

## **Welcome to St. Hilda's by the Sea Anglican Church.**

**We are very happy that you will be joining us for our worship. If you are a first time visitor the following information may be helpful.**

### **What denomination is St. Hilda's?**

St. Hilda's is an Anglican church and is part of the World-Wide Anglican Communion. Our denomination is rooted in the Church of England, transformed and adapted to Canadian needs. The Anglican Church is a blend of Catholic sacraments and priesthood, Protestant emphasis on the scriptures and the individual and humanistic respect for individual experience and reason. That blend has kept the church together during contentious times, and appeals to the diverse group of seekers that we attract.

St. Hilda's is a member of the Diocese of New Westminster which extends geographically from Hope to Powell River. Our Bishop is the Right Reverend Melissa Skelton.

We have a unique full-communion relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

### **St. Hilda's Place of Worship: Why does it look the way it does?**

As you enter the sanctuary via the lobby (**narthex**), you will notice an atmosphere of worship and reverence; your eye is carried to the altar, or Lord's Table and to the glass cross, so our thoughts are taken at once to Christ and to God. On or near the altar there are candles to remind us that Christ is the "Light of the World". Flowers are located on either side of the altar, to beautify the room and to recall the resurrection of Jesus. On one side, at the front of the church, there is a lectern, for the proclamation of the Word; here the Scriptures are read and announcements are made. The sermon is usually preached, close to the people, just below the altar.

Pews are unreserved and there is no specified dress code.

### **How Do I Worship at St. Hilda's?**

Anglican Church services are often described as being congregational and liturgical.

All of the major components of the liturgy, including the Eucharistic prayer, find their origins in Jewish, biblical, or very early Christian worship.

Liturgy literally means "the work of the people." In a liturgical worship environment, one's body and senses are fully engaged. Your body participates along with your mind and spirit through physical acts of standing or sitting, singing, and rising and coming forward to the altar.

In the pews you will likely find the Book of Common Prayer, the Book of Alternative Services, the Bible and a Hymnal. These resources enable the congregation to share fully in every service.

The early service at 8:30 AM is a traditional service and uses the Book of Common Prayer. The more contemporary service at 10:00 A.M. primarily uses a service leaflet that is created from a diverse set of resources.

### **Do I stand, sit or kneel?**

Practices vary---even among individual Anglicans. The general rule, at St. Hilda's is to stand to sing hymns. We stand, too, to say our affirmation of faith, the Creed; and for the reading of the Gospel. Psalms are sung or said sitting or standing. We sit during readings from the Old Testament, New Testament Letters, during the sermon and after we have received communion. If you are in doubt, look for instructions in the service leaflet. If you find standing difficult, you are most welcome to sit.

### **What is a sacrament?**

Sacraments are often called "outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace." The two principal sacraments for Anglicans are Baptism and the Eucharist (Holy Communion). The other five sacraments in which we share are Confirmation (the mature affirmation of one's faith), Ordination to Holy Orders, Marriage, Reconciliation, and Anointing of the Sick.

## **What is the Holy Eucharist?**

It is a re-enactment of the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples before his death on the cross. It is the means by which we share in the mystery and hope of his death and resurrection. The Eucharist is the focal point of liturgy, and indeed, of life at St. Hilda's. It is the Eucharistic table that brings us together physically and makes us one in spirit.

The Holy Eucharistic Rite has two major parts - "The Word of God" and "The Holy Communion". In the Word of God there are three readings - one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, and a reading from one of the four Books of the Gospel. There is also a psalm which is said or sung in unison. These four parts are all prescribed by the Lectionary, an order of readings which operates on a three year cycle and is common throughout the Anglican Communion. The readings and psalm are chosen to have a common theme.

After these readings, the leader of the service (usually the rector) delivers a sermon which reflects upon the readings. The service follows with an Affirmation of Faith. The Prayers of the People follows, along with the general Confession. The Word of God closes with the passing of the peace. (Here we turn and greet each other with a sign of peace, such as a simple handshake.)

The Holy Communion begins with the Offertory, in which we offer our gifts. The focus of the Holy Communion is of course, the act of Communion. The act of Communion is preceded by the Eucharistic Prayer and the Lord's Prayer. A hymn or hymns are sung during communion. The service concludes with the post communion prayer, hymn, family thanksgivings, and dismissal.

## **I am not an Anglican. May I share in the Eucharist?**

All are welcome to share in the celebration of Eucharist, regardless of one's faith tradition or of where they may be in their faith journey. This reflects our understanding that it is indeed the Lord's Table to which we come, and all are welcomed by our Lord.

## **How do I take Holy Communion at St. Hilda's**

Holy communion is served front to back - first row, second and third, until the last row is reached.. The ushers will direct you. When you reach the front of the church, join the people at the altar rail. Stand or kneel to receive the Eucharist. See details in the service leaflet about **Receiving Communion**. Stand or kneel at the altar rail until you have consumed both the bread and wine.

When the wine chalice comes to you, assist the chalice bearer by guiding it to your lips to drink. If you prefer to receive grape juice let the chalice bearer know at this time.

File back through the side aisles. Follow the rest of the people if you are unsure how it is done. Please maintain silence during and after communion.

Receiving the wine/grape juice in a common cup is an ancient practice that symbolizes our oneness in Christ. Research has shown that this practice poses no real hazard to health in normal circumstances. However if you do not wish to drink from the common cup, you may simply receive the bread and cross your hands over your chest to signal to the cupbearer to pass you by.

## **What about Donations or offerings?**

As we begin the celebration of the Eucharist an offering plate is passed around the congregation by the ushers. Our parish church, staff and programs are financed through individual giving. For visitors, one-time envelopes are available in the pews for putting on the plate and donations \$20 dollars, or greater, generate a tax receipt. Many parishioners choose to give via a box of pre-numbered envelopes or through an automatic monthly withdrawal system from various financial institutions.

## **Why are people turning in their places and looking at me as they begin to recite the Glory to God near the services end?**

Part of our communal culture at St. Hilda's is to make eye contact with each other while reciting these closing words.

**What is the proper way to address the clergy/minister?**

In a formal or written context the minister may be addressed as "the Reverend [person's last name]."

In an informal or conversational setting, our ministers like to be called by their first name.