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LEFT Following the tributes from friends and family, Fr. Fenton is presented with a gift box, which he unwraps. LEFT MIDDLE The gift is a Cedar hat, hand crafted on the Sunshine Coast by First Nations artist, Shy Watters. The hat features a red turtle, Fr. Fenton's spirit animal. RIGHT MIDDLE Fr. Fenton raises his hands in appreciation. The coloured ribbons around the brim are in honour of his Métis heritage. RIGHT The hat fits great and looks great. ALL PHOTOS Wayne Chose, ODNW

# Farewell Father Fenton

RANDY MURRAY  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

The Ven. Douglas Fenton's last day as Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster and Archdeacon of Vancouver was January 4, 2023, serving ten years and four days in the position. He retired on his birthday. During the morning of the final day, Synod staff had their first team meeting of 2023. There were two other January birthday's celebrated at the meeting, the Reverends Alecia Greenfield and Jessica Schaap, however they deferred to Fr. Fenton for the cake cutting and cake distribution component of the meeting. There were two memorable events at the meeting: the presentation by Bishop John Stephens of Douglas's new clergy license in retirement, "Permission to Officiate" and the presentation of the new license to his successor the Ven. Philippa Pride confirming her appointment as Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster and Archdeacon of Vancouver.

About an hour later the staff gathered again, this time for lunch and a chance to say goodbye to Fr. Fenton and present him with a gift. Fr. Fenton chose Japanese food, and all staff members present that day had ordered their dishes in advance. The Synod staff custom is for each member of staff to say a few words about their departing colleague. But before that, there was a gift presentation. Bishop John had arranged on behalf of the staff for a handmade custom crafted vest to be created by Erica Lucille "Rikki" Kooy, ODNW—LEX'LEX TCETS' NUW enx', Spirit Elk Woman. Rikki is an Elder and designer from the Secwepemc and St'at'imc Nations, and a third-generation residential school survivor. She is also a member of the ministry teams at Christ Church Cathedral and St. Hildegard's Sanctuary located at St. Faith's, Vancouver. The blue vest is adorned on the right shoulder with a three feathers applique, they represent three words Rikki considers to be central to the reconciliation journey—*Love. Purpose. Reconcile.*—and on the lower left a spirit animal (a frog) applique. In Rikki Kooy's tradition the frog is the animal that bridges two worlds.

On Saturday, January 7, the Synod gathering spaces were turned into a banquet facility with tastefully designed table settings adorning the 11 round tables and the two head tables. Thanks to Bishop John as MC; building administrator, Regan Gorman; serving team leader and co-designer, Jane Dittrich, ODNW; *Sharing Abundance* caterer and co-designer Bette Geddes, ODNW; and their



Bishop Stephens leads the prayers of blessing for Keith Landherr and the Ven. Douglas Fenton as they begin this new phase of life and ministry.

teams, the event was a huge success. More than 90 friends and family gathered to share a three-course meal and one dozen speeches (not too much "roasting") from Douglas's closest friends and colleagues.

Douglas was delighted to welcome members of his family to the dinner to join him at the head tables: sister, Cheryl Lynn Bruneau; nephew, Tyler Potter and his wife, Heather; niece, Alexis Hamilton and her fiancé, Mahir Aman; and of course, his husband, Keith Landherr. Keith had prepared a surprise for Douglas—a pre-recorded Zoom address from the eldest member of the Fenton family, Robert, who of-

fered warm memories of his younger cousin and a blessing that was an acknowledgement of the Fenton family's Métis heritage. During the five-minute video, "Bobby" Fenton regularly referred to Fr. Fenton as "Doug" which is not a diminutive that those who know him hear very often. This theme was repeated during the duet presentation by niece, Alexis and nephew, Tyler who affirmed that the guest of honour is only known to them as "Uncle Doug."

Here is the list (with their suggested topics) of the family and friends (colleagues) who spoke at the dinner:

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January 4 Last Day on Staff | Bishop John reveals the gift from Synod staff.



Fr. Fenton models the new vest.



A close-up of the frog. PHOTOS Randy Murray except where noted

## Farewell Father Fenton

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- **Bishop John Stephens:**  
MC and sharing an office and the supervision of diocesan mission and ministry with Douglas
- **The Very Reverend (retired) Peter Elliott:**  
Early days in the diocese; Douglas's arrival in the diocese of New Westminster in the 1990s
- **The Venerable Fr. Kevin Hunt:**  
Travelling with Douglas
- **Chancellor of the diocese of New Westminster, Mr. George Cadman, QC, ODNW:**  
the legal and administrative mind of Douglas
- **The Reverend Mtr. Amanda Ruston:**  
Douglas's role in the formation of postulants, ordinands, curates
- **Receptionist and Administrative Assistant at the diocese of New Westminster, Mr. Elias J. Neto:**  
a personal reflection from a Synod Staff employee
- **The Reverend Philip Cochrane:**  
Douglas's role in welcoming and orienting new clergy to the diocese of New Westminster; what that entails and means for the new priest, particularly if they have come from another province or diocese of the Anglican Communion
- **Douglas's niece and nephew, Alexis Hamilton and Tyler Potter:** "Uncle Doug"
- **The Reverend Stephen Rowe:**  
Looking back on more than a decade of ministry and being in diocesan leadership with Douglas
- **The Venerable Stephanie Shepard:**  
Douglas the clergy colleague.

Bishop Stephens did a skillful and entertaining job moving the program, and when the last speaker left the lectern, it was time for the presentation of the gift. Everyone who was invited to the dinner was given an opportunity to contribute to the gift, an original Cedar hat, crafted on the Sunshine Coast by First Nations artist, Shy Watters. The colours surrounding the brim affirm Fr. Fenton's Métis heritage and on the front of the hat is a red turtle, his spirit animal. The dinner closed with Bishop John asking Douglas and Keith to stand in front of the lectern facing the guests while he led all who had gathered in prayers of blessing for

the couple as they enter this new phase of life and ministry. Fr. Fenton will continue to serve the diocese using his

extensive experience to assist the diocesan coordinator for refugee resettlement, Dr. Shakuntala Soden.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



On the morning of January 4, the celebratory Red Velvet cake signifying three staff birthdays in the month of January: The Reverends Alecia Greenfield and Jessica Schaap and Fr. Fenton. January 4 was Fr. Fenton's birthday and his official retirement date.



Bishop Stephens presents the Ven. Philippa Pride with her new license confirming that she is Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster and Archdeacon of Vancouver.



January 7 Retirement Dinner | The bar is open. Bartender, Robyn Ingham gives the universal Love Boat gesture indicating that it is cocktail time. PHOTO Jane Dittrich

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rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca

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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 62 parishes and 4 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**  
Kerry Baisley, Leslie Buck, Wayne Chose, Hilary Clark, Joseph Dirbas, Melissa Dry, Simon Johnston, Dick Lee, Mary Lee, Hannah Main-van der Kamp, Lorraine McNeight, Sophie McNeight, Herbert O'Driscoll, Joyce Parry-Moore, Pitman Potter, Vicki Potter, Dave Price, Stephen Rowe, John Ruddick, Peter Smyth, Art Turnbull, Dave Walker, Pamela Whittall, Paul Woehrlé and Adam Yates

Thank you!





On the afternoon of January 7, the tables are ready for the dinner guests. Many thanks to Jane Dittrich, who, in consultation with Bette Geddes came up with this beautiful table design. PHOTO Jane Dittrich



Bette Geddes with Deacon, the Rev. Lizz Lindsay have things underway. Here we see them “building” the salad course. PHOTO Jane Dittrich



Douglas's special guests — HIS FAMILY! Heather Potter (niece in law); Tyler Potter (nephew); Alexis Hamilton (niece); Cheryl Lynn Bruneau (sister); Mahir Aman (Alexis's fiancé). PHOTOS Wayne Chose, ODNW except where noted



Missioner for Indigenous Justice on diocesan staff, Kerry Baisley, ODNW (second from right) with Nii K'an Kwadins (aka Jerry Adams — centre) and three members of the Adams family. Where's Linda?

## Farewell Father Fenton

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

### BACKGROUND

Originally from northwestern Ontario, the diocese of Keewatin, the Ven. G. Douglas Fenton, DD came to the diocese of New Westminster to begin his ministry as Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. Catherine of Alexandria, Port Coquitlam, September 1, 1995. He completed his incumbency April 1998. He began ministry as Assistant Priest at St. James, Vancouver on Palm Sunday 1998. During his tenure at St. James, he was appointed Regional Dean of Burrard by then-bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham. In March of 2002, Archdeacon Fenton began a new phase of his ministry as Staff Officer for Young Adults and Campus Ministry at the national office of The Episcopal Church in Manhattan. During his years in New York, he served as Assistant Priest at the Church of St. Luke-in-the-Fields and Associate Priest at Christ and St. Stephen in the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

After nine years in Manhattan, Fr. Douglas and his husband Keith decided that it was time to head back to Douglas's country of birth and citizenship and they chose Vancouver. In 2010, the diocese of New Westminster circulated a posting seeking a Director for Mission and Ministry and Douglas applied. He was appointed to the position by Bishop Ingham on March 1, 2011, and served until the retirement of then-Executive Archdeacon, the Ven. Ronald Harrison, December 31, 2012, when Bishop Ingham appointed him Executive Archdeacon of the diocese. Both Archdeacon Harrison and Bishop Ingham were at the retirement dinner on January 7, 2023.

There are many highlights of Archdeacon Fenton's tenure but certainly among them would be: his supervision of the renovations of 1410 Nanton Avenue and the Synod Office move in 2015; the establishment of diocesan-wide dismantling racism training; the Companion Diocese relationship with Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines; the updating of, and increase in, the scope of safe church training and Screening in Faith; the receipt of an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree at the November 2, 2014, convocation ceremonies at his seminary, St. John's College, University of Manitoba; his role in the renewal and revising of diocesan Constitution, Canons and Regulations; in partnership with Archdeacon Bruce Morris the development of the Diploma in Anglican Diaconal Studies at Vancouver School of Theology; his ongoing support of

postulants, ordinands and curates; his leadership on various committees and as a General Synod delegate at the national church and as a leader in the national church on committees, and much more. ✠

...more photos on pages 4 & 5

For those of you on Facebook, you may view additional photos with captions. Please follow the link to a photo album located at Anglican Conversation, the Facebook page of the diocese of New Westminster. <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=130319853684475&set=a.5749766625073075>

## ONLINE SERVICES

THINGS THAT CAN GO TERRIBLY WRONG

PROBLEMS WITH THE SOUND

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Here's Linda Adams (side/back view only) chatting with the Ven. Kevin Hunt. PHOTOS Wayne Chose, ODNW except where noted



Synod Office building administrator, Regan Gorman did a HUGE amount of work to make the retirement dinner a success. Thank you, Regan.



Rob Dickson, AAM (retired diocesan Director of Property and Finance); Lito Manalo (diocesan accountant); Cris Engnan (spouse of Archdeacon Luisito Engnan); Prashanti Yadavalli (diocesan accounting clerk); Shailene Caparas (Director of Finance, diocese of New Westminster and Treasurer of the PWRDF).



The Dean of the diocese of New Westminster and Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, the Very Rev. Chris Pappas with Randy Murray.



The Rector of St. Paul's, Vancouver, the Rev. Philip Cochrane, his spouse, Raymond Lee and the Rev. Tellison Glover, Director for Mission and Ministry at the Synod office.



Receptionist and Administrative Assistant, Synod staffer, Elias Neto, his spouse Gessica and Bishop John.



Alexis and Tyler with Bishop Michael Ingham (who appointed Douglas Executive Archdeacon) and Douglas's husband, Keith Landherr.



Long time Diocesan Council member and current Parish Administrator of Holy Trinity, Vancouver, Sharon Grove, ODNW (centre) chats with Raymond Lee and Philip Cochrane as Michèle van Teunenbroek looks on.

## Farewell Father Fenton



Bishop Stephens, Randy and Rose Murray, Thomas Roach, ODNW and the Rev. Stephen Rowe, Rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Surrey and Regional Dean of Peace Arch.



Retired priest of the diocese of New Westminster and former Rector of Holy Trinity, White Rock, the Rev. Neil Gray with members of that parish, Sean Latimer and Frances Fagan, ODNW.



The first speaker via Zoom (recorded) was Douglas's eldest cousin (and Fenton family elder), Robert Fenton.





Douglas acknowledges the applause.



Everyone in the room stands to applaud the retiring Fr. Fenton (there were several of these events during the evening). PHOTO Jane Dittrich



LEFT Douglas's spouse, Keith, stands to be acknowledged. Keith organized the video with Robert Fenton and arranged for the gift. RIGHT The first of ten speakers, the Very Rev. Peter Elliott was tasked with the topic: Douglas's *Early Days in the Diocese*. It was hilarious, even those of us who'd heard some of the anecdotes before laughed until we hurt.



LEFT Although the Chancellor, George Cadman, QC, ODNW wasn't sure what the communications officer was getting at when he presented the topic: *The Legal and Administrative Mind of Douglas Fenton*, he pulled it off with his usual wit, skill, and mix of gravitas and whimsy. RIGHT The Rev. Amanda Ruston, Assistant Curate, St. James', Vancouver spoke on the topic: Douglas's *Role in the Formation of Postulants, Ordinands and Curates*.



With his legendary dry delivery, the Rev. Stephen Rowe shared a reflection on his 12 years in ministry and diocesan leadership with Fr. Fenton.



The Rector of St. Paul's, Vancouver, the Rev. Philip Cochrane spoke on the topic: Douglas's *Role in Welcoming New Clergy* (particularly those from outside the country). Here we see Philip demonstrating the "Fenton Shrug" mixed with a little bit of the "Fenton Twinkle."



Fr. Fenton is very much enjoying the address from his niece and nephew.



The Ven. Stephanie Shepard rushed to the dinner from officiating at a funeral in West Vancouver to speak.



Nephew, Tyler and Niece, Alexis brought the house down with their memories of "Uncle Doug."



LEFT Many thanks to the volunteer team of servers, just beginning the salad course in the Trendell Lounge. Thank you all so much. (Left to right) Richard Sulkers, Maggie Sanders, Heather Esposito, Robyn Ingham, Peter Roulston, and Erin Barr. PHOTO Jane Dittrich RIGHT A huge ovation for the volunteer servers and the staff of *Sharing Abundance Catering*.





# The Baptism of the Lord

## Episcopal Visit to All Saints, Ladner

RANDY MURRAY  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

The Parish of All Saints, Ladner is one of the oldest parishes in the diocese, having begun its mission and ministry in the Fraser River Delta's riverside farming community in 1881. The church building and grounds that have evolved and developed since that time are amongst the most beautiful, and the building itself is a fine example of Gothic Revival architecture featuring the use of BC timber. The sanctuary is larger than many of its contemporaries around the diocese and each renovation right up to the recent building of a commercial grade kitchen and deluxe restroom facilities has served to elevate the look and function of the place. Sitting in the nave, one can sense the presence of the generations of folks who have worshipped there and see the results of their generous commitment to God's mission on Earth through the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The air inside the church is tinged with the sweet smell of sanctity. However, the parish is going through a bit of a rough patch with the resignation of then-current Rector, the Rev. Robin Celiz, who began his new ministry as Rector of the Parish of St. Helen, Surrey, February 1, 2023. As the parish has done for decades when the need has arisen, they will begin the search for new ordained leadership and will continue in ministry to the City of Ladner and beyond.

During the visit to All Saints, for the Baptism of the Lord (January 8) Bishop John celebrated Holy Communion from *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) at 8:30am and met with that congregation in the chapel after worship. At the main 10am Celebration of the Eucharist, Bishop John preached and presided, and presented Ms. Leanne Fischer, the daughter of All Saints' parishioner, Pat Sallis, ODNW with the medal and ribbon, naming Mrs. Sallis to the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster (ODNW). Mrs. Sallis had been too ill to attend the November 5, 2022, Investiture Service held at the Massey Theatre in New Westminster and sadly, she died soon after that date.

The posthumous investiture of Mrs. Patricia Eileen Sallis to the ODNW took place following Bishop John's sermon and before the Prayers of the People led by intercessor, Theeps Theeparajah. Ms. Fischer, Bishop John and Fr. Robin positioned themselves across the chancel in front of the altar for the brief ceremony which included a precis and prayers from the bishop and the reading by the Rev. Celiz of the full citation as recorded in the Register of the Order. An edited version of the citations are read at the biennial investiture and Pat Sallis's is as follows:

*"Over 29 years at All Saints, Ladner, Pat has served as Peoples Warden and many terms on Parish Council with dedication and commitment. She maintains strong personal faith and*



Ms. Leanne Fisher holding her mother's ODNW medal and ribbon poses for a photo with Bishop John. ALL PHOTOS Randy Murray



Guest musician, Rod Asher at the piano.



Bishop John at the lectern.

*loyalty to her values, family and friends. A faithful worshipper, Pat has served as an Eucharistic Administrator, Usher, Greeter and with the prayer ministry. Pat enriches the life of the parish through her enthusiasm and energy for fundraising, community outreach, and pastoral care. She demonstrates how faith in action can overcome both personal and church-related challenges."*

Amongst many contributions to the life, worship, mission and ministry of All Saints, Pat Sallis was either a founding and/or ongoing member of the community meal, health ministry and the popular Christmas Poinsettia Bazaar.

The Rev. Karin Fulcher was Deacon of the Word and Table for the Eucharist. Deacon Karin was for many years the deacon at St. David's, Tsawwassen, the Parish of All Saints's nearby neighbour to the south. Completing the sanctuary party was Crucifer, Pauline Ingall who also read the Epistle, *Acts 10:34-43*. Leaders in worship included, the aforementioned Mr. Theeparajah; greeters, Mitch and Kathy Gillis; guest musician, organist and pianist, Rod Asher; lay administrator, Liz Macdonald; Altar Guild member, Jennifer Semenoff who also read the Old Testament, *Isaiah 42:1-9* and prepared food for the after-worship luncheon and meeting with Bishop John Stephens.

This Sunday was particularly personal for Jennifer as following the Dismissal, the sanctuary party (clergy and crucifer) led the congregation outside to the Memorial Garden for the interment of the ashes of parishioner Marion Burnett, Jennifer's mother. The weather for January 8 was very mild with a gentle sprinkling of rain as Bishop John read the words of Scripture from the Interment of Ashes:

*"I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another." (Job 19:25-27)*

*"I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth.' 'Blessed indeed,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds may follow them?'" (Revelation 14:13)*

Please keep the Parish of All Saints, Ladner, and the Rev. Robin Celiz in your prayers as they enter into this time of transition. ✠

Bishop John's sermon may be accessed online at <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/podcasts/media/2023-01-08-the-baptism-of-the-lord>



Theeps Theeparajah leads the Prayers of the People.



The All Saints choir demonstrates the non-contact sharing of the peace.



Eucharistic Prayer, "After supper he took the cup..."



Holy Communion.



Bishop John leads the prayers for the late Marion Burnett.



Pauline Ingall, Jennifer Semenoff and Liz Macdonald during the prayers.



# Diocesan Priest | 2023 Recipient of the Vancouver School of Theology Thoughtful, Engaged & Generous Award

The Reverend Alecia Greenfield receives award that recognizes leading practitioners in Christian ministry during their early years of career service

RANDY MURRAY (CREATED WITH FILES FROM THE CIRCULATED JANUARY 23, 2023 VST MEDIA RELEASE)  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

The Rev. Alecia Greenfield, Regional Dean of Kingsway, Vicar of Holy Cross, Vancouver, and Special Projects Facilitator (part time) on staff at the diocese of New Westminster's Mission and Ministry department is the recipient of the Vancouver School of Theology's (VST) President's TEG Award for 2023. The award is for *Thoughtful, Engaged and Generous* Christian Practitioners.

A graduate of VST's Master of Divinity program, the Rev. Greenfield had earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy and religious studies at the University of BC. She followed her BA with a career in fundraising and organizational development for cultural institutions, highlighted by her management of Prince George Railway and Forestry Museum.

After completing her MBA, Alecia could no longer ignore her calling to ministry, and in 2013, began her discernment process with the diocese of New Westminster/Anglican Church of Canada. The Rev. Greenfield was ordained to the diaconate by the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton on June 15, 2019, and priested on January 18, 2020. She served as Assistant Curate at St. Francis-in-the-Wood, West Vancouver where she was of major assistance during the time of COVID-19. August 1, 2021, the Rev. Greenfield was appointed Vicar of the Parish of Holy Cross (a Celebration of New Ministry Eucharist was celebrated at Holy Cross, August 15, 2021) and began her part time role on the Synod office's Mission and Ministry program staff also at that time. She was appointed Regional Dean of Kingsway in the fall of 2022. Among her diocesan accomplishments

*"What a delight to make this award to Alecia Greenfield who exemplifies thoughtful, engaged and generous leadership."*  
The Rev. Richard R. Topping, PhD,  
President & Vice-Chancellor, VST



The Rev. Alecia Greenfield. PHOTO Wayne Chose, ODNW

was her chairing and organization of the 2022 diocesan ministry conference, held October 15, 2022. Alecia has also been of great support to diocesan communications with her submissions of photos and stories highlighting the diverse ministries of the diocese.

Alecia lives in Lynn Valley with her husband, Jeff Calvert. Alecia and Jeff have two adult children, Lytton and Hannah.

**About the TEG Award**  
An expression of VST's stature as a strong, innovation center of leadership development, the TEG Award is open to the alumni or affiliates of VST.

This award is intended to have a continuous presence in the community. Thanks to the annual generosity of founding donors and other supporters, the TEG Award will continue each year to acknowledge outstanding contributions of Christian leaders.

Nominations for the 2024 VST TEG Award are welcome. The award is open to all full-time ministry leaders within the first ten-years of full-time employment in Canada. Candidates will be known for their exemplary leadership and contributions in Christian ministry for the 21st century, reflecting the virtues of thoughtful, engaged and generous in keeping with the mission of VST. Nominations should be directed to Rachael Shi in the President's Office and received by November 23, 2023. Successful recipients may receive this award once. ✝

*"Alecia's skill as an artist, her ability to be in conversation with people of all ages and from many cultural backgrounds, her warmth and intelligence all make her into the rarest of priests—a person who can genuinely engage others, in thoughtful and generous ways."*  
The Very Rev. Peter G. Elliott

*"Alecia's leadership will benefit the wider Church community for years to come, and this award given to Alecia will be a credit to VST."*  
The Most Rev. Dr. Lynne McNaughton,  
Archbishop & Metropolitan,  
Ecclesiastical Province of BC & Yukon

*"Alecia's generosity of spirit in this found expression not only in the giving of herself but in helping others also to discover and give of themselves. This, it seems to me, is very close to the heart of Christian ministry."*  
The Rev. Dr. Angus F. Stuart

*"She clearly loves what she is doing, and this encourages and supports others to renew their own commitment to living as Jesus would call us to be. She has a deep kindness to her that touches people; clearly showing compassion and solidarity. She seeks justice for all people and hope for this planet and draw others on that walk with her."*  
The Rt. Rev. John R. Stephens,  
Bishop, diocese of New Westminster



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

DEADLINES FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS  
March 24 for the May issue  
April 28 for the June issue

Please email Randy Murray at [rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca](mailto:rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca)  
All contributions are appreciated  
• EDITOR •





Evan prepares to light the first candle of Advent.



Bishop John removes his mask to preach. PHOTOS Randy Murray except where noted

# Recognizing & Celebrating the Holiness of Life

## Bishop John Stephens’s Episcopal Visit to St. John the Apostle, Port Moody | Advent I

RANDY MURRAY  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On the morning of Sunday, November 27, 2022, Advent I, the first day of the new church year the sun was shining brightly. The drive to Port Moody that morning was extremely pleasant due to the lack of other vehicles on the road, likely a result of the World Cup game taking place between Canada and Croatia. However, the congregation at St. John’s, Port Moody had not stayed home to watch soccer but had gathered at the church to Celebrate the Eucharist and to greet the bishop as he visited his parish for the first time in his episcopacy. Always nice to see a full church.

Worship began with the singing of *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* followed by Bishop John gathering the community with Opening Prayers and then into the Lighting of the First Advent Candle, the Hope candle, by a younger member of the congregation, Ethan Stock. Ethan did a fine job with the lighting and reading the accompanying text.

Following the liturgical recognition of Advent, the Eucharist continued, beginning with what was billed as an *All-Ages Chat* (often referred to in other parishes as *The Children’s Talk*) with Bishop John seated on the chancel entrance stairs with Ethan and another younger member of the parish. The bishop spoke about Advent, and then shared some information about his mitre and vestments and provided some insight about what a bishop does and how the diocesan family is connected.

In his sermon, Bishop John emphasized the theme of the lighting of the candle as a metaphor for Hope. The Hope that we all share for better things to come, in this case the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World. He also spoke about Advent as a time to slow down and reflect as opposed to the messaging of the contemporary world to get out and do things, mostly buy things. He said:

*“We have lit the first of the candles on our Advent wreath. This lighting, this candle, marks the start of the Church’s year, a visible symbol of the beginning of the season of Advent, a time of preparation and anticipation that once more Jesus will come to us, that Jesus will be with us, that Jesus will walk with us. It is a sign of pushing back the darkness of this world to greet a new hope, the hope of the presence of Christ.*

*On this first day of Advent, we aim to slow down the pace of this frantic world, to slow down our minds to prepare once again for the coming of light into this world. A light that pushes back even the densest of darkness. Advent is our time in the Church, to slow down the rush to move quickly into the season of Christmas and the decorations and the baking and the festivities. The season of Advent is much more measured and whispers to us, ‘Don’t rush too fast into this. Just focus for a bit on what we are doing.’ It is a message not always wanted but it is important for us who see this season as part of a spiritual journey not simply a gift-purchasing event. You see we believe that this time is about feeding our soul, it is about rethinking who this Jesus really was, is and is to come. This Advent time is about recognizing the holiness of all of life and celebrating that.”*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



An episcopal visit is a good time to distribute Education for Ministry (EFM) certificates to those who have worked, studied and prayed for the four years it takes to complete the program.

*“Don’t rush too fast into this. Just focus for a bit on what we are doing.”*



LEFT Deacon, the Rev. Anne Anchor and the Rector, the Rev. Vivian Lam conclude their pantomime of receiving Holy Communion while masked and observing some physical distancing. RIGHT “Gifts of God for the people of God.”



# Synod Office Leaders Visit Native Education College

KERRY BAISLEY, ODNW  
*Missioner for Indigenous Justice*

Bishop John Stephens, Executive Archdeacon, the Ven. Philippa Pride and I recently visited the Vancouver Campus of the Native Education College (NEC) in Vancouver.

The main building, on 5th Avenue just off Main Street in Vancouver's Mount Pleasant neighbourhood was constructed in 1985, on a traditional Pacific Coast longhouse design. On a tour of the main building, we commented on the large wooden beams forming the rafters; Amanda Kai, Director of Operations, observed, "We could not find beams of that size again nor could we afford them if they could be found." The architecture is not the only thing unique about this place of learning.

NEC's motto is *Your Journey Home*. It is a place where students can be themselves



Bishop John Stephens, Archdeacon Philippa Pride with Amanda Kai, Director of Operations, and Darren Alfred, Wellness Warriors Coordinator. ALL PHOTOS Kerry Baisley

and learn in a supportive environment that enables and prepares them for work in their chosen professions. The College has certificate and diploma programs transferrable to the University of BC, Capilano University, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Simon Fraser and Emily Carr University of Art and Design. The diocese of New Westminster supports the work of NEC with the income of the invested funds from the sale of church properties through a motion passed at the Synod of 2019.

NEC is working on a new chapter in its life by moving from a private non-profit college to British Columbia's 26th provincially recognized public Educational Institution while maintaining its Indigenous perspectives and supports. This transition is an important step in recognizing authentic Indigenous education, and step forward in provincial reconciliation initiatives.

In the Chief Tsimilano building next door to the main building we met Darren Alfred, Wellness Warriors Coordinator, who showed us the Bentwood boxes he and students made as part of the work that assists in the maintenance of spiritual, physical and mental health. We look forward to developing our relationship with NEC and exploring ways in which we can work together. ✚



Exterior carving.



The Beam.



Builder's label on Bentwood box.

## Recognizing & Celebrating the Holiness of Life Bishop John Stephens's Episcopal Visit to St. John the Apostle, Port Moody | Advent I

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Other highlights of the liturgy were: the awarding of two Education for Ministry Certificates; the Lloyd Larson anthem *Light a Candle for All to See* sung by the choir under the leadership of LaRee Mohr and the rector, the Rev. Vivian Lam and the deacon, the Rev. Anne Anchor demonstrating the flow of Holy Communion in this parish where mask wearing remains mandatory. The demonstration was a success as Communion went flawlessly.

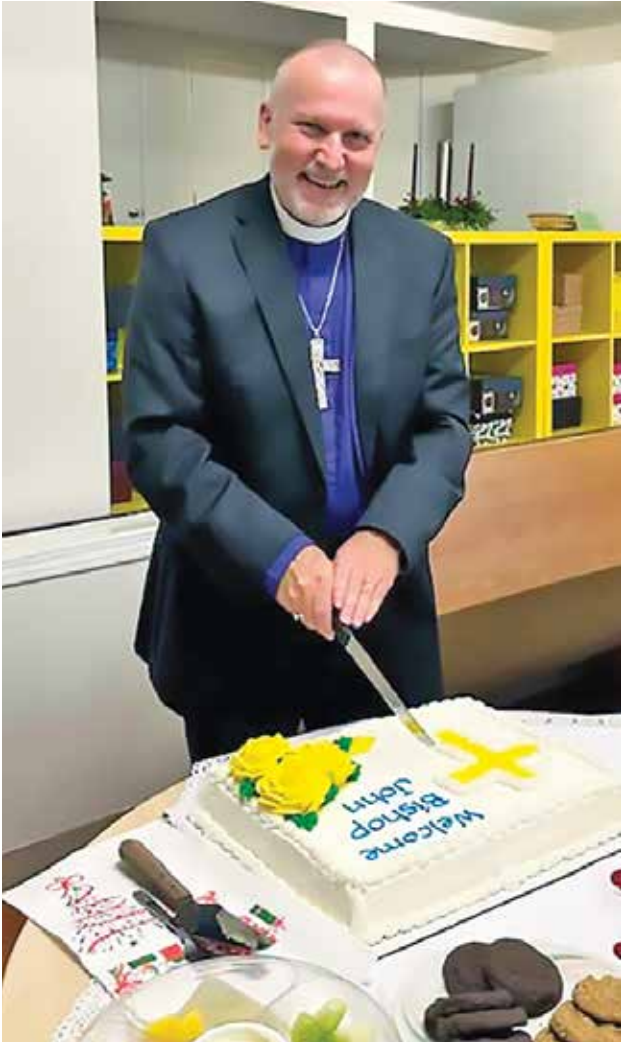
After worship there was a luncheon in the hall with most of the congregation in attendance and a celebratory "welcome" cake. Bishop John cut the initial slice. ✚



Episcopal Blessing.



The vested, unmasked Episcopal Visit photo: (left to right) Maureen Simons, ODNW, Bishop's Chaplain; Deacon, the Rev. Anne Anchor, Deacon of St. John's, Port Moody and EFM instructor; Bishop John Stephens; the Rev. Vivian Lam, Rector of the Parish of St. John's, Port Moody; and Viktor May-Savage, Server/Crucifer.



Cutting the cake. PHOTO Submitted





Ukrainian pianist, Anna Sagalova and Harmonia. ALL PHOTOS Adam Yates

# Ukraine Benefit Concert Offers an Evening of World-Class Music

ADAM YATES  
Rector, St. Faith, Vancouver

On the chilly December evening of December 4, 2022, St. Faith’s was blessed to open its doors to the wider community for a world-class concert for the benefit of Ukraine. The evening featured renowned Ukrainian pianist Anna Sagalova, who fled the country with her son at the start of the war and now resides in the Lower Mainland of BC. In addition, *Harmonia*, a Vancouver-based string ensemble filled with talented musicians from all walks of life, joined Ms. Sagalova in the evening’s performance.

The guests streamed through the doors as the musicians tuned their instruments. Lines formed around the donation table with community members waiting their turn to give support to the relief work. Soon, the pews on the main floor as well as the balcony were filled to near capacity.

The first half of the concert featured Ms. Sagalova on piano, accompanied by Harmonia, performing Chopin’s *Piano Concerto no. 1 in E minor*. Following an intermission, the focus shifted to Harmonia as they performed repertoire showcasing Ukrainian composers. The evening closed with *Prayer for Ukraine* by Mykola Lysenko, with Ms. Sagalova

returning to the stage to accompany on the piano.

Thanks to the generosity of the 150 attendees, St. Faith’s reports that \$6,000 was raised at the concert. The money was immediately forwarded to the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) for disbursement to partner organizations in Ukraine working to provide relief to their country’s people.

**Anna Sagalova**

Anna Sagalova is a well-known Ukrainian pianist. An Honoured Artist of Ukraine and Associate Professor at Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, she completed a postgraduate course at the University of Music Franz Liszt in Weimar (Germany). She also recently earned a Doctoral degree in Arts from the Kharkiv I.P.K. National University.

Ms. Sagalova, who is also the Artistic Director of the International musical art contest Kharkiv Assembles and co-founder of the project Music Against Cancer, frequently plays as a soloist with symphony orchestras throughout Ukraine under the baton of conductors from Ukraine, USA, Switzerland, Great Britain, and Austria. She has given concerts in the International Museum of the Red Cross in Geneva, the Bozendorfer Hall in Vienna, the House Museum of F. Liszt, and the concert hall in Altenburg in Weimar (Germany), as well as on Bern state radio. Her performances have been broadcast on radio and television, and she has recorded two compact discs.

**Harmonia**

Harmonia is a string chamber ensemble based in Vancouver, BC. The group originated 16 years ago when founder Tony Lee invited a small group of musician friends to play string orchestral music in his living room. Since then, Harmonia has grown to about 16–20 players with resident conductor Nick Urquhart and concertmaster Dominic Woo.

Harmonia’s focus is on performing many of the great string works that are rarely heard in concert halls today. Orchestra members come from many walks of life—professionals, businessmen, teachers, and retirees. All are advanced performers of their respective instruments and dedicated to the joy of making wonderful music together. ✝







The Rev. Karin Fulcher calls out the tables to proceed to the reception area to serve themselves from the Christmas lunch buffet.



The Trendell Lounge during the “cocktail” hour. ALL PHOTOS Randy Murray

# Retired Clergy & Spouses Luncheon | Advent 2022 Edition

RANDY MURRAY  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Tuesday, December 6, 2022, Bette Geddes, ODNW and the crew from *Sharing Abundance* catering, along with Jane Dittrich, ODNW, and a platoon of helpers arrived at the Synod offices of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster at 1410 Nanton Avenue, hours before 11am “doors” to prepare for the annual Advent luncheon. Also present were the co-chaplains to the Retired Clergy and Spouses; the Rev. Karin Fulcher who has been on the frontline of organization of this event for several years, and new co-chair, the Ven. Andrew Pike.

The three main gathering spaces were fully utilized for the 2022 iteration with the Trendell Lounge conscripted for the pre-lunch “cocktail” time, the reception area for the buffet and the large conference room with the addition of ten circular tables the venue for the luncheon itself.

Although there were still a few masks (and nothing wrong with that), attendance was robust, in the vicinity of 80+; the energy was high, and it was obvious that this group of folks were grateful for the opportunity to gather in person and spend some time together. Twelve members of Synod staff also attended the luncheon. Across from the registration table in the Trendell Lounge was a table with greeting cards to be forwarded to those not able to attend. Signing the cards and including good wishes to absent friends and colleagues has become an event tradition.

Bette and her team assembled a traditional Christmas dinner of turkey with all the trimmings, along with a tasty vegetarian option or two, followed by individual Gingerbread cupcakes topped with caramel cream.

As with many things in the Church, if something hap-



Gingerbread cakes with caramel sauce.

pens once or twice and nobody complains too much it becomes a “tradition” and that is certainly the case for the Advent Luncheon quiz. Established by then-co-chair, the Rev. Neil Gray in 2018, Archdeacon Pike was happy to take it over and the 32 questions contained in the “Retired Clergy Historical Diocesan Quiz” were distributed to the guests upon registration. Questions ranged from “What is the date of the arrival of the first priest in the diocese?” to “Name the 2nd Bishop of New Westminster” to “Who was the first Dean of Christ Church Cathedral (after it became the Cathedral Church of the diocese in 1929)?” The questions were quite difficult, use of smart phones was prohibited and when Archdeacon Pike took to the microphone to provide the answers during dessert, some of the answers he gave turned out to be controversial.

The keynote address was given by Bishop John Stephens. The bishop focused on the two principal trips that he had taken in the previous months, the Lambeth Conference, July 25 to August 8, and the trip to Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines, the diocese of New Westminster’s Companion Diocese for the Consecration of diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev. Benny lang-Akan, September 7 to 17. Bishop John was one of the consecrating bishops.

Prior to closing the luncheon, Bishop John directed the attention of the plenary to the Ven. Douglas Fenton who retired January 4, 2023. Archdeacon Fenton was greeted with sustained applause of appreciation for his years of service.

The next Retired Clergy and Spouses Luncheon will be the spring edition, exact date, TBA, but likely in late April or early May of 2023. ✚



The first guests to arrive were the Reverends Dave Price and Art Turnbull. Dave and Art live in the Eastern Fraser Valley and wanted to get an early start driving in. Both Dave and Art have articles in this March 2023 issue of *Topic*.



LEFT Anne and Dudley have a chance to visit. Amongst the benefits of this event are the opportunities to connect with friends and colleagues. RIGHT Bill Siksay (left), the principal staff support person, who organizes the two Retired Clergy and Spouses events each year with the Rev. Karin Fulcher the senior Chaplain to the group. Here we see Karin calling the folks in the Trendell Lounge into the Conference Room for lunch.



The Ven. Andrew Pike supplies the answers to the quiz.



Bishop John, the after-luncheon speaker.

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

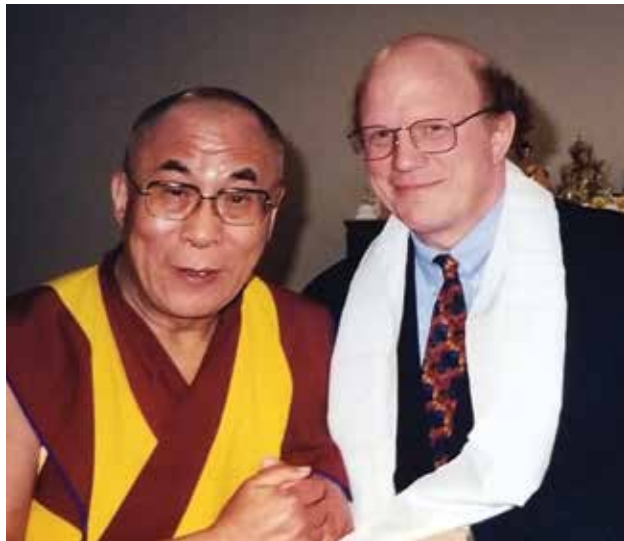
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**DEADLINE FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS**  
March 24 for the May issue  
April 28 for the June issue

.....

Please email Randy Murray at [rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca](mailto:rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca)  
All contributions are appreciated  
• EDITOR •





In Palo Alto, California, with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2002.  
ALL PHOTOS Courtesy of Vicki & Pitman Potter



Playing guitar in Beijing (1989).



Pitman is on the right, an acolyte at Washington's Episcopal Cathedral in 1970.



Posing for a photo in Nanjing (1981).

# Congratulations to Diocesan Deacon, the Reverend Dr.

RANDY MURRAY  
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

Early in the morning of Thursday, December 29, 2022, the media release listing the 99 appointees to the Order of Canada appeared online. One of those appointees is a retired deacon of the diocese of New Westminster, the Rev. Dr. Pitman Potter. The summary of his Citation that was printed in the list is as follows:

*“Pitman Benjamin Potter, CM, Vancouver, British Columbia. For his precedent-setting scholarship in the field of Chinese legal studies, and for his dedication and service to his community.”*

Raised up to the diaconate by his parish of St. Helen's, West Point Grey, Pitman was ordained by the 8th Bishop of the diocese of New Westminster, the Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham on June 17, 2007. While at St. Helen's, Pitman led the design and launch of the Westside Anglicans Neighbourhood Ministry (WANM), offering care, companionship and practical assistance to the marginalized and vulnerable living on Vancouver's Westside streets. In 2016,

he moved to St. Philip's and then to St. John's, Shaughnessy (SJS) with the Rev. (now Bishop) John Stephens. While at SJS, Pitman was licensed by the 9th Bishop, the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton as Deacon to the Archdeaconry of Vancouver which enabled him to serve in the parishes of St. John's, Shaughnessy, St. Philip's, Dunbar, and St. Anselm's, University of BC. Pitman continued his leadership of the WANM until his retirement in 2020, working alongside his spouse of 40 years, Vicki Potter, ODNW.

Since 1990, Pitman has been on the faculty of the Peter A. Allard School of Law at UBC, retiring in 2020 and now Professor Emeritus. According to his staff page on the Allard website:

*“Potter is an internationally acclaimed expert noted for his innovative and impactful research on human rights, foreign trade and dispute settlement in Taiwan and China. He has led large-scale research projects in countries throughout Asia, including India, China and Japan, and his work has informed the develop-*

*ment of law and policy here in Canada and internationally.*

*He has been awarded multiple large research grants, including two multi-million-dollar SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative grants for his Asia Pacific Dispute Resolution Program. Prior to retiring from UBC in 2020, Potter served in numerous leadership roles at the Allard School of Law, including as Director of Chinese Legal Studies, Director of Asian Legal Studies, Director of the Graduate Program and Associate Dean. He also served as Director of UBC's Institute of Asian Research from 1999–2008, where he held the HSBC Chair in Asian Research from 1999–2016.*

*A prolific writer and researcher, Potter has published more than fifteen books and over 100 articles and book chapters and has continued to publish since his retirement. His latest book, Exporting Virtue? China's International Human Rights Activism in the Age of Xi Jinping (2021) examines the challenges that China's human rights doctrine poses to international norms and institutions*

*and makes recommendations for effective policy responses.*

*Potter's appointment to the Order of Canada comes in addition to the numerous awards he has received throughout his career, including the UBC Distinguished University Scholar Award, UBC's Killam Research Award and the UBC Law Faculty Alumni Association Award for Research. In 2015, he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.”*

Pitman is also a musician/singer/composer who records and releases original music. He is a fan of *The Grateful Dead* and wrote a book depicting the “Dead's” career in light of the Gospels. Pitman has recently joined with a group of friends to found the *Neighbourhood Gospel Band*, which will perform a benefit concert for WANM at St. John's, Shaughnessy on June 18.

I am very grateful that Pitman agreed to take the time to do this interview, sharing some thoughts about his life, career, and ministry through the communications vehicles of the diocese of New Westminster. ✚

## The Interview

**Q.** First, congratulations on being named a Member of the Order of Canada. How did you feel when you found out this was happening?

**A.** I was surprised and in fact speechless when I was notified in mid-November. I feel honoured of course, but also more than a bit humbled at being included in the august company of the Order of Canada.

**Q.** Are you aware of other clergy who have been nominated and appointed to the Order?

**A.** I understand that Fr. John Emmett Walsh of the Catholic diocese of Montreal was invested in the Order in 2017. I am not aware of other clergy appointed to the Order but no doubt there are some.

**Q.** Please take us back a few decades and share some memories of your life as a youngster. What was your home life like? What were your interests? What excited you? How did you come to faith?

**A.** I was born in the US. In my very early years, I lived in Egypt where my father taught at the American University of Cairo. At the tender age of three, I was evacuated with my family to Rome during the Suez crisis of 1956 (the fear and disruption of that event haunted me for many years afterward and I still remember it). After a brief return to Egypt, the family moved back to the States. I grew up in Washington, DC, part of a loving family of modest income but with many academic high achievers, including my namesake grandfather who was a leading figure in international law for many decades.

My faith journey began at an early age, from singing in the choir of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Morristown, New Jersey in the late 1950s (I still have my *Hymnal 1940* from that time) to my time in DC at St. Albans and Washington Cathedral, to my penchant for visiting churches and other places of worship across China during the early

years of my studying there. I often describe my experience in the Master of Divinity program at the Vancouver School of Theology (VST) as one of learning the vocabulary to describe the experience with God that I have felt all along.

**Q.** Your academic career is broad, and it would be difficult to encapsulate it in this forum and do it justice, however, please share some highlights of your initial years of tertiary education and the decision to devote your career to the study of China, specifically Chinese law and policy?

**A.** I first studied Chinese history during Grade 12 at St. Alban's. I was enthralled by Chinese culture and art, continuing to study Chinese history as an undergrad at George Washington University (GWU) as I searched for a path to distinction separate from what other members of my family were doing. Under the tutelage of a number of prominent scholars at GWU, I gradually began work-





This photo was taken at a Canada-China conference (1992) and was the first conference after Tiananmen on human rights where foreign scholars were present. Pitman reports, “I had to go through a gauntlet of PLA guards around the university to gain entry — very tense and weird but emblematic of the times after Tiananmen.”

# Pitman Benjamin Potter, CM

ing on contemporary People’s Republic of China (PRC) politics. This took me to the University of Washington where I combined a PhD in political science focusing on China and comparative law and politics with a JD (Juris Doctor or Doctor of Jurisprudence) in law (the influence of my grandfather’s work in international law was never far from view). My dissertation focused on PRC contract law, which was newly re-emerging after decades of neglect. In January 1987, I moved with Vicki to Beijing to take a position with an international law firm negotiating investment and trade deals, while also teaching at Peking University Law Faculty. I witnessed first-hand the 1989 Tiananmen democracy demonstrations and the massacre and harsh repression that followed. Vicki and I together with our eldest daughter Kathleen returned to the US at the end of

that year, and I resumed practicing law in San Francisco.

**Q.** You speak Mandarin (and Cantonese?) fluently. What can you share about learning that language (those languages)? Do you speak other languages?

**A.** Well, my Mandarin is passable, my Cantonese and Shanghainese much less so. Most of my work in China has been conducted in Mandarin. Language study requires diligence, persistence and patience—especially when there are few opportunities to engage with the language in daily life. I was fortunate to be among the first US graduate students to study Chinese in Beijing, and also studied in Hong Kong and Taiwan. I studied Japanese for a time, forgetting the blood, sweat and tears I had expended in learning Chinese. I have also studied French and German,

although my facility with either is limited. I studied Biblical Greek at VST.

**Q.** What were the circumstances around your move to UBC?

**A.** After returning to the US at the end of 1989, I was busy with China work at the law firm that had posted me to Beijing earlier. UBC Law Faculty reached out during the spring of 1990, and I joined the faculty in the fall. I recall that at the time when I was considering the possible move to UBC, I was walking across the campus of University of California (UC) Berkeley while studying for the California Bar Exam and asking myself the question whether I’d prefer to live and work in a university environment or in the glass and steel confines of the elite downtown office tower that housed my law firm. The answer was not long in coming.

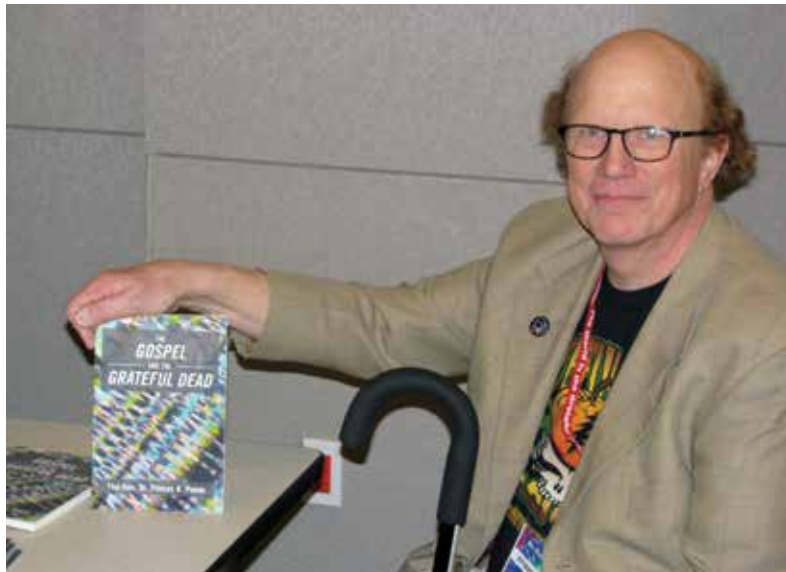
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Pitman in the middle with friends and a People’s Liberation Army (PLA) guard (1989).





Displaying his book, *The Gospel and the Grateful Dead* at a Grateful Dead conference at University of California (UC) San Jose (2014). PHOTOS Courtesy of Vicki & Pitman Potter except where noted



Presenting a lecture at People's University Beijing (2008).



Presenting *The Gospel and the Grateful Dead* at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver (2014).

## Congratulations to Diocesan Deacon, the Reverend Dr. Pitman Benjamin Potter, CM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

**Q.** Was St. Helen's the first Anglican church you attended in this diocese?

**A.** Our first experience with Anglicanism in Canada was at St. Mary's, Kerrisdale, where our younger daughter Jessie was baptized. After three years on Bowen Island where we attended the United Church, we returned to Vancouver and attended St. Helen's at the recommendation of several friends.

**Q.** What was it about St. Helen's that let you know that this was to be your spiritual home for the foreseeable future?

**A.** We joined St. Helen's largely unaware of the controversies swirling around same-sex blessings, which Vicki and I supported but which the rector at the time did not. We were actually preparing to move back to St. Mary's, Kerrisdale, when the Rev. Brian Vickers was appointed rector at St. Helen's. Brian's compassionate, thoughtful and supportive ministry encouraged us to foresee St. Helen's as our spiritual home.

**Q.** Do you recall the circumstances around your vocational call to the diaconate?

**A.** I have said many times (too often perhaps) that I became a lawyer to defy my family, I became an academic to please my family, but I entered seminary because that is what I have wanted to do my whole life. I enrolled at VST wholly unaware of the standard processes of discernment and raising up that most VST students experience. While at VST, I was encouraged to consider the diaconate by the Ven. Richard Leggett, who supplied a number of books and materials for me to review. I quickly determined that the diaconate was a place where I could serve God in my parish, in my community, and also through my academic work on China.

**Q.** What was your discernment experience like?

**A.** Under the Rev. Vickers's leadership, the community at St. Helen's was hugely supportive of my discerning a call to the diaconate. I was so convinced that diaconal ministry was the path for me that I was undeterred and unintimidated by the discernment process, which was difficult and painful for many of my VST classmates. I enjoyed it all, probably too much. I recall being asked by the Examining Chaplains about my commitment to Christianity in light of my rela-

tionship with the Dalai Lama, whom I had sponsored for an honorary UBC degree and whose 2004 visit I'd chaired. My reply was something along the lines of "I have studied many religions and experienced their practice, but Jesus is the one who speaks to me." Good enough I suppose.

**Q.** Several Anglican Saints are lawyers, did any of those influence you in responding to your vocational call or inspire you through your career?

**A.** Not sure about Anglican saints, but I have certainly been influenced by the teachings of Augustine, Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas. My interest in Christian mysticism has led me to the examples of the Desert Fathers (and Mothers), Meister Eckhart, Julian of Norwich, John of the Cross and more recently Thomas Merton and Dorothee Soelle. I would also note that I have studied and observed many world religions, ranging from the Islamic practices I observed in Egypt as a young child to later study of Buddhism, Judaism, Taoism, and beyond, from which I have gleaned much wisdom, some of which is presented in my recent work, *Fever Dreams* (2020).

**Q.** What have been some of the most rewarding moments in your career as both a legal academic and an Anglican deacon, and how has your faith informed your approach to legal scholarship and your service to the community?

**A.** Naturally, I have felt rewarded in my academic career with each new book, article, or research achievement. But the most rewarding aspect of my academic work has been the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in Canada, China and the world. The people with whom I have had the privilege to work are what has made my academic work most rewarding.

Similarly, as an Anglican deacon, I have felt rewarded by the encouragement and support I have received by so many clergy and laypeople in the diocese. Certainly, the Neighbourhood Ministry has been a high point.

Most of my professional work on China was initially that of a foreign business lawyer. After joining UBC, and certainly by the time of my application for admission to VST, I had begun to shift my focus toward human rights. Without consciously thinking about it, this seems an example of faith at work. My work with the WANM reflected an effort to move beyond policy discussion about

the homeless and needy on our streets to concrete action, a faith position much inspired by the *Book of James*.

**Q.** Your commitment to compassionate service to your neighbours is a substantial part of your ministry. How did Westside Anglicans Neighbourhood Ministry (WANM) evolve from that initial group of people at St. Helen's and St. Philip's to where it is today?

**A.** We designed the Neighbourhood Ministry to facilitate and encourage cooperation among the parishes of St. Helen's, St. Anselm's, and St. Philip's in a project to serve the homeless and needy on the streets of West Point Grey. Challenging parish "silos" was an important goal in the design and operation of the Neighbourhood Ministry, informed by the theme of transformation — both for friends on the street and also for participating parishioners. To that end, all of the operational teams, both the street outreach teams and the indoor teams preparing packets and information for our friends on the street, intentionally combined members of all three participating parishes. Reflecting this commitment to inter-parishional collaboration, the evolution of the WANM has now come to include St. John's, Shaughnessy as a partner parish along while welcoming invaluable support from St. Mary's, Kerrisdale and St. Faith's.

**Q.** What do you think the future holds for compassionate service faith-based organizations like WANM?

**A.** I believe that the Church is called to witness and celebrate the love of God lived out in ordinary circumstances by ordinary people. Programs such as the WANM serve as an example to the world that our Church is not simply about the trappings of ceremony, but about actual day-to-day work improving the lives of people through love and care — not so much about the concrete results of assistance programs (how many packets were distributed, how many folks got into supportive housing, etc.), but by the public example of caring that transforms the lives of the needy and those who minister to them. That's why we wear WANM emblems in our ministry on the streets.

**Q.** What role do you believe your faith can play in shaping public policy and how do you see that influencing your contributions as a member of the Order of Canada?

**A.** My faith informs all of my work. Friends in Ottawa and elsewhere are fully aware (for good or ill) that when I am



invited to speak about relations with China, I will focus on human rights. I hope that membership in the Order of Canada will further this work.

**Q.** Is there a passage or are there passages from Scripture that you have returned to throughout your ministry to help guide you?

**A.** While I am guided by many passages from Scripture, the *Book of James* certainly stands out for its focus on practical ministry. I am also influenced by the prophets—particularly Joel, Micah, and Isaiah—for their calls for social justice. The Gospels (particularly Mark) are always inspiring as examples of the unexpected and challenging presence of the Divine in our midst. The letters of Paul (particularly Romans and 1st Corinthians) are powerful guides to thought and action in ministry and offer hope that we can overcome obstacles in their pursuit.

**Q.** Do you align yourself with any liturgical style? If yes, which one and why?

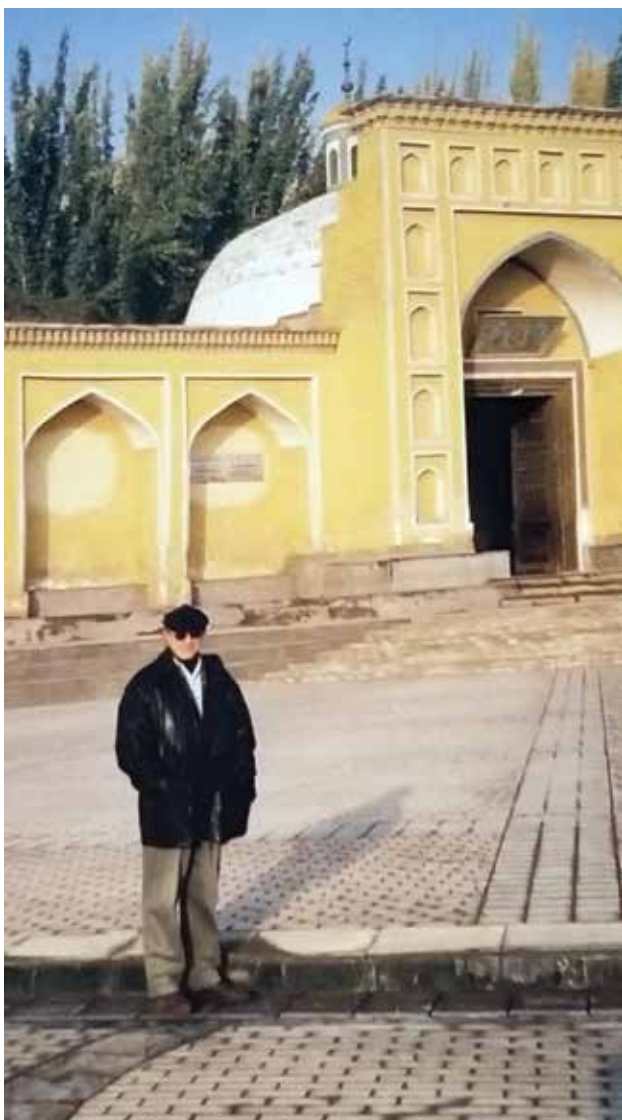
**A.** I love all sorts of liturgy, from high stylings with incense, vestments, and decorations to communal gatherings of the faithful with little in the way of accoutrements. For me the key to liturgy is how it inspires and empowers people to live out their faith in the world.



Receiving a blessing from Bishop John Stephens before proclaiming the Gospel.  
PHOTO Randy Murray



Gathering a Neighbourhood Ministry outreach team with prayer.



At Id Kah Mosque, Xinjiang (2002).

**Q.** *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) or *The Book of Alternate Services* (BAS)?

**A.** I am a BAS person, but there are elements of the BCP (evening prayer for example) that stir me still.

**Q.** Do you have a favourite sacred piece of music?

**A.** Not really. I love (nearly) all forms of music. I have favourite hymns (including *St. Patrick's Breastplate* and *The Spacious Firmament on High*, as well as the usual Christmas and Easter standards, particularly *How a Rose ere Blooming* and *The Strife is O'er*). I love Handel's *Messiah*. An early favourite of mine was the *Missa Luba*, a mass set to Congolese music. Other favourites include *Ave Maria* and *Ave Verum Corpus*. And I love *Taizé*.

**Q.** Of the many books that you have published, is there one that stands out to you?

**A.** Each of my published works represents a particular moment in my academic journey. Each one was important and reflected my thinking at the time about China and my work and relationships in the field. I suppose I would look to the following single-authored works as standouts: *Exporting Virtue? China's International Human Rights Activism in the Age of Xi Jinping* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2021); *Assessing Treaty Performance in China: Trade and Human Rights* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); *Law Policy and Practice on China's Periphery: Selective Adaptation and Institutional Capacity* (London: Routledge, 2011); *From Leninist Discipline to Socialist Legalism: Peng Zhen on Law and Political Authority in the PRC* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

The following edited volumes stand out for their subject matter, the excellence of my collaborators, and as examples of joint scholarship: *Local Engagement with International Economic Law and Human Rights* (Ljiljana Biukovic and Pitman B. Potter, eds., London: Edward Elgar, 2017);



Proclaiming the Gospel. PHOTO Randy Murray



Performing with *Dustcover* in 2016.

*Western Development and Socio-Economic Change in China* (Pitman B. Potter and Du Fachun, eds., Beijing: Chinese Intellectual Property Press, 2010—in Chinese and English); *The Hypothesis of Selective Adaptation and the Practice of Rule of Law in China* (Pitman B. Potter and Gu Xiaorong, eds., Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2009—in Chinese and English).

All that said, my two self-published works, *The Gospel and the Grateful Dead* (2014) and *Fever Dreams* (2020) are particularly close to my heart.

**Q.** Tell us a little bit about how your book about *The Grateful Dead* came to be and what was the reaction to its publication?

**A.** I have long been a fervent follower of *The Grateful Dead*. I remember clearly the moment in Grade 10 (1969) when I first heard the tune *Cryptical Envelopment* (lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group) and heard echoes of Christ's passion:

*The other day they waited  
The sky was dark and faded  
Solemnly they stated  
He has to die  
You know he has to die*

*And all the children learning  
From books that they were burning  
Every leaf was turning  
To watch him die  
You know he had to die*

*The summer sun looked down on him  
His mother could but frown on him  
And all the others sound on him  
But it doesn't seem to matter*

*And when the day had ended  
With rainbow colors blended  
His mind remained unbended  
He had to die, you know he had to die  
You know he had to die*

Through my many years of listening to and playing *Grateful Dead* music I came more and more to realize and appreciate the parallels to the Christian Gospel evident in the Dead's music, lyrics, and life. I had the opportunity at VST to write a seminar paper on these themes, which friends at St. Helen's urged me to publish—and quickly. Mindful of the time required for standard academic publishing, I elected to self-publish the book so as to get it out without too much delay. Not forgetting my academic standards, however, I did subject the work to full peer review. I sought and received permission from the Dead to publish the work and I understand it has been included in *The Grateful Dead* archives.

**Q.** What's next for the Rev. Dr. Pitman Potter, CM?

**A.** Sorry to say but likely to be more of the same. I am working on a new book applying my “theory” (supposition really) of complexity and alienation to explain China's populist resistance to the international rules-based order, as exemplified in China's handling of three global crisis—COVID, climate change, and involuntary migration.

I continue to support the Neighbourhood Ministry as I am able—most recently in preparing for a benefit concert in June with my newly formed *Neighbourhood Gospel Band*. ✠



## To Love & Serve | Anglican Beliefs & Practice

### A Personal Response

HANNAH MAIN-VAN DER KAMP  
St. David & St. Paul, Powell River

Did you know that in the exchange of *the peace* we are instructed to seek out those from whom we are estranged and secondly, to visitors? (As we are already reconciled to our buddies, there is no need to pass the peace to them.) Do you need to know that the Oil of Anointing is different from the Oil of Chrismation? Is it generally understood that the Creeds speak to matters that were controversial at the time they were written but do not settle all important matters of doctrine?

My own confirmation story may indicate why this book was so absorbing for me. I was confirmed in my late-30s by an Anglican bishop. Because the date of the bishop's annual visit to the parish had been set and the rector was a bit busy, it being December, the confirmation class was skipped. My husband and I (we were confirmed together) had been worshipping in that lovely parish for a few years. One day the rector invited us to be Lay Servers and casually added, "You have been confirmed?" Oh, no. He knew we had been baptized and that we were not too troublesome. Both of us had been raised in Christian homes and were familiar with the Bible. Neither of us had been a member of a Christian faith community as adults.

Since then, I have often been puzzled about Anglican beliefs and practices. Some things I had to learn from scratch and some I never could explain. Sometimes, I fret over Anglicanism's hierarchies and penchant for titles. Yet, confirmation in the Anglican church was one of the *big decisions* in life (marriage, parenthood, career, mortgage) that I have never regretted.

I took to this book like a deer panting for water. A few "Aha" moments later, I realized that this is the confirmation class I never had.

At 340 pages, including an excellent *List of Resources*, it's a serious read. For some readers it will act as a primer. For many "cradle Anglicans" it may be an interesting refresher.

I was intrigued by the many quotes from *The Book of Alternate Services* (BAS) and following them up, I discovered I don't really know the BAS. A treasure to be explored! Now I know why we go straight from page 280 to page 348. Now I know what a *ferial proper* is. The chapter on the Burial Office moved me to tears. I was stunned to find there is a distinctive Anglican theology of the saints in *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*. Chapter nine, *The Prayers of the Faithful*, persuaded me to renew and recommit to daily prayer. I discovered in *The New Life of Grace*, that baptism is "indelible." I have been present at a lot of funerals but very few baptisms in an Anglican parish. I wonder what "indelible" means when the community, though vowing "to do all in our power," loses track of those babies and we mostly never see them again. There must be many people in my own town who were baptized and do not know, value, or remember that and who are ignorant of what it means. "Indelible?"

The BAS is a complicated text. Why are the lectionary readings different from the ones we actually use? What proper takes precedence over another and why? Many words are not familiar to newcomers: "narthex, aumbry, oblation, beseech." If your education included Shakespeare, you might not be "put off" because you have a "feel" for the rich meanings of these antiquated words. This is not an argument for making the words contemporary; I wish them to be



The Rev. Jessica Schaap, Missioner for Christian Formation on Synod staff. The Rev. Schaap is one of the editors of the book.  
PHOTO Randy Murray

continued in common use. Every occasion when a word is deleted from dictionaries or liturgies is sad. Language is fluid. We can add new vocabulary to prayers while also keeping old phrases. When we lose words, we lose subtlety of thought. Anglicans are not good at explication. Is that because there is an assumption that everyone already knows? In the world of today, not being a print culture, how do we encourage young folks to slow down for learning a vocabulary that's traditional but new to them? Rapidly absorbing highly stimulating digital images comes natural to them but reading and absorbing strange words which are not in common usage?

The cover illustration of *To Love and Serve*, apparently the interior of an Anglican-type church building, is a regrettable choice. This building is not a church; it is a Disney concept of a quasi-religious space.

It cannot be a church because: Where are the people? There is no aumbry. Where are the liturgical colours? Where is the font?

There is no altar? Judging by the positioning of the pews, the altar has been replaced by a woody grove. Surely no Anglican bishop would permit that. The illustration directly contradicts the excellent teaching in the book. This is not a ruse to get you to find the book. It may seem as if I am ranting about a trivial detail. It's not trivial though small. Some small details have huge implications.

Will those who wonder about Anglican ways be willing to read this book? Who? I am wishful for a multi-generational, multi-ethnic parish which I will likely not experience in my lifetime. Will new liturgies have any impact on the make-up of congregations in this diocese?

A final question: as most diocesan parishes do not actually refer to the bound book form of the BAS but use a flurry of paper bits instead, will there ever be a print version again? It will need revising because it does not use the *Revised Common Lectionary* and because new liturgies have come, and are coming, into use. What is more inviting to a sincere seeker; a complex, multilayered book that requires constant flipping of pages or a little pile of paper handouts and more little folders and booklets in the pew rack? Yes, Prayer Book(s) have always, and hopefully will always, need revising as the connotations of words shift. That's good. But are the paper flurries a little discouraging?

"There is currently no plan to publish a revised BAS," says the Rev. Jessica Schaap. "Some newly authorized liturgies are available online and there's a plan to publish them separately but the timeline for this is not known." For example, there are newly approved daily offices for morning and evening prayer available online (see link at the end of the review).

You may be nostalgic for *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) that was still in use when I was confirmed. The Anglican Prayer Book(s) have always been under revision. There will never be a *once-and-for-all* prayer book.

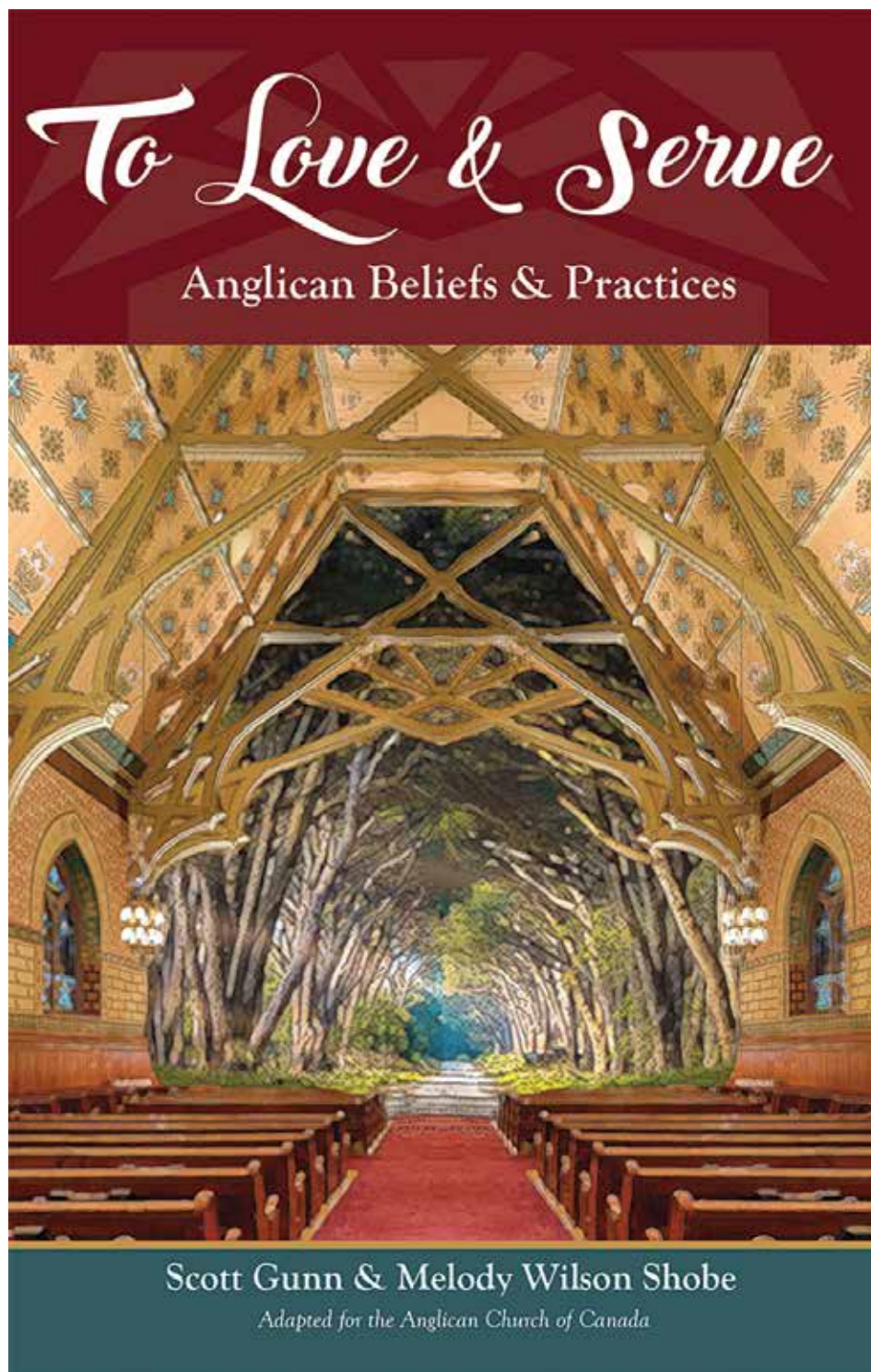
A curious note for me is the complete absence of reference to music. It's been said that "Music is the bicycle on which the liturgy is carried." Many newcomers enter a worship service and are first, before any other practice, delighted, heart-moved, by the music. For many it is the doorway in, a solace and soul's rest even before they can handle total and unconditional forgiveness. Shouldn't good liturgical and worship music be an acknowledged part of Anglican beliefs and practice?

Did I "buy" all these doctrinal statements? No, at least not now or yet or ever. Most I can affirm now. Some may shift in time as I grow deeper into the faith, if not in substance, probably the wording. But I am re-assured by the authors that "No bishop or clergy can ever force anyone to believe that which a person cannot affirm."

I was made joyful and energized by this big read. Archbishop Linda Nicholls, commenting on the book, called it "winsome." That's exactly right. I was won over. ✠

Hannah Main-van der Kamp, a poet and essayist, will ensure that a copy of *To Love and Serve* will soon be featured in the Parish Library of St. David and St. Paul, Powell River.

The newly approved daily offices for morning and evening prayer are available online at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Pray-Without-Ceasing-2022.05.04.pdf>



**To Love and Serve**  
Anglican Beliefs & Practices

Authors | Scott Gunn & Melody Wilson Shobe  
Adapted for the Anglican Church of Canada  
Editors | Jessica Schaap, Rhonda Waters, Grace Pritchard Burson & Deborah Noonan

Publisher | Forward Movement (2022)

Available online through the Anglican Church of Canada at  
<https://anglican.gilmore.ca/en/product/123c3ed2-d11a-4ede-8fef-da83df5bd00d>



## BOOKS

## God After Einstein

DAVID PRICE

Retired Priest of the diocese of New Westminster

This is a book of hope about the world, about human history and the history of the cosmos. The author, Professor John Haught is a distinguished research professor at Georgetown University. He specializes in Science and Theology. He is doing ground-breaking research of reinterpreting Christianity considering the findings of modern science. *God After Einstein* is an extended meditation on Einstein's religious beliefs, Einstein's Theory of Relativity, and the Nicene Creed. I was motivated to read this book after being a part of a Zoom discussion with the author. It was insightful and motivational!

Haught's discussion of Einstein's religious beliefs is fascinating. I had read in other works some of Einstein's most famous quotes about God and religion. As Haught explains, Einstein's God can be seen as a pantheist-God. Einstein's God was the timeless mystery that gave order to the cosmos. The key word here is timeless. Einstein believed that our sensation of the passage of time was an illusion. But, as Professor Haught points out, the Theory of General Relativity binds time to matter. Time being an irreversible part of reality as it is always moving toward the future and cannot do otherwise. It is very real, although Einstein was enchanted by eternity. This notes the dissonance between Einstein's theology and his scientific theory.

In Christianity, Jesus is very much involved in the history of the universe. The Nicene Creed affirms that the Christian hope is one that looks forward to the "life of the world to come." Haught stresses that Christianity is a religion of hope. It looks forward to the fulfillment of time which is important only analogously to the ultimate reality.

Haught stresses that with the demonstrated insight of Einstein the universe is a dramatic, unfolding story in time. Its meaning will develop in time, not in eternity. Haught describes his own theology as "anticipatory" (i.e., God is not-yet). The universe is a story that is only just beginning. The ever-expanding universe is 13.8 billion years old, which sounds incomprehensible, but it will last for hundreds of billions of years to come. In the Zoom interview he noted that God writes a chapter of the Big Bang Creation of the Universe about every 500 million years. There are 30 books written so far with more to come. We see this vitality through the pictures of the cosmos from the James Webb deep space telescope.

The universe is still very young. We do not yet know the meaning of the universe or exactly who God is because the story is just beginning. Intelligent life appeared only moments ago as seen in book 29 from a universal perspective. As Haught stresses over and over, we must be patient. We must allow the story to unfold, and we can trust that the story will be the fulfillment of right over wrong because God is a God of time and change and drama, not a remote, changeless God, eternally indifferent to the fate of the universe. On the contrary, from the very beginning, from the calling of Abraham to God's dramatic entry into time in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, biblical faith has always been based on a belief that history has meaning. Our history and the history of the universe have meaning, but the story has just begun. The meaning is "not-yet." We must be patient and live in hope.

Professor Haught describes three basic approaches to the meaning of time: the *archaeonomic*; the *analogical*; and the

*anticipatory*.

The *archaeonomic* approach is basically that of scientific materialism. It is the world view of many scientists and philosophers and is essentially nihilistic. The *archaeonomic* view of time looks backwards. The universe began as a lifeless lump of particles, mindless and meaningless. Somehow these particles created conscious beings. What is real is the mindless lump of stuff at the Big Bang. It's a story "told by an idiot—full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Haught in short dismantles this argument and definition pointing out the fatal flaw in the *archaeonomic* position: the scientists who believe that mindless matter is the ultimate reality nevertheless believe that their minds can be trusted to perceive the meaning of the universe. "But if mindless matter is the stuff that makes up the materialist's mind, why should we trust those minds?" asks Haught. Implicitly, even the scientific materialist believes that there is more to the story of the universe than mindless matter.

"We must allow the story to unfold,  
and we can trust that the story  
will be the fulfilment of right over wrong  
because God is a God of time and change and drama,  
not a remote, changeless God,  
eternally indifferent to the fate of the universe."

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON  
IN THE UNIVERSE?

GOD  
AFTER  
EINSTEIN

John F. Haught

God after Einstein

What's really going on in the Universe?

Author | John F. Haught

Publisher | Yale University Press, New Haven (March 15, 2022)

This *archaeonomic* view of the future is utterly despairing. The universe will die and take mind, consciousness, morality, and art into a meaningless abyss of everlasting nothingness. If scientific materialists believe in the pointlessness of the universe, why write about it?

The second view is the *analogical* view of time. Most Christians are in this camp. Ultimate meaning is in eternity, in an "eternal now," where past, present, and future exist in the mind of God. There is no drama to this universe, no point to the passage of time. To the people who seek for meaning only in the eternal now of God, time is pointless. The universe is a story that was told in its entirety at the very beginning in Genesis. Modern science and observation have demonstrated that this position is wrong as we see in the data from the James Webb deep space telescope. This stance also leaves no room for emergent Divine Energy inspired revelation and change. Christians can be caught with an understanding of God who endorses tribal brutality and retribution as being blessed by God. These views being an anathema to modern reflective people.

Professor Haught endorses the third response, the *anticipatory* view of time. He looks to the future where God is waiting for us as well as within in us. Time, in his view, is dramatic, an unfolding of a great story. How will the story end? Well, that's where patience and hope come in. The story is just beginning, but we can face the future with hope because God waits with us, as the Nicene Creed affirms, in the life of the world to come. It is a wonderful book for our times of uncertainty. Racism, Climate Change, church decline with the rise of violence and extreme hate and antisemitism all challenge society and world sustainable peace. Against this background, it is a book of hope, based not on a rejection of science, but is fully consistent with the findings of science.

In my view, Professor Haught did not write this book to bash scientists and to cheerlead for religion. On the contrary, he has the deepest respect for the findings of science because it has revealed a universe that is a remarkably unfolding drama. He notes the pessimism of scientific materialism is based on a backwards view of time—reality is the mindless lump of particles that exploded at the Big Bang, and consciousness is merely an accident. But the story so far contradicts that point of view. The universe has created beings who feel, think, love, hope, and strive to understand. The universe is a drama, and to understand it, one must look forward, not backwards such as the scripture notes of Lot's wife who turned into stone.

This is one of the most hopeful, optimistic, and restorative books for these anxious times. It's inspiring! Dr. Haught is a pioneer in the endeavor to interpret religion considering what modern science has uncovered and demonstrated. In this respect, he has similarities to process philosophers such as A.N. Whitehead and Brian D. McLaren as well as theologians like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry, John Polkinghorne, and Ilia Delio. *God After Einstein* is part of an important, ongoing conversation between theology and science. It is a must read for those who understand and seek to worship God "in Spirit and in Truth" following Jesus' advice to "dig and dig deep as we build our house (faith) on rock" (*Luke 6:48*) as we explore and practice our faith with reality in the light of the revelations of modern science. ✦



# CORRECTION | Editor's Apology

On the middle of page 6 of the January/February 2023 issue of *Topic*, I incorrectly identified Mrs. Sharon Susanne Indridson, of St. Mark, Ocean Park as Elizabeth Higginbottom of the Church of the Epiphany, Surrey. ✝



Here is the photo of Bishop John and Mrs. Indridson. PHOTO Wayne Chose



And a photo of Mrs. Elizabeth Anne (Betty) Higginbottom being congratulated by Bishop John. PHOTO Wayne Chose

## IN MEMORIAM

### Susan Chortyk, ODNW February 6, 1956 – November 24, 2022

Susan passed away peacefully at Rotary Hospice House in Richmond on November 24, 2022, after a full, rich, well-lived life of adventure and service to others. She faced her four-year battle with cancer with grace, inspiring others with her courage, humour, deep faith and gratitude.

Susan was born and raised in South Vancouver, the first child of Victor and Jean Chortyk. After high school, she earned her bachelor's degree in mathematics at the University of BC (UBC) and joined the actuarial consulting firm Watson Wyatt. In 1995, Susan became a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries, a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, and the company's only female actuary west of Toronto. In 2008, she co-founded PBI Actuarial Consultants, a successful firm specializing in multi-employer pension plans. In 2019, Susan was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions to finance in British Columbia. She loved to travel, visiting more than 60 countries on all seven continents. She also loved spending time at the family's vacation home at Birch Bay, Washington, and was an avid collector who enjoyed exploring antique stores wherever she travelled, looking for her latest treasure.

Susan touched and inspired so many lives with her incredible warmth, kindness, compassion, humour and generosity. She is lovingly remembered by her sister Lorie, her Aunt Pearl, cousins Denis, Ardis, Brenda, Karen and Barry, her beloved godchildren and a wide circle of cherished friends.

As a lay leader at the Parish of St. Thomas and at the

diocesan level, Susan's commitment and dedication were inspiring. Her considerable skills in finance and planning combined with her professional accomplishments and experience were of huge benefit to both the parish and the diocese. She will be missed by her church community.

In recognition of her service, Susan was invested into the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster (ODNW) in 2014.

Her Citation reads as follows:

*"Susan's service in the church began when she was just a teenager and continued all her life, serving God through her work on parish committees, on Christian formation through Cursillo and Lenten programs, and in her work on the St. Thomas Columbarium, Canonical Committees, and five successive parish retreats. In addition, Susan has been a diligent and loyal godmother to eight lucky young people."*

Her nomination to the ODNW came from her parish but she could very well have been invested again in recognition for her diocesan work, specifically as a valued member of the Property and Finance Committee of the diocese of New Westminster.

A memorial service was held December 9 at St. Thomas'. Donations in Susan's memory may still be made to the St. Thomas Memorial Fund c/o St. Thomas Anglican Church, (2444 East 41st Avenue, Vancouver). ✝

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*Article created by diocesan communications with files from the Vancouver Sun and Province obituary posted December 2, 2022.*



Susan Chortyk, ODNW. PHOTO Submitted





AROUND THE DIOCESE

Welcome Neel

On page 23 of the January/February 2023 issue of *Topic* we let folks know that the Rev. Areeta Bridgemohan, Vicar of the Parish of Christ Church Cathedral who began her parental leave in mid-November had given birth to a boy named Neel. A brother for Kiran and a son for her spouse, Chris. Many thanks to the family for sending in this photo. ✦



West Vancouver Parish Welcomes the Return of the Christmas Bazaar

SUBMISSION Lorraine McNeight, Administrative Assistant, St. Christopher's

St. Christopher's in West Vancouver held their first Christmas bazaar in three years, and it was a great success! The hall was full of shoppers who enjoyed a variety of things for sale including: original artwork, knitted and sewn items, handmade cards and stickers, wooden ornaments, beautiful centrepieces made of greenery, and delicious baked goods. There were Christmas Carols played on the piano to help set the mood.

The Rev. Jonathan Pinkney, together with some friends, built a *Hogwarts* (a fictional Scottish boarding school of magic for students aged 11 to 18, and the primary setting for the first six books in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series) Lego® display which was enjoyed by all ages. There were prizes awarded for spotting various pieces hidden around the display, as well as a prize given for guessing how many Lego® pieces were used. Members of the parish are looking forward to seeing what Jonathan comes up with for future bazaars.

The Cozy Café served tea, coffee and finger food desserts and provided a wonderful opportunity for friends to catch up. After being apart for so long, the parishioners of St. Christopher's were and are blessed with the chance to bring the community together just like old times. ✦



The Rev. Pinkney and the train. ALL PHOTOS Submitted



Delicious baking to be served at the Cozy Café.



The home baking sales table.

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**  
March 24 for the May issue  
April 28 for the June issue

.....

Please email Randy Murray at [rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca](mailto:rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca)  
All contributions are appreciated  
• EDITOR •

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany at St. Stephen's, West Vancouver

SUBMISSION Hilary Clark

St. Stephen's, West Vancouver began the festive Christmas season with a service of Lessons and Carols on December 4, Advent II which featured baritone, Jason Cook and flautist, Nancy Rieken. That afternoon many member of the congregation returned to church for Jazz Vespers. Worship, led by rector, the Rev. Ken Vinal who welcomed the sextet *Original Blend*. This group has performed and led music in worship frequently around the diocese, particularly the North Shore. The band is led by the Archdeacon of Capilano and Rector of St. Agnes' in North Vancouver's Grand Boulevard neighbourhood, the Ven. Stephen Muir, who plays drums. Also in the band are Laura Iwan on trumpet; Roly Pretty on tenor sax and vocals; Mike Winterbottom on alto sax; Roy Gould, guitar; Fiona Narod, piano; Amy Lewis, bass. The style of music varied from standards and Latin American numbers to show tunes including the standard *Almost Like Being in Love* from the 1947 musical, *Brigadoon*, made even more famous by Nat King Cole.

Unfortunately, because of the snow, the widely anticipated concert by the St. Stephen's Community Singers under the direction of Dr. Annabelle Paetsch had to be cancelled. Fortunately, the weather eventually improved, and the Christmas Eve Celebration of Holy Communion was able to go ahead. This service was enriched

by the sensitive violin accompaniments by John Lang. The post Communion solo was performed by soprano Setayesh Nourollahi singing *O Holy Night*. St. Stephen's is fortunate to have the talents of these young people to enrich the liturgies.

On Sunday, January 8, 2023, the parish celebrated Jesus's baptism with a congregational Renewal of Baptism Vows. The



Violinist, John Lang. ALL PHOTOS John Ruddick



Annabelle Paetsch and Kees van den Doel.

service also became one of thanksgiving and appreciation as the generous donor of her harpsichord, Sharon West, was present and was acknowledged. Dr. Annabelle Paetsch, Minister of Music, on the harpsichord, accompanied recorder player, Kees van den Doel, to perform several Bach *Sonatas* during the service. Rector, the Rev. Ken Vinal linked the renewal of baptismal vows, the

generosity of Sharon West, and the beauty of the music in his sermon, a homily which included challenges for all.

St. Stephen's Community Singers began another season of choral music on January 12. This choir is open to all, and rehearsals are late in the afternoon at the church at 22nd and Gordon in West Vancouver. ✦



Soprano, Setayesh Nourollahi accompanied by Annabelle Paetsch.



# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## Children's Creche Service

SUBMISSION Paul Woehrle

Taking in the wonder of the manger scene after placing the figures during the 5pm

Children's Creche Service at St. Cuthbert, Delta, on Christmas Eve 2022. ✚



PHOTO Melissa Dry

## Solemn Epiphany Mass & Ukraine Fundraising Dinner

On Friday, January 6, 2023, the Rev. Joseph Dirbas celebrated a solemn Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany at the Church of the Holy Trinity in White Rock. The service was beautiful and enjoyed by many parishioners, clergy and others in attendance. Deacon, the Rev. Paul Richards chanted the Epiphany Gospel. The sermon was delivered by guest preacher, Rector of St. John's, Shaughnessy, the Rev. Terry Dirbas, and three of the Dirbas children participated as acolytes and liturgical assistants.

The service was followed by a fundraising dinner for the Canada Ukraine

Surgical Aid Program (CUSAP) through the Canada-Ukraine Foundation. CUSAP is a Canadian charity that sends teams of surgeons, nurses and supplies to the region to treat civilians injured by the war in Ukraine. It was a wonderful dinner of borscht, rye bread, and delicious Ukrainian honey-cherry cake, made by a displaced person recently arrived from Ukraine. As the following day was Orthodox Christmas, this was a wonderful way to celebrate with our Orthodox brothers and sisters while contributing to an excellent cause. ✚



The Church of the Holy Trinity, White Rock sanctuary party for the Feast of the Epiphany liturgy. PHOTO Simon Johnston, ODNW

## Christmas at Sea on New Year's Eve for 2022 – 2023

Many thanks to the Rev. Peter Smyth, Senior Port Chaplain at the Mission to Seafarers (MtS) for submitting these photos of the annual Christmas gift delivery.

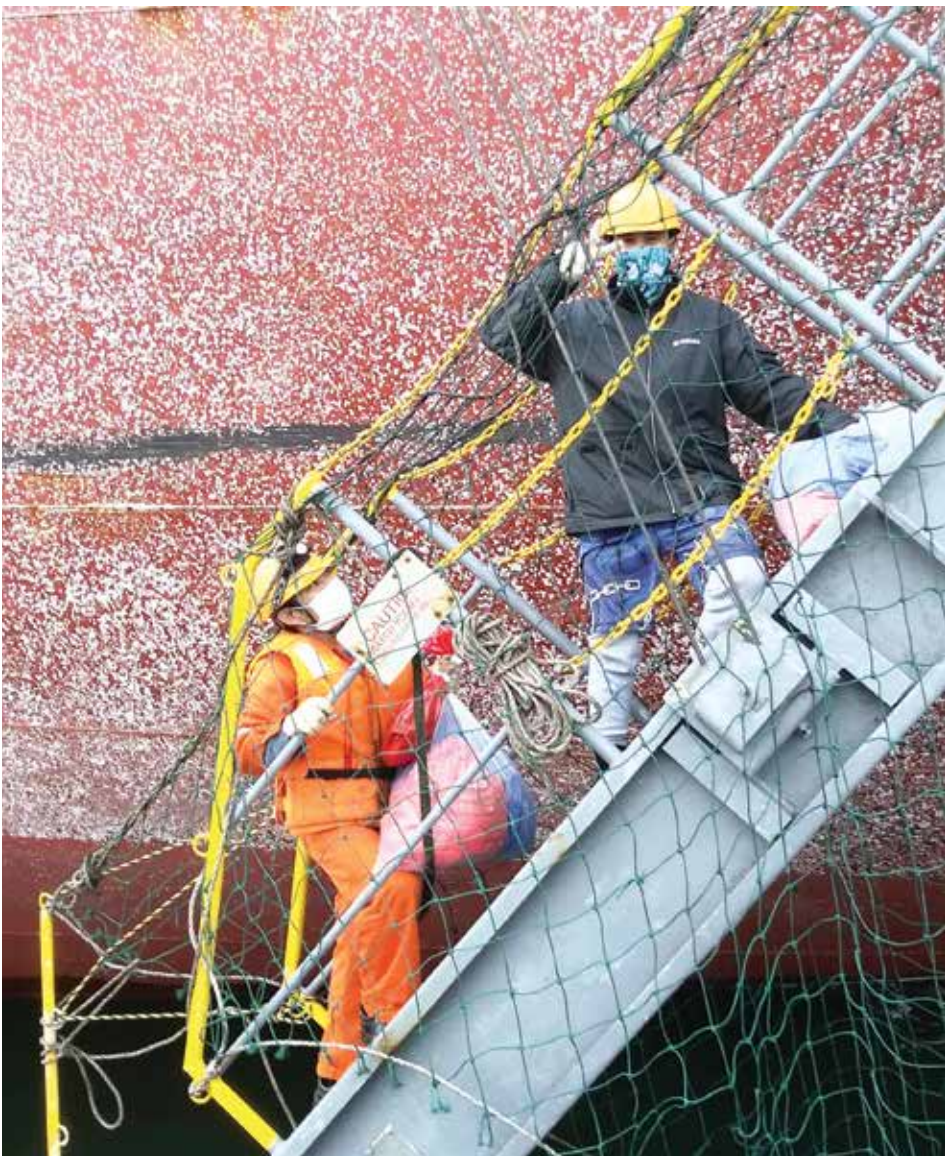
Due to the inclement weather that hobbled the Greater Vancouver Area (and further afield than that) on the days leading up to December 25, the delivery of more than 1,500 gifts to 70 ships in and around Vancouver harbour had to be postponed for a week. Saturday, December 31, 2022, was a much milder day with limited wind and precipitation.

The outstanding ministry of MtS continues and the Rev. Smyth and his team wish to thank all who donated to the *Christmas at Sea* appeal for 2022, an initiative that brings joy to seafarers.

In the note accompanying these photos he wrote: "What stands out when we go to the ships is the seafarer's appreciation and that someone cares. When we give them the gifts particularly when on the ships while there at anchorage we see and hear the joy." ✚



MtS folks in the midst of crew members pose for a photo. ALL PHOTOS Submitted



Two seafarers have received gifts and head back up the gangway.



Posing for a photo with crew members on the deck.



# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## St. Christopher's Parishioners Welcome Bishop John to a Celebration of the Parish's Past & Future

SUBMISSION Lorraine McNeight, Parish Administrator  
The parishioners of St. Christopher in West Vancouver were thrilled to welcome Bishop John Stephens to his parish on Sunday, January 15. This was the first episcopal visit to the parish of Bishop John's now almost two-year episcopacy. The visit coincided with the celebration of *St. Christopher's Day*, an annual event that gives parishioners a chance to look back at all that they have achieved over the years while also looking ahead to the future.

Bishop John presided, celebrated the Eucharist, and preached a well-received sermon on being open to receive God's call in our lives and how we may use our gifts to serve the community. The liturgy included the hymn, *The Church's One Foundation*, that had been sung during the first service held in the current church building in 1956.

Following worship, the congregation gathered in the parish hall to look at photos and memorabilia from past events. Elinor Martin, co-author of St. Christopher's history book, gave an informative and entertaining presentation on the first 70 years of parish life and presented Bishop John with his own copy of the book. Following the presentation a delicious potluck lunch was served and those present had the opportunity to catch up with friends old and new.

This, the second annual St. Christopher's Day was definitely one for the (history) books! ✦



Bishop John cuts the celebratory cake. PHOTO Submitted



Elinor Martin presents some history. Bishop John is holding the book. PHOTO Submitted



A good sized congregation in the nave. PHOTO Sophie McNeight

## Small Congregations Can Do Good Things St. Matthew's donates \$3,000 to community outreach

SUBMISSION Art Turnbull, Honorary Assistant at St. Matthew's, Abbotsford

The Parish of St. Matthew, Abbotsford raises extra funds for outreach to the community every December. This year the projects chosen were health oriented. The Salvation Army Medical Clinic and the Archway Food Bank Dental Clinic shared in the \$3,000 donation. The donation presentations were made on January 15 and 17.

The Medical Clinic will use their \$1,600 to purchase a needed ultrasound doppler. The clinic is staffed by an onsite nurse and a nurse practitioner. Virtual medical care is also provided, facilitated by local doctors.

Located at the Gladys Avenue campus, the clinic had over 1,800 patient visits in the past year. The Salvation Army (SA) looks after needy residents in Abbotsford.

SA provided 92,000 meals to homeless and transient people and even more meals for flood victims in 2022. Their overnight shelter program provided over 9,000 bed spaces, especially needed in winter weather. The medical clinic serves the user population. It sees clients for addiction related problems, injuries from street living, pregnant folks who are not within the normal maternity care system, and general health needs including monitoring medicines for diabetics.

The Dental Clinic provides check-ups and care to a wide range of patients. Seniors on fixed incomes cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs for dentures, and Archway can help. The \$1,400 donated by the Parish of St. Matthew's will provide support to many,

including dental care onsite. Staff includes the Dental Administrator, Christina De Mora and the volunteer services of dentists and dental technicians. This organization serves the needs of vulnerable and marginalized people in Abbotsford.

St. Matthew's parishioners support the work of the Archway Food Bank throughout the year. They are also generous supporters to the Anglican international aid organization, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). Many St. Matthew's members work as volunteers and as advocates for a wide range of community and national causes. ✦

## Clergy News Around the Diocese Meet the Reverend Joyce Parry-Moore



The Rev. Dr. Joyce Parry-Moore began her new double-edged ministry in the diocese of New Westminster on February 1, 2023, when she began two new appointments, as Vicar of St. Bart's, Gibsons (St. Aidan and St. Bartholomew) and on diocesan Mission and Ministry staff as Missioner for Climate Response.

The Rev. Parry-Moore received her Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Counseling from the San Francisco Theological Seminary and her Master of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion, both a part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. She came to the Sunshine Coast most recently from the Seattle area, where she served as rector of a parish, and before that, rector of a parish in the Bay Area. Joyce was raised up for ordination by her church in Juneau, Alaska, where she and her husband, Patrick were married, and their youngest daughter was baptized. So, she's used to the rain.

Prior to the priesthood, Mother Joyce (or Mo Jo as she is often called) enjoyed a career in classical music and education, having sung opera and oratorio on the East Coast, and then forming a traveling, teaching opera company in Alaska. Her passion for the beauty of the outdoors, for the arts, and for social justice led her to St. Bartholomew's, Gibsons and will enliven her service as Missioner for Climate Response. She and Patrick raised five adult children with families of their own, one of which is located in Vancouver. Mo Jo loves running, hiking, reading, movies and laughing. Especially laughing. ✦



Receiving a donation from the Parish of St. Matthew's is Christina De Mora, Dental Administrator at the Archway Food Bank in Abbotsford. The presenters are, the Rev. Art Turnbull, Honorary Assistant Priest and the Rev. Allen Doerksen, Vicar of the parish. PHOTO Mary Lee



Another image of the cheque presentation at Archway Dental Clinic. Pictured (left to right) are Dental Technician, Jina; Administrator, Christina De Mora; the Rev. Art Turnbull; and Dr. Miriam Lien. PHOTO Mary Lee



Angela McClelland (centre) is presented with a cheque from the Parish of St. Matthew's by the Rev. Art Turnbull and Parish Warden Trish Martin. PHOTO Dick Lee



A Forgotten Treasure

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

Retired Priest of the diocese of Calgary, Former Dean of the diocese of New Westminster & Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver; Topic Essayist & Diocesan Blogger

A small incident, a mere snatch of conversation heard from an adjoining table in a South Granville restaurant. It's a spot in which you see a fair number of elderly folks from the various apartment blocks in the area. They come for a morning coffee or an afternoon cup of tea. Sometimes they are alone.

An elderly woman is sitting alone as I take the only other table for two available. It adjoins hers. She has just finished a snack and is preparing to pay the bill she has just received. She hands the small bill and some cash to the young girl who has served her. Then, because the elderly customer wants to make some remark, any remark, to bridge the moment of the transaction, she murmurs to the waitress "The widow's mite" and she smiles, presuming her remark will be understood. It isn't. The waitress, a pleasant person wishing to be helpful, is puzzled. She makes a questioning sound. The older



PHOTO Miguel Angel Flores (iStock ID#1358619541)

woman repeats her remark "The widow's mite." The young woman is totally mystified. They part with an uncomprehending smile from the waitress and a sad and slightly embarrassed look on the older face.

I realize I have just overheard a huge culture gap between two generations. The older woman is, as I am, a member of what may be the last generation in western culture whose imagery, language and thought forms are almost unconsciously formed by a treasury of great literature, one that is almost totally lost to the younger woman. I'm referring of course to the English *Bible*.

Perhaps the even greater tragedy is that the younger woman does not realize what she has lost. That still holds true even if you consider the *Bible* not as a repository of faith but merely as great literature.

The moment was eased by our eyes meeting long enough to exchange a word of goodnight. ✦

Sacred Heart

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

A moment's carelessness on a wet lakeside dock, a tumble and there was a broken wrist. After an X-ray it was found I would need a general anesthetic, so I had to do all the things that line one up for the operating table.

It was a very busy day in surgery, especially for orthopedics, so half an hour or so rolled by before the gurney came and I was slid on to it to begin that peculiarly passive journey that most of us have taken at some time or other. One watches the ceiling go by, blinking under the bright lights, bumping slightly now and then over thresholds, sometimes faces float by. A momentary stop and we enter an elevator and finally we are in the very different atmosphere of the surgery area.

I want to mention only a particular short period that had significance for me. It arose from something quite fortuitous.

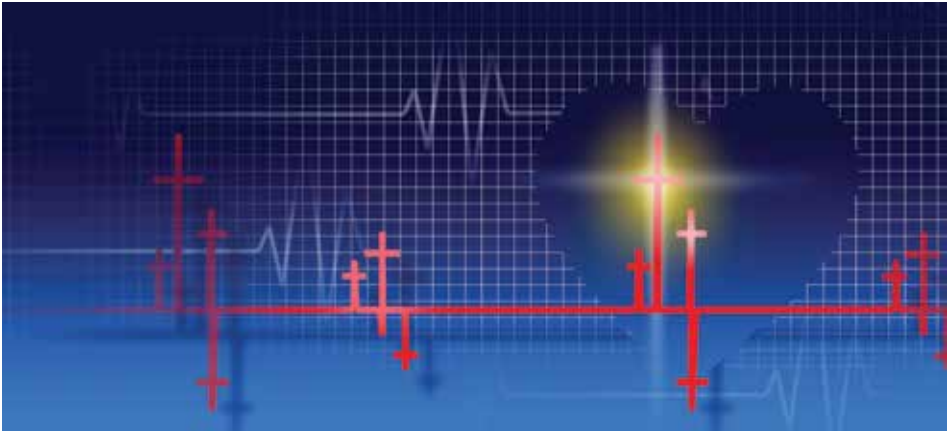


ILLUSTRATION GDArts (iStock ID#1358636240)

Thinking that the surgeon was ready for us, the nurse did this and that and wheeled me into the theatre itself. She then placed little patches that linked me with the electrocardiogram, then left.

As it turned out, the surgeon was delayed by an emergency. After about 15 minutes of what began as silence and stillness, the waiting began to become occupied by small sounds. I decided to try to give myself to it,

to receive it, if you will, as a gift. First there was only the thin high tone of the electrocardiogram delineating my own heartbeat. The sound seemed to come from behind me. Gradually I noticed the slight noises of the operating room. Then I found myself becoming aware of the life of the hospital itself, beating and stirring and murmuring like a great heart itself, filled with joy and anxiety, sleep and restlessness, pain, fear, hope and loving care, what Wordsworth once called "the still sad music of humanity."

As the moments of seeming silence passed by, they became deeper and deeper, richer and richer, until I recalled a symbol everywhere in the Ireland of my childhood, known again in my adult life as the dominant image in the spirituality of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin—the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus beating eternally at the heart of the universe. ✦

Keeping Old Skills Alive | The Art of Reading Books

HANNAH MAIN-VAN DER KAMP

St. David & St. Paul, Powell River

A POWER OUTAGE! Imagine: there's no power and so, no light no heat. This is before Wi-Fi and before digital gadgets. But it's not too cold to have a flashlight under the covers and an open book. Do you sense a little stir of nostalgia, longing for that young bibliophile you once were?

Try it out again. Pick up a book you received at Christmas or for a birthday and crack it open. Or, if you did not receive a book, find one forgotten somewhere behind a *ready-on* light.

Old skills are still around, and some are reviving. Not just reading under a duvet but also lace making, vegetable canning, letter press printing, orchid cultivation, soap and candle making, beehive and bird house construction, reading for pleasure, even re-reading books that once entranced.

Reading print on bluescreens is a kind of reading with many benefits. It would be almost impossible now to be in the book writing, editing, publishing trade without the internet. But online activity is also very distracting and much of it superfluous not to mention its algorithmic power to convince that black is actually white. That online world roughens our humanity with its lack of etiquette and paucity of ethics. Vigilance is required. The power of digital misinformation is a serious risk to



ILLUSTRATION kraftmen (iStock ID#1449302329)

democracy. Read the convincing argument against social media by Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, a Noble Prize winner, in *How to Stand Up to a Dictator*.

Warning: Bold Assertion coming up. Reading on bluescreens diminishes extended concentration. It does not encourage "inwardly digesting." It does not

develop the contemplative gaze as in gazing out a window with a real bookmark between real pages and just feeling your way into what you just read and how it changes you.

That's what good writing does, any kind of good writing whether fiction, science, history, autobiography, or poetry. It

invites slow integration. Reading material on a digital gadget is not amenable to going slower and deeper. Sharing books with friends and family is qualitatively different from forwarding links. Blue screens put you on alert; the printed page invites a slower process.

On a cold winter evening try out the latest (ancient) fad: read aloud to someone.

A century ago, many Anglicans were thought of as "bookish," a positive connotation signaling "smart/academic/knowledgeable." Now the connotation is "weird, elite, nerdy, snobbish." Any Parish Librarian will tell you now, "Oh I wish someone would sign out a book." Is this just old-fashioned? I'm not the first to suggest that increase in anxiety and hyperactivity may be related to rapid intake of digital information which is neither knowledge nor wisdom.

Like other old skills (embroidery, concocting herbal ointments, book binding) if we don't practice them, the world loses them. So, leave that book open, slow down and keep a valuable practice fully alive. ✦

A bibliophile, Hannah Main-van der Kamp reads and writes in Powell River. She organizes the Parish Library at St. David and St. Paul where there is something for everyone.



OPINION

Is it Monday or Tuesday?

STEPHEN ROWE  
Rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Surrey; Regional Dean of Peace Arch

Since the advent of COVID, in common with everyone else, we started to use technology to worship, meet and connect.

One of our early learnings was that mid-week liturgy was also a way to stay together, pray and interact. Once a week we meet for Mattins and Compline. On any given evening parishioners from Surrey, Langley, North Vancouver, Chilliwack, and Vancouver Island gather for ten minutes to close out the day with God and one another praying *Night Prayer*. I deeply value these occasions and know that those who attend also appreciate and enjoy such opportunities.

The second week of January 2023, we had an added bonus. One of our parishioners is visiting family in another part of the world. This is nothing new; at funerals and other worship services we often connect with other countries. My mother regularly attends both Sunday and midweek worship from the UK. But Monday was wonderful because as the *Hollywood Squares* opened (once the Rector realized he was in the wrong meeting) there was our friend joining us as she often does, only this time from Australia, where it was already Tuesday



PHOTO Highwaystarz-Photography (iStock ID#507831200)

afternoon.

Part of what it means to follow Christ is about connection. Until three years ago we totally took for granted that we could

attend church every week, providing our health or infirmity permitted. And suddenly our churches were closed but technology allowed many of us to stay together. There

are limitations, we know that when Arabic is your first language, listening to the rector babble on in English is not the same as attending rosary or the Eucharist where the shape of the liturgy, the gestures of the liturgy, and the bread and wine, speak without words. That said, to see someone join us for the intimate service of Compline from across the world, to share with us the sun and gently flowing trees behind her, was a special moment. As we greeted one another, the visitor from down under was a precious, God given moment.

COVID has deprived people of their loved ones, their freedoms and limited all our lives. Yet technology has opened new doors and connected us in ways we didn't know much about three years ago. My mother hadn't been able to worship with me since she attended our daughter's wedding and our granddaughter's baptism nearly six years ago. Now we talk on the phone and then she comes to church every Sunday. And someone visiting family from Australia can come to Compline on Monday before she cooks her Tuesday evening meal. What a gift that gives on giving. ✠

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik | A Winter Reflection

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

The depth of winter in the Fraser Canyon. The snow new fallen on the ageless rock walls shows jagged contrasts of gleaming black and blinding white. It has been blizzarding on and off for the last half hour or so.

The old year is dying, and a new year being born, and we are driving down from Sorrento to the distant coast. On evenings

such as this the canyon is elemental, dangerous, unforgiving. The sky lies along the peaks, trailing wisps of mist into the crevasses, suddenly becoming fog in the headlights. Far below the highway the Fraser thunders toward the coast as it flows through this vast cathedral of rock, the headlights of approaching traffic hurtling past like whirling votive candles lit against

a fearful darkness.

I decide to put on some music. I begin to listen to Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. Suddenly I realize an utter contrast. Here in my ears is that ultimate precision and order so beloved of an 18th century that in its time wished to bring order to both nature and humanity and to fashion them into neat predictable patterns. At the same time,

in the darkness outside the glass and steel walls of my car is an all-powerful nature refusing to be ordered, insisting on being a threatening chaos around me.

Suddenly I realize that the reason I reached for this particular music is that I am uncomfortable before a dark majesty that is beyond my human ordering. I am in the domain of the gods. ✠

Words & Music

LESLIE BUCK  
Topic Contributor, Essayist

In the whole of the four Gospels, singing is mentioned only once. Both St. Mark and St. Matthew tell us that "When they [Jesus and the disciples] had sung the hymn [to conclude the Passover meal], they went out to the Mount of Olives." Put the other way round, the Gospel was proclaimed and enacted by word alone. And yet our principal liturgies are full of music and singing.

Nor is music the only art form we use in our liturgies. We surround ourselves with visual art like icons and stained-glass windows, and we introduce theatre art in the actions, the dress, and the style of address of the liturgical ministers. The people take part in a similar manner by their singing, and their responses to the ministers, and to one another. We are participants in a drama and not merely spectators of a performance. In all, therefore, we do not proclaim the Gospel by words alone, but supplement words with music, and indeed with art in many forms.

This, of course, is far from new. The *Book of Acts* and several Epistles indicate that the first disciples continued the practices of their Hebrew forbears and sang "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." We know from the same sources that they also participated in the central act of our drama, the Breaking of Bread. As for the rest, what is not mentioned was not necessarily absent.

But it can leave us wondering. Is preaching the Gospel a matter of words alone? In the prologue of the Gospel of St. John we see "Word", a term which to the Greeks denoted reason and reasonable discourse, used to name Christ. Is, then, preaching Christ a matter of reason alone, or should



PHOTO Crispin Photography (iStock ID#472144348)

we involve feelings and emotions as well? Do we need just the words or both the words and the music?

Judging by the intense debates in the Church during the 3rd and 4th centuries, the answer is that it's the words that matter. As a result of those debates, we got our Nicene Creed. In more recent centuries much breath (and paper) has been spent arguing whether it is reasonable or not for people to recognize the existence of God. This more recent dispute about agnosticism and atheism began, according to received opinion, in the 17th century with Baruch Spinoza the philosopher. Since then increasing numbers have become at least agnostic

if not atheist, and in any case indifferent to the question. This falling away, we are told, we should combat by better argument and stronger rhetoric, trading word for word.

In a recently-published book entitled *Unbelievers*, the historian Alec Ryrie disputes the claim that unbelief grew because belief was unreasonable. As he puts it: "The death-by-philosophy narrative is a poor fit with the actual chronology of Western secularisation." In his view, unbelief arose as an emotional response, of anger, and not as a rational response. And it began before Spinoza started writing—in the 13th century, in fact.

Ryrie claims that anger grew towards a

Church that used its claim to define right belief as a means of extortion and oppression. That power was weakened in the 16th century with the advent of the Reformation, whose leaders pointed to the Scriptures, not the Church, as the guarantee of right belief. Unfortunately, those leaders could not agree on what the Scriptures had to say, leaving their followers bewildered and anxious. In both cases the easy escape was to reject belief. When Spinoza came upon to the scene, he merely provided a rationale for what had already happened.

If Ryrie is right, then he points to a strategy for preaching the Gospel that recognises the need to appeal to both reason and emotion. That, I suggest, is what our liturgical practices do. Even as we sing the Nicene Creed, we affirm that "We believe in one God," and not that "We believe that God is one." We believe *in*, expressing our trust and confidence in God; we do not believe *that*, assenting to a statement about God. Furthermore, it is we who do it, not I: we do it as the body of the faithful, not as an isolated individual.

Our Anglican liturgies are rich and varied, and are both traditional and contemporary in style, with words and music. With their reliance on appropriate forms of art they offer us a transcendental experience which is grounded in reality. When newcomers join us, we can first offer to share that experience with them. Later, we can give them reason for what we say and do. Of the two, I suspect that the experience, not the explanation, is what they first come seeking. ✠



# Welcome to the Siddiquis

## Afghan animal activists arrive in Vancouver on December 14, 2022

PAMELA WHITTAL  
St. Mary's, Kerrisdale

When Freshta Siddiqui in desperation gave her cat and dog to an animal rescue organization in Kabul, little did she know that her effort to save her pets would lead to her own rescue in the form of a sponsorship to Canada through the diocese of New Westminster.

Lucky and Leo arrived in Vancouver with 300 other Afghan cats and dogs in February 2021, through *Mission Possible*, a Kabul Small Animal Rescue (KASAR) initiative. The volunteers at the Raincoast Rescue animal shelter at the YVR (Vancouver Airport) South Terminal who were caring for Lucky and Leo began to communicate with Freshta through social media. They learned of her persecution by the Taliban because of her work as a women's rights activist and how she and her mother had to leave their home and go into hiding because of threats on her life. To find a way to get Freshta to Canada, the shelter volunteers spread the word. As soon as the Refugee Committee at St. Mary's, Kerrisdale (SMK) learned of Freshta's story they offered to take on the sponsorship and started the application process, along with raising the necessary funds. On Wednesday, December 14 after a three-day journey from Islamabad, Pakistan, Freshta and her mother Adela finally landed at YVR where they were greeted by a very happy group of volunteers from St. Mary's and the animal shelter. The very next day Freshta was reunited with her cat, Leo. In the coming months SMK Refugee Committee will be giving the Siddiquis all the support they need as they are introduced to their new life in Canada. ✠

Freshta and Leo. PHOTOS Courtesy of Pamela Whittal



The Siddiquis, Freshta and Adela are met by members of the St. Mary's, Kerrisdale Refugee Committee.

# The Companions Program

## | The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine

### September 2023 – June 2024

**Residential Companions**  
The *Residential Companions* program is an immersive opportunity to experience a contemporary monastic community rooted in the Benedictine tradition. It is open to women ages 21 and up regardless of Christian denomination.

Companions live, work, and pray alongside the sisters, learning from them but also sharing each companion's own gifts with the sisters and their ministries. They will:

- Learn to cultivate peaceful and creative ways of living in a diverse intentional community
- Appreciate silence and solitude as well as community and service for a healthy life
- Put down deep roots of spiritual intimacy with God and each other
- Develop a personal path to ongoing spiritual growth
- Discern individual gifts and vocations



Gathering around the piano. PHOTO Michael Hudson, diocese of Toronto

**Companions Online**  
Open to women of all Christian expressions, *Companions Online* is an opportunity to become "monastics in the world," living a Benedictine rhythm of prayer, work, study, and recreation. *Online Companions* learn to develop practices that support and nurture their spiritual life from the comfort of their homes.

They meet regularly for classes and discussion groups and commit to times of personal prayer at home. They share in book studies, participate in online worship and screen films relevant to spiritual growth and self-understanding. *Online Companions* also develop spiritual disciplines that follow the liturgical year.



2021 Class Photo on Zoom. PHOTO Submitted

**Application start and end dates (both programs):**  
January 1, 2023 – May 15, 2023

**Program dates (both programs):**  
September 2023 – June 2024

**Cost:** Residential Companions:  
suggested \$100/month

Companions Online:  
suggested \$50/month.

If cost is a hindrance, assistance is available

To learn more about either program, or to apply, email Shannon Frank-Epp, Program Coordinator, at [companions@ssjd.ca](mailto:companions@ssjd.ca) or phone St. John's Convent at 416.226.2201, ext. 342. ✠

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**

March 24 for the May issue

April 28 for the June issue

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Please email Randy Murray at [rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca](mailto:rmurray@vancouver.anglican.ca)

All contributions are appreciated

• EDITOR •