

RESPONSE TO THE FORMAL QUESTIONS

by

THE VEN. MONIQUE STONE

1. PERSONAL FAITH

How did you come to trust in the Triune God? How do you maintain your faith in daily life? How would you communicate this faith to others?

They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

~ Luke 24:32

My journey to faith in God happened when I was in my late twenties. In response to a promise, I made to my husband’s Anglican priest (at a marriage preparation meeting), I agreed to ‘check out the church’. It was through this exploration that I realized that Jesus had been walking alongside me throughout my life, but I did not recognize him. I committed then to a journey with the Triune God and have found the Anglican Church to be the spiritual home in which my discipleship can thrive.

My faith grows through daily prayer, worship, questioning, exploring, studying scripture, conversation with others, and experiencing God through creation and community. I also find God’s presence when I am honouring the soil in my hands, noticing the growth of the trees in my backyard, and watching the seasons unfold on the rural farms that surround our backyard.

I communicate with others through open and honest conversation rooted in authenticity and humility. I invite people to see how God has been part of all aspects of their life story, including achievements, doubts, imperfections, challenges, failures, and joys. I have found that creating safe spaces where a person can see themselves as a beloved child of God is one of the best ways to share the Gospel.

Put simply, I believe that we can trust that God’s kingdom exists in the world around us, beckoning us to participate, with all that we are, in this beautiful, imperfect, joy-filled, beloved story of God.

2. LEADERSHIP AND GIFTS

What do you consider the core functions of a bishop? How do your gifts align with these functions?

“I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it – not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.”

~ 1 Peter 5:1-3

In a tradition that is episcopally led and synodically governed, a core function of our bishop is to work collaboratively with and for the whole people of God. It is the bishop's role to lead, with the help of the laity and clergy, the ministry of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. As bishop I would be committed to upholding our synodical structure. I would provide oversight and guidance in areas of administration and governance. Importance would be placed on nourishing our capacity to walk together to define, transform, and implement the ministry that God calls us to undertake.

Another core function of the episcopacy is to ensure the connectedness of our diocese to our Ecclesiastical Province, our National Church, Sacred Circle, and the global Anglican Communion. Strengthening linkages such as ecumenical partnerships and relationships with sister organizations like Alongside Hope and the Anglican Foundation of Canada are also important.

Throughout my entire career and vocation, I have developed leadership capabilities that respond to the needs our diocese has for a bishop at this particular time. I have extensive experience in community engagement, collaborative vision planning, priority-setting, organizational implementation, and change management. I have been intimately involved in the strategic planning of our diocese since 2015 and, at the level of the national church, led the development of the current organizational restructuring document: [Creating Pathways for the Transformational Change of the General Synod](#)

I have deeply rooted my leadership in creatively working alongside communities to enable meaningful worship, prayer, and ministry. The goal of this work has always been to encourage a parish to be a catalyst for active discipleship and neighbourhood engagement in a way that honours radical hospitality and care for all.

I am grateful to have been trusted with leadership responsibilities by those whom I have served, and I believe I possess the skills and humility necessary to hold with grace the role of chief pastor, spiritual leader, and overseer of our diocese.

3. DEMOGRAPHICS, DIVERSITY, AND VISION

Demographic shifts within our diocese reflect broader changes taking place across Canadian society, in both its cultural and spiritual makeup. What is your perspective on these shifts, and how would you lead our diocese as we navigate the reality of social change?

The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.
~ Isaiah 58:11

Across cultures, traditions, geography, and time there has always been vast diversity of experience and expression of Christianity and Anglicanism. Humble acknowledgment of this truth may be an integral tool that we can use to 'make our bones strong' as we

experience and adjust to the transformations that are occurring both within and outside of our churches.

The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa is part of the ever-evolving diversity of Canada that informs, inspires, and strengthens the cultural and spiritual make-up of our parishes and communities. For some, the experience of significant differences between attendance of the past and those of today evokes grief, concern, and worry. For others, smaller numbers and an awareness that committed religious practice is a counter-cultural choice sits at the foundation of their faith journey. Still others are navigating an increase in cultural and religious diversity within church community as a result of immigration and spiritual migration from other denominations (or no religious background). These new realities demand us to explore what radical hospitality looks like in our current context and how discipleship and relationships can be strengthened across difference.

These shifts are our contextual realities. These are the waters in which we swim. These are the privileged opportunities that we, as the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, are invited to embrace. We cannot be led by fear but rather by hope and assurance that this is God's church and God has provided all we need to navigate these waters.

This is not to ignore that these shifts can be challenging, especially as we compare ourselves to previous years or examine some of the difficulties that we have with our aging infrastructure and systems. These shifts invite us in to the hard work of adapting and planning for a sustainable future. As bishop, I would navigate these challenges by continuing the dedicated work that we have all done together throughout the years and, with prayerful discernment, leading our diocese forward into God's future with confidence and collaboration.

4. FAITH AND COMMON PRAYER

Anglicanism is rooted in a tradition of common prayer, but it also encourages local expression in worship. As bishop, how would you guide the Diocese in maintaining a balance between common prayer and local expression?

So, then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.
~ Ephesians 2:19-22

The other day I had the opportunity to chat with a young couple new to our parish. During the coffee hour, they marvelled at how the service reminded them of their home in India; the similarity of the liturgy, the feel of community, and the sharing of the Eucharist. It was an emotional moment in which I, as their new priest, acknowledged with them that the commonality of our liturgy allowed them to feel connected with the

family and friends that they miss. At the same time, they were excited that their new parish was also different in its context, place, and meaning. This to me is one of the great gifts of being Anglican. What a privilege we all experience when we bring comfort and connection through common prayer while also reflecting local nuances and expression that builds meaning and relationship.

We all have a role in honouring and valuing how our tradition unites us to the wider church, across geography and time. Yet, we must also ensure that our local expression and teaching is responsive to the context in which we currently live out our discipleship. As bishop, I would invite a continued respect for both of these responsibilities. I would seek opportunities, in partnership with others, to explore how God is calling us into the future of liturgical expression that will both communicate a strong Anglican identity and equip us to welcome and embrace new opportunities to share the Gospel through worship, prayer, and ritual.

We must also acknowledge that our common prayer and local expressions of worship play a critical role in how we welcome and serve non-churched and de-churched individuals who are seeking a place to experience God. I have firsthand knowledge of walking through the doors of an Anglican church and not understanding what the tradition and its rituals are all about, and then finding what I was looking for through the richness of Anglican liturgy and community. As the Bishop of Ottawa, it will be my hope that we can further strengthen our parish ministry through inclusive Sunday liturgy, diverse worshipping communities, and a mixed-ecology of church expression throughout the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa.

5. MINISTRY TO PEOPLE WHO ARE VULNERABLE

Our Diocese is committed to meeting the needs of the vulnerable, through both our community ministries and our parish life. Under your leadership, how would you help both parish and community ministries flourish in this calling?

And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." ~ Matthew 25:40

As a Parish Priest I am a leader whose ministry is deeply rooted in the importance of community engagement. I invite parishes to see themselves as an integral part of the neighbourhood outside of the walls of their church building. I place utmost importance on participation in community discourse and activity. As the Bishop of Ottawa, I would continue this commitment. I would be dedicated to working alongside others to ensure that our entire diocese has the confidence, capacity, and dedication to serve the vulnerable, to seek justice and inclusion, to be a voice and presence in the public square, and to strive to love our neighbours as ourselves.

As an integral component of our diocesan identity, our Community Ministries must continue to flourish. Ongoing collaborative efforts will expand the ways in which these ministries remain deeply connected to parishes, are well staffed and resourced, have a strong presence in the broader neighbourhoods within which they serve, honour the volunteers and employees upon whom they depend, and develop effective partnerships.

Strengthening parish ministries that support those in need is also a sacred responsibility. The bishop must work alongside the laity and clergy to maintain and expand our service to the 'least of these'. Not all parish ministries evolve into a Community Ministry that operates under the direct administrative oversight of our diocese, but all parishes respond to God's calling with their ministry to the community within which they serve.

Today, our efforts require deep listening and understanding of what is happening in our surrounding contexts. Our presence is important in the spaces where needs and challenges are raised up and discussed: for example, stakeholder groups and municipal government offices, neighbourhood planning and development meetings, school councils and resource centres, advocacy organizations, agricultural fair boards, and others. There are so many opportunities for us to show up and learn about what is happening in the broader community and then explore how God is calling us to be involved. Sometimes we will discern a call to play an active role, other times holding something in prayer is the most powerful offering we can make.

6. TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Our diocese is deeply engaged in the journey of truth and reconciliation with Indigenous communities. Why does this matter to you, and how would you bring your own passion to this ministry of reconciliation and justice?

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? ~ Micah 6:8

Throughout my vocation I have listened to and learned about the ways in which the Anglican church has participated in the generational harm of indigenous people on Turtle Island. I am grateful to the people and elders who I have met along the way. They have provided me with a more truthful understanding of the history of oppression than what I was taught in school. Their teachings have inspired me to commit to life-long participation in efforts of reconciliation and Indigenous justice.

Over the past several years I have worked extensively at the national level of the Anglican church in various capacities. This work has allowed me to witness the ongoing development of Indigenous Anglican self-determination within the Anglican Church of Canada. I have been honoured to play a part in lifting up the importance of 'walking together in partnership between the Indigenous Church and the Historic Settler Church'

(one of the [Pathways](#) currently guiding the transformational change of the General Synod, adopted at General Synod 2025).

A passion I would bring to the role of bishop is the desire to respect, honour, and navigate the ways in which the evolving development of Sacred Circle will invite our diocese into new conversations and opportunities. Prayerful dialogue, discussion, and discernment of the evolution and development of the self-determining Indigenous Church continues both within Indigenous communities and between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous governance bodies of our church. There is still much to be done and there is also much wisdom to glean as the journey continues. I am inspired by this hope: “Indigenous church participation in the Anglican Church of Canada seeks to share Indigenous people’s gifts of expression, traditional ways, stories, dress and insights to community life and our spirituality that powerfully echoes an Indigenous biblical worldview; cooperation in the building of bridges helps all to live out and celebrate the love of Jesus.” (Section 12, page 37, of [The Way of Life](#))

The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa is comprised of a diversity of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans that contribute to who we are as a people of God in this time and place. As the Bishop of Ottawa, I would work with others, particularly Indigenous leaders, to strengthen relationships and further our diocesan commitments.

7. CALL AND DISCERNMENT

What is exciting, and what is challenging, about the prospect of being Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa?

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’

~ Luke 24:30-32

The scripture passage that I have offered in response to this question, includes the same verse I offered in response to the first question. It is my favourite Gospel passage. I love the simplicity of Jesus being revealed in bread and wine after a long walk and conversation. This passage speaks about so many aspects of our Anglican tradition including the centrality of the Eucharist, our commitment to listening, dialogue, and learning, our recognition that faith is a journey on a road with other people, and our understanding that the revelation of Jesus in our midst transforms us. It then invites us to tell others and to share the Good News.

If elected, it will be a profoundly humbling blessing to walk along the road with the laity and clergy of this diocese as your bishop. It will begin a new chapter for all of us. Together, we will participate in God’s mission that we are called to embrace. It is a

time in which we are invited to be bold, prophetic, hope-filled, humble, and creative. That is simply exciting!

As Bishop of Ottawa I would endeavour to do the following:

- To encourage and enable our diocese to be led by hope and trust rather than worry and fear.
- To create spaces of trust, transparency, and communication that will enable collaboration, mutual support, and transformation.
- To ensure that the parishes in the rural, urban and suburban areas of our diocese are vibrant communities that can embrace the excitement and the challenges of being Christ followers in this time and place.
- To expand our understanding of the mutual interdependence between laity, clergy, and staff for the effective governance of our diocese and the flourishing of our ministries.
- To strengthen our capacity to respond to the diverse contextual realities of our time.
- To explore new structures and processes that can increase the ability for Diocesan Synod, Diocesan Council, and Committees to be working environments that enable us to grapple with the important issues that we face together.

The next chapter of our diocese will be built on many of our existing strengths. *The Shape of Parish Ministry* process that has defined our current mission priorities provides us with a strong foundation upon which to continue our journey with Christ. Participation by all parishes and leaders in the work unfolding through the Triennial Evaluation and Priority-Setting Task Force will enable us to discern the next stages of our diocesan work with strength and support.

Of course, challenges exist. We are living in a time in which we are faced with the need to tackle and adapt to ongoing changes in church attendance; to consider the increased need for repair of our aging buildings; to navigate the diverse needs and expectations of new and established parishioners; to respond to financial vulnerabilities and create effective long-term sustainability measures; and other pressures and realities. None of these challenges outshine the excitement. The laity and clergy of our diocese can and will tackle these challenges together, with God's help.

We are a diocese filled with amazing people, parishes, and ministries that are rooted in faith. It is my hope that all of us find joy in the gift and privilege of participating in the life of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. As your bishop, the opportunity to preach the gospel, to serve others, and to humbly follow God is a responsibility I would take on with reverence, respect, and gratitude.

May our hearts burn within us as we walk together, with Jesus, on the road.