



# Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd

Serving Individuals and Families of the Concho Valley with the Transforming Love of Jesus Christ!

## AGNUS DEI

Fall 2024

*"I am the  
Good Shepherd.  
  
The  
Good Shepherd  
  
gives his life  
  
for his sheep."*

*John 10:11*

### **A Covenant With God —**

By Jean Stinnett LPC

A covenant (Hebrew "berith") is a formal agreement or treaty between two parties, usually one superior and the other lesser, with each assuming an obligation to the other. The greater power demands loyalty and in turn obligates itself to protect and care for the lesser one. Disobedience from the lesser party results in some kind of punishment. Very simply, this describes the familial relationship between parent and child.



In every Covenant with God, man has the choice to agree or not. This divine relationship was seen as permanent according to the Old Testament prophets, where man's breaking of a covenant was viewed as a minor setback. When people recommit themselves, God's prosperity and benevolence occurs in a new covenant.

In the Old Testament God's first Covenant was with Adam in the Garden of Eden. God created man in His image, declared him steward over all creation, gave him a delightful place to live (Eden translates from the Hebrew word, Delight), and commanded him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Because they disobeyed, Adam and Eve were punished. Consequently, God drove them out of Eden into a harsh life of toil for every bite of food and the ultimate finality: death.

God's Covenants with Abraham, Noah, Moses, and David evolved through centuries by adjusting agreement terms (also called the Law) to political and social changes. We are most familiar with the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses. The Law is a system of commands designed to support the stability of a society, allowing it to function in a consistent manner. In the Old Testament actual administration of justice was carried out by city elders sitting at the city gate where they meted out punishment according to the crime. The court was charged to administer justice, avoid corruption, adhere to cultural traditions, follow religious practices, and introduce new governmental edicts (Deuteronomy 16:18-20 and 17:8-13). In difficult cases they deferred to a higher authority. These Covenants were external, based upon human behavior and the consequences of making bad choices.

But a New Covenant was on the horizon, foretold by the prophets. Jeremiah prophesied the people's return, growth and prosperity with God establishing a new covenant with Israel (31:27-37); one that will be given internally. The New Covenant will become part of the nature of each individual, so that obedience is unbreakable (v.34), and its eternality is guaranteed (v.35-37 and Jeremiah 32:36-44). New Testament authors saw in the death of Jesus the beginning of the new covenant (Mark 14:24 and 1 Corinthians 11:25) and saw His followers as members of that covenant. The book of Hebrews makes the greatest use of covenant language in the New Testament.

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## The Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant between God and man fascinated archeologists and students of the Holy Bible long before Indiana Jones came upon the scene in *Technicolor*. Other cultures had similar practices of using portable shrines. Understandably, many people were migratory because of seasonal climate changes and agrarian life styles. And, in times of military conquest, a shrine carried into battle imparted super-human powers to warriors.

In Holy Scriptures ark translates from two Hebrew words which both mean box or chest. The word "tebah" is used only for Noah's ark (Genesis 6-9) and the ark of bulrushes in which Moses was placed (Exodus 2:3-5). The word "aron" indicates a coffin (Genesis 50: 26) and a chest (2 Kings 12:9) usually designated for a religious object.

The original characteristic feature of the Ark was that it was portable. At an early period in the Bible the Ark became a direct manifestation of God's presence and was virtually identified with Him. Moses addressed the Ark as God (Numbers 10:35-36). In Solomon's new Temple (1 Kings 8:4-7) the Ark was transferred behind the veil into the Holy of Holies, where God was believed to reside permanently. Believed to hold the two tablets upon which God wrote His Ten Commandments, the Ark was revered as holy and sacred. The Ark became a container of the "testimony," that is, the tablets of the law. The Hebrew term "kapporeth" suggests this was the place where atonement was made, mainly by the sprinkling of blood on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:14-16). This representation of the Ark is found in the New Testament in Hebrews 9:3-5 and Romans 3:25.

The New Covenant is foretold in Jeremiah 31: 31-34. Moses' covenant at Sinai was based on the gracious initiative of God in the Exodus (Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6) and was broken by a faithless people (Jeremiah 31:32). But the New Covenant is rooted in God's grace in and through Jesus Christ (1Corinthians 11:25). In other words, God sets people in a personal relationship with Himself and actually assumes responsibility for His people's faithfulness in Christ. Jesus taught the Golden Rule: to love God above all else and to love each other as He loved us first. In His authority as Son of God and Man, He transforms His followers into children of God and therefore heirs to God's kingdom in faith. Upon His resurrection and ascension we are given a new, intrinsic and essential relationship in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the mysterious presence of God in individuals, inspiring them with qualities they would not otherwise possess. The word spirit translates from the Hebrew word ruach and the Greek word pneuma meaning wind or breath and ultimately, a life-giving element. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament represents the continued presence of Jesus Christ in the church, that is, the Christian community.

As believers we possess the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit who is the moral and ethical Guide in our Christian lives. Therefore, we become the Ark of the New Covenant through Jesus Christ. Our bodies carry the indwelling of Christ, once again portable not stationary. His shed blood is the atonement for our sin. Our lives become testimony to His life, death, and resurrection. The covenantal agreement with God lives in us as the New Testament relationship with the Living God. The mystery of faith is this: Jesus is alive in us.

Halleluiah! — Jean Stinnett, LPC





*Family*



*Love*



*Serving*



*Teaching*





VIPs at School!



Graduation!



Laila Reunion

**HOME  
IS WHERE  
THE  
FAMILY  
IS**



Sallywag Stephen!



Tom and friend



Guess Who?



### ***THE MOST REV. STEPHEN D. WOOD***

The Most Rev. Stephen D. Wood was elected as the third Archbishop of the Province of the Anglican Church in North America on June 22, 2024. On Friday, June 28, 2024, authority was passed to him during the closing Eucharist of Provincial Assembly at the St. Vincent College Basilica in Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

Archbishop Steve Wood was elected as the first Bishop of the Diocese of the Carolinas by the College of Bishops on June 5, 2012. He was consecrated Bishop at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Mt. Pleasant, SC by Archbishop Robert Duncan on August 25, 2013. Co-Consecrators included ACNA Bishops Roger Ames, Alphonza Gadsen, and John Guernsey.

He was installed as Rector of St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Mt. Pleasant, SC by Bishop Edward L. Salmon, XIII Bishop of South Carolina, on September 1, 2000. Under Bishop Wood's leadership, St. Andrew's was described by the Charleston Post & Courier as, "one of the Lowcountry's biggest church success stories," growing to a membership of more than 3200 and planting new churches in Goose Creek, SC, and downtown Charleston.

Born October 12, 1963, Bishop Wood is the oldest of two sons born to the late Elanore Mitchell (Smith) Wood and the late Jewell Nelson Wood. He attended Lake Catholic High School in Mentor, Ohio, graduating in 1981. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Cleveland State University in 1986. He then completed his priestly formation at the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia where he earned a Masters of Divinity.

Archbishop Wood married Jacqueline Elizabeth (Benner) Wood on February 1, 1986. Together, they have four sons and eight grandchildren.

Archbishop Wood was ordained to the diaconate on June 15, 1991 and to the priesthood on February 1, 1992 by Bishop James R. Moodey, VIII Bishop of Ohio. He was appointed Vicar of St. Anne-in-the-Fields in Madison, Ohio where he served until April of 1995. He then served as Associate Rector and Chief of Staff at St. Luke's parish in Bath, Ohio until his move to South Carolina.

## Archbishop Steve Wood: A Letter to the Province

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am home now from participating in my first Executive Committee meeting and provincial staff retreat. I was grateful for the time spent with both groups, and I was impressed by the character, faith, and gifts of the people who serve our province.



**THE MOST REV. STEVE WOOD**

This Provincial Letter is the first of an ongoing series of quarterly letters that you will receive from me, God willing. My goal is to provide you with regular updates regarding life in our province from my perspective.

The Constitution and Canons of our church contain this remarkable statement: "The fundamental agency of mission in the Province is the local congregation." (ACNA Const. Art. IV.1; Canon I.6.1) My aim in the years ahead is to keep that statement before the various bodies and dioceses of our province. The evaluative question for us all will be, "how does this (whatever it is that is under consideration) support the local congregation in her mission?"

Two aspects immediately come to my mind when I think of supporting the local congregation. The first is our shared responsibility toward the hard work of ensuring that we have healthy congregations. And the second is like unto it, our collective duty to ensure that we have healthy clergy (and clergy families).

With regard to healthy churches, in late August, the Provincial Office published a sample safeguarding policy for our bishops and our dioceses. This document accompanies the Title I canonical revisions that were passed at our most recent Provincial Assembly.

With regard to the development of healthy clergy (and clergy families), I am pleased to inform you that we (the province) have very recently secured a Lilly Endowment grant to develop province-wide programs to support, develop, and encourage the financial health of our clergy. You will hear more about this in the coming months.

My first priority post-election has been to secure a Chief Operating Officer. I am delighted that Deborah Tepley has accepted this position. She is uniquely qualified and gifted to serve and help lead the province at this time in our common life. Deborah begins her role with us on September 9th. At that time, we will work together to assess and develop our provincial priorities and staffing needs.



I have almost completed a series of individual Zoom meetings with the diocesan bishops of our province. I've given them a number of questions for prayerful consideration, and their responses have shaped our conversation. I expect that I will be able to share a summary of what I have learned in a later Provincial Letter.

Another area of immediate focus has been to assess and develop our provincial communications. Specifically, I desire to have more regular and more informative communication within the Province, especially from the Provincial Office, to our laity and clergy. This letter is a first step toward accomplishing this goal. I have also asked our communication office to proactively seek and tell the stories of gospel life and mission taking place in our parishes and dioceses.

Lastly, a word about the work of the Court for the Trial of a Bishop. The last few years have been difficult and frustrating years for our province. Having served on the court for the Todd Atkinson trial, I gained perspective on how our disciplinary process works. Of particular interest was the discovery that our court is only able to entertain one trial at a time. Given the timeframe for the investigations and subsequent presentment processes, including the appeals to the Tribunal, being far longer than anticipated, by the time Atkinson trial was ready for adjudication it was first on the court's schedule. Practically, this means that the matters before the court concerning the Diocese of the Upper Midwest have been awaiting the completion of the Atkinson trial.

With the Atkinson trial complete and the election of a new court at our recent Provincial Council, the +Ruch trial is now before the court. In August, I affirmed Archbishop Beach's appointments of Mr. C. Alan Runyan, Esq. as the Provincial Prosecutor as well as the Honorable Tad Brenner as legal advisor to the court. (Canon IV.5.2.3) I have sworn in and commissioned the new court. I also asked the court to consider publishing regular updates as motions are ruled upon. I am very pleased to tell you that the court has agreed to issue updates on their work. I commend to your prayers all those affected and this process.

Please know that this letter comes with gratitude for our shared ministry and my continued prayers.

Yours in Christ,



+Steve

*God's "gifts to men" are varied. Some he made his messengers, some prophets, some preachers of the Gospel; to some he gave the power to guide and teach his people.*

*His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service, that the whole body might be built up until the time comes when, in the unity of the common faith and common knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity—that measure of development which is meant by the "fullness of Christ"*

*- Ephesians 4:11*

J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)

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