



The Centre for SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

News Update – Summer 2023 – by Rev. Lorie Martin

Celebrating 5 years!

The Centre for Spiritual Renewal is delighted to continue to serve many as we enter our sixth Fall program! Some are wondering what the Centre for Spiritual Renewal is and why it is thriving and expanding?



“The Centre for SPIRITUAL RENEWAL is a Christian Formation program rooted in a parish offering a variety of opportunities to connect and deepen in relationship with God, oneself, and others. Its aim is to support people on their spiritual journey using the riches of the Anglican, Christian, and other spiritual traditions to experience God’s love, insights, and healing through that we may be a loving engaged presence in community and for the world.”

The Centre began in 2018 when Rev. David Taylor, then rector of St. Dunstan’s Parish, Aldergrove, had a dream to create a Retreat/Renewal Centre and Rev. Lorie Martin, who was a parishioner and spiritual director at St. Dunstan’s at the time, joined with her longings, experience, and energy. They gathered the already existing spiritual formation programs in the church and added contemplative practices, workshops, studies, and community retreats. The School for Parish Development, DONW, assisted the leadership in the process of the creation, launch, and sustainability of the Centre.



**2018 The beginning of the Centre at St. Dunstan’s
Building a labyrinth, gathering a team, fund raising, and having a lot of FUN!**

The leadership wanted to have the Centre events and retreats be self-sustaining so that it did not strain the parish finances. This worked well, however, in order to grow and strengthen the Centre they were awarded a Parish Development Grant from the Diocese of New Westminster for three years. This enabled them to establish the Centre with ongoing programs, facilitators, and explore a wide breadth of offerings. The Centre has launched 2 – 3 Program Guides per year with diverse and life-growing gatherings, in person and on-line, in parishes and at retreat locations. During the Covid19 Pandemic all programs went online. These were a spiritual lifeline which brought much strength to many communities during this time. The Centre has been involved in different wisdom traditions and interfaith spirituality.

Expansion of the Centre for Spiritual Renewal

What began at St. Dunstan's has expanded to other locations:

- 2018 St. Dunstan's, Aldergrove – Rev. David Taylor
- 2021 St. Andrews, Langley - Rev. Andrew Halladay
- 2022 St. Thomas, Chilliwack – Rev. Lorie Martin
- 2023 St. Dunstan's, Aldergrove – Katherine Murray joins as Assoc. Director

The parishes share some events, facilitators, resources, and offer **a blended Program Guide**. The Centre is now an **Inter-Parish ministry!** Working together in ministry is very life giving as we adapt to serve the needs of people and the church. Rev. Andrew Halladay of the Centre at St. Andrew's, Langley notes:

“The Centre offers important benefits to a parish. It facilitates formation events and resources more clearly and easily. The Centre helps create and reinforce bonds between parishes. St Andrew's and St Dunstan's have certainly grown closer together due, in part, to shared spiritual practices. And, more recently, we've been sharing children/family events with St Thomas in Chilliwack and developing relationships in that way.”

Spiritual Transformation & Community Integration

'Transformation & Integration' are two key words that mark the life and flow of the Centre. Participants are experiencing spiritual vibrancy and a sustaining connection to God which affects all areas of life, faith and family. We have noticed that those who join Centre gatherings from outside the church are drawn in and some return to parish life. Those within a parish are curious, inspired, and drawn to Centre events. There is a weaving together of lives integrating into parish life and parishioners experiencing spiritual growth and renewal.

“The Centre functions as an evangelistic tool. People who, for various reasons, may be wary of or unable to attend a regular Sunday morning service, may feel inspired to cross the threshold of your church in order to attend one of the Centre's events.” - Rev. Andrew Halladay

The Centre Advisors

In 2022 a group of Advisors were invited to meet regularly to listen together and share from their experience, skill-sets, and wisdom. This has proven to be very valuable in offering wise insights, ideas, support, and encouragement to the directors of the Centre.

Advisor Team: Bishop John Stephens, Rev. Tellison Glover, Rev. Jessica Schapp, Rev. Dixie Black, Rev. Anne Crosthwait, Rev. Andrew Halladay, Rev. David Taylor, Katherine Murray, Rev. Philip Cochrane, and Rev. Lorie Martin

New Developments

An exciting addition to the life of the Centre is the intentional **Spiritual Formation for Children, Youth, and Families**. Saturday afternoon Family Eucharist Services (4:30 – 6:30 pm) provide families with an opportunity to connect with other families, learn and practice Anglican liturgy and share together in a picnic Eucharist. We enjoy get-to-know-you games and formative and thought-provoking activities, with supper provided. We are seeing that people want a spiritual family and location to belong. Saturday evening family services have been an outreach for those wanting spiritual nourishment for their families and an invitation for some to return to church at a time that works well for lots of families.



Family Service at St. Thomas Sharing communion & Get-to-know-you games at St. Andrew's

This year the Centre has launched an intentional **Spiritual Direction ministry** with monthly peer supervision for those companioning individuals on their spiritual journey. This program joins the **Listening Prayer lay ministry**, and **the Rite of Reconciliation** offered by the clergy, to bring wholistic one-on-one spiritual care for healing and growth to those deepening in their spiritual awareness and practice.

We are **developing a Handbook, a 'Toolbox', and a website!** Others are expressing a longing to enhance the spiritual formation of their parishes by creating 'a Centre' that will suit their vision and location. These 'helps' will share the key components and values of a Centre and the vital

role of prayer, discernment, and contemplation in solitude & community. The handbook will answer questions like: What is a Centre for Spiritual Renewal? Who is it for? How does it fit into the life of the parish? And why do we call it a Centre?

Each parish has its own particular areas of focus and style of doing spiritual formation. Having a Centre organizes, inspires, and ensures that **Spiritual Development and Practices in a parish remain a top priority.** Having a Centre also **develops leadership in the parish** with various ways people can use their gifts and talents in the church and **invite others to join.** Alleluia!



Celtic Spirituality Retreat at Loon Lake, Maple Ridge 2022



Centre News from the Parish of St. Andrew



The Centre for Spiritual Renewal has been in operation at St Andrew's in Langley for about a year and a half. We have held many different kinds of events including spiritual practice retreats, Bible studies, family eucharists, and evening prayer services. Some of the highlights for the year were the Rev. Cameron Gutjahr's retreat on spirituality and ecology, and the family Eucharist where we planted three apple trees and a fig tree in the church yard. Other events people enjoyed were: sound meditation, learning & practicing chanting, and building Anglican rosary's. We had over thirty people attend our Holy Saturday retreat, most of whom were not regular St Andrew's parishioners. We've seen our spiritual life here at St Andrew's deepen and grow since bringing the Centre in. I look forward to what the future holds! - **Rev. Andrew Halladay**



Centre News from the Parish of St. Dunstan



The Centre at St. Dunstan's remains a vital and vibrant part of the ministry of the parish. We continue to explore spiritual practices, retreats, and conferences as a way to inspire and invite people of the parish and the wider community. This past year we were thrilled to host the Awaken Love conference which brought in people from around the lower mainland and the US to explore their relationship to God. We are excited to have Katherine Murray take on the role of associate director for the centre at St. Dunstan's. Her experience of community building, contemplation, interfaith work and peace-making will guide the centre into new and wonderful ways in the coming years. – **Rev. David Taylor**



Centre News from the Parish of St. Thomas



Opening the doors to a third Centre has been welcomed with enthusiasm and consistent participation in Chilliwack! Having spiritual development opportunities has encouraged the parish to return to an active and thriving community after the pandemic. Parishioners and those coming from beyond the parish are hungry for contemplation in community. We have a regular group of 14-17 attending Friday morning Healing Eucharist & spiritual practice circle where we learn Centering Prayer, Welcoming Prayer, and Listening Prayer. We have enjoyed sharing lives, exploring spirituality, prayer practice workshops with Katherine Murray, harp music, prayer stations, and creativity with art and nature. We look forward to a couple of summer retreat days and new formation groups in the Fall - **Rev. Lorie Martin**

"I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." I will take what I received at this Centre event in God's Presence and continue to invite the breath of the gentle Wind of the Spirit into it. I am so thankful that I have been gently rocked at these gatherings. I've needed the "Let go" teaching to let go of the burdens and allows me to just sit and quiet and feel the love.

- Linda 2023

A Photo Journal of LIFE-GROWING Experiences & Connecting at the Centres!



Building Nature Altars



“The Women in the Easter Story” with Art



Meditation Walks



Picnic Eucharist – A highlight for all!



The Holy Spirit came in Wind



Contemplation with the harp



Setting out on a pilgrimage



Advent & Lent retreats



'Blanket Exercise'



Planting trees.



Yoga & soul work retreats



Rain or Shine!



Creative Journaling workshops



Loon Lake Retreat with ACW + others



Outdoor Eucharist



Seasonal Prayer Stations



Circle of Grace Spiritual Practice at St. Thomas



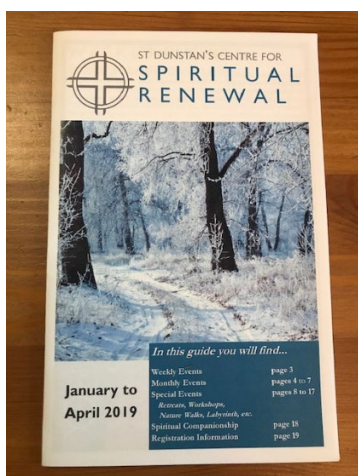
Praying with the harp, Anya McRae



Walking a delightful scarf labyrinth!



Candle lighting at Family Eucharist Service



A Program Guide



Centre Logo (old pews)



Felted hearts for Indigenous children



Ecumenical Retreat-Conference AWAKEN LOVE 2023



Key notes, workshops, Prayer Stations, One-on-one Spiritual Care Sessions...



All who desire to follow Christ and grow more in the image of God are welcome.
 All who are on a spiritual journey are welcome.
 All who are curious are welcome.
 All who are tired and need rest are welcome.
 All are welcome.