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The Rev. Alisdair Smith and Archbishop Melissa Skelton vested for Easter Day demonstrate social distancing for online worship. PHOTO Randy Murray

Online Worship for Easter 2020 | The Inside Stuff

RANDY MURRAY

Communications Officer & Topic Editor

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." *James 1:17*

"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." *2 Timothy 3:16*

As with the majority of scripture, these two examples from the Epistles can be interpreted in a variety of ways, however, I think it's safe to say that the message here is that the Word of God is gifted to the world for us to follow and share. How that's done is not as important as ensuring that the Living Word endures. With this in mind, late last March, a plan was put in place to design, film and edit a set of video liturgies, to be based from Christ Church Cathedral that would be streamed via the social media site, YouTube at the standard worship times for Holy Week and Easter Day 2020.

The earliest online worship liturgies in the diocese during this time of social distancing began with some Facebook live broadcasts and Zoom gatherings on Sunday, March 15, three days before Archbishop Skelton announced the suspension of in-person worship around the diocese of New Westminster. With the Rev. Tellison Glover, Director for Mission and Ministry Development well-versed in the use of Zoom remote meeting technology and equipped with licenses for that software that he made available to

all parishes of the diocese; online worship began in earnest March 22.

During the discussions between Archbishop Skelton and diocesan staff on March 17, it was suggested that a set of liturgies be produced, not livestreamed, but posted on Christ Church Cathedral's YouTube channel and promoted not only around the diocese but around the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon as an online option for Holy Week and Easter Day worship. Videographer/Filmmaker and regular contributor to diocese of New Westminster communications, Cliff Caprani (a parishioner at All Saints', Ladner) had quickly begun producing online worship events for his parish. This was also being done at a variety of diocesan parishes including some fine productions from St. Francis-in-the-Wood in West Vancouver's Caulfeild neighbourhood; St. George, Maple Ridge, a parish with an already established and in-place video producing capacity; St. Cuthbert's, Delta, a parish in our diocese that has a history of embracing multi-media platforms for worship; and St. John's, Shaughnessy, a parish that had recently welcomed new members with audio/visual production and photography skills.

At Christ Church Cathedral the term of interim priest-in-charge, Canon Richard LeSueur was concluding March 31, and Archbishop Skelton had decided to take on the position of priest-in-charge of the diocesan Cathedral

beginning April 1 and continuing until the newly hired rector, Archdeacon Christopher Pappas (then completing his commitments in the diocese of Edmonton) arrived either physically, virtually or both to begin his new ministry June 1. The original plan was that Cathedral clergy and lay staff would livestream Sunday morning worship; however, there were a number of hurdles for them to overcome—technical, hardware and personnel. So, Archbishop Skelton suggested the idea, that had been floated on March 17, that diocesan communications produce video Holy Week liturgies and an Easter Day liturgy that would be Cathedral liturgies but made for a larger worshipping audience. By March 25 a decision was made, Cliff was drafted as videographer, and the project began.

The principal agenda item to get things started was the design of the liturgies themselves. Archbishop Skelton had been tirelessly researching online worship forms and had worked out a format for a Celebration of the Eucharist and for non-Eucharistic offices that would work within the context of Holy Tuesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil. The archbishop designed the liturgies and passed them on to me and others for comments and edits and then it was my task to organize what we would need in terms of personnel and equipment whilst limiting involvement to a handful of individuals maintaining

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Cliff Caprani sets up the shot. PHOTO Randy Murray



Christ Church Cathedral during filming April 1. PHOTO Cliff Caprani

Online Worship for Easter 2020 | The Inside Stuff

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the social distancing guidelines. Initially it was hoped that the worship leaders would consist of: Archbishop Skelton, who would Celebrate both the Palm Sunday and Easter Day Eucharists and be the officiant for the other liturgies; four preachers (Archbishop Skelton would preach on Easter Day); three deacons representing the diversity of our diocese; and three lay readers sourced from the Reader's Rota at Christ Church Cathedral. We scheduled two days of shooting in the sanctuary of Christ Church Cathedral on April 1 and 2 which would then be followed by two days of editing for the Palm Sunday liturgy and then six days of editing in order to produce a Holy Tuesday liturgy (consisting of some prayers, readings and a homily), a Maundy Thursday liturgy, a Good Friday liturgy, a short liturgy for Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil that would be an adjunct to home worship comprised of downloadable print material, and last but not least, an Easter Day Eucharist.

This was a very ambitious and daunting undertaking and after careful consideration and conversations between the three principals — Archbishop Skelton, Cliff Caprani and myself — we decided this would involve too many people and the task of having to edit remotely would likely

leave us running out of time. Although we wanted to provide the best online worship possible, our primary focus was to protect people's health and safety and comply with the provincial health officer's guidelines for social distancing. On Monday, March 30, the plan was adjusted to include: four priests to preach, preferably able to video record their own sermons and submit them for editing; two deacons who would be on camera, reading scripture, leading the responses, and fulfilling the intercessory roles; a voice over professional to narrate the two passion gospels proclaimed on Palm Sunday and Good Friday; and another film editor to take on one or two of the Holy Week offices. The Holy Tuesday liturgy was changed to a homily, presented by retired-bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham (Bishop Michael recorded and edited his sermon and sent it in to the team for final processing) and the Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil would be handled in-house by Cathedral clergy and staff posting a sermon and preparing downloadable materials based on the liturgies Archbishop Skelton had created.

As the April 1 shooting day neared, Cathedral Director of Music, Rupert Lang carefully chose and prepared a selection of recorded music (including hymns) to be edited into the video liturgies. April 1 arrived, everyone involved was at the ready and present when they needed to be present in order that there were never more than six people in the Cathedral at one time. Cathedral Office Administrator, Vincent Carey who often fills the sanctuary party role of Liturgical Assistant was onsite with his spouse Ed Friesen and they made sure that the liturgical materials, altar frontals, candles and all other holy hardware were in place for each liturgy. Then-Cathedral Building Administrator, James Cheatley supplied us with another audio feed to go with the lapel mics and portable mics used with the cameras, (James concluded his nearly 10 years of service at Christ Church Cathedral on May 14). Deacons, the Rev. Alisdair Smith of Christ Church Cathedral and the Rev. Peggy Trendell-Jensen of St. Clement's could not have been

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Cliff watches some playback as Archbishop Skelton works on her iPad. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT The Rev. Peggy Trendell-Jensen composes intercessory prayers for Easter Day. The Director/Producer had forgotten that component of the Eucharist.



RIGHT Cathedral Curate, the Rev. André Stephany prepares to deliver a Palm Sunday sermon. PHOTOS Randy Murray

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



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Thank you!



Representing Easter Day in the St. Cuthbert's parking lot. PHOTO Paul Woehrle



Laura Polowski at the piano; St. Cuthbert's music ministry. PHOTO Paul Woehrle

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more helpful and cooperative and did what deacons do; serve and assist the Celebrant and Officiant and represent all people through readings, responses and prayers. I owe Rev. Trendell-Jensen a huge thank you as I'd completely forgotten to include the intercessory prayers for Easter Day. With grace and skill, Peggy composed prayers, put on a white and gold stole and presented the Prayers of the People for Easter Day on camera. The Rev. André Stephany who did not have the means easily at his disposal to video record arrived at the Cathedral following the departure of the archbishop and the deacons, and we filmed and recorded his Palm Sunday sermon.

Similar to the three spirits who visited Ebenezer Scrooge and did all their haunting at once, we got all the principal filming done in one day, April 1 and then it was time to turn the footage into four liturgies.

The Rev. Fr. Matthew Johnson was able to come by the Synod Office chapel April 6 where I filmed his Maundy Thursday homily and the Rev. David Taylor made a video recording of his Good Friday homily and had it ready for editing April 6. Many thanks! Archbishop Skelton and I prepared an introductory piece that would open each of the five videos and filmed it in her office at Nanton Avenue on April 3.

Cliff worked very hard to get all the footage in the editing software, as I worked on the order of the services and stayed in regular contact with Christ Church Cathedral's Communications Designer, Jennifer Ewing (also the designer of *Topic*) to make sure that the information was accurate in the downloadable service bulletin that would be available with the videos. Videographer and editor extraordinary, Ross Friesen took on the task of assembling the Good Friday liturgy and my dear brother-in-law of nearly 40 years, Bill Russell recorded the two passion gospels from his studio in Prince George and delivered the large audio files for inclusion in the Palm Sunday and Good Friday liturgies.

I won't go into any more details but suffice it to say that putting together three and half hours of online liturgies is stressful and time consuming. Even more time consuming in the midst of a pandemic when everyone involved working at a different location, therefore having to move large digital files around relying on inconsistent WiFi and software that on occasion can be a bit glitchy. Many thanks to Cliff Caprani who did a superb job. Concurrently Cliff was producing, directing, filming, recording and editing Holy Week and Easter liturgies for his parish of All Saints', Ladner.

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St. Cuthbert choristers respecting social distancing. PHOTO Paul Woehrle



The Easter Cross at St. Cuthbert's, Delta. PHOTO Paul Woehrle

THE FOODBANK

WAYS YOU CAN HELP IN 2020

WHAT IS NEEDED

FIND OUT WHAT IS NEEDED

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The sign and tree at St. John's, Shaughnessy, Easter Day, thanking front line folks with a display of paper hearts. PHOTO Regan Gorman

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The project was completed, all the bulletins were prepared and available and the liturgies were streamed on YouTube at their designated times. The Palm Sunday audience was 602; Bishop Michael Ingham's Holy Tuesday address had 589 views; Maundy Thursday, 532; Good Friday, 508; and Easter Day had 1,177 views.

Of course, this project took place very early in the time of the suspension of in-person worship and even now, three weeks following the April 1 filming marathon there have been huge advances in online worship around our diocese. The clergy and lay of the diocese of New Westminster are

showing that they are called to be innovative, committed and open to change and possibilities. By the time this issue of *Topic* is in homes and online we will likely be in a new age of online worship, having observed and noted what works best for our communities.

The Holy Week and Easter Day at Christ Church Cathedral online video liturgies sent the clear message that God's Church is not a building, God's Church is everywhere.

Here is the website URL where these liturgies can be found linked to YouTube www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/updated-holy-week-and-easter-day-online-worship. ✦



LEFT The chancel of St. John's, Shaughnessy during the Easter Day liturgy. RIGHT The view of the sanctuary from the gallery at St. John's, Shaughnessy during the Easter Day livestreaming liturgy. PHOTOS Derek Simpkins



Letter from Archbishop Skelton Regarding Retirement & the Upcoming Episcopal Election

In her front page letter to readers in the May 2020 issue of Topic titled, Faith in Times of Crisis and Change, Archbishop Skelton provided information about her imminent retirement, including the dates for the episcopal election and the consecration of the next bishop of the diocese. Archbishop Skelton had informed Diocesan Council of this at the March 11 meeting. On April 21, 2020 the following letter was issued by Archbishop Skelton and circulated throughout the diocese and the broader church. • Editor

Greetings, People of the Diocese of New Westminster

When I first became the Bishop of the diocese, I reminded all of you that, on account of Provincial Canons specifying that bishops must retire by age 70, I would have seven years to serve as your bishop. I turn 70 years of age in mid-March of 2021, and with a mixture of sadness about leaving as well as excitement for the future of this diocese, I inform you that I am calling for the election of a Bishop Coadjutor for the diocese of New Westminster on October 3, 2020.

As a reminder: delegates to the Electoral Synod are those members of parishes who were elected Delegates to Synod at the 2020 Parish Vestry Meetings.

Some important information about this election:

- First, by way of an explanation, a bishop coadjutor is a bishop who will take on the role of diocesan bishop upon the retirement of the current bishop. Our diocese has actually elected a bishop coadjutor before—Douglas Hambidge and David Somerville were both elected as bishops coadjutor, before becoming diocesan bishop.

- Second, by way of rationale, electing a bishop coadjutor allows for an orderly transition between myself and the next bishop of the diocese. It avoids a period of time without a bishop (something that I don't think is advisable in times such as ours). Additionally, electing a bishop coadjutor also provides for a brief period of overlap between myself and the next bishop, allowing a needed time of orientation and learning before that person becomes the diocesan.
- Finally, in accordance with our diocesan Canons, Diocesan Council has considered my request, discussed it and affirmed its support for the election of a bishop coadjutor in a motion at the last in-person meeting of Council.

With these things said, here are the key events and dates related to the Bishop Coadjutor election, consecration and seating:

- Electoral Synod to elect the Bishop Coadjutor: October 3, 2020

- Consecration of the Bishop Coadjutor: January 23, 2021
- Retirement of Current Archbishop and Seating of New Diocesan Bishop: February 28, 2021

And here is a description of an important next step as well as information about the Episcopal Election Committee:

For us to proceed along the timing referenced above, Diocesan Council will name a Nominations Committee for the Episcopal Elections Committee at its April 29, 2020 meeting. The Episcopal Elections Committee will be appointed by Diocesan Council on May 20.

- According to our Canons the Episcopal Election Committee shall consist of 11 members: (i) A Chair, either lay or ordained, chosen by the Diocesan Council; (ii) Five clergy, drawn from the canonically resident bishops, priests and deacons of the Diocese; and (iii) Five lay members who are qualified to be members of their Parish Vestry pursuant to Canon 9 or Canon 10 and have been so for at least two years.
- The membership of the Committee shall reflect the diversity of the Diocese with particular attention to: (i) gender identity, (ii) age, (iii) ethnic and cultural identity, and (iv) theological perspectives.
- The members of the Committee shall be drawn from all the regional archdeaconries of the Diocese.
- The Election Committee shall be responsible for establishing an electoral process that is: (i) transparent, (ii) fair, (iii) accountable, (iv) committed to discernment, and (v) guided by a pastoral concern for the nominees. (a) The Committee shall determine how electronic and social technology is to be used in the electoral process. The Election Committee will receive the nominations of persons eligible for the office of Diocesan Bishop; (b) oversee the process of vetting the qualifications of those persons nominated for the Office of Diocesan Bishop; (c) plan and execute a fair and transparent process by means of which qualified nominees are presented to the members of the Electoral Synod for their review; and (d) ensure that all necessary information regarding the nominees is available to the members of the Electoral Synod no less than 14 days before the date of said Synod.

I realize that this announcement and all this information may be a great deal to absorb, especially during this time of COVID-19. What I want to assure you of is that we are up to completing all the work that is needed to prepare ourselves for a new bishop. I also want to assure you that this process and all the people involved in it are in my prayers as we go forward. ✠

With gratitude for all of you,

*In Christ,
+ Melissa*



PHOTO Bayne Stanley

Shailene Caparas, CPA & the Government of Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy

RANDY MURRAY

Communications Officer & Topic Editor

When the history of the diocese of New Westminster and its experience with the COVID-19 pandemic is researched decades from now, those researchers will likely unearth hours and hours of online worship recordings, many pieces of correspondence, and we hope there will be photos, video and much more depicting celebrations taking place following the “flattening of the curve” and the reopening of parish buildings for in-person worship, and the rejuvenated restoration of mission and ministry throughout the diocese of New Westminster. Archbishop Skelton’s leadership will be remembered, and each parish will recall the servant leadership of their clergy who with resolve, commitment and resilience entered what was for many a completely different paradigm; the online digital world. Lay people will also be remembered, and it is without a doubt that the name of Shailene Caparas will be included in the list of those who were called to lead during this unprecedented time.

Shailene was appointed Comptroller of the diocese of New Westminster in mid-December 2014, following the December 2014 departure of Mark Beley, a CPA who had served the diocese well for many years. Shailene became a key member of the Administration, Finance and Property department of the diocese under the leadership of former Director of Finance and Property, Rob Dickson, AAM. When Rob’s service to the diocese as a Synod staff member concluded on October 31, 2019, Shailene was appointed interim Chief Financial Officer and recently promoted to the permanent position of Director of Finance. As 2020 began to unfold, the leadership of the diocese were anxious to move forward with new initiatives, programs and processes, many that involved considerable changes to finance and payroll. Accounting Clerk, Prashanti Yadavalli was added to the finance team consisting of Shailene; Administrator: Payroll & Benefits, Accounts Receivable & Payable, Michèle van Teunenbroek; and Pre-Authorized Donation Program (PAD) Administrator and Administrative Assistant, Rachel Taylor. The changes were considerable, and anxiety was high, however, new methods were successfully implemented and all involved were optimistic about the financial future of the diocese... and then COVID-19 arrived.

Since early March 2020, Shailene, in consultation with diocesan leadership has worked to seek out the best solutions for the myriad of potential financial problems that come with a worldwide pandemic and its subsequent effects on the local, regional, national and world economies. When the federal government rolled out a variety of relief programs, Shailene was quick to realize that the 75% wage subsidy benefit which as of this writing is the largest of the government’s relief programs (\$73 billion) would not apply to the parishes of the diocese of New Westminster because of the use of one payroll system (administered by the diocese) for the more than 170 employees of the Synod Office, the 66 parishes and the three additional worshipping communities. In consultation with the treasurer of the diocese, Bob Hardy, ODNW, parish treasurers, members of the Finance and Property Committee (F&P—one of the two standing committees that are adjunct arms of Diocesan Council) and the finance officers of the Anglican Church of Canada, Shailene dedicated herself to alerting the government authorities (and the CPA Canada team that works with the government in relation to the tax measures,) of this oversight and offering suggestions that could be used to remedy the situation. The campaign to notify the government was successful with new legislation passed on April 11, allowing multiple organizations with a single payroll account at CRA to consolidate revenue and ensuring that the definition of revenue for charities similarly affected by revenue loss would be appropriate for purposes of qualifying for the 75% subsidy.

With the preceding information as background, let’s find out some more about Shailene Caparas, CPA, CGA.

Q. Tell us a little bit about your early life, your childhood, and your education?

A. I was born and raised in the Philippines. My late parents did everything they could to send us to school and inspire us to study, so we could have a better life. They constantly reminded us that education without knowing the Bible is incomplete “for what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world but lose his soul.”

I studied at the Far Eastern University, Manila and graduated in 2003, with a Bachelor of Science in Accountancy, *summa cum laude*. I was blessed to receive the Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Academic Excellence Award, I started my career as an external audi-



Shailene at work April 2020. PHOTO Randy Murray



Shailene pauses to pose for a photo. PHOTO Randy Murray

*“Bound by our shared goals to advance God’s Kingdom,
I ensure that my decisions and recommendations glorify God
and to the best of my skills and abilities
I try to make sure that our parishes receive the help that they need.
It is my hope that when I have completed my time,
God will say, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant.’”*

tor at *Ernst & Young Philippines*. In 2013, I completed the Certified General Accountants (now Chartered Professional Accountants) Program of Studies and was privileged to be one of the Top Ten Graduating Students. After graduation, and while working in the religious sector, CGA Canada (a predecessor of CPA Canada) engaged me as a *standard setter* and a *course marker* of the *CGA Capstone* exams. With the introduction of a new program in 2015, CPA Canada engaged me further as a technical consultant and one of the authors of its Not-for-Profit course.

Q. When did you make the decision to emigrate to Canada and how has that affected you, your family and how you view the future?

A. My siblings and I immigrated in 2007, in order to be reunited with our mother who had been working overseas since I was in Grade 1. Unfortunately, my father passed away in 2003, prior to the approval of our application. Sadly, my mother died three years ago. Leaving a good career in my homeland in exchange for the uncertainties of life in Canada was not easy, however, the opportunity for family reunification moved us to look forward to the *greener pastures* Canada has to offer. We also hold on to our truth that God has a plan for us which gives us hope and an optimistic view for the future.

Q. Please describe how you came to be on the Synod staff of the diocese of New Westminster?

A. I believe that it was part of God’s plan. When I began applying for positions in 2014, in my prayers I asked the Lord to open only one door for me so I would not be confused about where to go next. Interestingly, two doors opened up from the same potential employer—the diocese of New Westminster. First, when the diocese was looking for a temporary Comptroller and second, when the diocese was looking for a permanent Comptroller. *Robert Half*, an employment agency, initially approached me about the temporary position at the diocese, however, I’d already made a commitment to mark the national exam papers for CGA Canada during that week. The interim position was then given to another candidate and I thought I’d lost that opportunity permanently. Two weeks passed and I saw on a CPA Canada Jobsite that the diocese was again looking for a comptroller, this time for a permanent position. I applied and was successful.

Q. Those of us who know you, know that faith plays a huge part in your life. How did you come to faith and how do you see your faith influencing your work?

A. My family was nurtured in the Word of God in our small village church. My mom, the late Pastor Aurora Caparas although working overseas, continued to water the seed of the Gospel of Christ through monthly letters and constant prayers. My mother’s faith and personal relationship with God through Christ inspired and affirmed my walk with God. I knew I was a sinner and in need of a Saviour, not only to be saved from the wrath of sin but also to experience the purpose and richness of life that can be found in Christ Jesus.

I am always reminded that in everything I do, I do it all for the glory of God. I view my workplace as my assignment in God’s Kingdom where I’ve been given the task to assist diocesan leadership in providing relevant and accurate financial information to aid them in making the decisions to properly steward and manage resources. Bound by our shared goals to advance God’s Kingdom, I ensure that my decisions and recommendations glorify God and to the best of my skills and abilities I try to make sure that our parishes receive the help that they need. It is my hope that when I have completed my time, God will say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

Q. Explain the rationale behind the change over to the current payroll system and what were the biggest challenges in undertaking that project?

A. In April 2019, it came to our attention that our existing payroll system was becoming obsolete and would no longer function as of January 2020. To move to the new online system of our previous provider would’ve cost us three times the current processing cost. Because of the complexity of our payroll set-up, it was not easy to find another system that would satisfy our requirements within our budget.

Q. What are the benefits of the changes?

A. The new system gives us the flexibility to process payroll anytime and anywhere. I am grateful that we had it in place before the COVID-19 pandemic. It also provides employees with the ability to access pay slips and T4s online, and to efficiently retrieve and update their payroll information. It

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also eliminates postage fees and reduces the use of paper which helps us fulfill our commitment to be good stewards of God's resources.

Q. In your life outside of the Synod Office you are involved in a number of compassionate service and charitable initiatives, how does your work in the Anglican church inform your charity ministry and vice versa?

A. I've noticed that donors and churches in Canada for a variety of reasons may not be able to fulfill the commands of God in *2 Corinthians 8*—the ability to share our abundant resources in Canada to supply the needs of those in other parts of the world. Compelled by God's love and commitment to advance the Gospel of Christ, I heeded God's call and in 2010, founded *SeedCare* International Ministries. At the time of its founding we could only support one pastor in my former village in the Philippines. *SeedCare* is a mission organization that creates a platform for partnership between donors and under-resourced pastors and ministries in the Philippines as well as in the 10/40 Window* nations (countries stricken by poverty and persecution) to advance the Gospel of Christ.

In the future I would be interested in presenting to all in the diocese a plan to bring youth and children on mission trips to the Philippines, to Honduras, and to other countries served by *SeedCare* so that they may experience what God has been doing in those areas. Also, if Anglicans wish to consider providing Bibles to people in remote villages of the Philippines who can't afford a copy of their own (\$2/Bible) or if they wish to support Christian ministry in other countries that are not within the ministries supported by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), they may want to explore a partnership through *SeedCare*. If interested, they may contact me at scaparas.vancouver.anglican.ca and we can connect after work hours.

Q. As one of the principal staff members with responsibility for diocesan finances what went through your mind when it became

*** 10/40 Window**

The 10/40 Window is a term used to describe the sections of the planet that fall approximately within the area of 10° north and 40° north latitude. It is a term used primarily by evangelical Christian missionaries indicating that nearly 70% of that region's 3.09 billion people are "unreached." The area which includes part of North Africa and the Middle East is of both historical and biblical significance to the many Christians. In brief, the 10/40 Window is home to what would be considered the majority of the world's unevangelized countries.

obvious that Archbishop Skelton would need to close the churches for in-person worship, mission and ministry and tenancy?

A. I thought that the directive of the archbishop to close the churches was necessary and also respectful of God's call that we obey the government. God is the same God whom we worship either in-person or via Zoom. God is allowing us to experience and explore creative and innovative ways to worship and to serve God's mission with our finances.

I also think that God is moving us to increase the involvement of the younger generation in churches, by bringing *the Church* right inside our homes.

It is clear to me that God is challenging our ability to remain faithful to our commitment despite the expected significant drop in diocesan investments and the results of assessment cancellation—a week before the COVID-19 pandemic, Diocesan Council made a bold decision to increase its proportional gift to General Synod in support of its programs and ministries.

I did anticipate a drop in parish donations knowing that the majority of our parishioners are elderly and more inclined to give through envelopes, so I thought we should immediately provide our parishes with alternative recom-

mendations to envelope giving such as e-transfer, online donations, and pre-authorized giving like the diocesan PAD program.

Q. When you first heard about the governments relief programs what was your initial reaction?

A. I immediately checked the eligibility requirements and became concerned about the ability of our parishes to claim the government subsidy given that there is a limit per payroll account (at that time, the Temporary Wage Subsidy was limited to \$25,000 per payroll account). A day after the initial announcement, I decided to send an email to the Hon. Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance, and inquire about the mechanics and also suggested that an exception be considered and granted for multiple employers that maintain a single payroll account so that every employer will be given an equal opportunity to benefit.

Q. When did you realize that the parishes of the diocese would not be eligible for the 75% wage subsidy benefit as it was originally configured, and what was your first course of action?

A. When the government announced that businesses and charities would need to show proof of a 30% revenue drop in March to avail themselves of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, I feared that we may not be eligible, knowing that the parishes had already paid their March assessments, and that cancellation of assessment would take effect in April and not March. In a worst case scenario, we could lose 12% in investments, and those losses deferred in our Consolidated Trust Funds are only reflected in income statements when there is a need to draw to cover our operations. In addition, since another requirement is the existence of a payroll account, I realized that the ability of parishes to avail themselves of the subsidy would be highly dependent on the eligibility of the diocese. If the diocese was not eligible, the parishes would be automatically disqualified. I thought that an exception should be granted for organizations that have a centralized payroll system so that all employers may be given equal opportunity to apply for the subsidy.

In reviewing further, I gathered that the government was consulting with non-profit organizations and registered charities similarly affected by loss of revenue to ensure the definition of revenue was appropriate given the different funding pressures and the peculiarity of the industry. I also learned that the CPA Canada tax group under the leadership of Mr. Bruce Ball, Vice President, Taxation, was working with the government related to the tax measures in the wake of the pandemic, and he was welcoming comments and concerns from members. I wrote to Mr. Ball and shared my concerns and recommendations regarding the relief measures for charities. I wanted him to receive this in time so that consideration could be given before the legislation was passed.

On April 3, I sent the draft letter to my finance
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Shailene with her brother, sister and their mother who died in 2017. PHOTO Submitted



Shailene and friends at an outdoor event in the *SeedCare* booth. PHOTO Submitted



Shailene and friends in the *SeedCare* booth at Missionsfest 2018. PHOTO Submitted

Shailene Caparas, CPA & the Government of Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

colleagues across the Anglican Church of Canada, to our treasurer, Bob Hardy and to the diocesan leadership team, ensuring that all comments and concerns were included. The following week, I again asked my colleagues if they would be interested in sending a formal appeal to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board, and Minister of National Revenue. The consensus was that it would be best if each organization voiced the same concern but sent the letters individually. With the editorial help of Randy Murray, a form letter template was created for this purpose. The plan moving forward was to ask all our treasurers and priests-in-charge to send the same letter, and directly contact their respective MPs. However, because of Holy Week preparations we decided to postpone sending the request until the following week (thanks to Lauren Pinkney for gathering the list of MPs and to Rachel Taylor for preparing the draft announcement), but happily it turned out that the House of Commons had its Special Session right after Good Friday. Thankfully, our concerns were submitted to the appropriate people just in time. The legislation that was enacted on April 11, 2020 addresses our concerns.

Q. As of this writing in late April (keeping in mind that things change rapidly in the COVID-19 world) how would you assess the effectiveness of government relief programs and their impact on the mission and ministry of the Church and specifically our diocese?

A. The government subsidy encourages charities and businesses that have the same dilemma that we faced and still face, it will move them to feel included and valued as part of the overall sectors that need help and support. I hope this will constantly remind us all that God honors faithfulness—I view the exception granted to our centralized payroll system issue as a reward for remaining faithful to our commitments to God, to the National Church and to our parishes. These commitments include increasing our proportional gift to the General Synod despite the assessment cancellation and significant investment losses and guaranteeing clergy salaries at a time when parishes need it the most.

Q. What are your thoughts about the March 25 decision by Diocesan Council to cancel parish assessment payments April–August 2020 and guarantee the salaries of priests of parishes with less than \$750,000 in the Consolidated Trust Fund? Do you anticipate any future repercussions from that decision?

A. I am happy and proud that our diocese took such a bold step. I am also thankful that with God's help we have strategically positioned diocesan assets to allow to aid parishes in such a time like this. I do not anticipate any repercussions, but I trust that this decision will encourage us all to remain committed and faithful to God's call.

Q. Do you have a favourite passage from Scripture? If "yes" what is it and why?

A. "...I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" *Acts 20:24*. It speaks of my personal commitment to glorify God in my existence.

Q. In your five years at the diocese what has surprised you the most about your ministry here?

A. I am impressed by the love and generosity of our forebears—the Anglicans of former days, and by the ability of Diocesan Council to steward every resource that God has entrusted to this diocese. I am also inspired by the commitment of our diocese to invest in the formation of and the care for ordained leaders, to offer substantial training for lay and clergy leaders, to teach the foundational areas of our faith, and to support many parish initiatives that are presented before the leadership.

Q. What has challenged you the most?

A. Given my position, I sometimes experience challenges in developing a healthy budget when donations are down while costs keep on rising.

With rising costs of living and our current economic uncertainties, it is difficult for us (parishioners) to give a portion of our income out of fear that we will not have enough to meet our own needs and the needs of our families. This fear indicates a bondage to the spirit of Mammon which can prevent us from giving what is due for the Lord. However, I believe that God wants us to be free from such fear by generating faith in our hearts, reinforcing that God is the source of everything we have and knows our needs. Often it is during times of need that we learn to trust God. I always believe that God's preferred method to develop faith in our hearts is through the tithe. "The tithe is holy

before the Lord," according to *Leviticus 27:30* and it requires faith to bring the tithe to God, especially in times of need. Tithing is a Biblical principle where God challenges us. The Lord declares in *Malachi 3:10-11*, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes," says the Lord of hosts." It is also written in *Matthew 23:23*, "... Justice, mercy and faithfulness; ... these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."

God has provided us with resources and when we bring our tithes and offerings to God's storehouse, we help our parishes and the diocese to continue to advance God's Kingdom until Jesus comes.

Q. In just a couple of sentences and broad strokes, where do you see the diocese headed in the next five to ten years?

A. With the pandemic, I've seen the overflowing love of Christ and the earnestness to care for one another. I've seen the fulfillment of *2 Corinthians 8* in our diocese. We excelled in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness, and in the love of Christ, even in the grace of giving. I saw how COVID-19 forced us to embrace creative technology as alternative means to express

our worship and financial support. The pandemic may open the doors more widely for the the younger generation to participate in our acts of worship and giving.

Our diocese is blessed with human and financial resources, and with commitment from its people to fulfill our mission, "growing communities of faith to serve God's mission in the world." With that in mind, I believe that God is positioning our diocese for a revival. I believe that in the next five to ten years, we will receive a new wave of transformation—God will blow new breath of life in us so that we can breathe life into others until it overflows, God will give us a greater revelation and a greater vision for the Anglican Church beyond 2040.

I trust that God will make a way to fulfill the Word in *Jeremiah 32:40-41*, "I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul."

Q. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

A. God remembers all of our sacrifices. Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Our God who began a good work with the Anglican Church will be faithful to complete it until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ✠



SeedCare's Bible distribution to a village church in the Philippines. PHOTO Submitted



SeedCare's Outreach to an Indigenous community in the Philippines. PHOTO Submitted



The building with refreshed landscaping and accessible path.
PHOTO Randy Murray



The Parish of St. Thomas' welcomes the neighbourhood to the rejuvenated space January 11, 2020. PHOTO Randy Murray

The Ministry of Collingwood Parish Recognized With 2020 Corporate Good Neighbour Award

On Monday, April 6 the following email was received by the Rev. Michael Batten in the parish offices of St. Thomas, Collingwood, in southeast Vancouver:

I hope this email finds you and yours well. I am writing this email on behalf of the Association of Neighbourhood House's of BC and the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) to congratulate St. Thomas for being awarded a 2020 corporate Good Neighbour Award.

The Good Neighbours Awards were developed in 1984 to acknowledge the valuable work of volunteers and to reflect the Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC's commitment to making neighbourhoods better places in which to live. The Corporate Good Neighbour Award acknowledges an agency that has made a significant contribution to the community through their support of neighbourhood house activities.

We want to recognize and thank you and others in your congregation for your:

- long standing community leadership
- support and sponsorship of SVNH programs and projects that benefit folks that live in our neighbourhood

Given the uncertainty of our current situation, we have had to make the tough decision to cancel the Good Neighbours Awards event ceremony scheduled for May 7, 2020. We do, however, intend to move forward with honouring our award recipients. We will produce posters that will be displayed throughout the year and we will also be looking at launching a social media campaign to recognize each recipient.

As part of the nomination process I submitted the following description of your efforts and did my best to capture the significant difference you and your parishioners have made and continue to make.

For approximately the last decade the SVNH has partnered with St. Thomas' Anglican Church, located at 2444 East 41st Avenue. The parishioners have undertaken to do a major renovation to their 108-year buildings and raise funds for SVNH projects and initiatives. Their past fundraising efforts have helped to ensure that our three Community Kitchens have ongoing funding and that we have dedicated funds to continue reaching

out to our community.

Their support to the SVNH goes beyond fundraising as we work collaboratively with the Outreach Committee who have helped us secure space at the church to offer activities that build social connections. Their tireless efforts have allowed us to offer new programs such as the monthly Community Dinner and ESL Conversation Circles.

Most recently, SVNH has been the beneficiary of the church's Lenten project, with funds being donated to help us address some of the food insecurity challenges that have been the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ongoing support that they have provided has been greatly appreciated and we extend our deepest gratitude to their Priest, the Rev. Michael Batten, church leaders, Jayne Fenrich and Cheryl Tobias and to all parishioners.

Please share this exciting news and pass on our sincere appreciation.

With gratitude,
Shelley

Shelley Jorde (she/her/hers pronouns)
Director of Senior's Programs and Food Initiatives
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
6470 Victoria Drive, Vancouver BC V5P 3X7

When asked for a comment Jayne Fenrich had this to say about the award:

"Eight and a half years ago, our interim priest-in-charge, Margaret Marquardt encouraged us to go outside of our comfort zone and increase our engagement with our neighbourhood in a meaningful way. We started by knocking on doors and then connected with Waverley Elementary School, the Metro Vancouver Alliance (MVA) and South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH). Our work has continued and grown with these organizations. Our goal to become more meaningfully engaged with our neighbours has been recognized by SVNH in presenting us with the Good Neighbour Award. The Parish of St. Thomas greatly appreciates this award as it affirms and encourages our work to support the parish's local community."

During the Maundy Thursday online worship, Rev. Batten made reference to the award during his sermon:

"We understand that when Jesus commands us to love each other, he doesn't just mean the people who come to church with us. We know that he has commanded us to love our neighbours as

ourselves. Tonight, as we remember the last supper that Jesus had with the Twelve, we do so with very mixed feelings. We cannot, this year, physically share in the meal that Jesus has given us. But we can continue to love and serve our neighbour. We can continue to make Jesus present in that way. We cannot physically share in the Eucharist tonight, but through your love of our neighbours, the Eucharistic feast has moved into our neighbourhood.

This week we learned that the Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC has awarded St. Thomas' the Good Neighbour Award for 2020. This recognizes not just one or two special projects, but many years of service to our neighbours, many years of loving our neighbours, many years of trying to live as Jesus taught us to live."

Congratulations to the Parish of St. Thomas. Just a few months following the 18 months of exile and uncertainty about the cost and scope of their renovations this recognition is truly a blessing, well-deserved as St. Thomas' is a committed community of Christians who selflessly serve the neighbourhood with their continuing ministry. ✠



Ping (left) from South Vancouver Neighbourhood House set to receive the mic from the rector, Rev. Fr. Michael Batten. PHOTO Randy Murray

AROUND THE DIOCESE

• Council of General Synod March 2020 Report •

SUBMISSION Marnie Peterson, diocese of New Westminster representative to CoGS

Writing this in the third week of April 2020, it feels like a lifetime ago, but March 13–15 which was near the beginning (for Canadians) of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Council of General Synod met for the second time in this triennium at Queen of the Apostles in Mississauga, Ontario.

This was a joint meeting between the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCiC). Our two gatherings met for worship, Bible study and meals but separated for the important business matters that were before us.

It was good to be together, to share common experiences and learn together.

It was a strange meeting as the implications of the spreading virus were beginning to take hold.

Less than half of the members of CoGS were in attendance, with many choosing to say away for concerns about the health and safety of themselves and others. With thanks to Zoom, we were able to bring in CoGS members in order to vote on a number of items including a motion I was privileged to second that was brought by the Rev. Murray Still, to create *Reconciliation Pathfinders*, a national church body to encourage and support the work of reconciliation and Indigenous justice in the ACoC. This motion was passed unanimously and will be supported in its implementation and promotion by Melanie Delva, Reconciliation Animator for the Anglican Church of Canada.

Between business matters we took time to celebrate “Green Shoot Moments”, new



The Rev. Marnie Peterson. PHOTO Jennifer Ewing

or re-invigorated ministries that are happening around the Canadian Church and I was pleased to speak about the growing community of St. Brigid’s at Christ Church Cathedral where I am Gathering Priest.

For more highlights from the meeting, I encourage you to visit the ACoC’s website where you will find the full daily summaries of our time (www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/highlights).

It continues to be my honour to be a part of this national council and to represent our diocese in the important work of our national church. ✠

• Whonnock Parish Shows Their Appreciation •

SUBMISSION Miranda Sutherland

Many thanks to Vicar, the Rev. Miranda Sutherland for sending in photographs from the Anglican Church of the Holy Spirit, Whonnock.

The church lawn was decorated on Holy Saturday with signage offering Easter expressions of love and care to all but especially to those directly affected by COVID-19, including thanks for those who are putting themselves at risk to keep us safe.

Members of the parish also became involved in care projects, making masks for care homes in the community and pick-up and delivery. Mimi Hunfeld, seen in the first photograph, handed over masks to Cathy Mellalieu, Director of Residential Services, ARCUS Community Resources, provider of specialised care in residential services.

They were grateful for the help and said they were happy that “colourful materials have been reborn as face masks, much to the delight of the needful clients.” ✠



PHOTOS Miranda Sutherland



• South Deltans Deliver on Request for Hospital Worker Laundry Bags •

SUBMISSION Elizabeth Murray, ODNW



St. David’s Kay Foord participates in a new “cottage industry” in Tsawwassen. PHOTO Isobel Telford

Within just ten days, members of Delta Hospital Auxiliary Society and their friends had produced 467 washable laundry bags in response to a request from the hospital’s executive director Teresa O’Callaghan. One of the friends was Kay Foord, ODNW of St. David’s, Tsawwassen.

It did not take long for the director’s coronavirus-related appeal to jumpstart sewing machines in the homes of Ladner and Tsawwassen residents once the Auxiliary’s past-president Yvonne Chard, and communication unit coordinator Youla Thomas, sounded the alert. Sewers known to Yvonne and Youla were enlisted to augment Auxiliary numbers, while its well-established *Pillow Pals* team “retooled” from comfort pillows to laundry bags.

Together, 12 Auxiliary volunteers and 12 friends and neighbours, set about repurposing bed sheets and pillowcases into drawstring laundry bags to enable hospital staff to transport their workwear to and

from home and in which they could launder their personal protective garments. With the user depositing and safely removing Scrubs (intact) from the facility in reusable fabric bags, it is hoped the normal volume of disposable plastic bags might be reduced.

While the Auxiliary members did the bulk of the sewing—one prolific sewer made 72 bags—it was an all-round team effort. Jean Evans sorted through fabric and other supplies at the Hospital Thrift Store, Youla distributed the material and collected the finished articles, and Kathy Bailey delivered the handcrafted laundry bags to Delta Hospital.

Parishioner Kay, who also knits prayer shawls for St. David’s, intended to continue helping Auxiliary members until hospital staff had at least two laundry bags each.

This new way of aiding hospital workers is another example of new thinking in a new reality. ✠

• Sign of the Times •

The Parish of St. John the Evangelist is an active and growing congregation in North Vancouver’s urban mid-Lonsdale neighbourhood.

The church building is situated on 8th Avenue just east of the Keith Road boulevard at a very busy location for both pedestrian and vehicle traffic. In order to let folks know that ministry continues and that the church is active despite being closed to in-person attendance the parish has strung two professional signs; one across the main church entrance facing north on 13th, and one on the parking lot fence at 8th. The signs feature the parish livery and a positive message:

Stay Home, Be Safe, Be Brave – Join Us Online
You are not alone, we are in this together

St. John’s rector, the Rev. Patrick Blaney reports that the signs cost about \$100 each and were put up by parishioner and *Long Long Night of Hope* founder, Donna Lawrence with help from her daughter. Donna also proposed the idea to have the signs made and to display them. According to Rev. Blaney “The signs are meant to show that we do care very much about the people in our community and even now, or perhaps especially now, we want to keep in touch as best we can.”

St. John’s continues to offer an ambitious program of Zoom worship on Sundays and weekdays. Learn more at www.stjohnnv.ca. ✠



PHOTO Randy Murray

AROUND THE DIOCESE



Reopening • Continuing Anew A Message from Archbishop Skelton

On Monday, April 20, Archbishop Skelton circulated this notice around the diocese. In the COVID-19 pandemic world things change very quickly, and it is possible that this message being included for layout in June's Topic at the end of April will no longer be applicable, however, this message was carefully worded and contains appropriate caveats... • Editor

After consulting with many in the diocese and with the provincial health officer's updates in mind, I am extending the time for the suspension of in-person worship in our churches into June. For now, I am

setting Sunday, June 14 as the date by which we might move back into our church buildings for in-person worship. Keeping this date will, of course, very much depend on what government health officials provide in both the written directives and in the daily updates all of us are watching. This date provides impetus for us to provide more enhanced online liturgies as well as a time-frame to consider what's next from June 14 onward. Again, if anything changes that might move the date forward or farther out, I will let all of you know with enough notice for you to plan. I know that this time of suspending in-

person worship has been difficult for many. I thank you for all you're doing to help our parishes and people stay connected during this unprecedented and challenging time.

Ordinations to the diaconate are scheduled to occur on Saturday, June 20 at 10:30am in Christ Church Cathedral. This date will be kept for now and may require some further consideration as to the number of those who are able to attend.

Diocesan Confirmation has been moved forward to Sunday, September 27 at 3pm in Christ Church Cathedral. ✠

Online Formation | Tips For Good Gathering

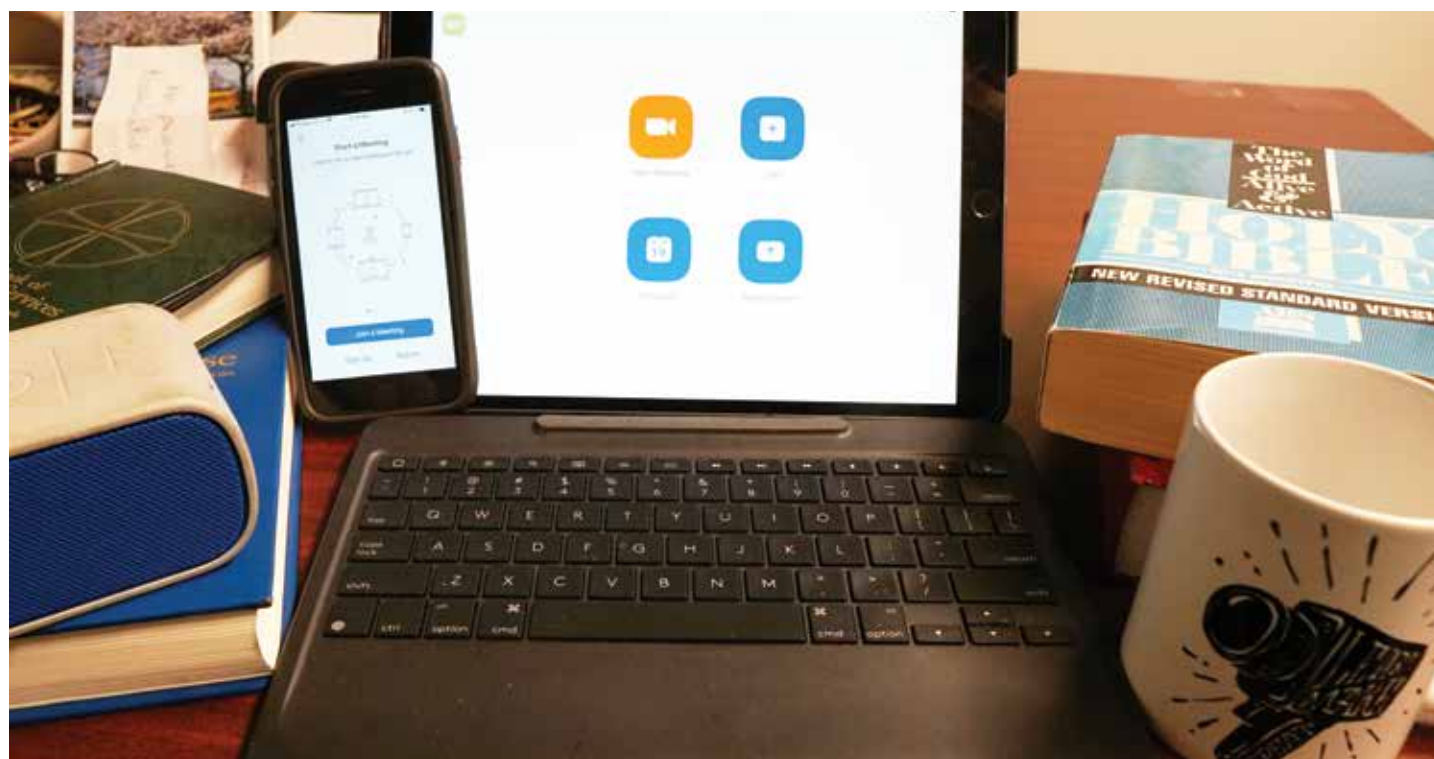
JESSICA SCHAAP

Missioner for Christian Formation, diocese of New Westminster

The pandemic has taught us very clearly that we cannot always meet in-person. Many parishes turned to Zoom and other platforms to continue Christian formation in addition to worship. But even when we are able to gather in-person again, online resources can still be an important place to offer Christian formation to people. Night shift and weekend workers whose schedules and lives don't allow them to attend group meetings, elders who no longer go out at night or can rarely leave their homes, parents who can't rely on or afford regular childcare—all these people could travel on their Christian journey with the help of online formation. Meeting in person could still happen, and this is vital, but it could happen at longer intervals without losing the momentum of relationship building and learning. These online resources can help support a healthy ecosystem of learning for people in the parish at any time. Please go to www.vancouver.anglican.ca/pages/online-faith-formation where you will find a list of online resources you can use for Christian formation in the parish.

If you're meeting via Zoom or another video conference program, here are a few very quick tips to run a good gathering:

- **Follow a basic agenda and stick to it.** Most people need some kind of routine to settle into learning and it frees the leader up from having to reinvent the wheel every time. It can be as simple as:
 - Welcome, group norms (see image with this story)
 - Opening prayer
 - Intro to topic (e.g. context of biblical passage)
 - Discussion (have prepared questions and describe process for facilitating discussion e.g. one person speaks and then invites the next person to speak)
 - Closing prayer
- **Offer a brief break if it's over 45 minutes.** Video conferencing takes a lot of visual attention and that can be tiring. It's ok to give permission for people to turn off their video after everyone has gathered and the meeting has begun.
- **Err on the side of participation over teaching.** It's harder to build connection and community online. Structured participation keeps people engaged and



getting to know each other. Segments of teaching are important, and you can use video and slides to make it dynamic, but make sure you're giving learners time to make their own contributions. Leaders don't need all of the answers. Asking people to add their own petitions or thanksgivings during prayer in a chat function or asking them to prepare prayers beforehand is also good.

- **Include a simple practice.** Christians grow through learning that engages mind, heart, and practice. If you're doing Christian formation online, you can still include simple practices or actions for people to try out. A bible study could invite people to respond with a simple drawing of their response to the text. People can look up information from concordances, bible dictionaries, etc. and report back to the

group. You can give the group quiet time to try out a contemplative prayer practice such as icons or Christian meditation. Psalm chanting can be taught and led. Home scavenger hunts or "show and tell" of theme related items can be fun and formative for all ages. ✠



Group Norms

- Use earbuds or headphones
- Put on mute when not talking
- Limit eating/drinking
- Chat is a way to ask questions in the moment
- Brady Brunch/Grid is the way to go!
- Watch your airtime
- Take a break when you need

Continuing the March Out of the Building & Into the World

A profile of the new rector of Christ Church Cathedral, Christopher Pappas

ANNE FLETCHER

Topic Contributor; Parishioner, Christ Church Cathedral

So, there's an Episcopal chaplain, a United Methodist pastor, an Orthodox priest, and a United Church of Christ minister.

And there's an Episcopal bishop, and they are in a bar. The bishop is from Wisconsin, and the Irish-style pub in New Haven, Connecticut, is built from bits and pieces of deconsecrated churches, with pulpits, pews, organ pipes, a wall of seven stained glass windows and, of course, beer.

This is no joke, although the Venerable Christopher Pappas, soon to be inducted as the fourteenth rector of Christ Church Cathedral can't stop himself from turning it into one.

"When I felt the call, I was unorthodox in how I did this," said Archdeacon Pappas, punning on his Greek Orthodox upbringing in recounting his 2003 ordination to the diaconate in the Episcopal diocese of Eau Claire in northwestern Wisconsin. Where, incidentally, the New Jersey born cleric had never lived.

The motley crew of clergy formed his discernment committee and the Dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale found him the bishop; the bishop liked what he saw in the bar but, subsequently, had no full-time job for his newest deacon; the then-Reverend Pappas was married to an Albertan; and that explains, more or less, why he was ordained to the priesthood in the diocese of Edmonton in 2004, spent the last ten years as rector of Holy Trinity in Strathcona, Edmonton, and is scheduled to begin his new ministry in Vancouver on June 1, leaving one locked-down church for another.

Rather than feeling dismayed at the prospect of rattling around in an empty building on his first day, "I'm actually excited," Archdeacon Pappas said in an interview late last April. "The Cathedral is an amazing community... every new position involves a transition, a change, one way or another. In one respect, this situation will give an opportunity to create something new without stepping on any sacred cows, because it's all new."

The scientist and self-labelled techno-geek sees something like Darwinian natural selection at work in the sudden, sharp shift to livestreamed services and Bible-study-by-Zoom that COVID-19 has wrought. "The church is being pressured to adapt."

After the first pandemic wave subsides, "there are certain things we've learned (about using technology) that we won't have to give up," he said.

"I think we've continued the march out of the building and into the world. And that's what I believe Jesus wants us to do."

Going back a decade, Edmonton resident Adrian Peetoom was on the 2010 Holy Trinity search committee that hired Archdeacon Pappas.

"He struck us as a very energetic go-getter and that was the deciding factor," Mr. Peetoom said in an interview. "And he's certainly lived up to that."

From a state of gentle decline, Holy Trinity climbed back up the slope to robust health, with substantial Sunday attendance, a poet-in-residence, annual Fringe Festival performances, a youth outreach ministry, ecumenical community meals, an Equally Anglican voice speaking for LGBTQ+ inclusion, and much more. But Holy Trinity Edmonton's committed rector took time to lay the groundwork.

"The first year, he sniffed out what the parish was like and who was in it," Mr. Peetoom said. "He didn't come in with a program... he looked for people with gifts."

Clearly, that's going to happen again, at the Cathedral. "The first thing I need to do is know who everybody is and what they do," Archdeacon Pappas said.

But he's bringing at least two enthusiasms with him. As a board member of Outreach to Haiti, he'll be talking to anyone who's interested about the health and education work the Connecticut-based, Roman Catholic-sponsored charity does in the Caribbean country.

And, with the Cathedral home to both the Seaforth Highlanders and the British Columbia Regiment, the Cathedral's new rector said, "I certainly intend to be engaged."

As a padre to the South Alberta Light Horse regiment, "I received as much as I offered," he said. "I walked with some people through some difficult times... most of the people I talk with are doing it out of a sense of duty."

"You (the military) offer yourself for us. The least I can do is offer my support."

A third enthusiasm likely to endure in Vancouver is his evident belief in Twitter as an effective forum for political discourse.



LEFT Presenting a homily at All Saints Cathedral, diocese of Edmonton. RIGHT Imposition of Ashes — Ashes to Go. PHOTOS Margaret Glidden



Given Archdeacon Pappas's dual Canadian-American citizenship, Donald Trump is never far from the centre of his Twitter attention. But Alberta premier, Jason Kenney, and his health minister, Tyler Shandro, have both come under recent Pappas fire.

He admits to pulling few punches on things he cares about most—health care, LGBTQ+ rights, and, perhaps, a new president for the United States. "Sometimes I do overstep and I realize that, but I try to be constructive and call people on policies."

His overt political ways are nothing new. Even through the 1990s as a neuroscience researcher at Yale University, he was out working on campaigns. "Politics was always something that was important to me," he said. "I believe in living a well-rounded life."

He moved whole-heartedly into the game in 1997, running a winning campaign for an underdog candidate for Connecticut's secretary of state. He then worked for four years as her assistant secretary, and overseeing the computer division. One achievement: the roll-out of a state-wide electronic voter registration system.

"I've not left things behind," Archdeacon Pappas said, of his varied resume. "I like to solve problems and create new things... my positions have always been about trying to figure out how things work."

As he neared graduation, in biology, at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut in 1984, Christopher Pappas had two applications in front of him—one for an Orthodox seminary, one for grad school. "I filled them both out. I

prayed about it and I sent in the one for graduate school. That was the call at the time."

However, his undergrad years had introduced him to the Episcopal Church, by way of the college chapel. "I was drawn by the liturgy and the sense of mystery."

When the call, or, as he again punned, the "recall" to the priesthood came, about 20 years ago, he knew his direction wouldn't be orthodox or even Orthodox, though all four of his great-grandfathers were Greek Orthodox priests.

"If we could have a sit-down conversation," he said, "I think they'd be happy that I'm following God's call."

An uncle-by-marriage was also a Greek Orthodox priest, and Archdeacon Pappas has worn his uncle's gold vestments on Christmas Eve and at the Easter Vigil.

Mr. Peetoom, watching as his priest and his friend packed those vestments, said the Cathedral and the diocese can expect someone who likes eating and drinking fine wines—a *bon vivant*; someone who shamelessly uses the pulpit to promote Greek food; who takes his iPad out to work in coffee shops and pubs; and brings his dog in to work in the office.

"If he doesn't satisfy after six months," Mr. Peetoom said generously, "send him back." ♦

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As of May 1, the date and time for the Celebration of a New Ministry Eucharist is June 28 at 3pm at Christ Church Cathedral. • Editor



Remembrance Day Service 2018, with Archdeacon Pappas laying wreath. PHOTO Margaret Glidden

Happy 70th Anniversary Betty and Don

Sharing our love and congratulations on their milestone anniversary

STEPHEN ROWE

Rector, the Anglican Church of the Epiphany, Surrey

Wednesday, April 8, 2020, marked the 70th Wedding Anniversary for a beloved couple at the Anglican Church of the Epiphany. They were married at the United Church in Kamloops on April 8, 1950.

Betty and Don have devoted their lives to the Church, and the Anglican Church in our diocese since 1957.

It seems fair to say that Don and Betty Stebbing were early converts in the life and witness of the Church. In the 1930s Don's attendance at St. George's, North Kamloops Sunday School was 100%. Meanwhile Betty Fraser was teaching Sunday School at Glenboig Presbyterian Church, Lanarkshire near Glasgow, Scotland.

Betty moved with her family to Kamloops in 1947, and joined the United Church where her aunt worshipped, and where she and Don later married.

Don worked for CN Rail in Kamloops until a conversation with a staff member one Sunday evening resulted in a transfer that had him working in Vancouver the following Thursday.

Now located in Vancouver, St. Thomas', Collingwood in the diocese of New Westminster was nearer to their new home than the United Church, and with four young children the Stebbing family became an active and committed part of that congregation from 1957 until 1992.

Don was a principal leader of the Men's Group for 12 years, tasked with the responsibility of selling plants at the annual Spring Fair. Under the Rev. Ernie Eldridge he was appointed treasurer and member



PHOTO Stephen Rowe

of the Administration and Finance Group. Don was rector's warden, people's warden, served on the Canonical Committee and the Maintenance Committee. Don was also President of the Vancouver Transportation Club that met monthly for dinner at the Stanley Park Pavilion.

Both Don and Betty were involved in bible study at St. Thomas' and were very much part of the *Cursillo* group in our diocese, Don serving as president.

Meanwhile, Betty served on Parish Council and was Chair of the Canonical Committee that appointed the first woman

priest to St. Thomas'. She was involved as a leader with Brownies and Guides. She was part of Little Helpers, Anglican Church Women (ACW) as well as Christian education lay leadership. For nine years Betty served on the St. Jude's Board, two as President. However, it was a life-threatening illness (including treatment at Minnesota's Mayo Clinic) that guided her into pastoral care, hospice work and later as a hospital visitor and trainer.

In 1967, Betty was given two years to live and throughout her illness and treatment was ably cared for by Don. Betty says

Don was "as Christ" to her during those difficult days, and Christ was and remains always at the centre of their marriage.

When the couple moved to Surrey in the early 1990s their work for God continued unabated. Both were involved in pastoral care, bible study and Betty was part of a group that established a healing ministry in the parish.

Both Betty and Don have been awarded the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster (ODNW); the present rector aware of all that they both have given to the Anglican Church. In fact, in order to make a purely non-partisan decision he had them draw lots to decide who should receive the honour first!

In the 19 years I've known this couple I have been so encouraged by their faith, love and commitment for Christ, the Church, their family and each other. And I know I am not alone. Many people who know them are inspired by their grace and dedication.

The Anglican Church (and especially St. Thomas and Epiphany) are so much the richer for their active and hardworking participation for well over 60 years.

One of the joys of remote worship during the COVID-19 pandemic has been Don and Betty's ability to participate in worship once more "at" Epiphany. Poor health has made it difficult for them to get to church on a regular basis. It has been a delight to see their faces on the screen during our online worship. ✠

BEATITUDES

FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO STAY INDOORS



FOR THEY HAVE PROTECTED OTHERS

BLESSED ARE THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE SELF-EMPLOYED



FOR THEIR NEED OF GOD IS GREAT

BLESSED ARE THE CORNER SHOPKEEPERS



FOR THEY ARE THE PURVEYORS OF SCARCE THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE DELIVERY DRIVERS AND THE POSTAL WORKERS



FOR THEY ARE THE BRINGERS OF ESSENTIAL THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE HOSPITAL WORKERS; THE AMBULANCE CREWS, THE DOCTORS, THE NURSES, THE CARE ASSISTANTS, AND THE CLEANERS



FOR THEY STAND BETWEEN US AND THE GRAVE, AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS SURELY THEIRS

BLESSED ARE THE CHECKOUT WORKERS



FOR THEY HAVE PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE IN THE FACE OF OVERWORK AND FRUSTRATION

BLESSED ARE THE REFUSE COLLECTORS



FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD DESPITE THE MOUNTAINS OF WASTE

BLESSED ARE THE TEACHERS



FOR THEY REMAIN STEADFAST AND CONSTANT IN DISTURBING TIMES

BLESSED ARE THE CHURCH WORKERS; THE DEACONS, PRIESTS AND BISHOPS



FOR THEY ARE A COMFORTING PRESENCE IN A HURTING WORLD AS THEY CONTINUE TO SIGNPOST TOWARDS GOD

BLESSED ARE THE SINGLE PARENTS,



FOR THEY ARE COPING ALONE WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THERE IS NO RESPITE

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ALONE,



FOR THEY ARE CHILDREN OF GOD AND WITH HIM THEY WILL NEVER BE LONELY

BLESSED ARE THE BEREAVED,



FOR WHOM THE WORST HAS ALREADY HAPPENED. THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ISOLATED WITH THEIR ABUSERS



FOR ONE DAY - WE PRAY - THEY WILL KNOW SAFETY

BLESSED ARE ALL DURING THIS TIME WHO HAVE PURE HEARTS; ALL WHO STILL HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE; ALL WHO WORK FOR PEACE AND WHO MODEL MERCY



MAY YOU KNOW COMFORT. MAY YOU KNOW CALM. AND MAY THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BE WITH US ALL. AMEN

Going Zoom at Epiphany

STEPHEN ROWE

Rector, the Anglican Parish of the Church of the Epiphany, Surrey

As some in my congregation and family will tell you, I am not technologically minded. In fact, I must admit, that I'd not progressed much beyond email and some texting.

Suffice it to say that my learning curve was steep when it became clear that in-person worship and meetings were about to cease in the middle of March 2020. I spoke with someone in the congregation who'd telecommuted for years and asked for their assistance. They were patient and offered feedback as the coming days evolved. Fortunately, I have three children who are with the program and Christine (my wife) was also able to assist when I could not remember today what I did yesterday.

Following a meeting with the parish wardens it was clear that we had to delegate, prioritize and organize. One warden took on pastoral care, the next administration and finances, and the third, communications; it also became clear that we had to figure out a plan week by week. To start, we had to get a Sunday service up and running; so, we signed up for a diocesan Zoom license, and with my elder daughter Hannah operating (who lives in our basement), we went live on March 22, which now seems about three years ago.

In Week 2 we launched a deliberate exercise to set up a telephone tree to connect with the entire congregation. We also worked on scheduling Parish Council meetings and began a weekly weekday celebration of *Matins* (a service of Morning Prayer not specific to the Anglican Church but often used in the Anglican Church) which in the past had been monthly. Next, we worked on getting the Arabic speaking members of our congregation (a substantial percentage of Epiphany's membership) connected, availing ourselves of the considerable skills of the two translators we'd appointed last year, funded through a grant from the diocesan supported Anglican Initiatives Fund (AIF).

On Sundays, for the principal worship of the week we follow the *Ministry of the Word* from the *Book of Alternative Services* (BAS) including PowerPoint for the essential elements of the service. We focus on the gospel reading of the day, a sermon, intercessions and the use of one voice for responses, as it soon became clear that many folks online trying to speak as one voice becomes a disjointed babble. Different members of the congregation are invited to read, lead, or be the voice for the day, and we also provide the Collect in Arabic and English. We have sung two hymns each week enabling us to retain that important aspect of our liturgy. We post a Zoom ID ahead of each service and have been and still are working to connect people to services via computer, iPad (tablets) and/or the phone. On Palm Sunday we heard the passion narrative read by a father and son, alternating voices, and it was so effective that we asked them to do it again for Good Friday. Our goal is to offer a variety of voices to vary the tone and pace of our worship. As far as vesting is concerned, I do not robe for liturgies but wear clericals.

Following the Sunday service, and other services, people are welcome to stay and chat or leave depending on their inclination and other commitments.

Given the scope and devastation of the global COVID-19 crisis it seems callous to look at the upside, however, one of the blessings of this unprecedented time has been the opportunity for members of our parish who have been, or are currently unable to attend worship mostly due to illness, once again be part of our worshipping community. Another has been that our giving is slightly above budget, as we have a good record of retaining ongoing Pre-Authorized Donation (PAD) subscribers. In fact, we are only behind on our overall budget because a fundraising event had to be cancelled.

In Holy Week at Epiphany we have always celebrated a liturgy each day of the week and this year was no exception. We had Compline (the New Zealand rite), Stations of the Cross (using photographs of our own stations from Epiphany) as well as the Triduum liturgies (again using the Ministry of the Word) taken from the BAS. For many services in Holy Week 2020, attendance was actually better than in-person worship in other years!

Sunday by Sunday numbers have risen, so that 78 (for Easter Day), though not what we would normally expect on that day, are not far short of our Average Sunday Attendance for 2020.

This has taken a good deal of effort and constant communication, inviting people to participate in online worship and offering them assistance in order that they might participate.

In addition, our weekly bible study which we normally hold at an Assisted Living residence continues. Shirley aged 91, has no computer (yet) joins by phone. We also plan to

"...one of the blessings of this unprecedented time has been the opportunity for members of our parish who have been, or are currently unable to attend worship mostly due to illness, once again be part of our worshipping community."



An Easter Garden created by Josie (6) and Olivia (3) with the help of their Nana, the Rev. Christine Rowe, Assistant to the Rector at St. Mary's, Kerrisdale and Regional Dean of Point Grey. PHOTO Christine Rowe



On the Second Sunday of Easter (April 19) Olivia is assisting while wearing her Chelsea Football team gear for the Hill family Zoom meeting to take place later in the day. PHOTO Tom Hill

start a weekly Compline on Mondays starting later in the month as this was very much valued during Holy Week. We'd also held a Quiet Day recently where members of the parish shared reflections of inspiration that had helped and continues to help sustain them during the health emergency. Afterwards each person added their contribution by email to the group who attended as an intentional record of the experience.

Our aim is provide easily accessible worship and ways to connect each week during this time. The parish is also actively sourcing hardware, software, training and expertise

in order to keep online worship and formation as part of our continuing mission and ministry. It is wonderful to hear the voices and in many cases see the faces of those in our parish whose mobility and health have prevented them from attending worship and events at Epiphany.

I am so grateful to the Parish Executive and others for their support and encouragement to enable all of this to happen.

It seems after all you can teach an old dog new tricks, and this *boomer* is doing his best to stay connected and meet the needs of our congregation in this new way. ✦

OPINION

God Didn't Send COVID-19

CHARLES DEMERS

Member of the St. Brigid's Community at Christ Church Cathedral

Though social media has turned us all into part-time exegetes, parsing a real-life plague for meaning is trickier business than it may at first appear. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, each of us has seen more or less well-meaning memes shared by friends or loved ones (or maybe ourselves) about deer moving onto the streets of Japan or prodigal dolphins coming back to Venetian canals we didn't even know they were from in the first place. When Sarah Ferguson shared her half-celebrated, half-notorious thoughts about "Mother Earth sending us to our rooms," they were only the most evocatively phrased and amplified posts of a whole genre of similar online musings.

But this is just the folk festival inversion of the indefensible theology that explains hurricanes by pointing to Pride parades: natural disasters are ascribed to a supernatural force, falling somewhere on the spectrum between Vengeful Patriarch and Stern Public Radio Enthusiast, who disciplines the world in line with our pet social, political, or cultural projects. No, God didn't send COVID-19, claiming lives by the tens of thousands—God didn't send COVID-19 full stop, for what it's worth—in order that we might "hit pause," and contemplate the importance of the simple beauty of baking our own bread, or completing a puzzle as a family in the living room.

And yet: it's not wrong, given the surrounding suffering, and the fear it brings, that we have turned to contemplating the beauty of that bread, or taken a sacred comfort in sheltering with our loved ones. Finding renewed life on the other side of mortification and death shouldn't be a foreign idea in most churches. There's a world of difference between morbidly retrofitting catastrophe to attribute authorship to God's agenda on the one hand and, on the other, turning to God to make sense of things. It's the difference in the tentativeness that begins the Rev. Lynn Ungar's

brehtaking poem, *Pandemic*, written this past March:

*"What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
[...] Center down."*

There's a whole sensibility in that "What if you thought of it as..." that points to a richer understanding of scripture and tradition, as more than just a hindsight *weather app* that will also judge your sex life or spending habits. As the late anti-literalist Marcus Borg counselled, they're sources we have a responsibility to engage with actively.

Because as obscene as it would be to use the current and unfolding tragedy as a moral cudgel, it would be worse to come through a crucible like this unchanged, having learned nothing—that would be death without resurrection. But what are the appropriate lessons to draw from the current circumstances, especially when so much of our ethos, so many of our Christian symbols and shining examples, seem to run contrary to what we're being asked to do? Share a cup—*are you crazy?* Was Francis a saint or an asymptomatic vector? What would Dr. Bonnie Henry say if she saw Jesus *spitting into the dirt and rubbing the mud into a blind man's eyes?*

In her most recent book, *The Lost Art of Scripture*, Karen Armstrong shares a theory which suggests that the Exodus from Egypt—invoked countless times by analogy all down through history to buttress movements for human liberation—may not have been all that literal to begin with. In this reading of the archeological and scriptural records, the people who became known to history as Israel emerged from a loose confederation of hilltop peasant communities who had fled the steeply hierarchical, lowland Canaanite city-states which had been under the regional control of the



Charlie Demers. PHOTO Joshua Berson

Egyptian Pharaoh. Following this line of thinking, the Exodus from Egypt wasn't one ethnic or religious group's long-distance geographical escape from another, but rather one socioeconomic class' relatively short-distance exit from their exploitation.

I don't even begin to pretend to know enough about the history to say whether this theory holds water—whether from the Red Sea, or the Sea of Reeds, or whether those are two different things. But anything that allows us, plausibly, to hear a long-familiar narrative in such a different way can be useful. Here we have the Exodus story in which Pharaoh isn't a man, but a way of doing things. Which means that, as we consider the present plague besetting our Egypt, we can imagine an escape to the Promised Land not as heading somewhere the virus isn't (in literal terms, of course, if there existed such a place, we'd be bringing it with us), but as an insistence upon doing things differently.

Having already warned against cheap shot symbolism, I'll refrain from highlighting the pathetic fallacy of this novel virus having gotten its start in a marketplace; why, that would be silly. What wouldn't be silly is to say that a global society which has made an idol of the profit motive (then started swapping complex golden calf derivatives) left us prone to COVID-19 and has proven incapable of saving us from it. If this seems like the same kind of just-so reverse engineering of nature's auguries to support a political project that I condemned above, imagine the difference between saying Pride parades lead to hurricanes on the one hand and, on the other, saying Pride parades lead to temporary parking inconveniences and brisk bar sales in Vancouver's West End. Better yet, read the work of my friend the science journalist Leigh Phillips on how the 17 years since the SARS outbreak were squandered because pharmaceutical companies couldn't envisage sufficient profits, and public funding bodies didn't have the largesse, to fully develop coronavirus vaccines.

At the same time, those who have kept us alive over the past months are not only, in the words of a popular tweet by Lebanese diplomat Mohamad Safa, "not the CEOs and the billionaires"—but read instead like a list of the very people we've been told, over the last several decades of economic myth-making, were the most indolent, obstructive, entitled, inefficient, easily-replaced, disposable, or low-skilled: public sector employees, civil servants, caregivers, farmworkers, grocery clerks, warehouse workers, delivery drivers, stay-at-home moms. Each day, to keep ourselves afloat bodily and financially, we are having to break with every orthodoxy that's been carefully drilled into our heads. For the first time in my life, the needs of the market are being discussed as separate from and secondary to the general social well-being. And if you're into Exodus imagery and want to know how long we've been in this wilderness—well, I'm about to turn 40.

In other words, the Exodus has already started. We are learning the lessons of this plague in the action of caring for each other through it. For a tiny minority of frontline heroes, this means high-risk, active service; for most of us, it means replacing frenetic activity with quiet and patience; loneliness, anxiety, and dread—like Ezekiel, lying on his side. It means sharing what we have. It means submitting to just authority. It means that we begin to see selfishness clearly again; not as the engine of innovation, but as a tyranny. And one we've escaped before. ✠

The Poem My Spouse Composed That I'd Never Seen

ART TURNBULL

Retired Priest of the diocese of Ontario with Permission to Officiate in the diocese of New Westminster

When my wife, Kathleen Turnbull, known as Gordi, died in the Spring of 2020, among other things it brought about a new beginning (once again). It is hard to choose a time to die. Death comes at the time it does. That a worldwide pandemic was in progress, that visiting in hospitals was limited, that gathering at the time of death by family was not possible, well that did not make any difference. The funeral service had to be experienced in a different way. Live video cast made it possible for family and friends across the land to join in all at the same time. Part of Gordi's personality was incorporated into the service, just what she wanted. There were balloons, lots of balloons, and rock music, - songs that she knew, and quilts that she created, all prominent in the liturgy.

It is the creative part of Gordi that I want to share. Gordi did not start out in life as an artist, a talented woman, a creative spirit in her own right. No, Gordi self-learned her many skills. To be a wife and mother were not taught in school. To build up a cottage business all her own did not involve going to college. Playing music or painting pictures were taught by trial and error. Gordi learned to write and compose poetry by writing poetry. Most of this I watched as it developed but a lot of it I missed. I knew from her writings the story she lived, even some of the hidden



Poet, Gordi Turnbull. PHOTO Submitted

parts. That is why, when I found this wee poem, I was surprised by a glimpse at this wonderful person who shared 60 years of her life with me. You see, Gordi was, is, much more attuned to the spiritual and mystery of practical life and death than I shall ever be. Gordi's God was personal and loving. I did not know she wrote this poem

Spit in His Eye

By G. Turnbull (December 1998)

*I'm not afraid of you my friend
Because you'll get me in the end.
But when it comes my time to die,
I'll face you down and spit in your eye.*

*A new adventure I plan to face
When I leave this earthly place.
Until then I give you warning,
I plan to wake every morning.*

*For now, my life goes on until I hear
That silent whisper in my ear,
Then I'll know it's time to go
And hope to hell it's not below.*

*But even though I'm dead and gone,
Don't count me out, you might be wrong.
So watch what you say and be aware,
You never know, I might still be there!*

that says so much to me. I was unaware that she put these words together 22 years ago. I found them the night before the memorial service and right away decided they had to be included in the saying of goodbye. Yet this is a new beginning for me, for Gordi, as life after death goes on. Easter is living in God's time, learning as we go. ✠



Opening shot/Official Cast photo. PHOTO Brotherhood Press Kit

FILM REVIEW

Brotherhood

DAVID ABBOTT

St. Helen's, West Point Grey

In this strange time of *Stay Home / Reste Chez Toi*, too much inside time has presented me with a warren of rabbit holes. One peculiar rabbit hole I've been burrowing since March 14. Since, the Vancouver premiere of an Anglican disaster movie was showing at the Rio Theatre.

Brotherhood tells the true story of a summer camp in July 1926 that went very wrong. The camp was sponsored by St. James' Cathedral in Toronto and its affiliated Brotherhood of St. Andrew. Led by young men who had survived the Great War, the teenage boys at the camp were mostly the sons of men who hadn't survived the war, or the Spanish Flu that had quickly followed.

Within days of setting up camp at Balsam Lake in Ontario, one 28-year-old leader and ten boys aged 14 to 19 had drowned. Their large war canoe had swamped far off-shore. No one had any meaningful canoe experience. Many couldn't swim. Everyone was enthusiastic about an awfully big adventure.

The movie opens with the boys hiking into camp singing along to the 1926 hit *When the Red, Red Robin (Comes Bob, Bob, Bobbin' Along)*.

One boy, Jack (Gage Munroe) admires the radium-glowing wristwatch, an Ingersoll Radiolite, of an older boy. "Swell," says Will. That was another big thing in '26.

Vernon (Spencer Macpherson) can swim. Waller (Jake) idealizes the Great War. O'Hara (Matthew Isen) has "hypersensitivities" to ragweed. Will (Sam Ashe Arnold) is the annoying kid brother to Jack, the admirer of glowing radium wristwatches.

The two young adult leaders: Robert (Brendan Fehr) has a war wound in the form of a bad limp, and Arthur (Brendan Fletcher) is haunted by his dead son and wife who died from the Spanish Flu.

When almost a dozen are going to end up dead, we need these annotations to keep them apart.

Robert and Arthur are of two minds on the best way to make these boys into men. Is it "Risk" or "Challenge" that builds character? No one thinks of life belts.

Robert, though, is old school: "...get them as far away from electrical sockets as possible. I think electrical things put us further from ourselves."

These are boys and young men who know by heart Titus Oates' last words in 1912: "I am just going outside and maybe some time." You may have forgotten Oates: the boys helpfully remind us that he committed quasi-suicide during Capt. Scott's failed Antarctic adventure (Scott was, also, good friends with J.M. Barrie—see above, it's all connected). Many of the boys will emulate Oates as their cold grip on the swamped canoe weakens. Sacrificing themselves trying to heroically save others. These are boys of adventure.

And, consider this, during that same July 1926 summer, 250 km due north of Balsam Lake in North Bay, a ghost-writer, Leslie McFarlane, was writing the very first three novels about two teenage boys seeking adventure—*The Hardy Boys*.

"To die will be an awfully big adventure."

J.M. Barrie (Peter Pan, act 3)

Brotherhood has a nomination in the Original Song category for the 2020 Canadian Screen Awards. Written by Bramwell Tovey (Vancouver Symphony Orchestra) and director Richard Bell, the naughty pastiche, *I've Got a Big One*, is sung by the boys while being... naughty. It has nothing to do with fishing. Like so much of the movie, *Brotherhood* works hard to get 1926 right both in the ethos of the boys and the look of the film. *Brotherhood*, also, has a nomination in the Visual Effects category.

For some, there will be a certain pleasure in actually hearing the words "Anglican" or "Brotherhood of St. Andrew" said out loud. *Brotherhood* doesn't pretend to be anywhere but at Balsam Lake near Kirkfield, Ontario.

Anglicans have a lousy canoe safety record. The Balsam Lake disaster with the 11 dead is in second place.

First place goes to the 12 boys (12 to 14 years old) and an instructor drowned in June 1978. Their 22-foot war canoe swamped on Lake Timiskaming, Quebec. The canoe trip was part of the curriculum of St. John's School of Ontario, a no-nonsense Anglican boy's school emphasizing "risk-taking, of learning-as-you-go." Years before the boys died, the founder was quoted as saying "We, at St. John's, believe it's better for a kid to die in the woods than to die in front of a television set."

Like the Balsam Lake deaths, the Quebec coroner, would also rule the swamping an accident and no charges were laid. But the coroner would also say, "We feel... this entire expedition constituted an exaggerated and pointless challenge." ♣

FURTHER READING & VIEWING

- *Brotherhood* is streaming now at <https://www.brotherhood1926.com>.
- *Deep Waters: Courage, Character and the Lake Timiskaming Canoeing Tragedy* by James Raffan (HarperFlamingo Canada. 2002. ISBN: 978-0006385745).
- *The New Boys*, a 1974 National Film Board documentary about a long canoe trip made by 13 to 15-year-old boys at St. John's (Anglican) Cathedral Boys' School, at Selkirk, Manitoba. This St. John's school and the St. John's school of the Lake Timiskaming disaster were related. The film can be streamed for free at https://www.nfb.ca/film/new_boys.



Brotherhood Film poster. PHOTO Brotherhood Press Kit



Director/Writer Richard Bell. PHOTO Brotherhood Press Kit

OPINION

Some Background on the Film, Brotherhood

ANNE FLETCHER

Topic Contributor, Parishioner, Christ Church Cathedral

It started in a Thai restaurant on Queen Street in Toronto in 2006, as Richard Bell was reading a newspaper.

It took shape nearly a decade ago in the quiet of Bowen Island's Rivendell Retreat Centre where Mr. Bell, a writer and film director, worked on the screenplay.

Finally, Brotherhood made its Vancouver debut this past March 14 at the Rio Theatre, for Mr. Bell's family and friends and everybody else, just before COVID-19 slammed the doors shut for months to come.

Now available from iTunes, and from Shaw and Telus on-demand streaming, the full-length feature movie sticks closely to the facts of a long-ago Canadian — and Anglican — tragedy.

Eleven teenagers and young men drowned in a canoe accident at a summer boys' camp, run by a chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew from Toronto's St. James' (Anglican) Cathedral, with stories of sacrifice and bravery told by four survivors.

Mr. Bell, a native of Port Coquitlam and a graduate of Studio 58 at Vancouver's Langara College, found himself in that Thai restaurant reading about a church service marking the 80th anniversary of the July 20, 1926 capsizing on Balsam Lake, northwest of Peterborough, Ontario.

In an interview, he said he remembers thinking: "That sounds like a great idea for a movie."

Another film project was jostling for attention at the time, but after the 2008 financial meltdown cleared the decks, the image of boys clinging for hours to an overturned 30-foot canoe came back to him.

By 2010, he had an outline, and the next year, he was on the road to Balsam Lake to see for himself.

A Roman Catholic by upbringing, and a one-time attendee at St. Paul's in Vancouver's West End, Mr. Bell finds he works well in Rivendell's silent natural setting, with its communal sacred hour.

"Being Catholic is in my DNA," he said. "The church-going experience isn't a big part of my life now... but it feels a bit like an old friend."

The bulk of the script was written at the centre, and the theme — boys and how to raise them to manhood — crystallized. "I had my 'aha' moment at Rivendell," Mr. Bell said. "That's the reason these camps existed."

Research showed him that worries about the "boy crisis" were as pervasive in the 1920s as they are now. Alarm over silent gangster movies, passive radio listening, and a "nature deficit" would be echoed decades later by alarm over passive screen time, violent content, and a "nature deficit," yielding unmotivated boys and underachieving young men.

Script in hand, Mr. Bell then spent three years putting financing together, from public sources such as Telefilm Canada. "The great thing about Canada is we have these funds and programs," he said. "But everything is oversubscribed, and things move very slowly."

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund helped pay for an eight-day shoot on the Michipicoten First Nation reserve near Wawa, on Lake Superior.

Reserve residents, watching their first-ever movie shoot, were unjaded and welcoming, even excited, Mr. Bell said. The chief led a smudging ceremony for cast and crew, and band members had behind-the-scenes jobs.

Another eight days of filming the canoe sequences in a Toronto studio wrapped up the shoot. William Rowson, former assis-

tant conductor with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO), wrote the music.

Former VSO conductor, Bramwell Tovey, who wrote music for Mr. Bell's first film, Eighteen, contributed the music and co-wrote the lyrics for a "dirty" song, with Mr. Bell, that the canoeists used to raise their spirits.

Mr. Bell acknowledged that the survivors said they sang hymns to keep themselves going but, being familiar with the minds of young men, he said he imagined they also may have sung something more secular, and then not quite told the whole truth afterwards.

Brotherhood had its first public showings on July 20-21 last year, 93 years to the day after the accident, in the Lions' Hall in the village of Kirkfield near Balsam Lake.

Ontario's lieutenant-governor, Elizabeth Dowdeswell, attended, and subsequently arranged a November 11, 2019 screening at Queen's Park in Toronto.

Mr. Bell had hopes of travelling the Canadian film festival circuit with Brotherhood but, between the completion of the script and the completion of the movie, Donald Trump, Harvey Weinstein, #MeToo, and the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission all happened.

The film about young white men in colonial Canada, although historically accurate, was hit by the swinging pendulum.

"That kind of story had really fallen out of favour," Mr. Bell said. "I didn't predict it, and maybe I timed things badly."

"I want women to have their time in the spotlight," he said, but, perhaps still feeling

the bruises left by that pendulum, he added: "I'm male and I'm white and I don't ever remember it being easy in this industry."

As a firm believer in the middle ground, he said, "let's all move together and let's all succeed."

But a pandemic can change anything, and Mr. Bell sees a message from Brotherhood given new significance by COVID-19.

The backstory to the story is the Great War and the 1918-1919 Spanish flu epidemic, disasters that had touched all the frightened boys and their leaders, who were trying to keep each other going through a dark, cold night.

"It's about pushing through with your community in the face of adversity," Mr. Bell said. "The tribe is really necessary... I do believe in the good of the many." ♣

The Globe. THE WEATHER. Probabilities: Clouds; thunderstorms; then fair. Sun times at 4:55 a.m. and sets at 7:55 p.m. (Standard Time). 16 PAGES.

ELEVEN YOUTHS PERISH IN LAKE AT SUMMER CAMP

Classified Index Of Inside Pages. NEW ARMED FORCE TO STOP RUM LEAKS FROM CANADA TO U.S. Washington Completes Plans for Blockading Frontier. BOOTLEGGERS EQUIPMENT Border Corps to Have Autos, Speed Boats, Searchlights, Arms. CORONER BELIEVES YOUTH MURDERED Thought to Have Been Robbed and Then Placed in Path of Train. NEW FRENCH CABINET BEATEN IN CHAMBER AND RESIGNS OFFICE Herriot Ministry Falls on Its Financial Policy by Vote of 290 to 237. POINCARÉ IS TO SUCCEED He Accepts Responsibility and Begins Consultations Today. TORONTO VICTIMS OF VACATION CAMP TRAGEDY Only Four of Fifteen Survive Terrible 17 Hours' Experience When War Canoe Is Capsized. UNSELFISH HEROISM SHOWN BY TWO LADS TO SAVE THEIR PALS. Swam to Death to Make Room on Upset Canoe for Others. SIMPLE TALE OF TRAGEDY One by One Victims Slip From Overturned Craft as Strength Fails.

Only Four of Fifteen Survive Terrible 17 Hours' Experience When War Canoe Is Capsized. Nine Toronto Homes, One Peterboro' and One Galt Home Saddened by Tragedy on Balsam Lake - Ages of Victims Range From Sixteen to Twenty-eight Years - All Members of St. Andrew's Brotherhood Vacation Camp - Stories of Youthful Heroism Form Stirring Chapter in Canadian Boy's Life. SURVIVORS TELL HARROWING STORY OF COMPANIONS GOING ONE BY ONE Expedition Met Disaster Half Hour After Setting Out. FLAG AT HALF-MAST ON DESERTED CAMP FOLLOWING TRAGEDY. Grey War Canoe Tied to Pier Grim Reminder of Fatal Voyage. SORROWING LADS DEPART.

The Globe. THE WEATHER. Probabilities: Fair and moderately warm. Sun times at 4:55 a.m. and sets at 7:55 p.m. (Standard Time). 16 PAGES.

TIRELESS SEARCH PURSUED ACROSS THE DARK WATERS OF BALSAM LAKE BY VOLUNTEERS

Army of Volunteers Drag Balsam Waters While Mourners Watch. Bereaved Parents Cling to Hope That Loved Ones May Yet Be Alive on Island Shores - Fleet Engaged in Grim Search Led by Sympathetic Clergyman. CIVIC RECOGNITION PROPOSED FOR BRAVE PETERBORO' YOUTH. WRITS FOR ELECTION INDICATE INTENTION OF SESSION IN FALL. N.Y. Strikers Give Up; To Ask for Jobs Back. 10 PERSONS KILLED WHEN BUS OVERTURNS. DRIVER LOST CONTROL. From Heat 50 in States.

MONSTER STAGES Strange Animal Walk. FORMER U.P.O. WHIP CONSERVATIVE CHOICE. Andrew Hicks Nominated at Convention in South. EXPLAINS HIS CHANGE. PREMIER IS READY TO AID IN SEARCH. Government Aeroplane Will Go to Balsam Lake if Request is Made. MAY GO FROM SUBURBY. PREMIER'S READY TO AID IN SEARCH. MAY GO FROM SUBURBY. PREMIER'S READY TO AID IN SEARCH. MAY GO FROM SUBURBY.

REFERENCE IS MADE IN VARIOUS CHURCHES TO DROWNING TRAGEDY: Ministers ...
The Globe (1844-1936); Jul 26, 1926; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Globe and Mail
pg. 13

REFERENCE IS MADE IN VARIOUS CHURCHES TO DROWNING TRAGEDY

**Ministers Speak of Courage
and Fortitude of Young
Men Who Perished in
Waters of Balsam Lake,
and Congregations Stand
While Organs Peel Forth
Dead March, in Memory
of Youths**

**TRIBUTE IS PAID
BY CANON PLUMPTRE**

Stirred by the tragedy enacted during the past week at Balsam Lake when 11 young lives were wiped out, most of the churches in Toronto and many in other parts of Eastern Ontario expressed yesterday their sympathy with the parents and friends of the dead youths, and their sorrow at the loss that the church and the community had sustained in their untimely deaths. In many of the city churches the congregation stood at the conclusion of the service while the Dead March was played, while in others, parts of the service was of a memorial nature, when feeling reference was made to the valor and fortitude of those who had perished, and the manner in which they had faced death.

Lives an Inspiration.

"These young men stood for nothing but what was high and good, they were picked young men, picked to be leaders of boys," declared Canon Plumptre, at the evening service at St. James's Cathedral, in paying tribute to the eleven youths who lost their lives in Balsam Lake.

Referring to the Christian life as a race, Canon Plumptre pointed out the inspiration that should be derived by the runners from the victorious multitudes that have gone before. "In these young men," he said, "we have additional inspiration to run the race with pluck and endurance such as was demonstrated by them." He believed that sainthood consisted in an individual making the best of the circumstances of life in which God had placed him, and declared that the victims of Balsam Lake had these qualities of sainthood. "A streak of joy, too, runs through our sorrow," he said, "as we think of those whom we are mourning, passing in their beauty of character into the life beyond." The bereaved were urged to look to Christ for comfort, for there alone, he declared, could comfort be found.

"Now let us before the crowd of witnesses to whom these brave young spirits have been added, cast aside the weight of sin and run the race before us with patience, pluck and endurance, looking unto Jesus for our help," Canon Plumptre concluded.

News of Tragedy.

Before giving out his text Canon Plumptre announced the latest news from the scene of the tragedy and informed the congregation that, with the parents' permission, he would have the bodies taken to the Chapel at St. James's Cemetery, where, after a service, interment would take place in one large plot that had already been set aside, and that a memorial service of a more public character would be held at a later date.

He expressed the hope that the sad accident would not prejudice people against such camps, "for," he declared, "the camp movement was one of the happiest of the present time in that the many thousands attending them seldom got anything but good."

Immediately following the benediction, Canon Plumptre read the names of the victims, after which Dr. Albert Ham, the organist, played the "Dead March in Saul," the congregation standing.

Christie Street Hospital.

At all the services held in the various wards of Christie Street Hospital yesterday, tribute was paid to the memory of the victims of Balsam Lake, the memorial hymn "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," being used, and at one point in each

(Continued on Page 14, Column 6.)

Connected With Firm
For Half-Century

REFERENCE IS MADE TO DROWNING TRAGEDY

(Continued from Page 13, Column 7.)

of the services, the patients stood with bowed heads for the "period of silence." Rev. Sydney Lambert, chaplain of the hospital, conducted the services assisted by the choir of Christ Church, Deer Park. The same form of service was also used at Red Cross Outpost Hospital at the Island. The inclusion of the tribute and prayers was the result of a call sent out by the Bishop, to the clergymen of Toronto Diocese, urging that special prayers be said for the comfort of the parents and relatives of the deceased youths.

Kew Beach Church.

At the morning service held Sunday in Kew Beach United Church, Rev. Dr. W. D. Lee, supplying the pulpit in the absence of Rev. J. A. Cranston, the minister, made reference to the terrible tragedy which had visited members of sister churches in the loss through drowning of 11 young men. Following Dr. Lee's sermon, the congregation stood in reverence, expressing their deepest sympathy for the families and friends of those thus suddenly bereaved.

Honor Dead Boy.

Peterboro, July 25.—"We honor him who is gone, and hold our heads high, even with tears in our eyes. We honor Raymond Allen as one who lived as a real man, and who died as a hero." With these words the Rev. J. Douglas Paterson, rector of All Saints' Church, referred to the sudden and tragic death of the young member of the church who was drowned in Balsam Lake with ten companions. The occasion was a short memorial service held at the conclusion of the regular morning service today, and the speaker referred to the fact that he had been the sole support of his mother and her younger children. The work of the young man as a sidesman in the church, as a member of the A.Y.P.A. and the boys' club, and as a teacher in the Sunday school, was recalled, and the rector said that he would doubtless have advanced to even more responsible offices in the church.

To Hold Service.

Cohoconk, July 25.—(Special.)—Rev. W. F. Wrixon, Christ Church, yesterday announced that he was arranging a memorial service for the 11 victims of the St. Andrew's Brotherhood tragedy, to be held on Sunday, Aug. 8, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in St. Thomas's Anglican Church, Balsam Lake, situated two miles from the scene of drowning. Mr. Wrixon anticipated that several prominent Toronto clergymen would assist in the service.

Taking charge of St. Andrew's Brotherhood Camp on Saturday, Mr. Wrixon shipped camp equipment and the personal belongings of the boys to St. James's Parish House, Toronto. Mr. Wrixon stated that he was personally watching dragging operations, and would have the care of the bodies, communicating with Toronto when any bodies were discovered.

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Brotherhood of St. Andrew

ANNE FLETCHER

Topic Contributor; Parishioner, Christ Church Cathedral

The route was long and circular—from Chicago in the late 19th century, across the wider United States; over the Pacific Ocean to the Philippines with American colonizers; and, finally, back across the Pacific to Greater Vancouver with Filipino immigrants.

In the end, a century after its decline here, the growing Filipino presence in the diocese of New Westminster has regenerated a long moribund church group for men and boys: *The Brotherhood of St. Andrew*.

Arvin Amayag, priest at St. Mary's, Sapperton, brought experience of the Brotherhood with him when he came to Canada in 2014, from the northern Philippines. After he was installed as vicar at St. Mary's in April 2017, he promptly persuaded his new congregation to set up a chapter. On May 15, 2017, in a service with then-Bishop, now Archbishop, Melissa Skelton, 24 men were admitted to the new chapter.

At the time, Amayag told *Topic*: "It's been my observation, every church that has a Brotherhood of St. Andrew, it helps the vibrancy of the church."

In 1883, a handful of young men at St. James Church, Chicago, dismayed by the plight of homeless men sleeping on the downtown streets of their booming city, founded the Brotherhood, devoting themselves collectively to prayer, evangelism and service.

Into the 20th century, the Brotherhood enjoyed a healthy membership across Canada, until the 1914–1918 Great War decimated its leadership.

In this diocese, both St. John the Evangelist, North Vancouver and Christ Church Cathedral hold memorials to Brotherhood members killed in the war. (See *Topic*, November 2017).

The 1926 Balsam Lake, Ontario tragedy, where 11 teenagers and young men at a Brotherhood camp drowned in a canoe accident, pushed the Brotherhood deeper into national decline.

In the US, with its 1917 entry into the war and with correspondingly fewer casualties, the Brotherhood carried on, though with less fervour.

American Episcopalians took the Brotherhood with them to the Philippines. But there, too, the organization stagnated after World War II.

Amayag dates the Filipino revival back to about 2000. Leaders looked hard at a church dominated by women and children—an all-men's organization with membership by invitation seemed a way to keep boys in and bring men back, he said.

That's an objective the Brotherhood of St. Andrew chapter at St. James Cathedral, Toronto, might have recognized, as it planned its Balsam Lake camp for that sad summer of 1926. ♦



Padi Bro. Arvin Amayag (right) poses with Evelyn Tagura of Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines in February 2019.

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

**Deadline for
Topic Submissions
July 26 for the September issue**

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

OPINION

Treasures Old & New

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

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

I have two handsome books in my study. I have come to realize that they are far more than books. They are actually treasure chests. Fittingly as treasure chests they are bound in leather and lettered in gold. One is called the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), the other the *Book of Alternative Services* (BAS).

From the late 16th century to the mid 20th century the *Book of Common Prayer* is the text with which all Anglicans once worshiped, and many continue to do so today. However, the *Book of Alternative Services* has taken its own place with many Anglicans, and there has developed much experimenting with liturgies beyond both books.

My own experience came from being of a particular generation. I came to know the *Book of Common Prayer* as a seven-year-old choirboy in 1935. By 1965, I had been formed as an Anglican by its beauty. I knew large sections of it off by heart—Psalms, Collects, Prayers. I know those things to this day. Beauty remains.

On the other hand, when in the 1980s I first received the *Book of Alternative Services*, I was interested and excited because I felt that these new forms would lead us eventually to the next generation of the *Book of Common Prayer*. For many reasons this did not happen, and I for one regret this.

After a few years of using both books regularly at Sunday worship I began a quest. I was already aware of many beautiful things in the pages of the BCP. I now began to search for beauty in the BAS. Over time that quest has been richly rewarded.

I would like then to offer two short lists of treasures found; both lists very obviously partial.

First, seven things I treasure from the *Book of Common Prayer*:

1. An Offertory Sentence: *You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor that you through his poverty might become rich.*
2. The Collect for the fourth Sunday after Trinity: *O God, increase and multiply upon us thy mercy, that we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal.*
3. General Intercession: *Remember for good all those that love us, and those who hate us, and those that have desired us, unworthy as we are, to pray for them. And those whom we have forgotten, do thou O Lord, remember.*
4. From Family Prayers: *For life and health and safety, for power to work and leisure to rest, for all that is beautiful in creation and in the lives of men and women, we praise and magnify thy holy name.*
5. From Psalm 84: *O how lovely are thy dwellings, thou Lord of hosts! Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.*
6. From a prayer at Eventide: *Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done.*
7. From the prayer of Humble Access before receiving Communion: *We do not presume to come to this thy table... trusting in our own righteousness but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under*

thy table...

Now a list from the pages of the *Book of Alternative Services*:

1. A powerful succinct summing up of Christian faith used in the Eucharist: *Christ has died: Christ is Risen: Christ will come again.*
2. From a prayer translated from the Dutch for use in the Burial Offices: *God of grace and glory, we thank you for N. who was so near and dear to us, and who now has*
3. Litany of the Holy Spirit: *Come Holy Spirit, breath of God, give life to the dry bones of this exiled age, and make us a living people, holy and free.*
4. From Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child: A prayer for a child born handicapped:



PHOTO Randy Murray

been taken from us. We pray that nothing good in this woman's life will be lost... and that everything in which she was great will continue to mean much to us now that she is dead...

Note how sensitively this prayer is given its title. What is made primary is the child, not the handicap. *God, grant us understanding, compassionate and accepting hearts, and the gifts of courage and patience to face the challenge of caring for (our child). Let your love for us show forth in our lives, that we may create an atmosphere where he (or she) will live a life full of dignity and worth...*

5. From the Occasional Prayers, a prayer for those suffering from Addiction: *...look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom... remove the fears that attack them, strengthen them in the work of their recovery, and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love...*
6. From the Blessing of a Marriage: *Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship, in their sleeping and in their waking, in their joys and in their sorrows...*
7. From the Commendation in the Burial Offices: *You only O Christ are immortal, the creator and maker of all; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return... All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*

There is my list of treasures. My hope is that you may roam in these two books and find material that you will come to treasure. ✠

Reasons Beyond Reason

LESLIE BUCK

St. Paul's, Vancouver

Anyone who indulges in the pastime of refuting the so-called New Atheists (NA) soon notices that somehow the NAs are missing the point. Francis Spufford, in his book entitled *Unapologetic* (HarperOne, 2013), identifies what they miss: they miss out on the *emotional* appeal of Christianity.

Spufford does not try to refute their claims—in fact, he concedes many of them—but instead insists on a broader view of the matter. Religion is not merely a set of propositions which may be either true or false, but a whole-person response to life that is emotional (or intuitive, if you prefer the word) as much as it is intellectual. We seek not only an understanding of the universe and our place in it, but also look for an emotional relationship to it. It is rather like falling in love: while you may need to know what you are getting yourself into, feelings finally determine the issue.

He sets his argument in the context of his observations about people. He notes the human propensity to mess things up, and the feeling we all have that there is something more to life than what is immediately to hand. Then he shows how the life and teaching of Jesus tell us what that something more might be.

Alec Ryrie, in his book entitled *Unbelievers* (Harvard University Press, 2019), takes up the matter from the perspective of an historian. He reminds us that in Western Europe at least, unbelief is not new, and that the unbelief that was present in Greek philosophy—in the form of Epicureanism, for example—took on new life in the 13th century when the Renaissance revived interest in classical thought.

Ryrie offers evidence that the unbelief

we see today developed in the first place from two emotional sources: anger and anxiety. Anger was directed against a Church that claimed authority to absolve from, or condemn to, eternal damnation. The easiest way to avoid the oppression exercised on the basis of that claim was to deny the reality of an afterlife, and many people did (although they kept the thought to themselves).

Anxiety arose as a consequence of the 16th century Protestant Reformation. Believers were now offered a choice between two ways of avoiding eternal damnation: Catholic piety or Protestant faith. To make matters worse, Protestant faith was offered in more than one form: Lutheran or Calvinist or others besides. As each and every side accused the others of unbelief, the individual believer was left bewildered and anxious. Unbelief was an obvious way out of the dilemma.

Unbelief in an afterlife is not, of course, full-blown atheism—one can reject that belief and still (as the Sadducees did) hold to a belief in God—but it is a start. Ryrie's contention is that such unbelief, based on anger and anxiety, was the forerunner of a broader unbelief based upon intellectual considerations. It was only in the 17th century that reasoned arguments against religion began to develop, notably with the works of Spinoza, and from there it was a direct line to our present-day NAs. But reasoning of that kind, for the most part, only confirms what one already intuitively believes to be true.

Today in our part of the world (but not, we should always bear in mind, in every part) we are faced with the outcome. The

outcome, as Spufford and Ryrie both point out, is not wholly unacceptable. We have set aside a great deal of cant and hypocrisy; we concern ourselves with questions of social, ethnic, economic and gender equality, rather than personal sexual behaviour; we prophetically criticise our leaders instead of remaining in thrall to them; and we spend more time serving others than compelling them to come in.

At the same time most of those others whom we try to serve claim to have no religion, which indicates that we have somehow failed to communicate the faith that is within us. What are we to do about that?

In trying to do something about it, it seems to me that we give too much importance to the New Atheists' claims that Christianity is irrational nonsense. We assume that non-believers agree with them, and conclude that our task, therefore, is to prove the NAs wrong. Spufford and Ryrie, by contrast, suggest that the problem, and its solution, lie elsewhere. When non-believers find Christianity irrelevant or unappealing, it is on emotional grounds, not intellectual.

If they are right, our task is not to argue with reason but to appeal with emotion. In so far as non-believers are ignorant, it is ignorance of what we have to offer them: a path to the transcendent, and a way of living life with meaning. If that is true, our strongest weapon in combatting unbelief is what Archbishop Melissa Skelton calls our *Anglican ethos and character*. We have no need to search for something new and extraordinary. We have sufficient at hand if we will only examine it and make use of it. ✠



First Notions

NII K'AN KWSDINS

Missioner for Indigenous Justice Ministries; Parishioner at St. James'

Strength in Our Community

This is an unusual year for all of us, and yet we are finding new ways to stay connected to our Anglican brothers and sisters. Similarly, our *Kwblii Gibaygum Nisga'a Dance* family is finding ways for its members to stay connected to one another. We still meet via Zoom for singing and dancing practice, and we begin and end each session as we always do with prayer and positive affirmations. We also meet on Zoom for our weekly language classes. We miss each other and the Nisga'a connections that have brought us together—connections that we would have had if we were in our home communities on the Nass River in Northern British Columbia, sharing our lives together.

The fact that my grandparents could not move about at will without permission in the 1940s and 1950s has an eerie feel because it is similar to the restrictions we experience today due to the COVID-19 pandemic, encouraging us to remain at home.¹ Mind you, we do have permission to leave our houses, but it is a strange feeling not

being free to move about at will or gather as a group in British Columbia and the rest of the country.

Today we have not gone that far about not being able to move about. We don't need written permission to go to work and go food shopping to provide for our families. But as Indigenous people we really miss that we cannot gather in groups due to the pandemic. It is in our nature to be with other people, and we are missing our friends and families.

Despite all the restrictions, Indigenous people had to preserve our traditions and pass on our history and rites of passage to our children as they grew up in order to ensure them the opportunity to become leaders for our future. The most telling thing that shows the strength of our people, even during these hardships, is the way that the stories, songs and spiritual ways are coming back to us in a very strong way. It is not that we lost these things, as much as they went underground. I remember that

in the early years of my life my grandfather hid some of his bentwood boxes and his small carved pole upstairs in our home in Old Aiyansh. Even though the law against potlatches was repealed in 1950, it took a long time before cultural items were brought back into the light.

Another example of this underground culture were the stories that Elders kept to themselves but did reveal when they gathered together, telling them to each other when they came to visit. These stories included our rights to our traditional territories and the spiritual connection we have to our land. It was such an enlightening moment when they got together. I did not appreciate these moments as a child, and only realized the importance of these conversations when I got older.

One of the ingenious ways the Elders kept their language alive was to translate the Christian hymns of the early missionaries into Nisga'a. They could hardly be criticized for speaking their own language instead of English when they were using their voices to praise the Lord!

But besides trying to hang onto our culture, most of all it was the caring for each other that kept us together. I had so much love and care from my relatives on both sides of my family. My grandmother was the one responsible for taking care of me, but I had so many *moms* who took care of me as well.

I have listened to Dr. Martin Brokenleg's podcast *Heart Learning with Dr. Martin Brokenleg*.²

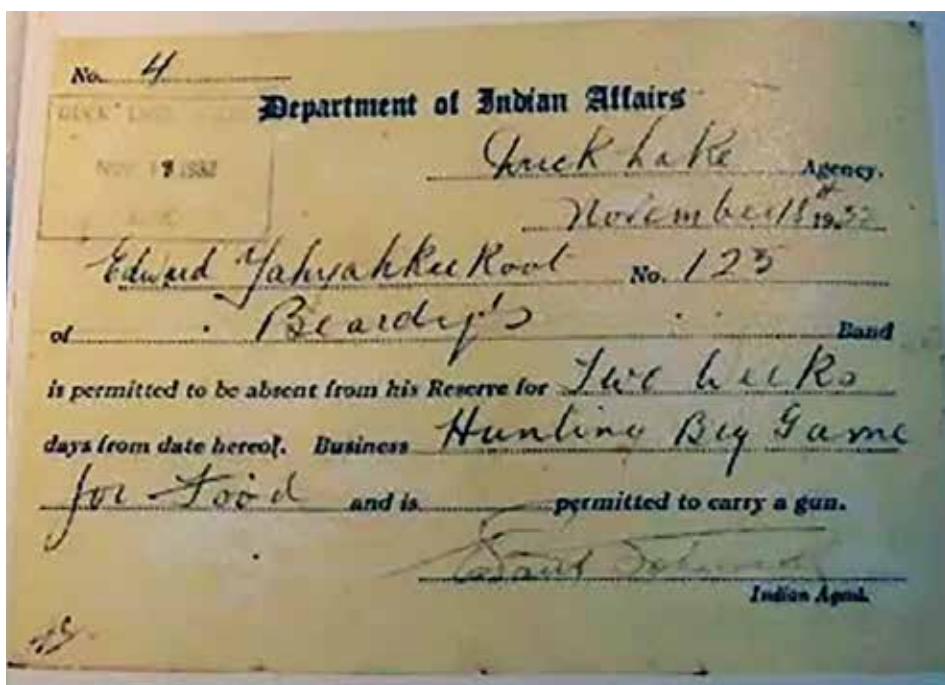
Dr. Brokenleg, who is both an Anglican priest and a Sioux pipe-carrier talks about the importance of a different kind of knowledge than what we learn with our heads. It is what we learn with our hearts through the direct experiences we have as we practise our culture and our spiritual beliefs. As our Nisga'a dance group continues to keep practising and speaking our language by social media, we strengthen our hearts. For all the setbacks we have had since the

Europeans landed in the Americas, our people have survived, and we have come back with strength through the protocols of our culture.

The love that this "heart learning" creates became apparent when we went home for *Hoobiyee*, the celebration of the Nisga'a New Year. The second of two First Notions articles in the May 2020 issue of *Topic* describes our experience, and the feeling we all had being in our home territory. Our children were awestruck by how all our relatives remember us, and also by the way that relatives they had not yet met before welcomed them home and embraced them as true family.

This pandemic has not stopped our Nisga'a dance practice or language classes. Our Indigenous community is still connected as it was in the past, and we need each other for continued love and support for our well-being. Nisga'a and Christian communities alike need to stay united and continue to celebrate our belief in God, and practise our own family and cultural rituals, to remain united as we face and ultimately overcome the unknown. The Nisga'a and other Indigenous Nations have persevered through many a setback and we have survived, as we all will today after this pandemic is over.

Aama sa ☩



A permission note issued in 1932 for a native man to leave the Reserve to go hunting for food.



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