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for an Icon

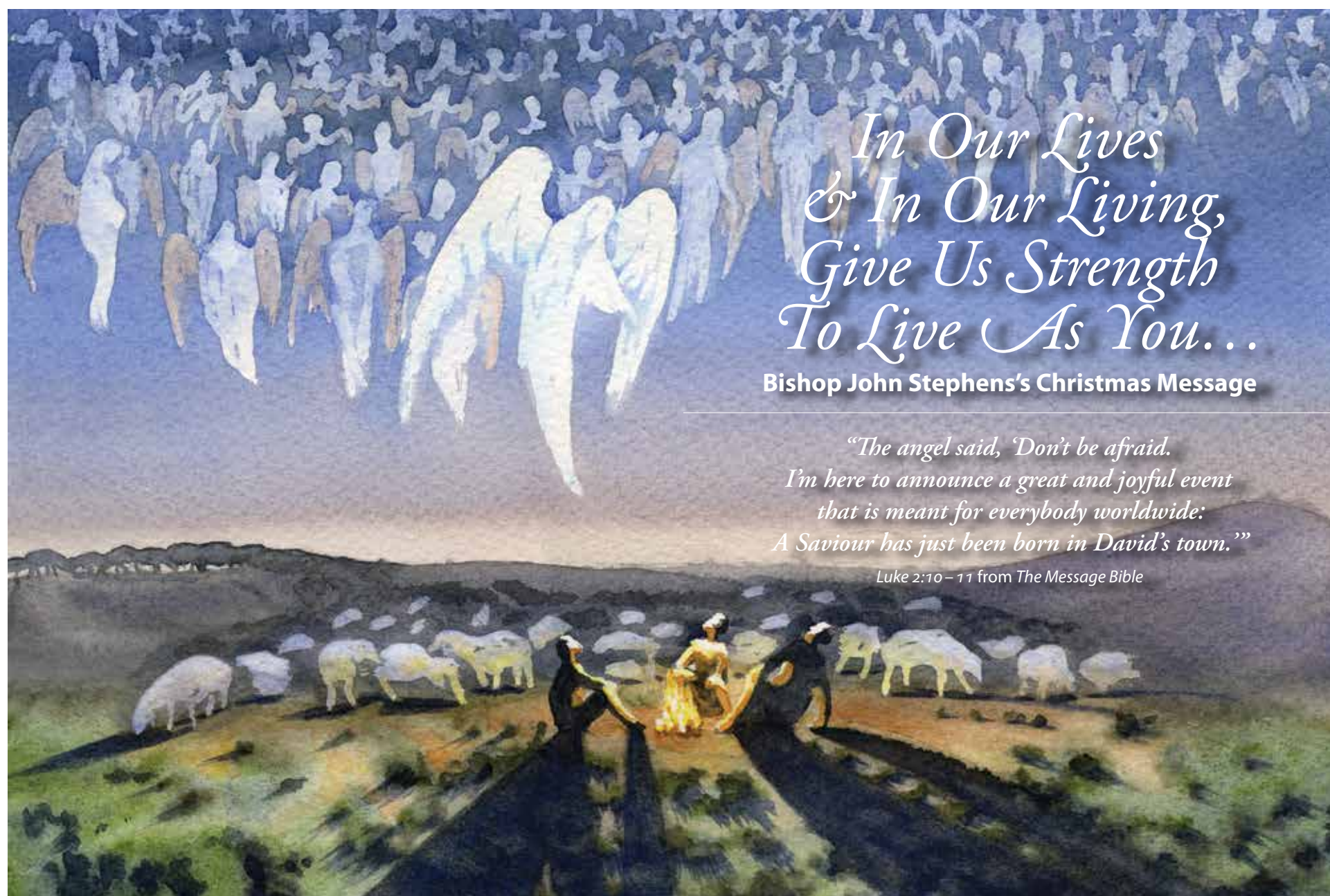
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In Our Lives & In Our Living, Give Us Strength To Live As You...

Bishop John Stephens's Christmas Message

*"The angel said, 'Don't be afraid.
I'm here to announce a great and joyful event
that is meant for everybody worldwide:
A Saviour has just been born in David's town.'"*

Luke 2:10–11 from *The Message Bible*

Angels, the heavenly host fills the sky proclaiming the birth of Christ. IMAGE Olga Ptashko (iStock ID#853486836)

Merry Christmas to you! May you know the peace and hope found in the birth of Jesus Christ, and may that same peace and hope guide you through the new year.

In the relatively new hymnal of the Anglican Church of Canada, *Sing a New Creation*, there is a hymn entitled *Holy Child Within the Manger*. It was written by Marty Haugen but because it is a Christmas Hymn, it probably does not garner a lot of attention as it tries to elbow its way into the long list of traditional carols of Advent and Christmas. It is hard to push aside *O Come O Come Emmanuel* or *Silent Night* to make room for something new. But if you do come across this hymn, take a moment to read through the words. I find them quite striking:

*Once again we tell the story
How your love for us was shown,
When the image of your glory
Wore an image like our own
Come enlighten with your wisdom,
Come and fill us with your grace.
May the fire of your compassion
Kindle every land and race*

Our Advent preparations and our Christmas celebrations focus on spiritual transformation. With all the other festivities and celebrations taking place at this time of year, we often lose sight of this. This is a time not wrapped up in

gifts and glitter but really about a child wrapped in swaddling clothes who will show us a new way to live and to see the world. This child will challenge all that we do and how we walk on this planet. This child will awaken our relationship with the One who first breathed life into us and the entire earth. This child indeed will enlighten us with a wisdom that is beyond our daily routines to touch on the deepest purposes: centering our lives on the grace and compassion of God.

On a wintry and dark night I was driving to one of the churches that was part of the three churches that made up my first parish. It was Christmas Eve, it was cold, it was snowing, and the roads were rather slippery. This church was found on a quiet country lane, where there were few homes as the church was surrounded by fields for growing crops. No streetlights here to help guide the way as I drove along. The thick and heavy darkness felt oppressive as I was trying to keep to the road with my headlights guiding me as best as they could. Eventually I was able to see light shining out from the windows of the church. A light of welcome, to be sure, but it felt more than that. It was light pushing back darkness of all kinds. Other headlights were soon seen on that same road as others were arriving to sing the familiar carols, to give thanks for the birth of Jesus, to celebrate the true light coming into the world. The lights of that church seemed to be a beacon of recognition of

the incarnation of God; that indeed even in the deepest of darkneses the light and hope of God can be seen and known. We need to hear this message amongst all else we will hear this Christmastide. That indeed the light has come: the light of all people.

Christmas is about pausing in our busy lives to reflect upon why the Christ child came to us. It is a pause button in our world to remind us that God is not distant or far removed from us but known in our midst. The birth of Jesus was God's ultimate sign of Emmanuel, God with us.

How do we live our lives differently because a child has been born for us? How are we changed because a child is born who will grow up only to be killed but will rise again? How are we transformed by the good news that God calls us beloved and seeks for us to come closer?

From the hymn, *Holy Child Within the Manger*:

*In our lives and in our living
Give us strength to live as you,
That our hearts might be forgiving
And our spirits strong and true.*

May your Christmas celebrations be filled with the true coming of Christ into this world, into our thinking and into our living.

Peace and hope to you. ✠



At the liturgy: Preacher, the Very Rev. Peter Elliott; Celebrant, the Rev. Mtr. Amanda Ruston; Rector of the parish, the Ven. Fr. Kevin Hunt; Organist/Director of Music at St. James', Gerald Harder. ALL PHOTOS Randy Murray



The procession in.



Peggy Smyth shared the First Lesson, 1 Kings 3:5-14.



John Daniel, OC, reads the Beatitudes, Matthew 5:1-12.

Evensong at St. James' in Remembrance of HM Queen Elizabeth II

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On a warm mid-October afternoon more than six weeks following the death of Her Late Majesty, Elizabeth the Second, the Parish of St. James, the oldest Anglican parish in the City of Vancouver celebrated a Solemn Evensong. The Eucharist is the spiritual practice which grounds us and prepares all of us as Anglicans and Christians to go out into the world and be the Body of Christ, however, although it has been out of fashion for decades, Evensong remains a relevant and moving liturgy. It's penitential tone and acknowledgement of the fragility of our mortality is a fitting vehicle for a memorial.

This Evensong had all the elements and more, including a homily which is not customarily part of the Office, but in recent years with the rarity of its celebration (at least in the diocese of New Westminster) has increasingly included a sermon. The guest preacher, retired Dean of the diocese of New Westminster and former Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, the Very Rev. Peter Elliott began his address with these two paragraphs:

"Like millions of others around the world we watched coverage of our late Queen's funeral. Bringing together royal customs with the precision of military pageantry underscored by ceremonies of the Church of England made for an impressive and moving ceremony. Who will ever forget her late Majesty's crown on her coffin in a gun carriage pulled by British sailors, or the soaring beauty of the music in Westminster Abbey?"

But, of course, the combination of these three forces — monarchy, military and religion have also been a lethal force in the process of colonization here and throughout the world. The crown's interests, aided with military might and the missionary zeal of the church too often trampled over territories here and elsewhere, imposing culture, religion, and values foreign to the people of the land."

The Very Rev. Elliott went on to remark on Her Majesty's relationship to Canada, her humanity and humility in relation to her privilege, her consistency, her relations with other leaders and her wisdom. To illustrate this last quality, he included this quote from former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams:

"When I held the role of Archbishop of Canterbury, I had to meet a large number of... leaders across the world; I can truthfully say that not one impressed me in the same way the Queen did. Not one had the same degree of attentiveness, unassuming clarity of mind and response, lack of prickly or defensive reactions. She could be abrupt; she could be caustic; she had a powerful sense of the absurd and a real impatience with clichés and flannel. Yet her profound kindness was always in evidence, and her dry and deflating humor was a great gift in keeping matters in perspective."

The Very Rev. Elliott also wove the scriptures read that day into the fabric of his homily, particularly the Second Lesson, Matthew 5:1-12 aka *The Beatitudes*:

"Even though she lived a life of incomparable privilege and wealth, she was not immune to the sufferings of the human heart and held fast to a faith that helped define her character and gave her the wise and discerning mind for which she was well known. Jesus's teaching in The Beatitudes was not far from her life experience: she knew what it was like to be poor in spirit, to mourn, to be a peacemaker, to hunger and thirst for justice, to be merciful and even to be reviled and persecuted. Set apart the role she inhabited for so long, she was respected

more for her service, steadfastness, and kindness than for her royal prerogative. In so many ways she was blessed indeed."

He went on to examine further Her Majesty's faith and philosophy by sharing her words:

"Reflecting on her death and her life weeks now after her meticulously planned and perfectly executed funeral, it's not the pageantry in her death or her life that stays, it's her humanity, her commitment to service, her wisdom and discernment. For 69 years her Christmas addresses rooted her values within the Christian story. In her last address, she said this:

"Despite being displaced and persecuted throughout his short life, Christ's unchanging message was not one of revenge or violence but simply that we should love one another. Although it is not an easy message to follow, we shouldn't be discouraged; rather, it inspires us to try harder: to be thankful for the people who bring love and happiness into our own lives, and to look for ways of spreading that love to others, whenever and wherever we can."

The music in worship led by Organist and Director of Music, Gerald Harder was truly beautiful with all the music (except for the hymns and organ postlude which was *Fugue in E flat* by J.S. Bach) composed by 20th Century composers. Music in worship included: *Evening hymn* by Henry Balfour Gardiner; Paul Halley's *Responses*; Gerald

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



The Celebrant, the Rev. Mtr. Amanda Ruston.

Growing communities of faith in Jesus Christ to serve God's mission in the world.



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Editor Randy Murray
rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca

Designer Jennifer Ewing, BDes

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The diocese of New Westminster

The Anglican Church in the Lower Mainland, the Fraser Valley and on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, located on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish First Nations, consisting of 67 worshipping communities.



The Bishop of New Westminster

The Right Reverend John Stephens

Address Diocese of New Westminster

1410 Nanton Avenue,
Vancouver, BC V6H 2E2

Phone 604.684.6306

Contributors & Helpers for this issue

Simbarashe Basvi, Michael Batten, Patrick Blaney, Linda Burton, Wayne Chose, Hilary Clark, Sid Clark, Laurel Dahill, Jane Dittrich, Douglas Fenton, Conrad Guelke, Jeddy James, Hannah Main-van der Camp, Joyce Mancinelli, Lorie Martin, Pam Martin, Jade Martin-Seedhouse, Mari Matik, Alison Minto, Herbert O'Driscoll, Margaret Rolfe, Jessica Schaap, Margaret Stedman, Bishop John Stephens, Dave Walker, and Amy Zidulka

Thank you!

Evensong at St. James' in Remembrance of HM Queen Elizabeth II

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Harder's Setting of *Psalm 67*; Herbert Howells, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimitis*, *Collegium Regale* setting; John Tavener's *Song for Athene*.

The Very Rev. Elliott closed with these words and a quote from the "Bard":

"As we mourn her death and celebrate her life there's a verse from Shakespeare's play Cymbeline which comes to mind:

*Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimneysweepers, come to dust.*

Thanks be to God for the life, service, and witness of our late Queen Elizabeth II. May her rest be in peace and her dwelling place in the paradise of God." ✠



Censing the Celebrant during the *Magnificat*.



The Very Rev. Peter Elliott preaching.



Mother Amanda leads the prayers.

The Very Rev. Peter Elliott's sermon is available on the diocesan website at <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/podcasts/media/2022-10-16-solemn-evensong-in-remembrance-of-her-majesty-queen-elizabeth-ii>

To read the article on the website *First Things* from former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams please go to <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2022/09/queen-elizabeth-servant-of-god>

To read *Her Late Majesty, Elizabeth II's 2021 Christmas message* please go to <https://www.nationalworld.com/news/uk/queens-christmas-message-in-full-elizabeth-ii-reflects-on-her-grief-in-personal-address-3507299>

Dear Topic Readers

You can help communicate the Good News of the arrival of the Light of the World by passing on to friends, family, and neighbours the web location of the diocese of New Westminster's Find-a-Church pages at

www.vancouver.anglican.ca/find-a-church.

There are 63 easy to access parish pages grouped in 11 deanery sections with regional location information on the entry graphics and detailed location information for each parish. Many of the parish pages may also include specific listings for Advent and Christmas worship and events including information about livestreaming and Zoom gatherings; inviting everyone to participate. All are welcome!



It is our privilege to produce *Topic* and we are extremely grateful for our readers and the wonderful support we receive from Around the Diocese

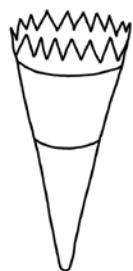
TO YOU
AND YOURS
THE MERRIEST
OF CHRISTMAS'S
& MANY BLESSINGS
FOR 2023!

Randy Murray, *Topic* Editor and
Jennifer Ewing, *Topic* Designer



ICE CREAMS

HOW CHURCHGOERS LOOK SIMILAR TO THEIR FAVOURITES



Multifaith Climate Emergency Group Event

Coverage of Fridays for Future on September 23

JEDDY JAMES, ODNW

St. Michael's, Surrey; Member of Mission & Ministry Development Committee of the diocese of New Westminster

As part of the Climate Emergency Implementation Team with oversight from the Mission & Ministry Development Committee (MMD) in the diocese of New Westminster, we have connected with other faith groups to see if there is a possibility of presenting a united platform/front to voice our concerns regarding the Climate Crisis. We feel a unified approach will have a much more significant impact overall, and help spread awareness in a meaningful manner. As an initial step toward collaboration, we participated in an inter-faith ministry meeting where we were joined by several representatives from various Christian denominations and eco-justice groups. It was decided that the first exhibition of our unified front would be participation in a Climate Strike/Protest held September 23, 2022.

Multiple groups concerned with the climate and envi-

ronmental crisis gathered together in downtown Vancouver on Friday, September 23 for the Global Day of Action, conducted a rally from Coal Harbour to the Vancouver Art Gallery and joined in chants, speeches and demonstrations highlighting the crisis and its drastic consequences. Hundreds of folks from universities, healthcare, environmental organizations, political parties, people who were concerned about the environment in general showed up in support, to voice their apprehension regarding the deteriorating condition of our planet.

The groups the diocese of New Westminster has connected with (to date): United Church, Vancouver Unitarians, Citizens for Public Justice, Vancouver Green Faith.

Here are some observations from the Multifaith Group members who attended the event:

The Rev. Dan Chambers, Co-Lead Minister, St. Andrews-Wesley United Church: *"Coming together at the Climate Rally on Friday, organized by the Sustainabilityteens, was the highlight of my day. This multi-cultural, intergenerational event brought together people in the community who share a sense of urgency, concern and hope."*

"We know that the climate emergency affects all of us, and while we each can do our part, the only adequate response is collective. Personally, I find it easy to get sucked into a pit of shadowy despair when faced with the climate crisis so genuinely appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with people of faith as we consider effective means for congregational and governmental policy responses. Considering together how to focus our energy and resources is already a hopeful response. On behalf of our staff and congregation, I can say that we're grateful to be part of this shared work."

Maryo Wahba, Communications Coordinator at Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ): *"The atmosphere during the Fridays for Future climate march was youthful and energizing. Despite a lower turnout than expected those who showed up were dedicated and passionate individuals whose commitment to climate justice fueled the vibrant conversations and discussions that took place during*

the rally.

CPJ believes that it is important to amplify our shared laments and commitments, as people of faith, to work towards climate justice. This is why CPJ hopes that our newly formed group of faith leaders for the climate can engage Vancouver's congregations in the work of environmental justice already being done by churches and organizations, such as the ones taking part in our new coalition."

The Rev. Brynn Craffey, Assistant Curate, St. Thomas, Collingwood in the diocese of New Westminster *"It was energizing and inspiring to reconnect with various climate-concerned friends and meet new friends and allies at the march and block party. I am always inspired by the youth who have made climate justice their priority! Activism IS the antidote to climate despair."*

"The world's major religions all advocate respect and care for creation as a key tenet of our faith traditions, and so it makes sense that churches, mosques, synagogues, and other religious meeting places would become organizing hubs for activism to resist and adapt to our civilization's worsening climate emergency. I'm excited to be a part of this emerging organization in Vancouver!"

Rather than reinventing the wheel, we've decided that in the current "infancy" stage of our group's formation, it would be prudent to support existing groups and/or events and move towards creating partnerships. The hope is to develop our own ethos and goals in the future as we further enhance our similarities and learn from our differences. Anyone within the diocese of New Westminster who is moved by the Holy Spirit to be part of and/or support this Action group in any capacity, would be most welcome to get in touch with our Climate Emergency Implementation Group by sending me an email at jeddy.james@yahoo.ca. ✦

More information about the September 23 Climate Strike/Protest can be found online at <https://fridaysforfuture.org/september23>



Members of the Climate Emergency Group. The author is third from left. ALL PHOTOS Submitted



LEFT & RIGHT Photos of the gathering at the Art Gallery on September 23.

IN MEMORIAM

Warren Harold Deacon, Priest

January 6, 1955 – October 6, 2022

The Rev. Warren Deacon died on Thursday, October 6 in Victoria after lengthy and serious health challenges and recent surgery.

Warren was educated at Simon Fraser University where he graduated with a BA in 1980, the Vancouver School of Theology, where he graduated with a Master of Divinity in 1985, and Western University where he obtained a Bachelor of Law in 1991.

He was ordained to the diaconate on November 24, 1984, at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver by the Rt.

Rev. John Snowden, Bishop of Cariboo and ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Snowdon, June 9, 1985, at St. Michael and All Angels, Prince George.

Warren served as a student minister at Barkerville in the diocese of Cariboo in 1983, and in 1984–1985 as a student intern at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver. He was Assistant Priest at St. Michael and All Angels, Prince George, 1985–1987; Priest-in-Charge at Moraviantown First Nation in the diocese of Huron, 1990–1992; Rector of Church of Cleopas, Kamloops, 1992–1997; Priest-in-Charge of St. Alban and St. Hilda, diocese of Cariboo in 2000; and Priest-in-Charge of Grace Church, St. Catharines, in the diocese of Niagara, 2001–2003. He served as Planned Giving and Stewardship Consultant to the dioceses

of Cariboo and Kootenay from 1997–2000. Warren also practised law between 1992–2000 in Ontario and British Columbia.

Warren moved to this diocese from the diocese of Niagara in 2003 and was Rector of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale in 2003 and 2004.

Warren had recently returned to ministry as a supply priest at Two Saints Ministry in Victoria.

He is survived by his four children: Nicholas, Megan, Deborah, and Elias.

As of this writing in the third week of October 2022, Funeral details were yet to be confirmed.

We give thanks for his ministry in our diocese and in the Anglican Church of Canada. ✦



ACW Fall Gathering

An inspiring afternoon with author, Margaret Franz

LINDA BURTON, ODNW
St. Matthew's, Abbotsford ACW

The “workers” of St. Matthew’s ACW (Anglican Church Women/Workers) hosted women from all over the diocese of New Westminster on Saturday, September 24, 2022, for the *Fall Gathering*. It is an occasion to hear from an interesting guest speaker, and to find out what various ACW groups from the Sunshine Coast to Hope have been doing within their parishes and in outreach to the wider community. Amazingly, as with the *Spring Gathering*, this event could be in-person, at convivial round tables in an actual hall — not a Zoom room!

The St. Matthew’s group, to prepare to host, liaised with the present congregation now leasing the church hall — Hope City Church — to use this space (and to return it to its Sunday configuration afterwards). Friends and family of the St. Matthew’s ACW showed up on Friday for the physical setting up of tables and chairs. Skilled-in-cooking members of the ACW prepared morning muffins and coffee for the Saturday arrival/registration time, and cooked and served the lunch — soup, sandwiches, fruit tray, and desserts.

The ACW Diocesan Board members registered folks, kept track of the lunch money, counted the thank-offering, led the meeting, and took back with them to the ACW warehouse St. Matthews’ contribution of over 70 baby outfits. President Kelly Bowman introduced the speaker, Margaret Franz, who with a PowerPoint slide presentation and a table of historic photographs took the audience through the life of service of her sister, Mary Steinhauser. The biography of Mary, including her last tragic hours as a hostage at BC Pen in 1975, written by Margaret Franz, was displayed for attendees to look at and buy: *Between Blade & Bullet: The Mary Steinhauser Story*. The offering, at the speaker’s request, went to the Mary Steinhauser Memorial Bursary for Simon Fraser University (SFU) Aboriginal students in Arts and Social Sciences.

Before lunch, the Board treasurer and president delivered their reports, and members heard accounts from various ACW parish groups of recent activities, illustrating in the real world the theme of the gathering: *Thrive in God’s Service*. In St. Matthew’s sanctuary in the early afternoon, the theme was taken up again in the celebration of a sung

Holy Eucharist.

Thanks to the organizers and hosts and hostesses, the approximately 40 in attendance left at 2pm renewed in

commitment, refreshed in body, and reflecting on ways to continue to thrive by attracting and accommodating new participants in the diocese of New Westminster’s ACW. ✠



The event promo with presenter Margaret Ganz holding a copy of the book in front of the BC Penn façade. ALL PHOTOS Submitted



Folks gathered before 10am for hot drinks, muffins and social time.



Registration Table.



Three more gathered at 10am.



Rose and Paulette on the right serving soup and sandwiches.



Judith Pomerleau was the “surprise” door prize winner.



The hall during lunch.



On the far left standing, ACW President Kelly Bowman and in the centre, the keynote, Margaret Ganz.





LEFT Dr. Amy Zidulka requesting reporting from conference attendees following the morning discussion groups. RIGHT A highlight of a diocesan conference is the opportunity to connect, spend time together. Here we see a laugh being shared by the Rev. Jessica Schaap, Missioner for Christian Formation, diocese of New Westminster and one of the hosts, the Rector of St. Dunstan's, the Rev. David Taylor. ALL PHOTOS Randy Murray

Mission & Ministry Conference 2022 | A Brief Report

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Saturday, October 15, more than 220 clergy and lay of the diocese of New Westminster gathered at St. Dunstan's, Aldergrove for the biennial Mission Conference.

This year the conference theme was based on *1 Thessalonians 5:11*, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are doing." The keynote speaker and facilitator was Dr. Amy Zidulka, Royal Roads' instructor and associate professor. Dr. Zidulka researches and teaches innovation and design thinking. Following Opening Worship, she presented a talk on *Nurturing Creative Conversations* specifically to the ministries that would be workshopped following her address:

- Spiritual Development
- Housing and Homelessness
- Climate Justice

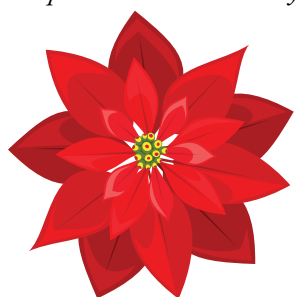
Although it would be an oversimplification to reduce Dr. Zidulka's process to one page, the chart reproduced on the following page contains the basic idea behind *Creative Problem Solving*, which guided the conference attendees in their discussions that day.

Following the first plenary which did include break-out groups and some reporting, each "Creative Discussion" took place in a different venue with *Spiritual Development* located in the St. Dunstan's sanctuary; *Housing and Homelessness* in the parking lot under canopies; and *Climate Justice* in the church hall.

With the workshop phase of the conference completed there was lunch in the hall catered by Sto:lo Catering. The food was delicious and received rave reviews from the conference attendees. After lunch, there was worship, followed by Dr. Zidulka leading the plenary in debriefing discussions about what they had experienced in the three larger groups and smaller discussion groups. These were formed during the workshops to come up with some creative ideas connected to the ministries being discussed. Although there were several "reporters" during the debrief there was much information gathered.

Unfortunately, Bishop John Stephens was unable to attend due to a positive COVID-19 test. The Ven. Kelly Duncan, Archdeacon of Lougheed read Bishop John's sermon during Opening Worship. In his homily he urged the diocesan group of clergy and lay to use the verse from Scripture as their guide not only during the conference but in all facets of ministry. Bishop John wrote:

"For as long as I can remember, within the Church there has been division manifested as internal competition with different camps amongst us rather than being able to recognize that we are all in the business of building up the kingdom or the commonwealth of heaven. We get far too wrapped up in assuming that one of us is correct and so others must be wrong, rather than seeing that God is calling us all, each one of us, with the gifts and skills we have been given, to be part of building up the commonwealth of heaven where we are, where God has placed us. That the Holy Spirit gives a multitude of gifts to us and to the Church as a whole. Moving toward unity is what we are invited to be part of... but somehow that message has often been lost over the last 2,000 years."



At a meeting of the Mission and Ministry Conference Commit-

tee days after the event it was decided that the large amount of material that was produced on the day will be examined by the Committee and communicated widely at a future date.

Information about the conference data will be distributed when it is available.

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Bringing the kids into the hall at registration to meet the child-care team.



LEFT The Rev. Roberta Fraser at the registration table. Each name tag also indicated which of the three workshops would be attended. RIGHT The Executive Archdeacon and the Dean of the diocese of New Westminster.



Opening Worship with the Rev. Simbarashe Basvi and the Rev. Clare Morgan.



The Ven. Kelly Duncan, Archdeacon of Lougheed and Rector of St. George, Fort Langley reads Bishop John's sermon.



The Chair of the Mission and Ministry Conference Committee, the Rev. Alecia Greenfield, Vicar of Holy Cross, Vancouver and Special Projects Facilitator for Mission and Ministry on Synod staff.

The Creative Problem Solving Process



Chart adapted from: Puccio, G.J., Mance, M., & Murdock, M.C. (2010). *Creative leadership: Skills that drive change*. Sage Publications.



A small group discussion following the plenary presentation on Creative Conversations and Creative Problem Solving.



Colleen Butterley, ODNW of St. Stephen the Martyr, Burnaby reporting back following the small group discussions.



A healthy and delicious lunch.



Located in the parish hall, the Rev. Tim Morgan, Vicar of Christ Church, Hope leads the initial discussion around Climate Action and the Environment.



Reporting back in the sanctuary after discussions around Spiritual Development and Church Growth.



Peter Bailey, ODNW of the diocesan Housing and Homelessness Action Committee leading opening discussions under the canopy in the St. Dunstan parking lot.



A group coming up with ideas around what their parish might do to alleviate homelessness.



LEFT The Rev. Wilmer Toyoken, Regional Dean of Kingsway and Vicar of St. Michael's, Vancouver leads prayers during afternoon worship. MIDDLE The Rev. Adam Yates, committee member and Rector of St. Faith, Vancouver. RIGHT The Rev. Tellison Glover, Director of Mission and Ministry Development for the diocese spoke about partnerships.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

THE MISSION CONFERENCE 2022 TEAM

MISSION & MINISTRY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE | The Reverends Alecia Greenfield (lead), Adam Yates, Roberta Fraser, David Taylor, Lorne Manweiler; Tellison Glover (MMD representative), and Ms. Deirdre Thornton.

PRESENTERS | Dr. Any Zidulka (keynote/facilitator), the Reverends Tim Morgan (climate), Alex Wilson, Simbarashe Basvi (homeless task force), David Taylor (Spiritual Development), and Mr. Peter Bailey (Homeless task force).

Behind the scenes the workshops were developed with assistance from the Climate Committee (the Reverends Alecia Greenfield, Tim Morgan, Brynn Craffey, Liz Hamel, Harold Munn and Mr. Jeddy James), the Housing and Homelessness Committee (Ms. Vicki Potter and Mr. Peter Bailey), and the Spiritual Development workshop (the Reverends Eric Mason and Sharon Smith, and Ms. Mary Millard).

WORSHIP | The Reverends Simbarashe Basvi, David Taylor, Roberta Fraser, Wilmer Toyoken, Helen Dunn, Lorne Manweiler, Andrew Halladay, and Clare Morgan. ✠

A PDF format version of Dr. Zidulka's PowerPoint presentation is available through the diocesan website at <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/mission-and-ministry-conference-2022>



These New Relationships That Were Fostered Will Be Lifelong

Report on the diocesan cohort's trip to the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines for the Consecration & Installation of Bishop Benny Lang-akan | September 8 – 18, 2022

BISHOP JOHN STEPHENS
Diocese of New Westminster

In the wee small hours of the night, well before the sun would rise on September 7, our plane careened along the runway at YVR (Vancouver Airport) destined first for Taipei and then transferring on to Manila. There were seven of us at that point: Jean Kyle, Elizabeth Ferguson, the Rev. Philippa Pride, the Rev. Helen Dunn, Archdeacon Douglas Fenton, Ruth Stephens and me—the Rev. Wilmer Toyoken would join us later in the Philippines. After about 14 hours in the air, we were tired upon arrival in Manila, but we were about to discover that there was very little “downtime” in our schedule!

From the airport we were brought to the compound which contains St. Luke's Hospital, St. Andrew's Seminary (toured St. Andrew's Chapel) and the National Church Office for the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP). We had a chance to hear from Attorney Floyd Lawler (the ECP Chancellor and a seminary lecturer) who gave us a description of the vitality of Anglican Church in the country and particularly in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines (EDNP), our partner diocese. We heard about the number of churches they are building and the growth in numbers despite the pandemic, an earthquake and a typhoon. It was amazing and inspiring to hear.

The next day we eagerly travelled from Manila to Bontoc. The distance is about 400 kilometers, which is not an intimidating drive, in terms of distance for people in North America. But it took about 12 hours. The road twisted and turned, rose in elevation, and then quickly dropped; there were slow moving vehicles, and areas of one-way traffic. It brought us from the lowlands to the mountains, the beautiful, lush mountains of EDNP.

Upon arrival we were brought to a restaurant to meet some clergy of EDNP and to share a meal (despite stopping for food a few times along the way). We would soon discover that this, too, would be a common theme: incredible hospitality and welcome, often with food, singing and dancing.

The next day we met with bishop-elect, the then-Rev. Benny Lang-akan and other staff of the EDNP Diocesan Office. We discussed the consecration liturgy and the itinerary for the next week or so. We had time to discover more about Bontoc, the culture of the area and the Mountain Province before we gathered (for more food!) at the bishop's residence. Here we also met with our host families for that night who would take each of us to our partner parishes. Ruth and I went to the parish linked with St. Philip's, Dunbar: St. Hippolytus of Rome, Ambagiw and St. Philip's, Gueday. We visited St. Augustine's, Agawa (partnered with St. Augustine's, Marpole) but stayed the night in Ambagiw in preparation for Sunday morning worship.

The other diocese of New Westminster representatives visited many different parishes. Jean went to St. Augustine of Canterbury, Gongon and St. Agnes of Rome Mission, Payag-ao. Elizabeth to St. Francis of Assisi Mission, Cagubatan. Helen attended St. Clement of Alexandria, Payeo and St. Mark the Evangelist, Banguitan. Philippa to St. Matthias Mission, Mayag. Wilmer to St. Michael and All Angels, Tadian. Douglas was with St. Benedict of Nursia, Kin-iway and St. James School. All were asked to speak or to preach or to preside.

Our visit at St. Hippolytus of Rome was wonderful. It was a long drive along rough mountain roads to get there. At the end of the road, we had to walk for about 30 minutes to reach the village. People were incredibly welcoming and interested to know more about us and our diocese. The accommodation was simple but adequate. There are no hotels or *Airbnb* options so we stayed at the one bed health centre. In the morning we were offered an enormous breakfast, and then we made ourselves ready for worship. I was preacher and presider for the Eucharist in a lovely, small, stone church. The pews were full, there were lots of children, youth, adults and seniors. The church was lively, brimming with life. Afterwards a sumptuous lunch was shared before we had to be on our way back to Bontoc.

On the Sunday evening, Ruth and I went with bishop-elect Benny and his family to St. Joseph's Rest House in Sagada. It was a beautiful setting for the



The diocese of New Westminster delegation (left to right) Elizabeth, Jean, Ruth, Bishop John, Douglas, Philippa, and Helen (Wilmer is missing from the photo).



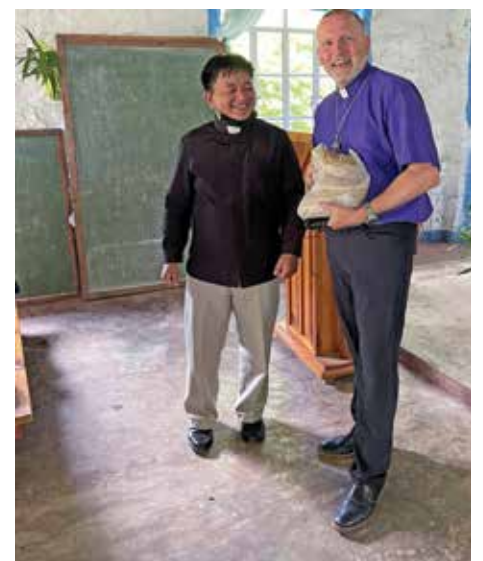
Philippa, Ruth and Helen.



Jean and Elizabeth at an orientation meeting with Padi Elvie Tulingan (left), priest of EDNP and graduate of the Diocesan School for Parish Development.



LEFT Ruth and I with Padi Tristan and his son Elijah at St. Augustine's. RIGHT Bananas growing in Ambagiw.



With Padi Tristan at St. Hippolytus of Rome.



With the people of the Parish of St. Hippolytus of Rome.





Parishioners of St. Hippolytus.



The community of Ambagiw.



The retreat in preparation for the consecration of Bishop Benny.



In the rice fields.



Rice harvest.



The market in Bontoc.



Overlooking Bontoc.



Philippa and I overlooking rice terraces outside Bontoc.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

retreat prior to the consecration. Bishop Benny is married to Bronwyn, has two adult children and a teen-age son. All seven of us were involved in the retreat which focused on the offices of the day and the Lord's Prayer. We had excellent discussion, quiet time, gospel contemplation, rest, and prayer. It was a delight for me to get to know Bishop Benny and his family.

While we were on retreat, others in our group visited several sites in the diocese where churches are being built and new ministries are taking shape.

Wednesday, September 14, Holy Cross Day was the day of the consecration. And what a day it was! All the preparations that had been taking place for weeks came together.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10





Bishops in attendance at the Consecration.

These New Relationships That Were Fostered Will Be Lifelong

Report on the diocesan cohort's trip to the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines for the Consecration & Installation of Bishop Benny Lang-akan | September 8 – 18, 2022

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Hundreds of people arrived ready to walk in a 30-minute procession around the streets of Bontoc before entering the Cathedral. And the liturgy itself was rich and filled with the Holy Spirit. The music was lively and uplifting, the sermon engaging and forward-looking, the consecration itself (and I participated as one of the consecrating bishops) was stirring and hope-filled. And then to receive the bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ, was inspirational and life changing. One particular highlight of the liturgy was during the offertory music when gifts from around the diocese were carried in: so many sheaves of rice, bananas, papayas, lemons, squash, limes, tomatoes, onions, a duck and too many other things to name. All were placed in enormous piles in front of the altar, while traditional music of gongs and dancing took place. It was stirring.

Towards the end of the liturgy, I was able to officially thank the people of the diocese, Prime Bishop Brent Alawas, and Bishop Benny for the welcome and the generosity of spirit we experienced with so many people in EDNP. As a gift from the diocese of New Westminster, I presented Bishop Benny with a pectoral cross (made by an Indigenous artist in Vancouver, Alvin Adkins) to match my own pectoral cross.

After worship the party really began. There was dancing and singing and laughing and festivity that went on for hours, until well after the sun had set and stars were in their places.

One might think that the trip could have concluded at that point, but oh no! The next day we all drove to Butbut (the church of St. Luke is partnered with St. John's, Shaughnessy) for a confirmation service. The drive was along a very rough

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Bishop's Procession.



The Offering.



Bishops and others in the procession leading around Bontoc and into the Cathedral.





The diocese of New Westminster delegation in preparation for the consecration (Philippa and Ruth are not visible in this photo).



A Celebratory Gong Dance featuring the Presiding Bishop following the Consecration.



Some celebratory singing at the Consecration Party.



LEFT The bishops with their pectoral crosses designed and created by Alvin Adkins. RIGHT The Chico River.



Me and the Chico River.



Getting ready to plant some trees.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

and arduous mountain road, and once again we relied heavily on the skills of the drivers. Not long after we arrived Bishop Benny was given quick instruction on how to preside, members of the diocese of New Westminster joined in preaching the sermon and 14 young adults were confirmed in this lovely village. And then another party began! More singing, dancing and playing of the gongs. Gifts were presented to us, and our host families ensured that we were all comfortable for the night only to welcome us with a generous breakfast in the morning.

We had to start thinking about returning to Bontoc (after visiting Prime Bishop Brent's home for lunch) and prepare for the long trip to Manila and then flights back to Vancouver.

This has been a quick description of the trip but there was so much more to it that is hard to communicate the full scope of the experience. The people of the Philippines and EDNP and this beautiful country are now etched onto our hearts. The new relationships that were fostered will be lifelong. The love and kindness we received was overwhelming. The generosity of sharing so much of their lives and their limited resources was touching beyond measure. Their faith in a God of love and compassion was lived out in so many ways, in actions and kind acts. We could not quite put into words the depth of immense gratitude we all felt towards the people of EDNP for bringing us in, welcoming us so warmly and treating us as if we had always been part of the family. For it is true that we are all sisters and brothers in Christ, and we discovered these to be not mere words but transformative in our partnership diocese and as we look to the future.

Please keep the diocese of Northern Philippines and Bishop Benny Lang-akan in your prayers. We hope that a delegation will be coming to visit the diocese of New Westminster one day soon. ✠



Ruth and I looking over the UNESCO World Heritage Site rice terraces of the Cordillera Region.



Preparing to dance at Butbut.



Ruth and Padi Tristan planting trees just outside Butbut.

EDITOR'S NOTE | The seven people who accompanied Bishop Stephens have all agreed to visit parishes and share their experiences and their stories of the ministries being done in EDNP. Why not be in touch with one or more of them and set up a visit to your parish?

Jean Kyle • jeankyle@shaw.ca

Elizabeth Ferguson • eafergus@shaw.ca

Ruth Stephens • ruthandjohn17@gmail.com

The Rev. Helen Dunn
• helen@stclementschurch.ca

The Rev. Wilmer Toyoken
• gumido_42507@yahoo.com

The Rev. Philippa Pride
• ppride@vancouver.anglican.ca

The Ven. Douglas Fenton
• dfenton@vancouver.anglican.ca





The icon depicts the enigmatic account of *Genesis 18:1-8*, interpreted by the Church as a revelation of the Trinity. Three angels, equal in stature, similar but different, are seated around the table, centred on the chalice. Their expressions are serene, their gazes one to another guiding our attention in the timeless exchange described by St. Augustine as “*Lover, Beloved, and Love.*” Yet their circle is not closed. The invitation is there. There is space right in front for us, the viewers, to enter in and join the circle, join in that eternal flow. It is a powerful visual expression, every element rich with meaning, inviting us to enter and experience, rather than analyse and describe, the Trinity. Gaze. Be still. Ponder. Notice what arises. Respond. PHOTO Jade Martin Seedhouse



Bishop John and Pam Martin, ODNW with the icon. PHOTOS Wayne Chose (e



Angela Garzouzie and Ben Dobyns.



Mary Ann Saunders and the Rev. Liz Hamel.



ICONGOGRAPHER'S NOTES | Painting* an icon is an act of prayer. Painting an icon of this size is a powerful spiritual experience. It is not so much an expression of individual creative artistry as it is a dialogue between the painter and the Spirit glimpsed through the icon. In my experience, the icon has the final say. * I use the word “painting” to describe the process of creating an icon, while some may prefer to use the word “writing.” The original Greek word *graphos* anglicized means drawing or writing to convey meaning — consider photography, graffiti. Because I do the work with paint and a brush, I use the word “painting.” PHOTO Jade Martin Seedhouse



Steven Seegerts reader and chef.





except where noted)

Vicar of the Parish of St. Mary Magdalene, the Rev. Tasha Carrothers with Pam.

Pam describes the process.

Evensong for *An Icon*

PAMELA MARTIN, ODNW
St. Mary Magdalene

On October 3, during a warm Monday evening, Bishop John Stephens visited his Parish of St. Mary Magdalene to bless a new icon of the *Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah*, better known as the *Trinity*. Created by Pam Martin, ODNW over two years and based on a recent restoration of the original by Andrei Rublev from early 15th Century Russia, it is done in the traditional media of egg tempera and 22 carat gold leaf on a gessoed wood board at almost the full size of the original (56" x 45" or 142cm x 114cm).

As the evening light filled the room the Rev. Tasha Carrothers welcomed everyone, and Pam Martin spoke about her practice of iconography. Pianist Ben Dobyns

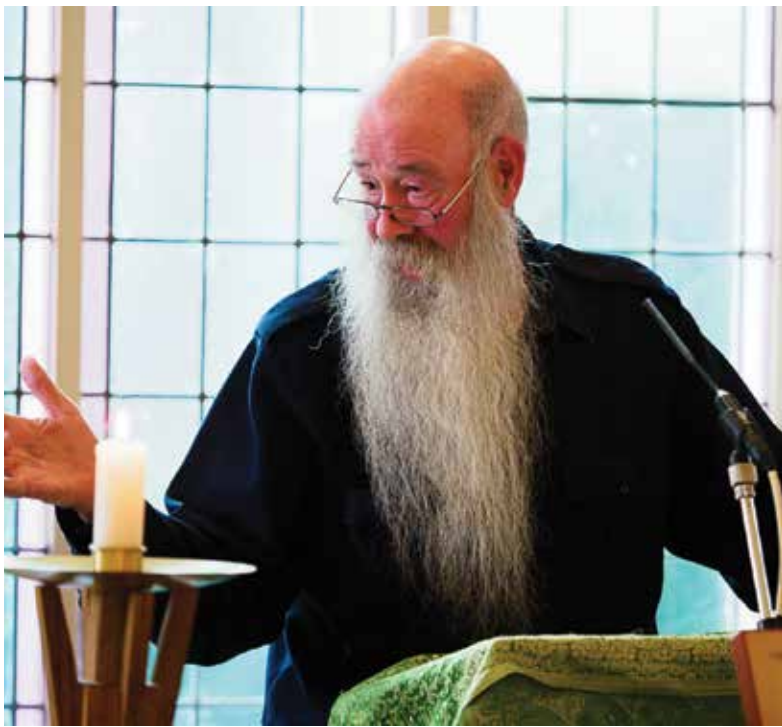
and violinist Angela Garzouzie with cantors Mary Ann Saunders and the Rev. Liz Hamel led the singing of *Holden Evening Prayer*. Kim Seary read the account in *Genesis 18* of the inspiration of the icon, the hospitality of Abraham and Sarah to three mysterious visitors, and Steven Seegerts read from the Gospel of *Matthew 25:31-40* of the puzzled "sheep" who discover that they have been unknowingly serving the Lord in their care for the least among them. The Rev. John Marsh, retired Rector of St. Mary Magdalene, wove the readings and the icon together with storytelling in his homily, reminding us that radical hospitality is at the heart of the way of Jesus—we meet the face of God

in the face of the stranger.

Bishop John blessed the icon, anointing it as he prayed:

"Fill it with the radiance of your good, holy, and life-giving Spirit to complete the work of our hands for your glory and for the good of those who come to pray before it."

A champagne reception completed the evening, catered by chef Steven Seegerts and his talented crew. The guests were able to hear more about the icon and its symbolism, sitting right in front of it and experiencing it up close before it is permanently hung above the main door in the sanctuary. ✠



The Rev. John Marsh shares a homily.



The community gathered for Evensong.



Bishop Stephens blessing the icon.



NEWS FROM ST. ANDREW'S, LANGLEY

The Langley parish has been very busy this fall, with events, new worship innovations, Christian Formation programming and a substantial renovation of the church's interior.



The parish grounds with canopies set up for the outdoor luncheon. PHOTO Lorie Martin



A labyrinth made of scarves. PHOTO Lorie Martin

The Parish of St. Andrew the Apostle Celebrates 100 years

ALISON MINTO

St. Andrew's, Langley; Centennial Celebration Coordinator

On Saturday afternoon, September 10, some 75 members of the congregation of St. Andrew's, Langley gathered for a church picnic—1920's style. It was all to celebrate the centenary of the parish and the newly renovated interior. The sun shone on friends and family as we shared memories of years gone by, while looking at old pictures and memorabilia. Time was spent enjoying tea sandwiches, jellied salads, pineapple upside down cake and other 1920's treats. Wooden toys, old-fashioned games and activities were available to entertain the young and young at heart. And a colourful scarf labyrinth was laid out on the lawn for those who wanted to enjoy some quiet contemplation. The Rev. Andrew Halladay blessed the renewed sanctuary,

the Rev. Lorie Martin splashed holy water around the room and over the people, and the choir sang, concluding the service with Leonard Cohen's *Halleluiah*.

Although there had been several Anglican churches in Langley township from the early days of the colony, and later province of British Columbia, it was not until the 1920s that a church was built in Langley Prairie, now Langley City. As more English families located to the area, there was a desire to have a church close to home. Local farmer Brian Harrison donated land on the north side of Yale Road (Fraser Highway) at Telephone Road (206th Street). The new church and vicarage, dedicated to St. Andrew the Apostle, was built through the efforts of volunteers.

The church served the parish well for 57 years before a suspected arson fire tore through the hall and offices causing extensive damage resulting in the loss of the building. Some items of sentimental value including several stained-glass windows, a World War I memorial and the altar rail were salvaged. The new church was rebuilt on a new, larger site less than half a mile to the east of the original building to allow for a growing congregation. Built in a non-traditional style, the church was consecrated by Archbishop Douglas Hambidge the 7th Bishop of Caledonia and New Westminster on April 27, 1981. ✠

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Event coordinator Alison Minto (left) with event assistants: Warden, Cathy Barnes, ODNW; and Parish Administrator, Joanie Markwart with husband Carl Markwart, ODNW. Alison with her chapeau is definitely dressed in keeping with the events' 1920s theme. PHOTO Lorie Martin



Is that a Pineapple Upside Down Cake?! Although Upside Down style cakes do date back a few hundred years to when they were cooked on skilletts over an open fire, the modern cake was born in 1925, soon after the Dole company had perfected canned pineapple. A fine example here of that dish. PHOTO Lorie Martin



Serving up at the buffet table in the hall. PHOTO Sid Clark



Vicar and parishioner in period dress enjoy the luncheon outdoors. PHOTO Sid Clark



Nathan, the son of vicar, the Rev. Andrew Halladay checks out the photos and documents chronicling St. Andrew's history. PHOTO Lorie Martin



Folks under the tents having lunch. PHOTO Sid Clark



Big smiles for the photographer. PHOTO Sid Clark



Celebration of the Family Eucharist at St. Andrew's

LORIE MARTIN

Assistant Curate, St. Andrew's, Langley & St. Thomas, Chilliwack

The Parish of St. Andrew's launched a Saturday evening once-a-month Family Eucharist Service in September 2022. The first liturgy began with three families and NINE families appeared for the second gathering on October 15. Celebrating worship that is family friendly and held at a time that works for children's/youth's/parent's weekly demands of school and work schedules is clearly a need and a delight to many families. Some are checking out the Anglican Church as they deconstruct from other church experiences or return as lapsed Anglican/Catholics to a wonderful inclusive and Christ-centred faith family.

Spirituality still really matters to families with younger folks who are being raised in this predominantly secular culture. The evening included *Get-to-Know-You* games; processing with Cross and candles, Communion elements, cups and plates; lighting candles; a story about St. Francis, utilizing PowerPoint; planting apple trees and building a four-element Cross outside; picnic-style Family Eucharist with repeat-after-me prayers, followed with fun and pizza! A few parishioners came just to lend a hand or simply join in the beautiful life-giving energy — all are welcome. God bless our wonderful families! ✠



LEFT The Rev. Andrew Halladay administers Holy Communion during the picnic style Eucharist. ALL PHOTOS Lorie Martin
RIGHT St. Andrew's vicar, the Rev. Andrew Halladay prepares for the procession.



LEFT The Rev. David Taylor rector of St. Dunstan's, Aldergrove leads Get-to-Know-You games. RIGHT The Rev. Lorie Martin gathers the families, encouraging them to light candles in the name of our Creator who said, "Let there be Light," in the name of Jesus who said, "I am the Light of the world," and in the name of the Holy Spirit who is the fire of God in all of life.

Logan, David and Andrew's son beside the statue of St. Francis.



Planting apple and fig trees at St. Andrew's!



The Parish of St. Andrew the Apostle Celebrates 100 years

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14



Led by the vicar, the St. Andrew's Choir rehearses for the Liturgy of Blessing and Dedication of the renovated space. PHOTO Sid Clark



The Rev. Lorie Martin (left) dressed as a "flapper" and the Rev. Andrew Halladay lead the worship, filling the font for asperges. PHOTO Sid Clark



Building a Celtic cross with the four elements of Sister Water, Brothers Wind and Fire, and Sister Mother Earth.



The choir leads the music in worship. PHOTO Sid Clark



The newly renovated sanctuary. PHOTO Sid Clark



We Look to the Future & to New Possibilities

Closing Eucharist at St. Martin, North Vancouver & Welcome Lunch at St. John the Evangelist, North Vancouver

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Sunday, September 25, 2022, the faith community of St. Martin, North Vancouver celebrated Holy Communion for the final time as a parish. At a Special Vestry meeting in February 2022, the parish voted to make a request to the bishop for permission to close the parish and merge with the Parish of St. John the Evangelist, North Vancouver located just a few kilometres south and west of St. Martin's Windsor Road location in North Vancouver's Upper Lonsdale neighbourhood. There was a good-sized congregation present to participate in the Eucharist celebrated by Priest-in-Charge, the Rev. Mark Munn. Organist and Director of Music, David Millard as he has done for many years and with the participation of the St. Martin's Choir led the music of the liturgy.

For more than 122 years, the church building with its signature lychgate and mid-20th century parish hall has been a landmark of the neighbourhood. For those at the closing liturgy it was a sad time, but also a time to celebrate the many years of service to the community and the rich history of a place that has invited all to worship and to seek the divine through Jesus Christ.

In an interview given by the Rev. Munn to *North Shore News* reporter Mina Kerr-Lazenby by telephone following the service he said:

"I wasn't expecting it to be emotional for me, but I was really quite sad... I've spent nine months now with these people, being with them weekly. I saw just how hurt they were, but also how proud they were. It was quite the day for everybody, including me. We have parishioners here that started going to St. Martin's 60 years ago. We have people in their 70s who were baptized here and have been coming here every Sunday since. That would be a very atypical thing now, to stay in the same neighbourhood that long."

As worship concluded, the Rev. Munn led a Litany which concluded with this prayer:

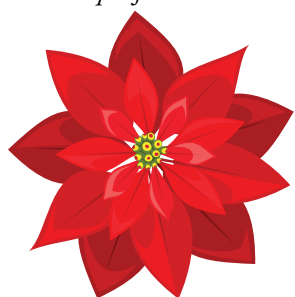
*Loving God,
We offer you our memories of this place,
so dear to our hearts.
We offer you the memories that we have heard.
We offer you the memories
that we keep deep within ourselves.
Bless us all as we bring these memories to mind
and as we share our stories in the coming days.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,
who shared wonderful stories.
Amen*

One-week later, on October 1, with Bishop John Stephens present, the Parish of St. John the Evangelist hosted a lunch welcoming the members of St. Martin's. As both parishes are keen to see a successful merger, the last few months have involved the groundwork around that taking place, including combined liturgies last summer, specifically on June 26 which also included a Canada Day Celebration. There are several legal steps that need to be taken involving the wardens of the parishes, and diocesan leadership including the legal officers. Those details should be completed well before the end of 2022. Mergers are about legal details but more than that they are about the uniting of two communities and their new life together in a new expression of the Body of Christ in North Vancouver.

There were about 40 people gathered at the luncheon in the St. John's hall, including the bishop and the Rev. Munn. Rector of St. John's, the Rev. Patrick Blaney, wardens, and other members of the parish made the St. Martin's folks very welcome. A feature of the lunch was a table of "door prizes" that included painted prayer rocks created by St. John's Choir Director, Christie Smith. There were also "goodie bags" containing small gifts of stationery, chocolates, pens and more.

In his address to the group gathered for the lunch, Bishop John shared these words:

"This past summer I attended the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury, England. The Lambeth Conference is for all of the bishops of the world-wide Anglican Church, the Anglican Communion, so there were about 650 of us. Many things were part of the discussions at Lambeth but one of the joys was meeting bishops from all over the world. There were many things that I learned but one was that in many places the Anglican



CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



The church building, main entrance view facing west. ALL PHOTOS Wayne Chose



September 25 | Closing Eucharist | The Procession in.



The Children's Talk.



Eucharistic Prayer.



Director of Music, David Millard at the organ.



The Eucharist.



View of the nave to the chancel from the narthex door.



Gathering in prayer following the Eucharist.



Prayers of dedication and blessing outside on the plaza.



October 1 | Welcome Lunch | LEFT St. John's warden, Yasmin, and rector, the Rev. Patrick Blaney welcome the luncheon guests. RIGHT Reverends Mark and Patrick.



Sandwiches are served.



New friendships being made.



The bishop says, "Yes, I'll have some coleslaw."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Church is growing. Here in North America, we might think that the Anglican Church is only shrinking but in many parts of the Communion that is not the case. It was good to meet with bishops in places wither the church is growing and hear their thoughts about the future.

Just two weeks ago I returned from a visit to our partner diocese in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines (EDNP). I was there, along with a delegation from our diocese, to attend the consecration of their new bishop, Benny. It was a fabulous experience. While there, we toured many parts of that diocese and learned that it is growing rapidly. Despite a pandemic and a changing world, they are building many new churches or expanding others. The church has a major impact on society there and holds a position of honour. Once again it was good to witness a place where the church is not shrinking.

The Christian Church is not dying. We need to hear this. We also need to learn from those places where it is growing and discover more about church planting, new models of ministry and evangelism.

This is a difficult time for St. Martin's, but I am delighted with the work that you have done in terms of merging with St. John's. Merging is always difficult work as the new church will not be the same as the old church. And the same is true for St. John's, as new people join, the church will feel different.

But this is an exciting time as we look to the future and new possibilities for the merger of St. Martin's and St. John's. By joining

you have created new ministry potential, and this is a good thing.

Please know of my prayers in the days, weeks and months ahead as you determine what the future will hold for you together."

When asked to share his thoughts about the merger process now well underway, the Rev. Patrick Blaney, Rector of St. John the Evangelist shared these words from the sermon he'd preached the second time the two parishes had gathered for worship earlier this year.

"There are so very many things I would like to share with you this our second Sunday together but the most important I think is this: I am more excited, honoured, energized, thankful—and did I say excited—to be your priest as we begin to merge our two communities together. It is for me as much a huge responsibility as it is a wonderful challenge and a privilege. I hope you don't think I am too old school in this, but as I stated to St. John's when I first came here ten years ago, I consider you all to be my flock. Your pastoral and spiritual wellbeing are of utmost importance to me, and as long as I am around, my office door, my phone and my email and my heart will always be open to you. And I also promise to you that I know God gave us two ears and one mouth and that I appreciate the importance of that ratio." ✠



Bishop John addresses the group.



The "door prize" table.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Welcome Nyasha Janelle

On September 30, Nyasha Janelle Basvi was born, a daughter for the Rev. Simbarashe and Mebbo Basvi and a sister for Noku-tenda Nicole and Kupakwashe Ivan.

The Rev. Simbarashe Basvi is Rector of the Parish of St. David, Tsawwassen. The family arrived in Vancouver, December 29, 2020, following a very long journey that was preceded by a long wait to make the trip to Canada due to the many complications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The name Nyasha translated from the Shona language means *Grace of God*. Nyasha was delivered through C-Section and according to an October 18 note from the father, mother and daughter have recovered and are doing very well.

Many thanks to the Basvi family for sharing this news and these photos with diocesan communications for publication in *Topic*. ✦



Nyasha Janelle asleep in a red heart cap. ALL PHOTOS Submitted



Eyes wide open and wearing an awesome sweater!

National Day for Truth & Reconciliation Observed at Brock House

SUBMISSION Conrad Guelke, ODNW

The Brock House Society commemorated the second National Day for Truth and Reconciliation at Brock House on Friday, September 30. A Salmon and Bannock Luncheon preceded the formal program which featured as keynote speaker, Kerry

Baisley, Missioner for Indigenous Justice on diocesan staff. Kerry, who is a member of the Métis Nation of British Columbia spoke about *Exploring and Truth and Reconciliation*. Kerry's address was well received by the Brock House audience. ✦



Conrad Guelke, ODNW; the Rev. Lorne Manweiler, Rector of St. Philip, Dunbar; and Kerry Baisley, ODNW. PHOTO Mari Matak

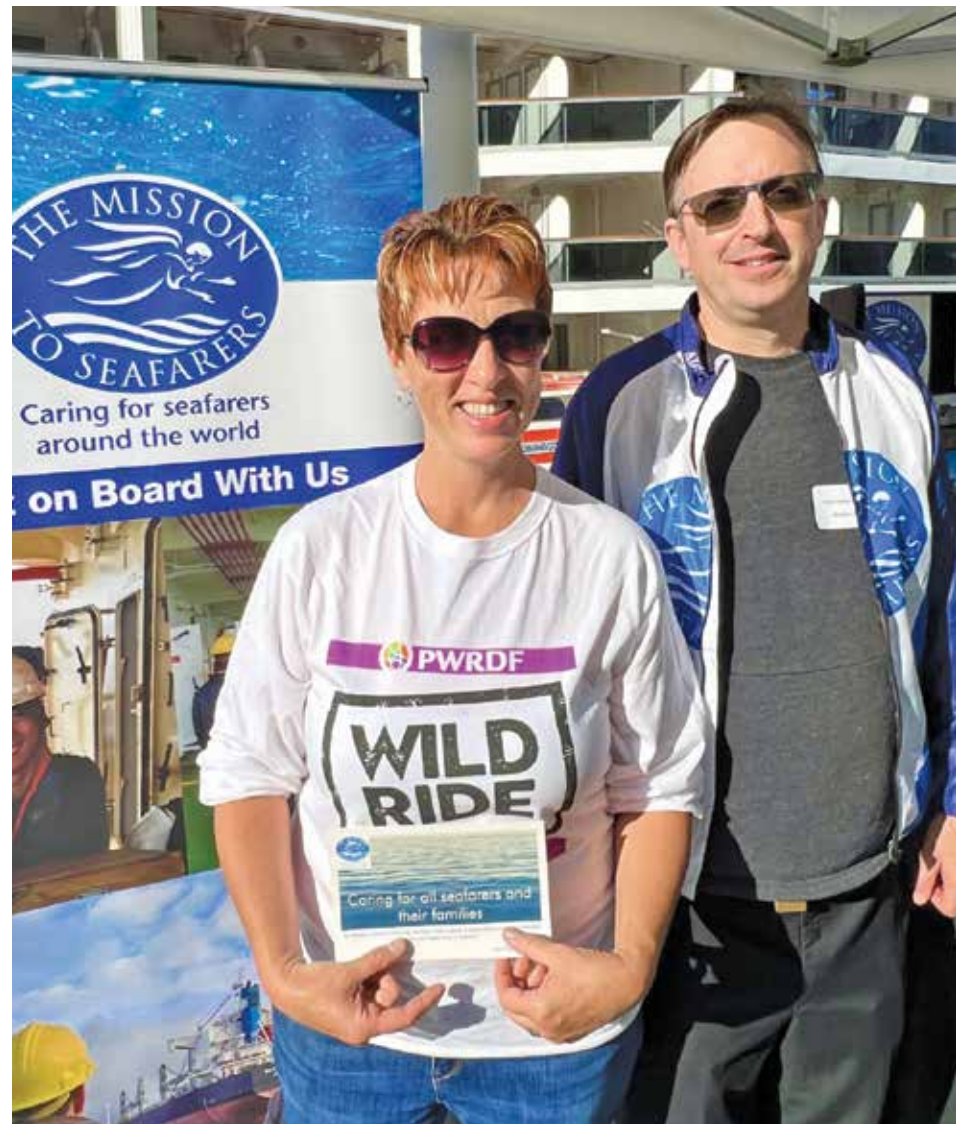
World Maritime Day at Canada Place

Many thanks to Jane Dittrich, ODNW for submitting these photos to *Topic*. ✦

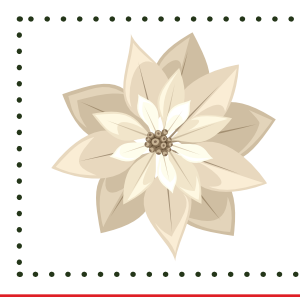
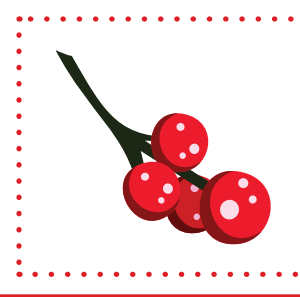
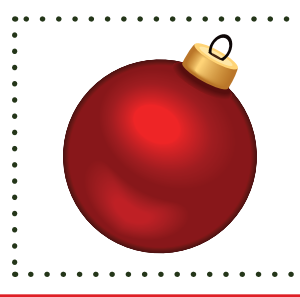


LEFT World Maritime Day signage at Canada Place on October 1.

RIGHT Peter Goodwin, ODNW of St. James', Vancouver chats with the Rev. Peter Smyth.



Jane Dittrich, ODNW of Christ Church Cathedral and Vancouver Mission to Seafarers Senior Port Chaplain Rev. Peter Smyth at the Mission to Seafarers (Mts) display booth. Jane popped by the booth with long-time Mts volunteer Peter Goodwin, ODNW, following a walk that they did that morning for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF).



AROUND THE DIOCESE

Film Company Helps Stock Food Pantry Shelves SUBMISSION Laurel Dahill

Every year St. John the Divine in Maple Ridge serves as a location for several movie shoots. This year, one of the scripts called for a scene with a holiday food drive. The production staff knew that the parish keeps a basket for donations to our local food pantry in the sanctuary, so they collected prop foods that would work for the needs of the food pantry that St. John the Divine supports.

At the end of the day, seven large boxes

of non-perishable items were gathered to be sent to a new location, and eventually to the tables of our neighbours.

St. John the Divine is pleased to be able to provide locations to support our local film industry and is grateful for the generosity they've shown for the needs of our city.

While we cannot share details about the movie, we can tell you to expect it among this year's holiday film selections. It'll be the one with the food drive. ✠



PHOTO Submitted

Harvest Thanksgiving report from St. Stephen's, West Vancouver SUBMISSION Hilary Clark

Thanksgiving Sunday at St. Stephen's, West Vancouver opened with an organ arrangement of *We Gather Together* performed by Director of Music, Dr. Annabelle Paetsch. Around the altar had been placed all the food items collected by the parish for the North Shore Harvest Project Food Bank.

The seasonal celebration was warm and enthusiastic only marred by the COVID illness of the rector, the Rev. Kenneth Vinal. Taking his place was the Rev. Canon Donald Lawton from Squamish who preached a sensitive sermon on the thankfulness those of us living on the West Coast of Canada feel when we consider the problems in many parts of the world. He blessed the Harvest Project food items hoping that needy people will be helped by St. Stephen's gifts.

On October 16, the third annual *Lavender Tea* followed the morning liturgy. The tea was a fundraiser for the North Shore Harvest Project. The lavender had been stripped from the church gardens and fashioned into sachets and tea bags. Many raffle items in lavender colours were donated, with a generous donation of chocolates and gift items from next-door neighbour *The Westerly*. Raffle tickets were sold to all guests resulting in most people receiving a gift. The event was chaired by Mollie Anthony and Caroline Sutherland, with enthusiastic help from Jan Harvey, Carol Harrington and Georgie Reddington.

Delightful background music was supplied on the piano by Dianne McKinnon, and the draw was handled by Anton Taylor. The total proceeds of \$1061 were donated to the North Shore Harvest Project. ✠



Canon Lawton at the altar. PHOTO Margaret Stedman



Close up of items donated for Thanksgiving. PHOTO Margaret Rolfe



The Lavender Sachets. PHOTO John Ruddick



Carol Harrington and Andrea Miller. PHOTO John Ruddick

Jane Dittrich's Annual Photos of Decorations at the Diocesan Cathedral, Christ Church

Many thanks to Jane Dittrich, ODNW for submitting photos of Christ Church

Cathedral taken the morning of October 10, 2022. Enjoy! ✠



AROUND THE DIOCESE

Archbishop Melissa Skelton | Provisional Bishop of Olympia Episcopal Diocese Standing Committee Announces Appointment

The 9th Bishop of the diocese of New Westminster and 12th Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon, the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton has been chosen Bishop Provisional of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia by the diocesan Standing Committee.

Here are the second and third paragraphs from the announcement post:

"We are thrilled to announce that we have found a Bishop Provisional who knows our diocese and brings experience beyond the footprint of Olympia to assist us during this transition time. We introduce to you the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton, current Assisting Bishop in Olympia and the former Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada for British Columbia and Yukon.

Archbishop Skelton has deep ties to Olympia having served as the Canon for Congregational Development and Leadership and as the rector for St. Paul's Episcopal Church in

Seattle. During her previous tenure in Olympia, she created the College for Congregational Development." ✦



The October 6 post on the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia's website is comprehensive with a detailed listing of Archbishop Melissa's career in ministry. The post is online at <https://ecuw.org/bishop-provisional-announcement/>

Definitely Not the Beatles, Definitely a Hit SUBMISSION Michael Batten

The familiar melodies and driving rhythms of the *Fab Four* rang out over East Vancouver on the evening of Friday, October 14, as St. Thomas', Collingwood hosted a fundraising dance to support Cultural Art Therapy programmes in Vancouver Native Housing and the Britannia Community Centre.

The music was provided by the North Shore band *Definitely Not the Beatles*, featuring the Ven. Stephen Muir, Archdeacon of Capilano, on drums. The idea for a musical evening came about after Stephen toured St. Thomas' following its recent renovations and noted that the upper hall and stage would make a fine performance venue for his band.

The congregation of St. Thomas' has been working hard to engage in the work of Reconciliation, and following a recent cultural workshop with Michael Sabian Rawcliffe, decided that a fundraiser in support of Sabian's work would be a worthwhile event. Kerry Baisley, Diocesan Missioner for Indigenous Justice, attended the fundraiser and took time between the band's sets to explain the importance of cultural art therapy for residential school survivors.

The high-energy event attracted a full house and raised over \$2,000. More to the point, the dance floor was full for most of the evening, and at the end of the night the fans were screaming for more! ✦



Definitely Not the Beatles play St. Thomas', Collingwood (left to right): Jon "Not Paul" O'Neil on bass; Stephen "Not Ringo" Muir on drums; Roy "Not George" Gould on lead guitar; and Randy "Not John" Cunningham on rhythm guitar. PHOTO Submitted

The Reverend Philippa Pride Joins Synod Office Team First day in a new ministry October 17, 2022

Bright and early on Monday, October 17, 2022, the Rev. Phillipa Pride arrived at 1410 Nanton Avenue in Vancouver's Shaughnessy neighbourhood, the home of the Synod Offices of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster. Philippa made the rounds and greeted members of staff.

Until the retirement of current Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Douglas Fenton, Philippa's job title will be Special Assistant to the Bishop. The Rev. Pride will succeed the Ven. Fenton on January 4, 2023. However, she will be very busy for the next few months which will include "right off the bat" the National Conference of Executive Archdeacons taking place in Toronto, the week of November 21, 2022.

It is likely that Philippa will be collated and installed during the upcoming Ordination Eucharist scheduled for Saturday, December 3 at Christ Church Cathedral. All are invited to attend this liturgy which will begin at 10:30am. Following the installation, she will use the honorific *The Venerable*.

On October 16, Philippa completed her interim ministry as Priest-in-Charge of St. Helen's, Surrey. The Surrey parish in the Gateway neighbourhood very much enjoyed Philippa's time there (as did she) and were sad to see her go but grateful for the experience of having her as the ordained leader of their parish.

Prayers are encouraged for Philippa and Synod Staff as they embark on this next phase of their shared ministry. ✦



PHOTO Randy Murray

Cross Canada Quilts SUBMISSION Joyce Mancinelli

The folks at St. Oswald's, Port Kells are professional class quilters and they have chosen to pursue this ministry of sending care and comfort through carefully and lovingly created textiles to folks who will really appreciate them. Here is what parishioner and quilter, Joyce Mancinelli had to say about their October delivery:

"And they're off!

Another dozen quilts head across the country to Newfoundland!

After watching the scenes of devastation following the hurricane, I felt we needed to do something. But what? The quilts came to mind. Would they even be wanted?

I found the contact for the local Anglican paper. They put me in touch with a lovely person named Karen who said that as four of her neighbours had lost everything (and apparently it was even worse in the Burnt Islands) owned by their children, the quilts would be welcomed.

Next step... boxes. We found some at U-Haul. Filled the box to the top with quilts and squished it down. Off to Purolator. Ah... now the destination was Margaree, a town that doesn't seem to exist. Was I sure the address was correct? The closest they could come was Port-aux-Basques (and there wasn't an actual pick-up point within 100km radius!). Karen assured me Port-aux-Basques would be fine

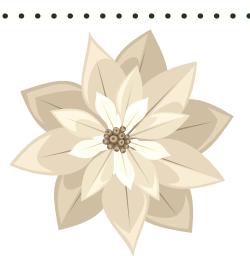
and would reach the recipients.

And they were on their way!

Hopefully they will be able to send us a couple of pictures (but the quilts will be REALLY created by the time they get there! I did warn her!). ✦



PHOTO Submitted



AROUND THE DIOCESE

Clergy News Around the Diocese

From the desk of the Executive Archdeacon, the Venerable Douglas Fenton

Bishop Stephens has appointed the Rev. Mark Munn, Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. Helen, Surrey effective October 24, 2022. Mark concluded his ministry as Priest-in-Charge at St. Martin, North Vancouver while supporting them as that parish merged with St. John the Evangelist, North Vancouver. Mark succeeds the Rev. Philippa Pride who began as Special Assistant to the Bishop in the Synod Office on October 17.

Holy Trinity, Vancouver will begin a period of interim ministry and discernment with the appointment of the Rev. Craig Tanksley as their Interim Priest-in-Charge (50% time) effective November 1, 2022.

The Rev. Elizabeth Ruder-Celiz has been appointed by the bishop as the next Vicar of St. Alban, Richmond (50% time) effective November 7, 2022. Mtr. Liz will conclude her ministry at St. John, Shaughnessy with her last Sunday on November 6, 2022.

A new Anglican ministry in Richmond focusing on Chinese-language speakers has begun, with headquarters at St. Albans. The Rev. Bill Mok, former Rector of St. Chad's (the parish closed in the Spring of 2022) is Priest-in-Charge. This new ministry is funded through the legacy of the assets of St. Chad's with assistance from the diocese of New Westminster.

The Rev. Marnie Peterson, Rector of St. Anne's, Steveston has been elected by the Council of General Synod (CoGS) as the Anglican Church of Canada's clergy representative to the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). Each Province of the Communion is represented by a clergy, lay and episcopal delegate. Marnie is one of those elected to fill vacancies during this triennium of the ACC. ACC next meets in Ghana in February 2023. ✠



The Rev. Mark Munn. PHOTO Randy Murray



The Rev. Elizabeth Ruder-Celiz. PHOTO Wayne Chose



The Rev. Craig Tanksley. PHOTO Randy Murray



The Rev. Marnie Peterson. PHOTO Jennifer Ewing

All are encouraged to submit letters, articles, reports on parish activities, opinion pieces, photos, and more for consideration as content for Topic

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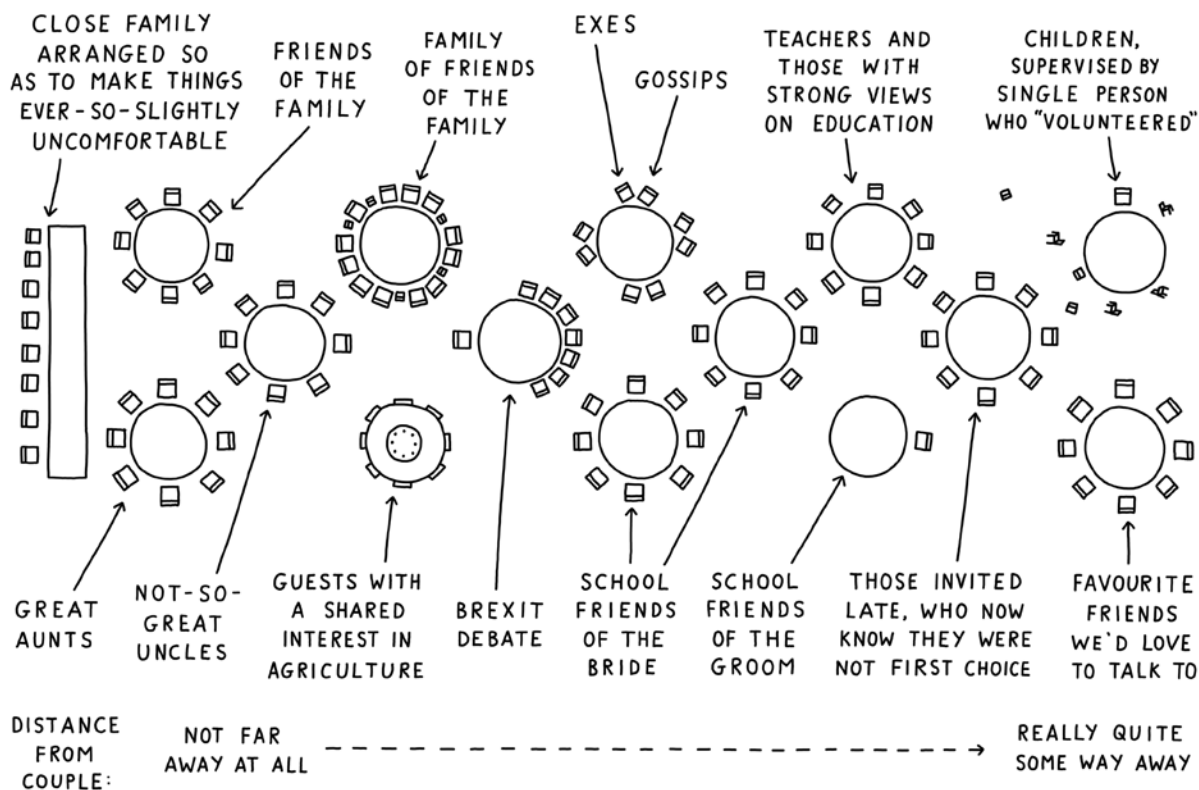
DEADLINE FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS
January 20
for the March issue

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Please email
Randy Murray at
rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca
All contributions are appreciated
• EDITOR •

THE WEDDING RECEPTION

THE SEATING PLAN



CartoonChurch.com

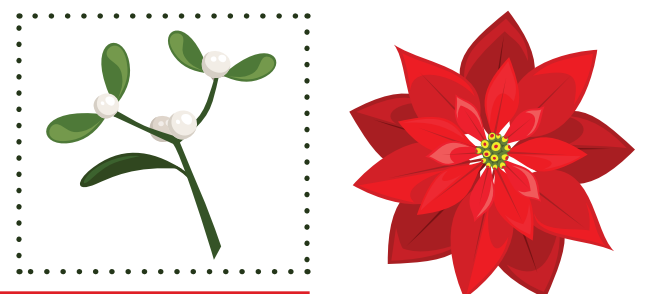
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023 | January 18 – 25, 2023 | Do Good; Seek Justice

The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity have published the resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023.

Praying for Christian Unity is an ecumenical practice going back at least to the Lambeth Conference of 1867. Churches around the world began using the now established resources in 1968. The week is commemorated from January 18 to 25.

This year the theme is *Do Good; Love Justice* based on a reading of *Isaiah 1:17*. Consider calling up your neighbourhood churches and working together in marking this important ecumenical week. ✠

To access a resource to help you plan how to commemorate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity go online to <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2023>



To Wait, To Wait For, To Expect, To Hope

HANNAH MAIN-VAN DER KAMP
St. David & St. Paul; Topic essayist & Diocesan Blogger

Gardeners! Were you humbled this year by failures in your garden? Were you “brought low”?

In the *Magnificat*, Mary, quoting her foremother Hannah, affirms some startling news.

The Lord has scattered the proud, has brought the powerful down... has fed the hungry with good things.

She said “has”, not “might” or “will.” Was she a dreamer or did she see a good future as already accomplished?

The Lord “favoured her lowliness.” Mary was expecting and expectant. (Grammar trivia: Latin verb for “to wait” is *expectare* and for “hope” is *sperare*. If you have travelled in the Spanish-speaking world you will have learned that hope and wait are the same word, *esperar*.)

The year 2022, challenged the confidence of gardeners in the diocese. First the seemingly endless spring rains rotted seeds and washed away seedlings. If the seeds did germinate, they failed to thrive and ended as compost. Wet conditions caused a failure of pollination. In the microclimate of the street where I live, no fruit in the orchards. Raspberries flowered but failed to set berries. Though late, pole beans put out vigorous leaf growth, but plentiful bean flowers produced only a few wispy beans. Shall I go on with this lament?

Most parishioners (not all!) can afford to buy vegetables and fruit. It was not a personal disaster like that of berry farmers in the Sumas Valley. (Will we ever forget the atmospheric rivers of the fall of 2021?)

And then drought. I pride myself on humus-rich soil that can hold moisture. September, I was watering morning, noon and evening. That’s nothing compared to the plight of salmon trying to get up the nearby creek to spawn.

This fall we heard several Lectionary readings from Jeremiah. He spoke of a

time when God’s people, weeping, will be consoled. They would be radiant over their harvests of grain, wine and oil. Their lives would become like watered gardens. Was he a dreamer, giving voice to the universal longing for safety and prosperity? Was that promise fulfilled? How much rain will come next spring and what about increased drought? I know well what the science says. We all do.

When I feel despair, I search seed catalogues for varieties that can withstand extreme temperatures. I learn how to hand-pollinate blossoms with Q-tips. My plan is to xeriscape the borders where annuals used to go. Wait and see, wait and pray, wait and hope. It’s not just about the gardens in my own block, not just about this diocese.

Tough skinned tomatoes were a bit tasteless, but the twice-flowering delphiniums were a delight. How about a new practice? Gardeners love to talk to other gardeners. Instead of notes of dread, let’s talk about all the good things that did come from farms and gardens this year. Praise the volunteers who carried, trucked, and carried salmon to the spawning beds. Save and share the seeds and cuttings of good plants. Make compost, make some more. Wait and hope are one shared state. Call to mind the vision of expectant Mary, and of Jeremiah’s assurance.

I planted lavender between the raspberry canes and agastache under the bean trellis. Bzzz bzzz.

Not fatalism, not optimism, let’s drop doom saying and learn the vocabulary of expectancy. *Espero*, I wait, I wait for, I hope.

Q-tips anyone? ✦

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Hannah Main-van der Kamp gardens in Powell River. She is a parishioner at St. David and St. Paul, where a parish Pollinator Friendly Plant project is in the works.



Gardening with a Q-tip. PHOTO Latvian (iStock ID#502817629)



Young lavender expecting to grow a lot bigger PHOTO igoriss (iStock ID#899317412)

Hard Hat Country

HERBERT O’DRISCOLL
Retired Priest of the diocese of Calgary; Former Dean of the diocese of New Westminster & Rector of Christ Church Cathedral; Topic Essayist & diocesan Blogger

The excavation site is huge. Someday a towering structure will emerge to—we fervently hope—grace the city. Currently this area does not grace anything. It is still what you might kindly call a work in progress.

For the last couple of months here the great machines have torn at the earth and dumped it in huge trucks that have ground their way along the streets to destinations unknown. In the last week or so concrete and steel has begun to line the great pit. Sparks flash here and there as welders work. Slowly the huge spine of the construction crane has risen until it now stands like a great gaunt bird swinging its head to and fro, distributing giant titbits to waiting groups of workers. As evening approaches, floodlights illuminate the cold glittering chaos that lies behind the mud-stained scaffolding and the grey metal fence.

Yet, and yet, the scene can produce unexpected and even moving contrasts. In the face of all that I have described, I see one day an utterly different scene. For some reason one of the men in his hard hat has been called to the gate by what I assume is his family. His wife is telling him something. There are two small children. He has one in his arms and the child is tugging at her dad’s bright yellow hard hat. The man is smiling at his wife, so I assume that whatever the reason for the visit it is good.



It strikes me I am looking through a door open for a moment into a world we so often understand—or think we understand—as hard and tough and unfeeling; world of power and technology, of things such as union-management struggle. Sometimes a construction site

can seem synonymous with all such soullessness and simmering hostility. We even use the term “hard hat” to label the world of such things.

Yet amid great looming machines, crumbling earth and grinding gears, the tiny hands of a child reach for bright

yellow hard hat and find a parent’s love. As the city pours by around them, a family forms for a fleeting few moments an island of humanity in a world of machines, of permanence in a world of change, of love amid the demands of duty. ✦



PHOTO Ольга Симонова (iStock ID#1335714185)

OPINION

A Moment of Seeing

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

About a year ago I decided I should not continue to drive so I gave in my license. As some of us know it is quite a difficult thing to do, a huge milestone in one's life. However, when it has been done there is at least a lessening of anxiety about being part of the world of ever-growing traffic and increasing speed. Also, one of the things I've noticed is that being driven allows one to be aware of many things one could not be aware of while driving.

A few days ago, we took a granddaughter to the university campus, where she is taking a course that will enhance her present professional situation. As she walked away from the car, we continued to watch her for a couple of minutes. Nothing could be more normal in a family moment. You too have experienced such a moment when you found you were not just looking at someone very dear to you. You realized that you were really seeing them. With our children and grandchildren, after they have ceased to be children, such opportunities are fewer. When they were children, it happened when they were asleep, and one looked down at them. In sleep the face is



PHOTO Grash Alex (iStock ID#1090391470)

particularly revealed, the mask, even that of very early years, is off. But later in life there can still be precious moments—such as this one—when there is a glimpse of a very dear person, and that all too short moment is much more than just looking at them.

What happens in such a moment? It seems to me that there is a dimming of everything around the other. That morning at the university as I looked at our granddaughter it seemed to me that buildings, cars, the rain, others passing by, all faded a little, remaining only as background. Our granddaughter then walked from us into the distance as if she were walking into the heart of a living portrait.

In that moment I became conscious of her as part of myself, carrying some of my strengths and weaknesses, my gifts, and my shortcomings, carrying them yet bringing to them all the properties of the new person she herself is. I was conscious of her total uniqueness as a human being, indeed of the uniqueness of all human beings. It was a moment of mystery. We turned the car and went back into the morning traffic. ✦

The Story & the Glory
A Christmas bouquet

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

William Blake once wrote that it would be wonderful “to hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour.” Many years later another English poet, John Betje-man, did just that in his poem Christmas. In the simplest of language, he expressed the infinite depths of meaning in what we Christians call the Incarnation, the coming into the world of the Divine in human form. Listen to him...

*And is it true? and is it true?
This most tremendous tale of all.
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A baby in an ox's stall?
The maker of the stars and sea
Become a child on earth for me?*

*No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare,
That God was Man in Palestine
And comes today in Bread and Wine.*

There you have two wonderful contrasts. First, a baby in an ox's stall becomes the Maker of the stars and seas. Then we encounter the long-ago Jesus of Palestine in the timeless sacrament placed in our hands at Eucharist.

I sometimes think that one of the problems for Christian faith today is that we have become anaesthetized to its wonder through being over familiar with it. So, for years now I have found myself on a kind of quest, to discover and to treasure moments when someone succeeds in capturing what I once heard Michael Ramsay, then Archbishop of Canterbury, call *The Story and the Glory* of Christian faith. The *Story*, he said, is so simple it can be told to a child, the *Glory* is so boundless that the greatest of philosophers cannot fully probe its depths. For me, John Benjamin's deceptive simplicity captures the profundity.

Another such moment of realization. I recall standing in the Dean's stall of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver, finding myself deeply moved as a full Cathedral sang an old Welsh carol, and I realized that the words had captured both the *Story and the Glory* in language immensely powerful yet utterly simple.

*All poor folk and humble,
All lame folk who stumble,
come haste ye and be not afraid;
for Jesus our treasure,
whose love passes measure,
in lowly poor manger is laid.*

*And he shall reign ever,
and nothing shall sever
from us the great love of our king;
His peace and his pity*



Nativity scene in the courtyard of the El sama Eyeen Coptic Church in Sharm El Sheikh. PHOTO Ionna Alexa (iStock ID#1400405108)

*Shall bless his fair city;
His praises we ever shall sing.*

In the first verse the tiny child lies in the manger. In the second he has become the Lord of Time itself, ruling an everlasting kingdom.

For me there are other such moments remembered. I was listening as a young soloist sang that lovely carol, *I Wonder as I Wander Out Under the Sky*. Halfway through the third stanza I noticed the shift from the earthly to the heavenly, from utter simplicity to deep mystery.

*When Mary birth'd Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall
with wise men and farmers and shepherds and all,
but high from God's heaven a star's light did fall;
the promise of ages it then did recall.*

Again, I heard the haunting qualities of contrast. First the village girl who would for millions become Queen of Heaven, then we find our common humanity among farmers and shepherds, then we are suddenly borne away into the vast surrounding ocean of the stars. Once again, the *Story and the Glory*.

Over the years there have of course been other moments seized before they vanished from memory, but then a bouquet can only be so big! A last captured moment that

captures both the *Story and the Glory*. Back in the 1960s Thomas Merton wrote a poem he entitled *Carol*.

*God's glory now is kindled
gentler than low candlelight
Under the rafters of a barn:
Eternal peace is sleeping in the hay,
And Wisdom's born in secret
In a straw-roofed stable.*

Notice the beauty of the thought that even a candle can be the bearer of God's Eternal Light, that a wooden manger carries a human child who is the embodiment of Eternal Peace, and in the shadows of a stable the voice of Divine Wisdom speaks God's Eternal Truth.

Maybe we should spare a moment to taste again those immortal images of Blake. What he said really applies to the whole world of worship. To worship is “to hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour.”

A Blessed Christmas to you and those whom you love. ✦



Transforming Questions Returns

JESSICA SCHAAP

Missioner for Christian Formation

Beginning January 24, the course to explore fundamental questions of Christian faith returns. This 11-week course for adults (16+) invites participants to explore, question, and wrestle with the core of belief and practice. It's not just an intellectual exercise. It is a time to renew heart, mind, and spirit together so that we can discern God's good will in this time and place. Each session opens with prayer and meditation on a short passage from scripture, then a brief presentation, and after that discussion in small groups. Each small group remains the same over the course of the 11 weeks and has a trained facilitator to foster discussion.

The course begins in January for a couple reasons. First,

it's cold, dark, and often rainy—a Zoom based course like this means we don't have to go out in it! Fortunately, we can still gather to learn and have conversations. Second, the course is set up to conclude just a few weeks before the diocesan celebration of confirmation on May 6. There's nothing quite like people preparing together and then celebrating together. This course can be a good way for adults to prepare for confirmation, reaffirmation of their baptismal vows or reception into the Anglican church.

Another feature of this year's *Transforming Questions* will be new video presentations produced by a diocesan production team and featuring lay leaders from differ-

ent parishes. These videos were made possible by a grant from the Anglican Initiatives Fund of the diocese and the hard work of a small, dedicated, and creative team led by Randy Murray. Look closely and you will likely recognize the filming location.

If you want more information about the course, check out the *Transforming Questions* page on the diocesan website at <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/pages/transforming-questions> or contact the Missioner for Christian Formation by email at jschaap@vancouver.anglican.ca. Registration is simple, free, and online. Every registrant will receive a participant guide as well. ✦

“Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:2



Principal videographer, Ross Friesen and principal presenter, Hope Sealy, ODNW test the lighting before filming a take.



All is ready for the next take. ALL PHOTOS Randy Murray



All are encouraged to submit letters, articles, reports on parish activities, opinion pieces, photos, and more for consideration to be published in Topic

DEADLINE FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS
January 20 for the March 2023 issue

Please email Randy Murray at rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca
All contributions are appreciated

• EDITOR •