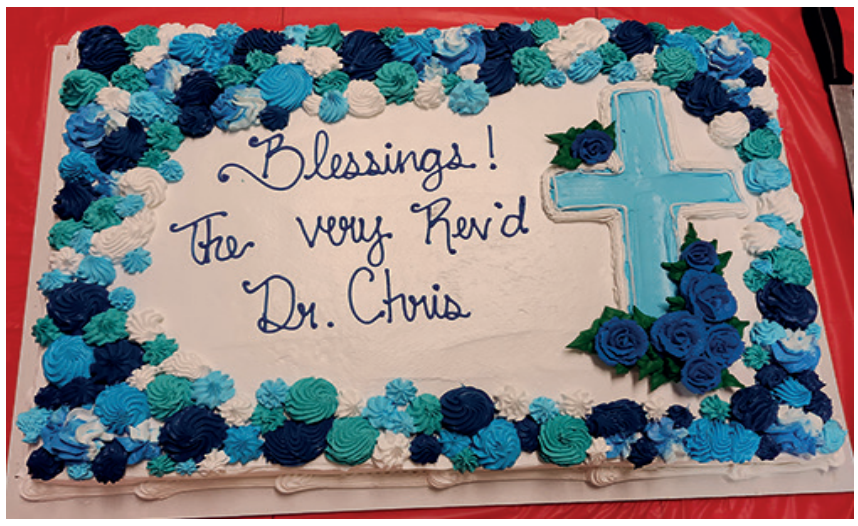
AMC 2026 Cont.

close to crossing the line of the knowledge/experience requirements for staff and the increasing needs of our campers. The needs of our children require the Diocese and Camp Committee to evaluate the competencies required for those adults who are working with our youth.

CCC#5 calls the Committee and the Diocese to discover new ways to engage with our communities, advertise all three of our Camps, and encourage registrations to the Camps. Our Diocese of Brandon Anglican Memorial Camp is a tremendous gift to the Church and the wider community. We need to find ways to reach out and encourage paying registrations to increase camper participation and create an upsurge in enthusiasm for the camp beyond the community of Easterville. We need to develop and cultivate relationships throughout the entire Diocese of Brandon to fully live into the call God has upon Anglican Memorial Camp.

The Camp Committee would like to offer our sincere appreciation to our Coordinator Mackenzie Kukurudz and her staff; to the Cabin Leaders Ashleigh Hoskin, Brooke McKay, Stella Kukurudz, Torr McKay, Rileigh Sinclair, and Bugzy Young; to Chaplains Fr. Innocent and Archdeacon Jonathan; Medical Officer Rob Parker; Volunteer Leaders Cindy and Adriana Hoskin, and Bishop Rachael. We look forward to working with all of you who will answer God's call to volunteer next year! God bless you all and God bless our Campers!

Rumors, News, Gossip and other Stuff



Congratulations to Dean Chris Evetts for the completion of his Doctorate.

A service of Confirmation was held at Redeemer-St. Georges, Brandon on the 7th of June.

Congratulations and many blessings to the Confirmands.

DIOCESE OF BRANDON 52nd SYNOD

REVIVAL

The 52nd Synod

StMatthew'sCathedral

September 24, 25, 26
2026

Opening Service,
24 Sept, at 7:30 pm.

All are Welcome!

If It's Wrong to be Proud, I Don't Want to be Right!

This summer the Teen Week of Camp took on a new look. For a full week 21 teens joined together to learn the in's and out's of Leadership. From First Aid certification to learning about how to plan and lead liturgies, to canoeing, devotions, and even the responsibility of being the "leaders on duty," the teen participants of the Diocese of Brandon learned how to take on and be responsible for Camp. Over the course of the week every one of the participants struggled with and triumphed over the realities of what it means to be responsible and mature when the lives and learning of others is in your capable hands.

The week began with the Cabin Leaders hired and trained for the Junior and Intermediate Camps taking the initiative and sharing their learning with the Groups named after the Apostles Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. While the Cabin Leaders were of many ages, the Apostle groups were intentionally grouped by age, beginning with the older teens in Matthew and ending with the youngest in John. Matthew and Mark were the first groups to take leadership during the week, and they were excellent mentors for Luke and John, whose responsibilities landed on Thursday and Friday of the week.

While the teens are all still teens, the adult leaders all had opportunity to stand back and observe the incredible growth and maturity of each of the 15 teens who were solely participants. Coming to camp expecting the usual high-jinks of pranks and late nights, games and spending copious amounts of time on their phones, the participants quickly got on board for a new kind of "camp" experience. While there was some resistance to having to give up phones for First Aid Training, being expected to show up on time for sessions, and needing to participate even if they thought it might be "boring," most of the teens' attitudes evolved into understanding as they began to see the potential of the learning being shared with them and the expectations being placed upon them.

The moment when the leadership recognized that this just might work, occurred part way through the First Aid Training when the teens were learning how to do CPR, particularly on infants. The Trainers treated the teens as peers and expected them to take the training seriously. They spoke the teens' language. They demanded performance and attention. They celebrated with them when that "aha" moment appeared on the teens' faces and they discovered that they could indeed save another person's life! That Wednesday First Aid Training was, for many, the moment when they shifted from being "campers" to "leaders."

An incredible 'aha' moment was when Lucius, a teen from Easterville, was administering CPR to an infant doll and his style was incorrect. Upon closer inspection, the trainer discovered that, while Luicius' approach was unorthodox, it was working well and even gave him better control of the baby's stability. The look on Lucius' face when praised, and on the faces of his teen peers when he received those kudos, was priceless. An adult was open to learning a new thing from a teen. More than CPR and First Aid Training were learned that day. The trainer taught each of these young people the power of being told "well done" by an authority figure.

While the 15 teens who came to camp only for Teen Leadership Week each went home a bit more mature and a lot more ready for leadership roles, the greatest growth and potential was seen in the 6 Cabin Leaders who had already been present and leading at camp for two weeks. Part way through the week, in trying to delineate between the Apostle Groups who were the "Leaders of the Day" and the Cabin Leaders, the Bishop nicknamed them "The Original Six." (Much to her dismay, the Bishop quickly realized that these 6 precocious leaders were all so young that they didn't know who the Original Six were and upon further prompting, thought that the Winnipeg Jets must be. For those who don't know, the Original Six are: Toronto Maple Leafs, Montreal Canadiens, Detroit Red Wings, Chicago Blackhawks, New York Rangers, and the Boston Bruins.) Our AMC Original Six are: Ashleigh Hoskin, Stella Kukurudz, Brooke McKay, Toree McKay, Rileigh Sinclair, and Tyrone "Bugzy" Young. Each of these leaders are AMC alumna and they rose to the occasion admirably.

While there were hiccoughs and moments of needing to be reminded that they were not simply campers but leaders of leaders throughout the week, these 6 young people exhibited a combined sense of maturity, common sense, enthusiasm, and most importantly a growing compassion and ability to respond to campers in ways that cannot be taught. It became obvious that 9 times out of 10, the Original Six would turn to each other when problems arose or advice was needed and concerns of all sorts were handled on their own. On almost every occasion, they also followed their own training and reported to the Adult Volunteers what had happened, explained how they handled situations, and were open to feedback and course corrections.

A concern that the Camp Committee had been discussing before the Camp season began was the very real problem of finding young people who have the skills and abilities to attend the three weeks of Diocesan Camp to act as Cabin Leaders. This year's Teen Leadership Camp granted us the privilege of seeing firsthand the incredible current and potential gifts our Original Six have to offer and the opportunity to get a glimpse of a few more potential leaders for next year!

A highlight for the Volunteer Leaders was the Teen Leadership Graduation we shared during the final worship at the Saturday Eucharist. Archdeacon Jonathan Hoskin, who worked harder than anyone with 2 worship services a day and four sessions of Worship Leadership Training daily, had the privilege of presenting the Original Six with their "diplomas." Each of the Original Six leaders then had the proud opportunity to present their own Apostle Group participants with their diplomas. (Please see our 2026 Teen Graduating Class pictures. All but one participant – Bentley Ledoux – was present for the presentations. His sister received his diploma on his behalf.)

The transformation from nervous and edgy teen campers arriving on Sunday afternoon to the mature young adults who each received their diplomas with looks of both pride and incredulity from their very own peer mentors was all we could ask for. Lives were changed at Teen Leadership Camp. Because of the First Aid Certifications, lives may indeed be saved due to this opportunity. The world became a little larger for teens who may not have known that they have leadership skills inherently present in their very selves.

As the very first Teen Leadership Training Camp has wrapped up, we recognize that many things can – and need to be – improved. We now know that we need to engage more "outside subject matter experts" for two reasons. (1) The young people respond to people who have been hired from the "outside world" and in whom the Diocese invests real monies to train them. This brings home the truth that the Diocese of Brandon is indeed literally and figuratively investing in the futures of our young people. (2) The Volunteer Leaders, when not taking on the bulk of the training, will be more able to come alongside as mentors, compassionate listeners, and chaperones, for young people who desperately need to know that they are simply loved and respected by adults in the Church world.

As we have wrapped up the 2026 Diocesan Teen Leadership Training, the Bishop would like to thank the AMC Camp Coordinator and crafts guru Mackenzie Kukurudz and her summer staff, as well as the dedicated work of our three week Medical Officer Canon Rob Parker who also led Devotion Training and Leadership Training, and Father Jonathan Hoskin whose willingness to be priest and person through his worship leadership, storytelling, canoe-training, wisdom-sharing and ability to be awake almost all the time, rounded out the Bishop's crack squad of Volunteer Leaders for this first (but not last) endeavour into Teen Leadership Training at Anglican Memorial Camp.

On one final note of appreciation, the Diocese

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Leadership Teen Week Cont.

would also like to offer a sincere thank you to The Council of the North for providing a Special Grant in the amount of $8500 to offset the costs of this inaugural Teen Leadership Training. This gift provided us with the opportunity to bring in Red Cross certified trainers for First Aid and CPR Training for all the participants. It also covered the Teen Week Honoria for our Original Six leaders and covered a portion of the travel expense of bringing most of our teens to the Camp for this opportunity. (This Special Grant is indeed one of the many ways that your Parish's Fair Share dollars come back to help us!)

So, please join the Bishop in shouting from our steeples, "if it's wrong to be proud, I don't want to be right." This Diocese has the Original Six and 15 other teen leaders in whom we can loudly proclaim we are proud to call them part of our team!

The Original Six

Teen Camp Grads