

The Anglican Church of Canada
Diocese of Athabasca



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**From the desk of
The Rt. Rev. Fraser Lawton**

For Immediate Release

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As one who was in Slave Lake on Sunday, I share in a small measure the shock of the people of that community. The magnitude of the disaster in that community won't become fully clear until people are able to return and see what remains and what has been lost. The prayers and thoughts of the Anglican Diocese of Athabasca continue to be with the evacuees and with those who remain to fight the fires. Our thanks go out to those who have given of their time, energy and donations to care for those who have fled the fires. We are grateful to the authorities and emergency workers for their actions, and continue to pray for wisdom for them and for their safety. We see again the generous and caring spirit of the people of Alberta and of the rest of Canada as they reach out in care for the evacuees. Our thanks also go out to our parishes for their own ongoing response to having evacuees in their midst.

We are also very mindful of the many other communities across Northern Alberta that have been evacuated or face evacuation warnings. It is important that they not be forgotten, and all Albertans continue to follow their circumstances and to help out as we are able.

The implications and full nature of the disaster in Slave Lake and across Northern Alberta continue to evolve and will not be fully known for many days or even weeks. The true test for us all will come then, as we look to how we will help rebuild the communities so terribly affected. Our prayers for all directly involved will continue. In the bible (John 10:28), Jesus promised that no one can snatch us from His hand. Though things may be very difficult, we do not lose hope. We encourage all Northern Albertans to continue their generous actions in caring for those who have been displaced from their homes and communities, to be patient and have perseverance, and to commit to the rebuilding and healing that will be needed.

Rt Rev Fraser Lawton
Bishop of the Diocese of Athabasca
(Anglican Church in Northern Alberta)