

Parish Profile 2021

ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR



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WHO WE ARE



[St. George the Martyr Anglican Church](#) -- located in the beautiful [Cadboro Bay](#) neighbourhood of [Victoria](#) -- is a vibrant, inclusive and passionate parish ever seeking the transformative presence of God in our daily lives and in the greater community. We wish to deepen our faith, challenge our ways of thinking and be sources of welcome, inspiration and love not just on Sundays, but every day throughout the year. We feel invigorated by our [diocese's vision of renewal](#) and we want to weave that vision into our own in a way that reflects our specific desires and our unique parish identity. We recognize that our demographics - an aging community, the declining number of middle-aged adults and a small number of young families - impact what we are able to do. We hope to creatively address these challenges with open hearts and excitement over what the future may bring. We are learning how to best respond to the current social climate, the surrounding community, the land, and the colonial history which continues to shape our present.

St. George's website: www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca

St. George's on Facebook: ["St. George's Anglican Church - Cadboro Bay"](#)

For more information about the Diocese: <http://bc.anglican.ca/>



FAITH IN ACTION

"WE ARE CALLED TO BE A PEOPLE OF ACTION, SEEKING JUSTICE FOR THOSE AT THE MARGINS OF OUR SOCIETY, SHARING THE GOOD NEWS WITH OUR NEIGHBOURS, AND REGULARLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES. WE SEEK TO BE THE HANDS OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD."

We feel called to live as a Christ-centered, justice-seeking community that shares God's love for all people. While we are curious how this calling will continue to manifest itself, it has already spurred us into action in the following ways.

RECONCILIATION

The land upon which St. George's resides is known to the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) peoples as SNAKE and is a part of the territory of the Lekwungen people. In 2019, members from our parish participated in training with the Indigenous Perspectives Society (IPS) and were greatly moved by the experience. Our work toward reconciliation with the living history of the land and local indigenous communities has only just begun and we hope for further assistance and guidance in this important journey.

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

We are called to respond with compassion to the needs of the world's refugees. Being able to help refugees establish a new home here is a blessing that we share in outreach to the community: we have hosted concerts and a community art auction to raise awareness and augment our fundraising efforts and have received significant financial support from beyond St George's. Since 2015, our sponsorships have changed the lives of thirteen people from Syria and Eritrea as well as our own. We now await the arrival of a young Eritrean woman -- currently in Ethiopia -- who is expected to arrive in 2022.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Hosting seasonal fairs and other opportunities for fellowship with the greater community has been a source of much joy for our parish, but our demographics have made this more challenging in recent years. We wish to explore new and different models of outreach that provide more connectivity to the community, while also nurturing the following activities which we already have in place.



WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS

Our Wonderful Wednesdays lecture series encourages reflection on the connections between religion, faith, and all aspects of human society. We have hosted experts in such diverse subjects as the political situation in the Middle East, mindfulness and spirituality, colonialism, gender fluidity, climate change, and Celtic poetry.



SOCIAL JUSTICE AND OUTREACH

This team helps us to open our eyes and our hearts to the needs of our community and the world even when we ourselves are dealing with challenges in our own lives. This is achieved through a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the following examples. Education initiatives such as an anti-racism online workshop and regular updates on the work of Primate's World Relief and Development. Deliberate giving: each month, our congregation is invited to donate to a different charitable organization, often one that focuses its efforts on marginalized groups. Responding to immediate needs in the community, e.g. meal support and warm winter clothing.

PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care Team offers individualized, in-person support during challenging times in peoples' lives: a meal, a prayer, a listening ear, a ride to a medical appointment. Prayer support at St George's comes in many forms, including our prayer shawl ministry, which lovingly reaches out to those in need of comfort, acknowledgement and encouragement.

MUSIC AND ARTS

We have a rich music ministry that extends beyond Sunday worship to include community concerts and recitals. In 2019, St. George's Community Theatre (made up of volunteers from both St. George's and the wider community) staged a fun and well-received pantomime production of Cinderella.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

A community garden space with deer-proof fencing provides 6 shared plots, as well as 17 plots for individuals and families to congregate and grow fruits, vegetables and flowers.

ST. GEORGE'S HOUSING SOCIETY & THE ORCHARD

The parish established the St. George's Housing Society in 1991 in response to the lack of affordable housing for seniors in Cadboro Bay. The Society owns and operates The Orchard, a housing complex located next to the parish hall. The Orchard consists of 20 one-bedroom suites occupied by seniors on a 'life lease' basis.



SIMON FARINTOSH

A Guitar Recital

Featuring works by J.S. Bach, A. Tansman, M. Castelnuovo-Tedesco, A. Scriabin, T. Monk, and others.

Admission by Donation - all proceeds will be given to the Children's Ministry at St. George's.

Saturday, January 18th | 2:00 pm
St. George's Anglican Church
3909 St George's Ln, Victoria, BC

FAITH IN FORMATION

"DAILY PRAYER, REGULAR ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH, SCRIPTURE READING AND STUDY, AND THE ONGOING RENEWAL OF OUR LITURGICAL PRACTICES ARE ALL PART OF HOW WE EQUIP THE SAINTS TO BE FAITHFUL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD."

We strive to find the balance between honouring our traditions and staying relevant and open to different spiritual needs. Despite our differences, we feel very connected when we worship together, join in song, and gather for communion. We want St. George's to be known as a place which bridges the spaces between diverse realities, ages and backgrounds.

WORSHIP

In our readings, music, and prayers, we follow the seasons of the church year, exploring such themes as forgiveness, thanksgiving, and renewal of life. There are two [worship services](#) on Sunday; both offer Holy Communion. One is traditional, quiet and reflective, the other is contemporary and full of song. In summer, we have been blessed to hold some outdoor services, gathered in the shelter of our beautiful maple tree.

Our parishioners highly value worship that is imaginative and creative. We draw on many sources of liturgy, including the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), Book of Alternative Services (BAS), Celtic liturgy, and our diocese's own island liturgy, which celebrates the natural beauty of these islands and inlets. [Lay people](#) at St. George's love to participate and assist in a variety of ways.

MUSIC

We are a parish that likes to sing. The music which enriches our worship and unites our hearts reflects both traditional and contemporary sources, with participatory singing and reflective listening. St. George's is blessed with a gifted music director, a devoted, mixed-voice choir, enthusiastic adjunct musicians, and a varied repertoire. Guest instrumentalists and soloists, often from the extended community, are occasionally invited to join the choir.



FAITH IN FORMATION



[NURSERY, PRAYGROUND AND SUNDAY SCHOOL](#)

While the children who attend St. George's are not many in number, they are an integral part of our worship and church life. Nursery care is provided at the 10 a.m. service and significant parish events; windows and a speaker connect the playful room with the Sanctuary. We also have a "prayground" in the Sanctuary, it is a special spot filled with crafts and other sensory activities which invites children to worship in their own way. At our 10 a.m. service we offer Sunday School with two people always present, a paid teacher who is assisted by either the family life coordinator or a parish volunteer. Before Sunday School, children gather at the altar for a short story, discussion and prayer. This is an enjoyable aspect of our worship for children and adults alike.

[YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS](#)

Younger members of St. George's have taken the lead in several multi-parish, collaborative groups for youth and young adults. They have come up with creative ways to reach out to church-goers and non-church-goers alike, with lively programmes adapted to the spiritual needs of young people today. [Wider Area Anglican Youth Victoria \(WAAYV\)](#) offers a wide variety of activities and exciting events for middle school students both at St. George's and out in the broader community. The diocesan [Tolmie Region Youth \(TRY\)](#) is a multi-parish group of high school students that meets at different parishes in the Tolmie Region. The [Victoria Anglican Young Adults](#) offers people from diverse backgrounds a space to connect, have fun, and belong. St. George's family life coordinator is responsible for overseeing the staff of these groups. St. George's also supports and partners with Anglican programming at the [University of Victoria Multifaith Centre](#). There is strong interest in further developing this relationship.



[PARISH LEADERSHIP](#)

Our parish currently enjoys committed, thoughtful leadership and strives for balanced gender representation. Part-time paid staff include our parish administrator, family life coordinator and music director; our nursery, Sunday school and youth group staff are on hourly contracts. Together they facilitate the important work of the parish. St George's is also blessed to have a few retired priests who, as Honorary Clergy, provide assistance in worship and other support.

[2020-21 PANDEMIC: CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS](#)

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, many parish activities transitioned online and, in March, we began Zoom services. Music met us in our fears and our hopes and breathed the Holy Spirit into our midst when we were physically separated and isolated, thanks to the work of our music director. [Recorded anthems](#) with illustrations allowed for introspection and reflection in a very different manner. When possible, we have held services outdoors under the maple tree, affectionately referred to as our “cathedral.” The unexpected benefits of this uncertain time (ie. spiritual connection and communication with members who have moved far away, enabled attendance of people who feel unwell and updated audio-visual equipment) are such that plans are afoot to provide some form of online service sharing in the future. St. George’s continues to meet the current challenges presented by the pandemic with great care, creativity, and resilience.

FAITH IN FOUNDATION

“UNDERPINNING ALL OF OUR EFFORTS TO GROW IN FAITH AND REACH OUT TO A BEAUTIFUL AND HURTING WORLD ARE THOSE THINGS THAT ENSURE OUR VITALITY AND VIABILITY NOW AND INTO OUR UNKNOWN FUTURE.”

We rely on responsible [stewardship](#) of our building, grounds and financial resources for the sustainability and growth of our parish, as well as for our potential as an accessible and inspiring centre for the community.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES

St George’s has 262 parishioners in 159 households. 2020 witnessed a mix of regular, online and restricted outdoor services with an approximate average of 83 people in attendance each Sunday. We are currently meeting exclusively online and attendance continues to be good. The parish is blessed with a very generous congregation. In 2020, offerings reached over \$275,000. We have a balanced, break even budget (\$331,000) for 2021 and continue to be in good financial standing with a solid donor base and a plan to produce balanced budgets in years to come.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The church sanctuary is oriented in an inclusive and intimate layout. A large narthex brightens our worship area with natural light and offers improved access. Adjacent to the church is the [Parish Hall](#) which houses offices for the staff, a commercial kitchen and meeting spaces used by both the parish, and several rental groups, including an outdoor learning school and various arts groups. A huge maple tree anchors the grassy area directly in front of the church building. Our [beautiful grounds](#), including a meditation chip trail with a contemplative bench, provide an inspiring place for outdoor services and activities, as well as for community engagement. Part of our vision for the future includes visible acknowledgement



of the Indigenous communities who have cared for these lands for thousands of years and whose presence colonization has attempted to erase. Reconciliation is hard, but necessary, and ultimately hopeful work.



HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

Similar to other parishes, our congregation is aging, numbers are decreasing and we face the reality of fiscal restraints. At the same time, we know we must re-imagine how to realistically BE the church now while also ensuring its future. We want to grow our family life and youth ministry. We desire stronger, more inclusive engagement within our parish, as well as within the broader community and the diocese. We want to offer greater social and spiritual support which extends beyond Sunday worship. We want to see St George's become the "heart-centre" of Cadboro Bay; a place where the wider community finds welcome, support and activities that encourage and nurture connection, kindness and whole-hearted living. We want to actively listen and respond to the needs of people through each life stage: children young and old, youth and university students, families, and seniors. We want to be a church that meets people where they are and lifts them up. We want to love and care for all of God's creation.



St George's

ANGLICAN CHURCH

CADBORO BAY