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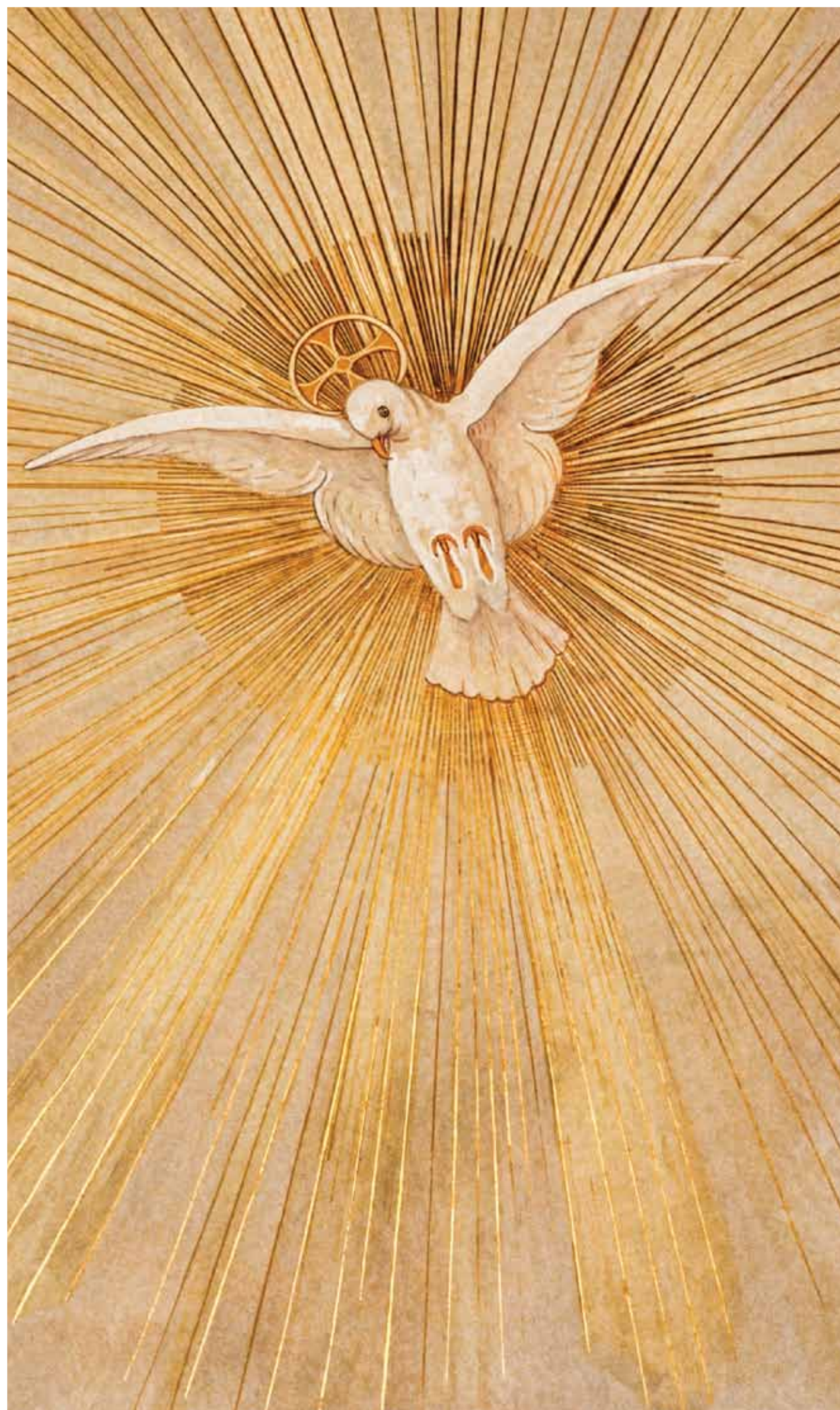
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## Ordinary Time

**A Reflection from Bishop Melissa Skelton**

*The Fire of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's arrival in the form of the Dove at Pentecost is one of the most powerful images in Christianity. As this issue of Topic is due in homes around June 8th, The Feast of Pentecost for 2014, we asked Bishop Melissa Skelton if she would offer a brief reflection about the season that follows, Ordinary Time. • Editor*

*"I think of Ordinary Time as a time of Godly spaciousness when the small moments of life can be savored and experienced for the sense of the sacred that they bear."*

Ordinary Time: that time in the Church year that can be defined by what it is not — Ordinary Time is not Advent or Christmas or Lent or Easter. Ordinary time: a time that is neither characterized by feasting nor fasting. Ordinary time: a time whose name we draw from the Latin word *ordinalis* referring to numbers in a series. And a long series it is with its green vestments, its fading memories of Easter and not a hint of Advent on the horizon.

I think of Ordinary Time as a time of Godly spaciousness when the small moments of life can be savored and experienced for the sense of the sacred that they bear. This savoring often depends on our ability to slow down and allow ourselves simply to be present.

Poet Laureate of New York State, Marie Howe, was raised a Roman Catholic. In her book entitled *The Kingdom of the Ordinary* she explores how a person can inhabit the apparently unremarkable moments of their everyday life. This can happen, some of her poems suggest, by setting aside our haste. In her poem entitled *Hurry*, Howe catches herself in the act of hurrying her own daughter and then chooses a different path. I hope that you will too, stopping and savoring some of the small moments in Ordinary Time. ✠

.....

**Hurry**

By Marie Howe

We stop at the dry cleaners and the grocery store and the gas station and the green market and  
Hurry up honey, I say, hurry,  
as she runs along two or three steps behind me  
her blue jacket unzipped and her socks rolled down.

Where do I want her to hurry to? To her grave?  
To mine? Where one day she might stand all grown?  
Today, when all the errands are finally done, I say to her,  
Honey I'm sorry I keep saying Hurry —  
you walk ahead of me. You be the mother.

And, Hurry up, she says, over her shoulder, looking  
back at me, laughing. Hurry up now darling, she says,  
hurry, hurry, taking the house keys from my hands

.....



# Bishop Melissa Skelton at Christ Church Cathedral • Holy Week 2014

NEALE ADAMS

Communications Officer Emeritus, Diocese of New Westminster; parishioner, Christ Church Cathedral

The Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton, the new Bishop, preached three sermons and gave an informal talk at Christ Church Cathedral (CCC) during Holy Week and told a personal story each time. She spoke a lot about herself and—by implication—what she will expect of the diocese.

Bishop Melissa Skelton was present and preached at all services of the *Paschal Triduum*, the ancient name for the three sacred days—Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Great Vigil at the dawn of Easter Day.

In addition, she spoke at the Maundy Thursday parish supper, anointed four children during a Baptism service at 8 am Easter Day, and preached at the main choral celebration Easter morning. She had spent Palm Sunday with St. James', Vancouver.

The Bishop was elected at an electoral Synod on November 30th and ordained and installed as Bishop on March 1st at the Vancouver Convention Center and the Cathedral. Her previous post was rector of St. Paul's in Seattle and Canon for Congregational Development for the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia, headquartered in Seattle.

Her messages over the three days included the following:

- That the Church could and should be entrepreneurial as business.
- That we come together as family in the Eucharist not only to remember, but to prepare for new challenges.
- That we have the potential, capacity, beauty, and power to serve in the world.
- That we must let go of much that we have been attached to in order to move into a future we have not yet imagined.

Her first messages came in an informal talk to about 120 at the Cathedral's Maundy Thursday parish supper. Bishop Melissa spoke about her upbringing in the southern US before and during the Civil Rights movement. She had been born in Columbus, Georgia, to a military family of four children. "Our family was at the bottom rung of the economic ladder."

During a time of racial segregation, "My parents were seen as liberal," she said. When she was in Grade 7, they moved from Birmingham, Alabama, to Atlanta, Georgia, a city still in the south but somewhat more racially tolerant. Much later, but early in her career as a priest, she served two African-American parishes—one of which had a chapter of the Black Panthers "as part of parish life."

She spoke of coming to the West Coast from Maine a decade ago to work in Seattle. At her Anglo-Catholic parish in Seattle she found "a palpable sense of prayer in the place—you could cut it with a knife." She learned she could pray, "in any way I wanted to." She asked the Christ Church Cathedral parish whether Anglicans could have "the boldness to pray for what we want to see."

She spent time in business, twice venturing into the business world (she holds an MBA) in marketing at the firm of Proctor and Gamble and later at the natural products firm Tom's of Maine. The business experience opened up a belief that with others much can be accomplished. In contrast to what she had found as a "passive" attitude at Virginia Theological Seminary, she found that business people had a "stunning" confidence that enabled them to act.

"Why should business have the corner on creativity and possibility?" she asked the group.

In a question period, she clarified that a more business-like approach by the Church should in no way mean abandoning what is good in Anglicanism. "No—I want to be entrepreneurial in presenting the old way."

While in marketing, she worked on building a brand identity for products like shampoo and toothpaste. While



Meditating on the cross on Good Friday. PHOTO Neale Adams

she wouldn't use similar marketing terms (like "brand") for promoting the Church, she did feel Anglicans must ask themselves the question: "What's the deep identity of our tradition?"

In her Maundy Thursday sermon, the Bishop noticed that the readings for the day were all about meals: the first about the initial Passover in Egypt; the second, Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist; the Gospel was John's account of the Last Supper with Jesus' washing of feet.

"Why is it, then, that at times like these, Scripture depicts God urging us to come to eat a meal together? God, like some kind of obtrusive mother or father who, when we're feeling lost, body and soul sick, stands at our elbow urging us to put a little something in our mouths."

"Eating together as a family or tribe has always been about community," she said, showing our "connection to each other and to the source of all life."

"But there's more. In the readings tonight, we also eat to remember... We eat as a way to acknowledge that we have been and are still dependent on God's graciousness for the basic sustenance of our lives.

And what is more, we eat in anticipation of a future life... Eating a meal, especially in times of confusion and loss is about the affirmation that God will create a path forward and that we need only do our part to accept the food that God is giving us now to find our way along that path."

The Bishop told of a time when, as a school child, she moved with her military family from Birmingham, Alabama, to Atlanta, Georgia, hoping at that time to escape some of the racism present then in the southern United States. Birmingham had been "the centre of orchestrated resistance to the Civil Rights movement." Her family, considered liberal at that time, wanted to shield their children from "racist messages."

But soon after arriving in Atlanta, at a baseball game

her father had taken his children to, an incident between innings involving a black man at a concession stand showed him that the family had not escaped "the inhumanity of racism."

Returning to their new home, expecting only sandwiches and a drink, the father and his children found something else:

"We found our wilted mother standing in an overheated kitchen in front of a table on which she had placed two lit candles. In the middle of the table was a pile of steaming pasta and a bowl of fragrant sweet, red tomato sauce. Next to it was an enormous salad and a large basket of toasted garlic bread. For us, this was the dish of celebration, the dish of birthdays, holidays and special family events.

Now looking back on it all—looking back on the little beleaguered family that was mine, looking back on the experience of brokenness my parents had hoped we could flee, looking back on the challenges that surely lay before us, I can only imagine that this meal, the one that she and they offered us was her way of saying: 'Remember, family, we have had this meal that I have labored to give you, this meal of celebration, before. We are having it here too and will have it here again in this sweltering and seemingly hostile place of your loss and dislocation.'

Though you are beleaguered and overwhelmed, you are loved by me. Though the future will not be easy, you are loved by me. Eat. We will need to love one another here in this new place, where for now all we believe we have is each other. We will need to love one another."

On Good Friday, the Bishop focused on the way John's Gospel presents Jesus in the passion story. He is "strangely unemotional."

"Unlike the Gospel of Mark showing us a Jesus who asks that the cup of suffering be taken away from him and who cries out from the cross asking God why God has forsaken him, unlike the

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



Published ten months a year as a section of the *Anglican Journal* by the Bishop and Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster.

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**Issue** This is the 6th issue in the 45th year of publication.

**Deadline For Submissions** July 25th, 2014, for the September 2014 issue.

**Subscriptions**

The *Anglican Journal* and *Topic* are sent to members of a parish who pay for it through their contributions to the national Church. Others, \$10. For address changes, please notify your parish secretary or write:

Topic c/o Anglican Journal,  
80 Hayden Street, Toronto ON M4Y 3G2  
or visit [www.vancouver.anglican.ca](http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca)  
and click the link for subscription changes located in the footer of every page.

**Printed and Mailed By**

Webnews Printing Inc., North York ON  
Circulation 6,350

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**Thank you!**





LEFT Bishop Melissa speaking about her life at the Maundy Thursday parish supper at CCC. "Why should business have the corner on creativity and possibility?" she asked those in attendance. MIDDLE Bishop Melissa preaching on Maundy Thursday. "We eat as a way to acknowledge that we have been and are still dependent on God's graciousness for the basic sustenance of our lives." RIGHT Lighting the Paschal Candle in the Hillman Garden outside of Christ Church Cathedral at 5:30 am on Easter Day. PHOTOS Neale Adams

#### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Gospel of Luke that depicts Jesus interacting both with weeping women along his path to the cross and with arguing bandits on either side of him as he is being crucified, unlike these stories in which Jesus either expresses or is surrounded by so much feeling, John's passion story presents us with a Jesus and with others who express little emotion during the intense events of his betrayal, trial and crucifixion.

This Jesus is the one who does not have anyone helping him with his cross but who carries the cross by himself. This Jesus is the one who does not cry out in agony on the cross but who declares that his life has been made complete there, that it is there upon the cross that his life has found its consummation."

The Bishop interpreted John's account as stressing "royal dignity and his regal capacity in and for a new kingdom in which all have dignity and worth." This idea, she said, is in baptism, in which she believes we undergo "a kind of coronation" and share in Jesus' reigning.

For many people it is difficult for them to conceive of themselves as being a king or queen "with the responsibility to create and sustain the realm of God," the Bishop said.

But John presents a "King Jesus [as] one whose dignity, gravitas, power and beauty defeat the powers of this world that would have him and us believe that we have no potential, no capacity, no beauty and no power."

"At times, it is more than we can believe: that God has gained mastery and dominion over the powers that intimidate us and that our true humanity flows from this mastery and dominion, that our true humanity is to be the kind of royalty that he was and is, pouring out our life as he did for the sake of the world?"

The Bishop concluded the Good Friday sermon with a poem by American poet and pacifist William Stafford, *A Story that Could be True*, which begins by asking the reader to imagine that in the cradle, he or she was exchanged for another baby. It ends: "Who are you really, wanderer?" —and the answer you have to give no matter how dark and cold the world around you is: "Maybe I'm a king."

On Sunday morning, after lighting the Easter fire at dawn in the Hillman Memorial Garden outside the Cathedral, Bishop Melissa presided and preached on John's account of the Resurrection. She began with a recurring dream:

"I'm on the land around my former farmhouse in Maine, the house that for so long was the geographical centre of my heart. I walk up to the front door and as I do so, I look towards the cove: a tiny inlet bounded by what used to be an apple orchard running down to the water's edge. The tide is coming in something fierce, with whitecaps all around.

I bound up the front steps and put my hand on the doorknob. I'm wired. I'm about to go into the house of my longing, the house with its little bead board kitchen, an office that looks out over the cove, a door from the kitchen that opens onto a magical barn: the house within which I lived as a married person and from which I discovered nature anew as an adult. I turn the knob, thinking of all these things, anticipating returning to all of these things... then I wake up.

This, of course, is just a dream, the dream of one person: a woman who moved from a place and a house that she loved some ten years



Bishop Melissa washes the feet of one of Christ Church Cathedral's honorary assistant priest's, the Rev. Dr. Linda St. Clair. PHOTO Neale Adams

ago, that, even now, she cannot completely forget. But within this dream and its abrupt and unfulfilling ending is part of the message of our Easter Gospel for this morning, part of the Easter message that has your name and my name on it: though we yearn to hold onto the people and places and circumstances we have loved, resurrected life is not about holding on to what was.

Instead, resurrected life is giving ourselves over to the dynamic process of newness as we follow the risen Lord into a future we can neither imagine nor completely control!"

The Gospel of John also illustrates the desire to hold on to what we have loved, the Bishop said, in the story of how Mary Magdalene encountered the risen Jesus.

"She is weeping because she believes someone has stolen Jesus' body. But before the angels have a chance to say anything else to her, she senses that someone is outside the tomb, someone she assumes is the caretaker of the garden.

"Why are you weeping?" the man asks, but then adds another question: "Whom are you looking for?"

But then everything shifts.

"Mary" the man says, and she knows immediately who he is. She replies 'Rabbouni' (which means 'my beloved teacher'), the familiar way she might have addressed Jesus while he was alive.

But then he says something to her that I believe is directed towards us as well on this Easter morning. 'Don't hold onto me,' he says."

The Bishop said that in some ways Jesus' action seems

"strange and even cruel." What does it mean for her and for us to be told not to cling, not to grasp, not to hold onto him?

"Doing what he says will not be easy, for loosening our grasp on who and what we are attached to can feel like death itself. This is because our attachments, like Mary's attachment to Jesus, have been good and life-giving.

Just like my beloved farmhouse in Maine, each of our attachments has its own particularities that have hold of us. Each has a particular look and sound and smell and feel connected to it. To let go of these particularities in order to go forward in an empty-handed way — how can we do it?

The only one who can help us is the one who gives us an image to hold onto even as we are letting go of someone or something precious to us. That image is the Easter image of the one who has passed through death into life, who has gone from being 'Rabbouni' that is 'dear Teacher' to being proclaimed as 'Kurios,' that is 'the Lord,' the one whose presence will fill all things, making it possible to move into a future that we have not as yet imagined and will never completely control.

'Don't hold onto to me.' Jesus says to Mary Magdalene, the first person he speaks to after his resurrection. He says this to her and to us not to be insensitive and cruel but because God forever goes before us into the future and asks us, needs us to follow him there ready, as brothers and sisters of the Lord of Life, ready and empty handed, empty handed and ready. ♣

## PONTIUS' PUDDLE by Joel Kauffmann



## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

compiled by Anglican Archivist Melanie Delva

45 years • 1969 Archbishop Gower conducts the consecration of Douglas Hambidge as Bishop of Caledonia.

"Disking" catches on in parishes of the diocese with clubs starting in Holy Trinity, Vancouver and St. Mary's, Kerrisdale among others.

40 years • 1974 Delegates to the 68th Session of Synod debate "Plan of Union" with the United Church of Canada.





The preacher for the Induction was Pastor Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford of First Lutheran Church. She spoke of Michael Batten's passion for Social Justice shared by the faith community of St. Thomas. And she said, "I am in awe of this community's devotion to Christ Jesus." PHOTO Randy Murray



The Rev. Fr. Michael Batten signs the Oath in the presence of the St. Thomas Congregation, guests, Bishop Melissa and Archdeacon Douglas Fenton. PHOTO Randy Murray



For the first time in her five weeks as Bishop the Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton asked this question, "Do you, in the presence of this congregation, commit yourself to the responsibility entrusted to you?" The Rev. Michael Batten answered, "I do." PHOTO Randy Murray



The Executive Archdeacon of the Diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Douglas Fenton reads the license before Susan Chortyk and Jackie Fennelle, the Wardens of St. Thomas. PHOTO Randy Murray

## Commitment and Stability

### The Induction of the Reverend Michael Batten as Incumbent of St. Thomas, Vancouver

RANDY MURRAY  
Diocesan Communications Officer and Topic Editor

There was a bit of history made in the Diocese of New Westminster on Wednesday, April 9th, 2014, during a Celebration of New Ministry at St. Thomas, Vancouver. The principal focus of the Eucharist was the Induction of St. Thomas's new rector, the Rev. Michael Batten by the Bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton. Now the induction of a new incumbent is historic on its own but this particularly induction was the first of Bishop Melissa's five week old episcopacy.

Michael Batten is not new to East Vancouver having just completed a 9 year incumbency at St. David of Wales located about 14 kilometres north and a little bit west of St. Thomas's location on East 41st Avenue, so he is well versed in the particularities of that region of our diocese. One of the great benefits of St. Thomas's location is its close proximity to First Lutheran Church, and the wonderful relationship that has grown between the two congregations over the past few years.

In celebration of that continuing relationship, the preacher for the liturgy was Pastor Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford of First Lutheran. Early in her sermon, she said that she "is in awe of this community's devotion to Christ Jesus" and that "you are a beautiful and friendly community." She also voiced her appreciation for the use of the St. Thomas rectory that she and her family have rented for the past two years. Included in her homily were interludes when Pastor Lori-Anne sang quite beautifully the song, *Take, O Take Me* by Tony Alonso, John Bell and Gabe Huck from their Lenten Communion Rite. When this song is

used during the Celebration of Communion during Lent, the four lines are each sung three times. Pastor Lori-Anne maintained the consistency of the ritual by singing it near the beginning of her address, near the middle and at the end.

She commented that it was fitting that Michael, an advocate for social justice and equality would be installed on the Church calendar day when William Law, the 18th century English Christian mystic is remembered. William Law wrote a very successful book entitled *A Serious Call to the Devout and Holy Life*, which generated an income and allowed him to spend much of his life doing good works for those around him. Pastor Lori-Anne proceeded in her address continuing to focus on social justice as she listed the recent intentional actions of the St. Thomas community, their work with Metro Vancouver Alliance and their boots-on-the-ground approach to raising awareness of the marginalized in their East Vancouver neighbourhood.

With a twinkle in her eyes and hint of a smile playing around her lips, Pastor Lori-Anne admitted that she has been watching Michael and is beginning to get a sense of who he is. His wit and self-effacing humour are characteristics that she has noticed, but when she asked him what his greatest gift was he said that it was his stability. Michael is committed to his relationship with St. Thomas; he doesn't "flit from Parish to Parish."

Near the end of her homily Pastor Lori-Anne said, "Michael has unique gifts, gifts of grace, given by God. And the Parish of St. Thomas also has gifts, gifts of grace. May you share what God has given you with each other and the

world for we follow the One, Christ Jesus, he who calls us. He summons out who we are called to be, not who we think we should be."

After the sermon it was time for the Covenant in Ministry, the Ven. Douglas Fenton, the Executive Archdeacon of the diocese presented all who were gathered with a brief outline of the process that had taken place leading to the induction of the Rev. Michael Batten as incumbent. Michael then made the required Oaths and Subscriptions in the presence of the Bishop and the Congregation. Then it was time for Bishop Melissa Skelton to ask for the first time, "Do you, in the presence of this congregation, commit yourself to the responsibility entrusted to you?" To which Michael responded, "I do." Bishop Melissa then requested that the people of the parish stand and she asked, "Do you, the people of the parish of St. Thomas, commit yourselves to share with Michael in the ministry of the parish?" to which they answered, "We do." An historic moment.

Following the Covenant in Ministry members of the parish participated in the Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry of the Whole People of God to Michael. Next, there was a welcome to the East Vancouver Deanery by the senior priest of the deanery present, the Rev. John Marsh of St. George's, Vancouver. John was quick to point out that Michael is hardly new to the deanery and that he didn't want to follow the current trend of the Burrard Archdeaconry of giving bouquets of flowers to new rectors. He explained that over the years he and Michael would

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5





LEFT Audrey Henry, QC, presents Michael with the water of baptism during the Covenant in Ministry. MIDDLE Michael looks out on the congregation after receiving the Holy Bible during the Covenant in Ministry. PHOTOS Randy Murray  
RIGHT Reception in the Hall. PHOTO Elaine Jan

*“Michael has unique gifts,  
gifts of grace, given by God.”*

• Pastor Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford •

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

occasionally get together for lunch and over platefuls of Italian cuisine they would commiserate about why everybody else didn't think the way that they do. John said that he had seen an episode of the Canadian restaurant rating show, *You Gotta Eat Here* that featured *Neighbours* restaurant located just blocks away from St. Thomas's so he thought that a gift certificate for a lunch for two was a good welcome gift, as long as Michael takes him along of course.

After Michael was introduced by the Bishop as the leader of St. Thomas's shared ministry and prior to the celebration of the Eucharist, Michael briefly addressed the congregation. He thanked the prior priest-in-charge, the Rev. Margaret Marquardt who “planted the fruit that is ripening” and he thanked Pastor Lori-Anne for her homily and stressed how much he values the relationship with First Lutheran.

There will be challenges ahead for the East Vancouver parish and their new rector, but what they have now, which may have been lacking in their life as a faith community, is commitment and stability. They share in the knowledge that they will be there for each other and that they will do their best to grow together into the full stature of Christ. ✠



A happy group of St. Thomas' Parishioners. PHOTO Elaine Jan



## Does Your Legacy include Your Church?

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*A bequest in your will to the Anglican Initiatives Fund or your parish is an ultimate act of stewardship and a tangible expression of your trust in God. Consider tithing the value of your estate as your legacy gift to God's mission in the world.*



# The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship

## The Induction of the Reverend Luisito (Louie) Engnan as rector of St. Michael, Surrey

RANDY MURRAY

Diocesan Communications Officer and Topic Editor



The Choir of the Parish of St. Michael, Surrey prior to the procession. PHOTO Randy Murray



Bishop Melissa invites all to welcome the new incumbent. PHOTO Randy Murray



Louie receives the Canons and Constitutions of the Diocese of New Westminster from warden, Jeddy James. PHOTO Randy Murray

The April 10th, 2014, Induction of the Rev. Fr. Louie Engnan was the second in as many nights and the second induction of Bishop Melissa Skelton's young episcopacy. There was a good-sized congregation gathered 40-minutes before the scheduled 7 pm start time and a lot of positive energy flowing in the bright, cheerful sanctuary of St. Michael's.

The theme for the evening was defined in the sermon offered by the Rev. Michael McGee former rector of neighbouring Surrey parish, St. Helen's and now rector of St. Christopher's, West Vancouver. And that theme was Louie's remarkable ability to quickly acclimatize to his new life in Canada after leaving his former home in the Philippines and resuming within a few short years his vocation as a priest in the Church of God.

Michael began his address by summarizing his 2-year history as Louie's mentor in ministry, a role he gladly assumed when the Archdeacon of Fraser, the Ven. Stephen Rowe, offered it to him. When Michael and Louie met earlier in the week prior to the induction liturgy to reconnect and discuss some sermon themes, Michael could sense through their dialogue that Louie had acquired more knowledge of the Surrey area than he himself currently possessed and realized that Louie had absolutely come into his own. Michael then switched things up a bit and went on to explore the significant Church figures whose contributions are celebrated on April 10th, amongst them, William of Ockham, the English Franciscan and philosopher commonly known for Occam's Razor, the principle that the simplest explanation is usual the correct explanation.

He concluded his address focusing on the theme of "shared ministry," saying, "We are here today to celebrate Louie's induction but we are also here to celebrate the

ministry of this parish. The Church is more than about solving problems, it's about being together in community with Christ-centred ministry." Throughout his sermon Michael had peppered movie references and in keeping with that theme, he ended his sermon with the classic line from the 1942 Michael Curtiz film, *Casablanca*, "This is the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

Prior to the Covenant in Ministry the administration of the Oaths and Subscriptions as required by the Canon of the Ecclesiastical Province, the reading of the License of Institution and the presentations of the Symbols of Ministry of the Whole People of God, the Executive Archdeacon of the Diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Douglas addressed the congregation. Douglas also spoke about how quickly Fr. Louie had grown into his ordained leadership role after being recommended for an interim post by then-priest-in-charge the Rev. Sue Foley-Currie. Sue's recommendation was echoed by the officers and parish leaders in a letter that they wrote to the Bishop's office requesting that Louie be appointed priest-in-charge.

Following the presentation of the symbols of ministry by members of the parish, which is the final piece of the Covenant in Ministry, it was time for Bishop Melissa to say for the second time "let these be signs of the ministry which is mine and yours and is shared by all the people of God." She then presented Louie to the faith community of St. Michael, Surrey as the leader of their ministry to enthusiastic applause and cheering.

The Regional Dean of South Fraser, the Rev. Craig Tanksley and the Archdeacon of Fraser, the Ven. Stephen Rowe, were present to offer their welcome to Louie. Craig again touched on the theme of Louie's remarkable gifts, his

ability to within a few short years to become a leader in shared ministry in a different country and using a second language. Archdeacon Stephen Rowe recalled the first time that Louie and his family had visited his parish five years earlier, the Anglican Church of the Epiphany located a few kilometres away in the Guildford neighbourhood of Surrey and how much the family has changed and obviously flourished in their new life in Canada.

Following a very moving intercession by parishioner, Natasha Kaweski, and prior to the new incumbent offering the Peace, the Bishop stood in front of the congregation and said, "I just want to greet you all in the name of the Lord!" Looking around the congregation with a big smile she said that this place has "a wonderful feel," and that she knows that "the Spirit is here." She reminded the congregation that for a large part of her life in response to her vocational call she has pursued the ministry of congregational development and to see the life and vitality growing at St. Michael's "makes my heart soar like an eagle."

Following the Peace there was a prayerful but joyful celebration of the Eucharist punctuated with a variety of music led by: the St. Michael's Parish Choir; organist, Coleen Whitmore; violinist, Shelley Novak; saxophonist, Sasha Abraham; and guitarist/vocalist, Andy Whitmore.

At the conclusion of worship, Louie positioned himself in the narthex area and greeted everyone in attendance as they left the Church building to walk the 20 or so metres to the Millennium Hall to enjoy a reception with sweets and savories that featured arguably the best samosas on the planet.

In his bulletin notes Louie summed up his feelings

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# Bishop Melissa at the Agora Lunch Series at Christ Church Cathedral

RANDY MURRAY

Diocesan Communications Officer and Topic Editor

The final guest speaker for Christ Church Cathedral's initial 2014 Agora Lunch Series was the Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton, Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster. The series, organized by the Cathedral's Business Chaplain, the Rev. Alisdair Smith and the Cathedral's Emerging Ministries Pastor, Andrew Stephens-Rennie, was designed to invite and welcome the downtown Vancouver neighbourhood to explore the topics of faith and spirituality in a business environment.

The April 7th Agora Lunch discussion was facilitated by Alisdair and was attended by 40+ individuals, admittedly the large majority present were members of the Cathedral Parish.

The Bishop's opening remarks covered some of her history as it related to the topic of the day, which was how one's faith life intersects with one's business life. The Bishop began by saying that, "we are not simply consumers, we are more than that." She has a great deal of experience with the intersection of the world, the marketplace, the business world and Christian Faith. She wanted to make it clear that her business background and training and her call to ministry were not ever mutually exclusive as she was in graduate school working on her Master of Divinity (Mdiv) and her MBA at the same time. Traversing the two different worlds while in school was a rewarding and enlightening experience. At the business school the lights were on 24 hours a day, the common areas and lecture halls were abuzz with energy, conversely the coffee shop of the divinity school was "a great place to hang out" and experience the quiet contemplative world of students and instructors who live in the world of theology.

Bishop Melissa was recruited by Proctor and Gamble for their marketing division while still at graduate school and she was ordained while working as a brand manager for that company. The Bishop listed some of the characteristics of the two different worlds and then she explored the issue of intersecting the two worlds. For her, this is "all held together by prayer." Having the two worlds function

together internally, within ourselves, involves putting our situations and challenges of our everyday work experiences into our prayer life. By pursuing a prayer life it "opens that channel of vulnerability between us and the giver of life." She counseled that Christians in business should bring their real selves to wherever they are. It is important to "be present to what is really going on in front of you." It isn't about being "good" or righteous like a "girl scout" or "boy scout," "you need to tell your truth, be courageous, be compassionate and give yourself permission to apologize."

The business community teaches us to steer clear of tunnel vision and "look for multiple bottom lines." We shouldn't get hung up on structure and following prescribed business models or patterns as often success comes from relationships. She equated multiple bottom lines to the vows that are made in the Baptismal Covenant. The business world brings to us a positive outlook, the "sense that we can do it", and a valuing and love of teamwork and excellence. "It feels good to do good work and it feels good to be involved in good liturgy." She asked that people in business connect to the marketplace by listening closely



to consumers because they aren't just consumers they are friends.

Stay tuned for more information about the next series of Agora Lunch Discussions at Christ Church Cathedral planned for later in 2014. ✦

LEFT Following Bishop Melissa's 25-minute address, the Rev. Alisdair Smith asked the plenary to form groups of three and discuss their personal experiences of faith and work life. PHOTO Randy Murray

RIGHT Bishop Melissa reads the Baptismal Covenant from the Service of Baptism, Book of Alternative Services as the underpinning of how we can live our faith in the workplace and consider embracing "multiple bottom lines." PHOTO Randy Murray



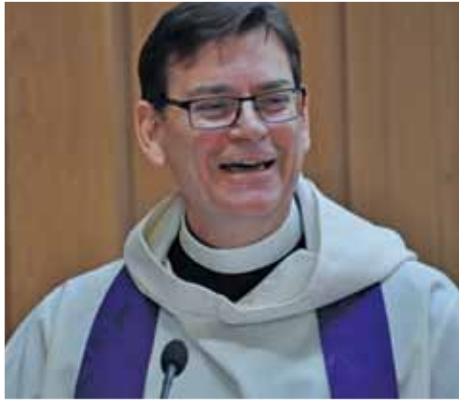
## The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

succinctly and beautifully, "Thank you to the faithful of St. Michael, Surrey for walking together in this past 2-years of interim ministry. It was a challenging but fun-filled experience on my part to be working with people like you who continue to show your

love and ministry to our beloved parish."

Please keep Louie and his family: Chris, Dannah, Josh, Reaia and Bryce; and the Parish of St. Michael, Surrey in your prayers as they continue on their journey in faith together. ✦



The preacher, the Rev. Michael McGee, rector of St. Christopher, West Vancouver. PHOTO Randy Murray



Louie reads the Oath during the Covenant in Ministry. PHOTO Randy Murray



Arguably the best samosas on the planet. PHOTO Randy Murray

# THANK YOU AND HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!



We look forward to being back in the fall with the September 2014 issue of *Topic*.

The deadline for submissions for the September issue of *Topic* is Friday, July 25th, 2014. We look forward to your submissions.

### REMEMBER!

The diocesan website at [www.vancouver.anglican.ca](http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca) is updated regularly with news and information of interest to *Topic* readers.

Also, check out *Anglican Conversation* on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/J2yGrT>.

"Have a wonderful summer!"

Randy Murray, *Topic* Editor and  
Jennifer Ewing, *Topic* Designer





# Women of Faith, Women of Courage

## The 47th Annual General Meeting of Anglican Church Women • Diocese of New Westminster

RANDY MURRAY

Diocesan Communications Officer and Topic Editor

The Anglican Church Women (ACW) of the Diocese of New Westminster's 47th Annual General Meeting (AGM) entitled *Women of Faith, Women of Courage* took place April 26th, 2014, at St. Catherine's Anglican Church in Port Coquitlam. The St. Catherine's congregation rents space in the structures which house the Trinity United Church congregation and the two faith communities successfully share these bright and welcoming buildings located at the corners of Prairie Avenue and Shaughnessy Road in one of Port Coquitlam's more venerable neighbourhoods.

There are currently 17 active parish chapters of the ACW in the Diocese of New Westminster and they are organized in three area groups. One of the most vibrant chapters is located at St. Catherine's and the President of the St. Catherine's chapter, Margaret Warwick is now the President of the Diocese of New Westminster's ACW, succeeding outgoing president Sheila Puls of St. George's, Fort Langley. There was an excellent turnout of ACW members for the all-day event.

The AGM began with a morning meeting at which the usual agenda items were covered: correspondence, reports, budget, roll call, elections and the president's message. At 11 am, Keynote Speaker, Tasha Carrothers, Ministry Resource Associate on the Diocese of New Westminster's Synod staff and an Instructor at the Diocese of New Westminster's School of Leadership took the group through an extended workshop event focusing on the theme *Women of Faith, Women of Courage*. The session was enjoyed by those in attendance and came to an end shortly after 12 noon leaving enough time for the plenary to gather in the hall for lunch.

The soup and sandwich lunch was catered and served by the members of the United Church Women of Trinity United Church. Their generosity and hospitality was much appreciated by the Diocese of New Westminster ACW members.

Outgoing President, Sheila Puls took on the task of Master of Ceremonies for the lunch formalities, introducing the Invited Guests who included: the Rev. Brian Burke, Minister of Trinity United Church; Delorie Walsh, National ACW President; Sharon Cieben, Catholic Women's League Diocesan President; and Madelyn Craven, United Church Women Area Convenor. All four addressed the group, shared information about their ministries, their appreciation for the work of the ACW in the Diocese of New Westminster and all mentioned a desire to continue working together for the common good.

The next item on the agenda was the Guest Speaker spot and that was occupied by the Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton, 9th Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster. This was Bishop Melissa's first official contact with the Diocese of New Westminster ACW, her first visit to St. Catherine's and in fact her first visit to Port Coquitlam. Following Sheila's introduction of Bishop Melissa there was enthusiastic applause and the first thing the Bishop said was, "It is a thrill to walk into a room full of women, wearing this colour (purple)," which produced a joyful response. Bishop Melissa candidly spoke about her own life, loosely connecting the events of her life to the AGM theme. She said

that faith and courage don't just come from the Church; these are not just faith community qualities. There is an "outside" beyond Church walls. In retrospect Bishop Melissa sees her life as an ongoing process of "juggling priorities." She talked about her life history, growing up in the US south in a liberal family that was not a religious family. She spoke about going to university, falling in love, marrying an Episcopalian seminarian, giving birth to a daughter with a serious illness which led to her opening herself to the support of the seminary community which facilitated

her deepening conversion. This resulted in among other things her call to vocation. She reflected on her intense time of study at graduate school that led to her receiving a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and a Master of Divinity (MDiv). Recruited by Proctor and Gamble while still a graduate student, Bishop Melissa went to work in that corporation's Cincinnati offices but she continued on her path to ordination which took place in Southern Ohio while she was working at Proctor and Gamble.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

*"The purpose of the Society is to unite women in a fellowship of worship, study and stewardship which will deepen and strengthen their own spiritual lives and lead them into Christian service everywhere."*



Bishop Melissa begins her after lunch speech. "It's a thrill to walk into a room full of women wearing this colour." PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT Delorie Walsh the National ACW President was present at the AGM. She'd left her home in Calgary to come to the Lower Mainland and she was very much enjoying the "green surroundings" as Calgary has suffered a particularly harsh, extended winter. RIGHT Outgoing ACW president, Sheila Puls introduces the next speaker, Sharon Cieben the Catholic Women's League (CWL) Diocesan President. Sharon announced that the CWL raised money to support the Shower Program at St. Alban Anglican Church's Drop-in Centre in Richmond. PHOTOS Randy Murray





LEFT The United Church Women of Trinity United Church where the Parish of St. Catherine's shares the worship space catered and served the lunch.

RIGHT Bishop Melissa spoke about her life and her experiences connected with, and related to, the ACW AGM theme, *Women of Faith, Women of Courage*. PHOTOS Randy Murray

*"...our lives are not straight lines,  
but there is room for faith,  
faith in a loving  
and intentional God."*

• Bishop Melissa Skelton •

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

For Bishop Melissa, faith and courage come from prayer. Seminary did not teach her to pray, she learned how to pray at St. Paul's, Seattle where she was the leader of that parish's shared ministry for the nine years prior to her being elected Bishop of New Westminster. The "work" that "flowed" from prayer during her time at St. Paul's set-up the call to vocation to be a Bishop, a servant-leader in God's Church.

During the brief summary that concluded her address she looked out at the women and said, "our lives are not straight lines, but there is room for faith, faith in a loving and intentional God."

With the lunch concluded, ACW members and guests assembled themselves in the Church sanctuary for the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, the congregation was welcomed by St. Catherine's priest-in-charge, the Rev. Gordon Dominey.

The Gospel read by ACW Chaplain, the Rev. Sue Foley-Currie was John 16: 16–33. Bishop Melissa began her sermon by listing some of the things she had recently learned about the Diocese of New Westminster ACW and their ministry. Then she quoted Jesus' words from the Gospel text:

"Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me?' Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world."

This is from the section of John's Gospel, chapters 13 to 17 commonly referred to as Jesus' Farewell Discourses. This is the point where Jesus provides an image for the eleven disciples of what it will be like without him and what is waiting for them in God's Kingdom. In a Church full of women, intently listening to the first woman to be Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster, Bishop Melissa's focus on Jesus' childbirth metaphor was particularly compelling.

The liturgy continued with the Intercession, which included the Memorial Roll, next was the Installation of the Chaplain and Installation of Diocesan Board Officers and finally the Celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop Melissa as celebrant.

The words spoken by the Bishop at the beginning of the Installation section of the liturgy illustrate most effectively the ministry goals of Anglican Church Women:

"The purpose of the Society is to unite women in a fellowship of worship, study and stewardship which will deepen and strengthen their own spiritual lives and lead them into Christian service everywhere." ♦



Bishop Melissa installs the Chaplain and the Board Officers prior to Celebrating the Eucharist. PHOTO Randy Murray



The "new" Bishop and the "new" president, Margaret Warwick. PHOTO Randy Murray



# Palm Sunday

On Palm Sunday, April 13th, Bishop Melissa visited St. James' Anglican Church on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside for the morning Celebrations of Mass. Following the Liturgy of the Palms celebrated in the Parish Hall at 10:30 am many of those assembled participated in a joyful procession two blocks east to Oppenheimer Park and then back to St. James'. The procession included members of The Carnival Band, a marching band/community orchestra based in East Vancouver. The Carnival Band presence has become a regular part of the annual St. James' Palm Sunday processions.

Bishop Melissa was the preacher for the morning worship liturgies at St. James'. For her text she took St. Matthew's Passion. Three members of the St. James' choir sang the Passion. In the beginning section of her sermon,

Bishop Melissa referred to Jesus' silence in the face of Pilate's questioning. For the Bishop, the Messiah participates in the silence of the oppressed, the silence of the poor, the abused and marginalized. For those with no political or economic power there is nothing left to say, and Jesus' silence in response to the questioning of a person of power is resistance. Resistance that shocks and amazes Pilate. Jesus in his silence stands against those who would rob us of our very dignity. ✠

*The texts for all five of Bishop Melissa Skelton's Holy Week sermons are available on her Staff Page on the Diocese of New Westminster website at <http://bit.ly/1n2RA8i>.*

*Many thanks to Elaine Jan of St. James' Parish and to Bishop Melissa for their photo submissions.*

- 1. The Crosier of the Diocese of New Westminster and St. James' Processional Cross with Palms affixed in the Vestry at St. James'. PHOTO Bishop Melissa Skelton
- 2. A closer look at the top of the Crosier and the Processional Cross. PHOTO Bishop Melissa Skelton
- 3. The Rev. Father Mark Greenaway-Robbins's daughter Anastasia tries on the Bishop's mitre during a light-hearted moment in the Vestry prior to worship. PHOTO Bishop Melissa Skelton
- 4. The Liturgy of the Palms in the St. James' Parish Hall prior to the procession.



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5. Thurifer, Paul Stanwood, ODNW leads the procession out of the Church and into the neighbourhood.

6. The front of the procession has left the Church and is moving south, soon to turn east and move toward Oppenheimer Park in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

7. The Thurifers stop the procession to wait for a red light before crossing into Oppenheimer Park.

8. The Clergy and Servers part of the procession winds its way around the north side of the park.

9. The Rev. Douglas Williams processes past a park patron.

10. Members of the Carnival Band lead the laity in the procession through the park playing and singing *All Glory, Laud and Honour*.



# Palm Sunday



11.



12.



13.



14.



15.



17.



16.

11. The procession leaves the park and moves west back toward the Church.  
 12. The Bishop with the Rev. Mr. Alexis Saunders on the left make their way to the steps of St. James'. Corey Kussey is in the lead. PHOTO Elaine Jan  
 13. The Rev. Fr. Mark Greenaway-Robbins leads the prayer prior to the Crucifer knocking on the door of the Church with the staff of the Processional Cross.  
 14. Once in the Chancel the Bishop changes vestments.  
 15. Bishop Melissa preaching.  
 16. Organist and Choirmaster, Gerald Harder sang the role of Jesus in the singing of the Passion from the Gospel of Matthew.  
 17. Prayers at the Eucharist.



# Chrism Mass

On Tuesday, April 15th at 12:10 pm the Bishop was the preacher and presider at a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist with Reaffirmation of Ordination Vows, and Consecration of Chrism. More than 100 clergy, the majority of whom were vested, attended this liturgy. There were a few lay in attendance as well at the noon hour worship.

Following the procession, and prior to the Collect of the Day, the clergy followed the Cross and Candles and the Worship Leaders in a procession around the Cathedral while the Litany for Ordination was sung. The Cantor was Christ Church Cathedral's, tenor soloist, Byron Hanson.

In her sermon, Bishop Melissa asked the congregation to think back to that time when, as a layperson or deacon, the call came to live their lives in Christ, a decision that would likely come with a "price." She said, "Vocation and

vocational discernment of all kinds are fascinating to me. What I have learned is that vocational discernment can come to us like the bite of a wild animal that draws blood we would sooner keep as our own, and also comes to us like the kiss of a lover who woos us to himself or herself promising intimacy and fulfillment."

At the conclusion of the sermon, the liturgy continued with the Renewal of Ordination Vows participated in by

the clergy, followed by the Eucharist, and the Blessing of Chrism, the holy anointing oil. After the oil was blessed and the congregation was dismissed, Bishop Melissa retired to the West Chancel Prayer Alcove to offer blessing and anointing with oil to all who desired it. A very long line of clergy and lay formed at the entrance to the alcove and continued all the way back through the nave past the crossing. A powerful witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit. ✠

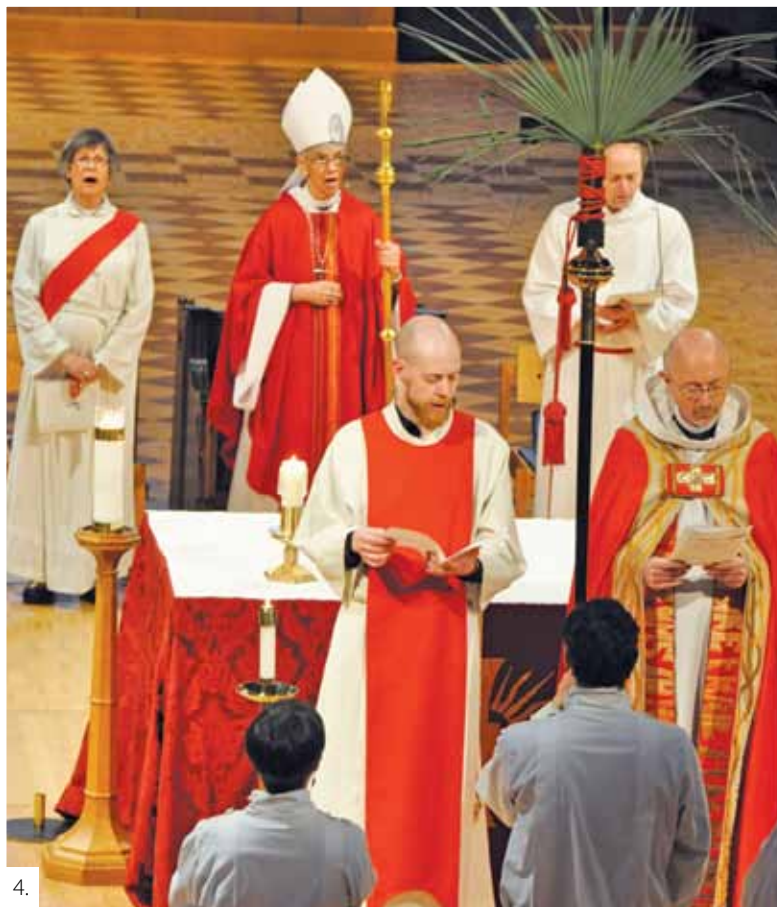
1. The Bishop leads the Reaffirmation of Ordination Vows.
2. At 12:05 pm just prior to the procession, Dean Peter Elliott welcomes the congregation to the Chrism Mass and Reaffirmation of Ordination Vows.
3. Bishop Melissa blesses and anoints a man who had waited patiently in line.
4. Byron Hanson on left leads the singing of the Litany for Ordinations prior to the procession.
5. "Vocation and vocational discernment of all kinds are fascinating to me."
6. During the Peace, Bishop Melissa greets Bishop Jim Cruickshank.
7. Following the Eucharist the Chrism Hymn (*Blest by the sun, the olive tree...*) was sung as deacons delivered and placed the oil on the Altar for blessing.



1.



2.



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5.



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# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## • Youth Brings Fresh Perspective on the Gospel •

SUBMISSION Wilna Parry  
St. Clement's, Lynn Valley

The First Sunday of Lent was an unusual one at St. Clement's. Our priest, the Venerable Dr. Lynne McNaughton, the Regional Youth Ministry Coordinator, the Rev. Andrew Halladay, and Caroline Battista who is our Sunday School Coordinator hosted a Junior Youth Sleepover at St. Clement's on Saturday, March 8th. As Lynne remarked, given that it was also the night the clocks went forward an hour, this was perhaps not too smart, but everyone had tremendous fun despite the tiredness. The youth prepared Lenten Banners on the theme of pilgrimage, with the help of our deacon the Rev. Elizabeth Mathers they worked with brown paper and charcoal, tracing their feet. Cacti on the Altar further supplemented the theme and a "desert road," lined with rocks and desert-like plants

invited us to journey to the Altar, where we were fed with bread and wine.

The Gospel of The Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4: 1-11) was acted out by the youth in a very imaginative and energetic way, including a couple of cheerleading lifts! The parish was then invited to wonder about the presentation: *I wonder what stood out to you; I wonder where or how we are tempted; I wonder if you have ever had an encounter with an angel or with the devil?* It was a thought-provoking exercise for us all and the youth did an amazing job. Then we were led in prayer, also by the youth, who took turns at the microphone reading a prayer they had all worked on.

This was a wonderful Sunday for us all and we look forward to another exciting Youth-led service in the near future. ✦



Jesus is tempted.



The Cacti on the altar.

## • In Memoriam •

**The Reverend John Jeffries**  
February 4th, 1920 – March 27th, 2014

SUBMISSION Archdeacon Douglas Fenton

John, from the Cree First Nation, was born on February 14th, 1920, in Chapleau, Ontario. He later attended Wycliffe College in Toronto and was awarded a Licentiate of Theology (LTh). He was ordained to the Diaconate in 1945 and to the Priesthood the following year in the Diocese of Toronto for the Diocese of Saskatchewan.

He served as Missionary at Onion Lake, Saskatchewan before moving to the Diocese of Moosonee in 1947 where he served as Missionary at Mattagami (where he also taught school) and Calstock. In 1963, John returned to the Diocese of Saskatchewan serving in the parishes of: St. James', Kinistino; All Saints', Lac la Ronge; and St. James', Nipawin. John was made an Honorary Canon of both the Dioceses of Saskatchewan and Moosonee.

In October 1976, John came to the Diocese of New Westminster as the Parish Priest at St. Peter, Vancouver (one of the predecessors to Holy Cross Church). His appointment was described as unconventional—the funding allowed for a shared ministry with the United Church and he was accommodated in a United Church manse on West 14th Street.

John, along with his wife, Jean, also worked as a missionary priest to the Native Community throughout the diocese until 1986. Their work was characterized by a strong visitation programme, based on a centre in what became the Longhouse Council for Native Ministry.

John served as a Regional Dean of Vancouver Centre and after retirement was an Honorary Assistant at St. Helen's, Point Grey before moving to Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory in the Diocese of Ontario.

John was predeceased by his wife Jean

(2003) and daughter Judalon Jeffries (2001). John is survived by sons John Jr. of Ponoka, Alberta, Rod of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and Randy (Karen) of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, together with six grandchildren, one great-grandchild and many nieces and nephews.

John died peacefully on March 27th, 2014, in Belleville, Ontario at 94 years of age.

A Funeral Service was held at Christ Church, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory on March 31st, 2014.

We extend our condolences to John's family.

Please remember our brother in your prayers and at the altar. ✦

The Rev. John Jeffries around the time of his ordination in May 1945. PHOTO Courtesy of Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives (P75-103-58-48-MSCC)



## • Liturgical Fabric Arts at St. Christopher's, West Vancouver •

SUBMISSION Hilary Clark  
St. Christopher, West Vancouver



The team works on repairs: Victoria Gemmill, Winnie Butterfield, Patricia Bice and Elizabeth Robinson. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT The team poses at the Altar with the beautifully embroidered Lenten Altar cloth dedicated in 2009.



RIGHT The Baptismal banner consisting of 5,000 French knots. PHOTOS Randy Murray

Does the term medieval guild evoke any historic charm for the average Churchgoer? We on the west coast of Canada have our own version of history, and almost none of it comes close to the concept of a medieval guild. But if asked, most of us would be able to give a brief description of what guilds were, when they existed, and how they functioned. Even operas refer to guilds; take *Die Meistersinger Von Nurnberg* by Wagner, for example. But when some skill-set is led and taught by an expert, who in her own right was led and taught by an expert (in this case, her mother), we have its essence, the core of the medieval concept of a guild.

St. Christopher's, West Vancouver is blessed to have its own, in the existence of the Altar Guild, whose embroidered artwork has enriched the Church since 1991. The Master is Victoria Gemmill, who has designed the pieces, then worked with a group of at least 12 people over the years. Working with them involves teaching them the art of canvas work and supervising the stitchery. The designs she creates are inspired by historic Christian symbols and empathy for the architecture of the Church designed by Robert A. D. Berwick of the well-known Vancouver firm of Thompson Berwick and Pratt. The materials are wool on an open canvas stretched on a frame. Repair, moth prevention and storage, are all part of the responsibility of the group. Behind the Altar in the guild room is a well-designed cabinet that houses the altar

frontals.

Among the impressive collection of canvas work adorning the Church are; altar frontals, a baptismal altar hanging, cushions and seat covers for 10 chairs, and Victoria Gemmill's very first challenge, a wedding kneeler. She has also done the gold work (metallic covered thread) for the burses and veils that dress the chalice to match three altar frontals.

The altar frontals are stitched in the appropriate colours for the Church seasons, with designs that refer to subject matter of the period. For example: Lent is purple with a design of the cross, flanked by crowns of thorns; the most often used frontal is green with dogwood flowers framed by Celtic crosses; red is used for Palm Sunday, Trinity Sunday and for the installation of a priest; white is for festivals and memorial services; and blue is for Advent.

St. Christopher's is very fortunate to have in Victoria Gemmill a very talented and experienced fabric artist. She has brought her skills and commitment from her home in England, where she learned the craft from her mother, who was also a dedicated fabric artist. Not only has she given her craft into the service of God, in His Church of St. Christopher's, but she has also inspired a new group of artists who are carrying on her work. This may not be a medieval guild, but on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, many miles away from the source of this craft, the beat goes on, and on! ✦



# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## • Who is My Neighbour? Lenten Visiting •

SUBMISSION Laurel Dykstra

Curate, St. Catherine's, Capilano and the North Vancouver Regional Council

On Sunday, March 30th, 45 Anglicans and Lutherans were guests at Masjid Ar-Ramnan, the mosque in the former St. Richard's building in North Vancouver. Members of St. Catherine's, the North Vancouver region, St. John's, Port Moody and the diocesan Ecumenical and Multifaith Unit studied the story of the good Samaritan, learned about what being a good neighbour means in Islam and toured the mosque, as part of a North Vancouver Lenten Visiting Program called, *Who is my neighbour?* ✠

TOP Masjid Ar-Rahman, the mosque at the former St. Richards. PHOTO Kathy Campbell

MIDDLE LEFT Imam Petrit Deçani describes the five pillars of Islam. PHOTO Kathy Campbell

MIDDLE RIGHT St. Richard's, circa 2009. PHOTO Randy Murray

BOTTOM Lynn Spence asks a question in the Women's Prayer Room. PHOTO Kathy Campbell



## • Bishop Melissa Joins CBC Radio "Spirituality Panel" •

On Maundy Thursday, April 17th, Bishop Melissa Skelton participated in a CBC Radio spirituality panel discussion that was aired, April 21st on a province-wide edition of the show *On the Coast*, hosted by Stephen Quinn. Bishop Melissa was joined by Rabbi Dan Moskovitz (Senior Rabbi, Temple Shalom in Vancouver) and Aasim Rashid (Islamic scholar/Mufti, and Director of Religion and Islamic Education with the BC Muslim Association).

The three panelists who are all leaders of

their respective spiritual communities were asked to reflect on the present state of the world and to a couple of specific regional and national stories currently in the news.

To access an archived recording of the April 21st broadcast on line please visit [www.cbc.ca/onthecoast/past-episodes](http://www.cbc.ca/onthecoast/past-episodes). ✠

Rabbi Dan, Bishop Melissa and Iman Rashid pose for photos in the lobby area of the CBC studios on Hamilton Street in Vancouver. Aasim Rashid who had just arrived has not yet affixed his official visitor badge. PHOTO Randy Murray



## • St. Augustine's, Marpole Welcomes Marpole Place •

The faith community of St. Augustine's, Marpole and priest-in-charge the Rev. Andrew Halladay are demonstrating their commitment to their neighbourhood through some intentional hospitality.

In December 2013, Marpole Place Neighbourhood House (1305 West 70th Avenue), just a few blocks from St. Augustine's (8680 Hudson), were forced to shut down due to a devastating flood caused by burst plumbing pipes in the ageing converted fire station. The repairs were estimated to take at least 6 months. St. Augustine's stepped forward and offered to be a venue for some of the Marpole Place programs, including the Thursday night dinner, the Friday night breakfast, drop-in computer time and various other program activities. St. Augustine's made some office space available for Executive Director, Cindy McMillan so that the administration of Marpole Place could continue.

Marpole Place facilitated the printing of information brochures so that the community would be aware of the change in address of the popular neighbourhood, gathering place.

On the very rainy evening of April 3rd, 2014, diners attending the Thursday night meal between 6 and 8 pm were treated to delicious butternut squash soup, roasted Loin of Pork, potatoes, dressing, asparagus and banana upside-down cake. More than a half dozen volunteers who served, bussed tables, and washed dishes supported the cook and event supervisor, April Pringle. All the food was prepared in the St. Augustine's kitchen. April, who has a full-time job in addition to her work with Marpole Place had not heard any news about when their building once again would be ready to welcome folks who participate in the Marpole Place programs.

In addition to the current Marpole

Place residency, on the first Wednesday of the month, from September to June, St. Augustine's hosts a sit-down community meal for 50 to 80 people prepared by the Eburne Society with the assistance of a number of community volunteers.

The Food Bank also uses the St. Augustine's Parish Centre to distribute food every Thursday morning except for the Thursday following the distribution of government support cheques. ✠



The Thursday Night Meal sign on Hudson Street. PHOTO Randy Murray



Dessert! PHOTO Randy Murray



A big smile from a Volunteer. PHOTO Randy Murray



April carves the pork loin. PHOTO Randy Murray



April and a volunteer serve up the main course. PHOTO Randy Murray



# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## • Wheels 4 Freedom •

Our House West Coast Society Fundraiser

At the age of 77, *Our House* West Coast Society founder and principal director, Norm Sharkey, ODNW (Order of the Diocese of New Westminster) has embarked on a remarkable journey that he has titled *Wheels 4 Freedom*. He began the journey on May 1st and plans to rollerblade 50 kilometres daily around the Stanley Park Seawall, Monday to Friday, until he reaches a total aggregate distance of 5350 kilometres, the distance from Campbellton, New Brunswick to Vancouver, British Columbia.

The desired outcome for this exercise is to raise awareness about addiction and source enough revenue through gifts and pledges to purchase a house. Norm (a recovering addict himself who has been sober for 42 years) and the Board of Directors would prefer to find a property within the city limits of Vancouver that will become the new *Our House* addiction recovery

residence. Currently *Our House* is located in a rental property home in Surrey.

The Parish of St. Paul's in the West End of Vancouver is Norm's parish and the parish has rallied around the *Our House* initiative and has made it a key part of their shared ministry.

During the process participants in the *Our House* addiction recovery program and members of the Board will be present near the intersection of Davie and Denman dressed in t-shirts displaying the *Wheels 4 Freedom* wordmark. They will be talking about the event, handing out brochures, soliciting donations and offering information about the benefits of the *Our House* program, 2 to 3 days a week, during Norm's sojourn.

There are multiple ways for people to donate: an online site is ready to receive donations and you can connect to it

through the *Our House* West Coast Society *Facebook* page (LIKE the page too) at [www.gofundme.com/wwwfacebookcomourhouse](http://www.gofundme.com/wwwfacebookcomourhouse); or donations are also welcomed by mail (*Our House* West Coast Society, 1130 Jervis Street, Vancouver, BC, V6E 2C7). Tax receipts for donations greater than \$20 will be sent out, so please don't forget to include your return address when sending a cheque by mail.

Norm's goal is to finish the trip by mid-October of this year. Diocesan Communications will keep everyone in the diocese apprised of his progress. Godspeed Norm! ✠

TOP Norm training for the "Cross Canada" run last April.

BOTTOM Norm is supported by his faith community, the Parish of St. Paul's in Vancouver's West End.

PHOTOS Randy Murray



## • Palm Sunday Crossing Guard •

On April 13th, Palm Sunday near St. David's of Delta in beautiful, sunny Tsawwassen, St. David's rector, the Rev. Paul Woehrle served as the crossing guard as the

festal procession moved from Brandrith Park to the Church. ✠

PHOTO Courtesy of Paul Woehrle



## • North Shore Justice Working Group • A New North Shore Interfaith Group Advocates for Justice •

SUBMISSION Peggy Trendell-Jensen

St. Catherine's, Capilano

A rabbi, a deacon, and a minister walk into a... no wait, that's the start of another story. Here's a much better one (but don't worry, it still involves a rabbi, a deacon and a minister—and a whole lot of lay people!).

April 10th marked the latest meeting of the recently formed and still-evolving North Shore Justice Working Group (JWG), a collaborative action group representing a growing number of faith communities in North and West Vancouver.

The group is multi-faceted, to say the least. There are lay and ordained members. There are people passionate about topics as diverse as local poverty, food security and pipeline issues. There is currently representation from Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, United Church and Jewish communities, with other interfaith members welcome to join.

Any differences, though, are dwarfed by what is held in common—a strong desire to help usher in change where it's most needed, and to translate faith into action. Given this shared vision, the April 10th discussion at St. Andrew's United proved very productive, with the different faith representatives agreeing that the first issues to be studied and tackled will be child poverty on the North Shore and the oil pipeline debate. Co-chairs to spearhead these topics stepped forward, and will meet in the coming weeks with other interested members to detail an action plan and also investigate potential partnerships with other environmental, social action and First Nations groups.

Another key mandate identified by the North Shore JWG is to gather and disseminate well-researched information (regarding these and other topics of concern) as a way

to raise awareness in members' faith communities, workplaces and other circles.

Many members of the North Shore JWG are actively involved in the newly launched Metro Vancouver Alliance (MVA), an organization that represents dozens of local faith, labour and community groups. Given this collaboration, there will be many future opportunities to work as a combined force to address matters of poverty, transportation, affordable housing and social isolation, matters identified by the wide-ranging MVA membership as top priorities for the Lower Mainland.

Are you interested in joining with other like-minded people to work towards a world that reflects your deepest faith convictions? You are warmly invited to attend. For more information about the North Shore JWG, please email the Reverend Andrew Wilhelm-Boyles at [awboyles@hotmail.com](mailto:awboyles@hotmail.com). If you are specifically interested in the oil pipeline issue, please contact the Reverend Elizabeth Mathers at [mathers@telus.net](mailto:mathers@telus.net). To learn more about the topic of child poverty, please contact Kate Lunn at [katemark@shaw.ca](mailto:katemark@shaw.ca). ✠



## • Nanaimo Retreat Centre to Close •

SUBMISSION Lilian Elliott • St. John's, Port Moody

Sister Barbara Rinehart • Prioress, House of Bread Monastery, Nanaimo, BC

It is with deep sadness that the Benedictines of Nanaimo announce the decision to relinquish ownership of the Bethlehem Retreat Centre (2371 and 2393 Arbot Road) in Nanaimo. These properties will be placed on the market on July 1st, 2014.

After prayerful discernment and advice from professionals, the Society Board, comprised of the Benedictine Sisters, accepts the reality that it no longer has the resources to continue supporting the Retreat Centre financially or by providing personnel.

Waiting until July to place the properties on the market allows time for parties interested in continuing a retreat ministry to arrange purchase of one or both properties.

Bookings for the year 2014 will be

honored and business will continue as usual. Bookings after December 31st, 2014 will only be accepted if the property has been purchased for the purpose of continuing a retreat ministry.

The Sisters are grateful to all who contribute toward making the Bethlehem Retreat Centre a place of hospitality, a place that welcomes individuals and groups from all walks of life seeking a place for quiet reflection and sharing.

The Benedictine Sisters have been on Vancouver Island since 1974 and reside at the House of Bread Monastery where they will continue to be a Benedictine presence in the local community. ✠

*"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."*

• Anne Frank •

## PONTIUS' PUDDLE by Joel Kauffmann





## AROUND THE DIOCESE

### • Vancouver School of Theology Announces Resignation of the Reverend Dr. Wendy Fletcher •

SUBMISSION Shannon Lythgoe

Communications, Marketing and Recruitment Associate at VST

The Vancouver School of Theology (VST) announces that Wendy Fletcher has accepted the position of Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Renison University College of the University of Waterloo effective August 15th, 2014.

Dr. Fletcher came to VST in 2000 and quickly proved her leadership qualities as academic Dean. In 2002, she became Vice Principal and Dean. She was promoted to full professor in 2004. From 2005 to 2012, Dr. Fletcher served as much loved Principal and Dean of VST. Dr. Fletcher resigned as Principal and Dean in 2012 in order to serve as Professor of the History of Christianity for the past two years.

Wendy brought energy, integrity, compassion and hospitality to her teaching, leadership and vision for the School. From the beginning of her principalship, she had a profound sense that VST is God's not ours, that theological education is a spiritual task, and that everyone in the community is important to move the work forward. Under her leadership VST founded centres that integrated the core work of theological education in a partnership with Indigenous people and collaboration with people of other faith traditions for the good of the world.

Over the past 20 years, Wendy has worked extensively with the Association of Theological Schools of North America based in Pittsburgh in a variety of roles. She has served as Director on the Boards of various professional and academic societies. She has published extensively in the areas of women and Christianity, spirituality and religion and ethnicity, including significant work in the arena of First Nations Education with particular reference to residential schools. She is currently writing her most recent monograph in this area.

#### Long-time colleague and former Acting Principal Stephen Farris:

"We will all miss Wendy very much here at VST. She has been an inspirational teacher, a sympathetic and supportive colleague and a wonderful Principal and Dean. She led the school through some very hard times, many times making painful but necessary decisions. These decisions were never easy for Wendy but she made them and, perhaps more importantly, carried through on them. I



Wendy Fletcher. PHOTO Courtesy of VST

doubt we would still have a school without her leadership. May God bless Wendy in her new role."

#### Principal Richard Topping:

"I wish Wendy every blessing in this new role where she can use the great range of gifts — vitality, energy, imagination, integrity — that God has given her for the good of the Church and world. She welcomed me when I arrived and gave the gift of friendship and respect, always respect. Her care, her love, for the school and its students has been so obvious. We will miss Wendy a great deal, but will take pleasure in her accomplishments in the elsewhere to which God has called her. She will have our prayers in the days to come."

#### Pat Dutcher-Walls:

"Wendy brought an articulate and scholarly passion to her leadership of theological education at VST, which allowed the School to envision itself as a place where minds and hearts, mission and spirituality all worked together for the well-being of the world. Under her guidance in her years as Dean and Principal, years which saw difficult challenges for the School, VST laid the groundwork and instituted the practices for the creative and responsive educational programs that we enjoy today."

In due time we will say our good-byes. We will greatly miss Wendy as she leaves us for her new work at Renison College of the University of Waterloo. Her scholarship, imagination and deep commitment to theological education that matters has shaped the mission and ministry of VST in deep and profound ways. ✠

### • Artaban Cream Tea for 2014 •

SUBMISSION Fern Jaspers-Fayer

Holy Trinity, Vancouver

The annual Artaban Cream Tea was a rousing success again in 2014, with a turnout of over 75 people, and a very popular bake table. Gwen Lamacraft made her renowned pies, which sold out immediately, as they do every year. There was also a white elephant table, a canteen with Artaban t-shirts, and Jody Simmons' beautiful greeting cards.

Everyone was seated at tables covered with table clothes lovingly made by Susan Foulds and her sisters. With the tea and scones served, Sandi LaCharite, the Chair of the Artaban board, thanked everyone for coming, thanked the Cream Tea Volunteer team and reported that Artaban is pushing to open for rentals this summer.



LEFT The Artaban Tea kitchen crew of Meg Cozens and Kirsten Oakes. PHOTO Brian Walks

RIGHT The main attraction, fresh scones and cream. PHOTO Fern Jaspers-Fayer



### • A New Initiation Ritual for Diocese of New Westminster Priests? •

Many thanks to the Rev. Karl Przywala (pronounced PR-VOW-ER) for sharing his official Ziptrek photo taken while he was attending the Clergy Conference held April 21st to 23rd in Whistler, BC. Karl was inducted as rector of Holy Trinity, Vancouver on February 18th, 2014, and prior to that he was in ministry in England. Karl is indeed the newest priest in the diocese but the details of how he came to participate in a Ziptrek Eco-tour have not been officially disclosed.

The annual conference was a great suc-

cess with over 100 clergy and partners in attendance. The principal presenter for the conference was the Rev. Dr. Martin Brokenleg. The annual Bishop's Retreat for Clergy will take place November 3rd to November 5th at the Loon Lake Research and Education Centre near Pitt Meadows and the retreat conductor will be Brother James Koester, SSJE. Brother James is the only current member of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) who is Canadian, and he was formerly a parish priest in the Diocese of British Columbia. ✠



PHOTO Courtesy of Karl Przywala

### • Farewell Eileen •

The Rev. Eileen Nurse stepped down from her position at the Synod Office, April 30th after 21 years serving in various capacities. It is rare indeed that one person is in possession of such a broad range of skills and expertise; the diocese has been blessed by her service. With Eileen's departure, the entire Synod Staff has completely changed since the year 2000. Glen Mitchell is currently the longest serving Synod Staffer having begun his ministry January 1st, 2004.

Eileen will take some time to discern where God is calling her next. She continues as a deacon in the Parish of St. George, Fort Langley.

A search for the next incumbent Administrative Assistant in the Bishop's Office began last May.

A celebration of Eileen's service including lunch, some gifts and the presence of her long-time colleagues, the Ven. Ronald Harrison and the Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham was held at the Synod Office May 13th. ✠

*Thank-you very much, Eileen!*



PHOTO Wayne Chose

### • The Sign is AWESOME •

When the City of North Vancouver redid the sidewalks on Grand Boulevard they removed the St. Agnes Anglican Church of Canada sign, the kind of sign that is available for parishes to purchase through Augsburg Fortress Canada. St. Agnes's rector, the Rev. Stephen Muir thought the sign was gone forever but apparently a member of the Altar Guild, Marilyn Watson took the initiative and through polite insistence

prodded the city into action. The new sign made by the city with the Diocese of New Westminster badge provided by Stephen, located at the corner of East 13th and Grand Boulevard is great and without going too overboard, suffice it to say that diocesan communications personnel are dee-lighted! To quote, Stephen, "never underestimate a determined Altar Guild volunteer." ✠

PHOTOS Randy Murray





# AROUND THE DIOCESE

• Taking Flight •

Confirmation Prep Day for 2014

On Saturday, April 26th the third annual Taking Flight Confirmation prep day took place at Christ Church Cathedral

The day got underway with a welcome from Dean Peter Elliott who informed the confirmation candidates that they would be part of history as the first cohort to be confirmed by Bishop Melissa Skelton. Prior to introducing the Rev. Marnie Peterson who would give details of the running order of the day's events, Dean Peter introduced the facilitators for Taking Flight 2014: for those who self-identified as "adults" they would be led by two guests from the Church of England; Canon Rosie Harper, the Vicar of Great Missenden in the Diocese of Oxford and Chaplain to the Bishop of Buckingham, and the Bishop of Buckingham, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Alan Wilson who is suffragan Bishop in the Diocese of Oxford. That group of 15 would meet downstairs in the Cathedral's Park Room whilst the younger cohort would remain in the chancel to be led by: Caitlin Reilley Beck, Youth Ministry Coordinator at St. Philip, Dunbar; and Cameron Gutjahr, Youth Ministry Coordinator at St. Mary's, Kerrisdale.

The Rev. Marnie Peterson posted some flipchart paper displaying the day's agenda and guided the candidates through the scheduled program, which would run from 10 am to 2:30 pm with a break for lunch.

Next, Bishop Melissa addressed this representative group of her *first-ever confirmands*. She revealed that she was baptized at age 10 in the Presbyterian Church and that her family were not churchgoers. In her early 20s she came to faith and was confirmed in the Episcopal Church. She went on to speak briefly about the differences between the Episcopal Church where she is from and the Anglican Church of Canada. The Bishop then asked all those present to find someone that they did not know and speak with them, share names and parish affiliations, their expectations for the day and a little bit about how they viewed their approaching confirmations.

Following these duo dialogues different people stood up and shared their stories, focusing on what has and who have brought them to this point in their faith lives.

Then it was time for the two groups to form. Beginning the young people's session, Caitlin and Cam assured the group that this would be a "safe place" and that there would be "no wrong answers." Cam led the youth in some exercises to loosen up and through games and shared information the younger cohort of the 2104 confirmation candidates began to form a community.

Downstairs in the Park Room, Bishop Alan and Canon Rosie began the day with the older candidates sitting in a circle. They went around the circle sharing their stories

and how they have come to this point in their faith journey.

Although this report is only a fraction of what the confirmation candidates experienced on April 26th the focus of the Confirmation training day is to acclimatize them to the physical surroundings of the Cathedral and to create a sense of community as Christianity is a faith deeply rooted in being together.

The Confirmation Liturgy will take place at Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday, June 22nd at 4 pm. ✠



Cameron Gutjahr loosens up the group. PHOTO Randy Murray



Bishop Melissa in dialogue with a confirmation candidate. PHOTO Randy Murray



The Circle of Adult candidates led by Bishop Alan Wilson and Canon Rosie Harper. PHOTO Randy Murray

• Errata •

In the May 2014 issue of *Topic* we made a mistake in identification of the ecumenical guests at the March 1st, 2014, Consecration and Installation of Bishop Melissa Skelton. On page 6, photograph #7 (*photo below*) the person walking behind Fr. Hrnt Tahanian is in fact *Fr. Martin Lotho* of the Old Catholic Church of BC. And on page 7, photograph #9 (*photo below*) behind Fr. McAllister is *Fr. Richard Soo* of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Many thanks to Fr. Juergen Schmode of The Old Catholic Church of BC for contacting diocesan communications and for being very gracious and understanding in accepting our apology. ✠



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## OPINION

### Faith Changes Reality

ART TURNBULL

Retired Priest of the Diocese of Ontario

I do not believe it! People read what I write.

Recently I wrote an article for *Topic* about dying that was printed on the Opinion pages of the February 2014 issue. I was suggesting that we all put our affairs in order because we all die. I got lots of responses. People read the paper. Many said they were going to write down their wishes. In a culture that is squeamish about dying I was heartened by the many that said they were ready.

Now another matter of dying has come into my experience. Many people around my age seem to be dying. Some are a bit older and some a tad younger. Some of these were my good friends in the chaplain services. A few were lieutenant-colonels. I am glad I only got to be a major. Another promotion may not have been good for longevity. However, I do not believe there is a direct connection between promotion and death.

I am also aware that innocent people all over the world are dying from the vio-

lence of war and terrorism. I know of the recorded deaths due to human error and neglect in places like the clothing factories in Bangladesh. There are killings on our Canadian highways and murders in our cities. Disease takes a steady toll that medical science valiantly tries to stem. If we all live long enough we will all die of old age. So, I believe in death. I also believe in living.

It is in the context of belief in life and death that the Apostle Thomas gives witness to faith in God.

Thomas with his peers and friends is in a state of shock, as their leader Jesus has been executed by the authorities. Jesus is dead and buried. Thomas and the others are stunned. They also worry that they may be next. It is in this context that the unbelievable happens.

Strange as it seems, Thomas is told that Jesus has come to the apostles, has been seen and talked with and known in the hidden room. Thomas is told that Jesus lives. "No way can I believe this unless I see it for

myself," says Thomas.

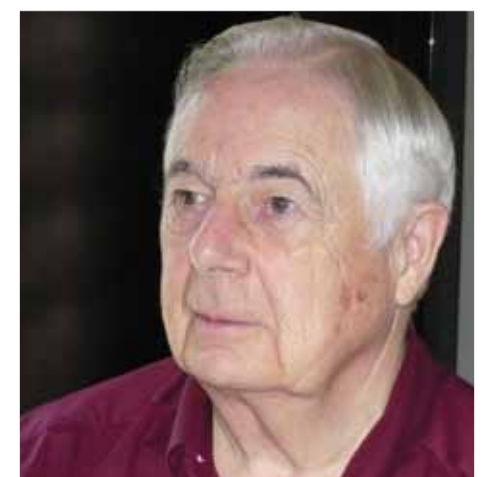
That opportunity came to Thomas a few days later. This Jesus before him now asks Thomas to reach out and touch the wounded hand, feel the tear in the chest from the spear. Thomas instantly changes. He no longer needs the physical encounter as he exclaims, "My Lord, and My God!" Faith has changed reality. We, like Thomas, can believe. This belief removes from us the need to question, to doubt. Jesus says to Thomas and to us:

"Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have come to believe." (John 20: 29)

So with my peers and friends who have died, I can move forward in life and in death with confidence. Not because of what I do not believe, but because of what I do believe.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection

of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1: 3-5) ✠



The Rev. (Major) Art Turnbull.



## OPINION

### Homelessness: A Collage

DONALD GRAYSTON

Retired Priest of the Diocese of New Westminster;  
former director of the SFU Institute for the Humanities

This is really a collage about homelessness, rather than an op/ed or an analysis. I want to preface it with an item I heard on the radio on March 13th. Rick Cluff, host of the CBC's Early Edition, was interviewing former premier Mike Harcourt, who has been working on homelessness in a personal way since 2008. *He told Rick Cluff that he was convinced that Vancouver could eliminate street homelessness by 2015.* This was beautiful to hear, but it has to be placed beside the reality that 80% of the homeless don't live on the street.

The first reading at Church on February 9th was from Isaiah 58, which concerns the connection between fasting (especially done ostentatiously in public, i.e. with sackcloth and ashes) and compassion. It includes these words (God is the speaker).

"Is not this the fast that I choose...  
...to share your bread with the hungry, and  
bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?"  
(Isaiah 58: 6-7)

I'm hunching that it was because of the reference in this passage to the homeless that Dean Peter Elliott invited Judy Graves to preach that Sunday at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver. Simply put (and of course she would deny this): Judy is a saint. For 25 years she was an advocate for the homeless at Vancouver's City Hall. In her sermon, spoken from heart and gut without a note, the proverbial pin if dropped would have been easily heard. Can you spare 14 minutes? If so, you can listen to her sermon at <http://bit.ly/1hV5m4X>.

She told how on many occasions, she would walk through the city at night in order to find and talk with the homeless. Finding some of them asleep around the Cathedral, which without an overhang offers no real shelter from the elements, she would ask them why they chose to sleep there. Because, they said, it helped them feel that the hand of God was over them (Why did I groan inwardly when I heard that?). Another story concerned a former warehouseman, unable through illness to work. He couldn't afford both the cost of transportation from his home to Vancouver (where he was being treated at St. Paul's Hospital) and the cost of food. She offered material help, and then quickly realized

that in so doing, she had failed to respect his dignity. He had worked out a plan, one not without difficulty, but a plan which was working for him; so she apologized. A third story concerned a former career criminal for whom conscience had broken through. He had left the life of crime and found himself homeless. He had, she said, touched the inner point of honesty and stillness that is in each of us, and made a change accordingly, even though it meant eating out of garbage cans.

She acknowledged that the homeless need money, food, and political leaders who will act on their behalf, to say nothing of shelter; and beyond these, they need human contact. Yet there is "nothing in our flesh," she averred; that draws us to want to make contact with them very easily. It is easy to judge them (as if they are deliberately homeless); something that scripture warns us against (Matthew 7: 1-5); and she reminded us that Jesus was himself homeless, at least part of the time (Matthew 8: 20)—as was Paul (1 Corinthians 4: 11). I knew this about Jesus, but not about Paul until I started in on these reflections about homelessness.

Their challenge to us, she concluded, is not to try to change them, but to allow them to change us. To do this is to find our own need, whatever it may be, mirrored in their need. By the grace of God, this can bring us to a point where we are unwilling to judge in the way that the gospel condemns, and so come to a place where we can live in continuous amazement at the way God works.

I belong to a community choir, *Local Vocals*, which meets under the inspired direction of singer-songwriter-ethnomusicologist Anna Baignoche. A powerful song she taught us was *It Takes More Than Promises*, by Steve Langley, which asks and responds to three questions.

- Why am I hungry (in this land of plenty)?
- Why am I naked (when one person has 200 pairs of shoes)?
- Why am I homeless (when you own strings of houses)?

It addresses the same needs that are addressed in the Isaiah passage: hunger, nakedness (and other forms of vulnerability), and homelessness. With 26 centuries between them, these two statements of



The Rev. Dr. Donald Grayston.

human need echo each other exactly.

Anna again. Recently she did a gig in a mansion in Shaughnessy. She was talking with the host, and asked him if he lived there. No, he said, nobody lives here; it's just a place where we hold parties.

The headline for the front page article in the February 28th issue of the *Guardian Weekly* was *Scandal of EU's Empty Homes*. The article says that "[M]ore than 11 million homes lie empty across Europe—enough to house all of the continent's homeless twice over..." Many of these are in vast holiday resorts built in the housing boom that preceded the 2007-08 financial meltdown, and have *never been occupied*. In the UK, there is a charity called Empty Homes, "which campaigns for vacant homes to be made available for those who need housing." Some local authorities in Catalonia have taken a pro-active stance on this scandal, threatening to impose large fines on banks if the homes they repossess remain empty for more than two years.

I recently attended a concert at First Lutheran Church in South Vancouver. There I noticed some posters issued by [stophomelessness.ca](http://stophomelessness.ca). They made the point that 80% of the homeless are not on the street, but live in temporary accommodation in shelters, on friends' couches, and so on. I've mentioned Anna: in 2010, she in fact spent some time living in her van. Working as a musician and being a grad student, her budget didn't always extend to regular accommodation. Here's an article from *The Globe and Mail*, which refers to her situation online at <http://bit.ly/Rp0U9w>.

I encourage you to check out the [stophomelessness.ca](http://stophomelessness.ca) website. It shows that concern for the homeless is rising and that action is being taken.

It also offers some very thoughtful reflections on what it means to have a home (as distinct from mere shelter). You may find ideas on that website about what you (or I!) could do to mitigate homelessness.

And Cathy Campbell, an Anglican priest in Winnipeg, writing in the March 2014 issue of the *Anglican Journal*, suggests as a reachable goal for the Anglican Church of Canada, that over the next three years, one third (i.e. nine) of its dioceses commit themselves to pursue at least one affordable housing project; and, in this historical moment of so many Churches closing down, to commit at least one quarter of the proceeds of all such property sales to the development of affordable housing. Notice the action words in what she says: goal, commit, pursue. It's time.

Finally, a word from Jesus in which he makes very personal whatever we do or don't do in response to human need.

"...when I was hungry, you gave me food;  
when thirsty, you gave me drink;  
when I was a stranger [read: homeless]  
you took me into your home,  
when naked you clothed me..."  
(Matthew 25: 35)

That quotation comes from his evocation of the Day of Judgment. But why should the homeless have to wait for a cosmic day of vindication and the rest of us for a day of shame? If I am homeless, I need a home *now*. So, rather than relegating the Day of Judgment to a distant and thereby convenient future, I would opt for what Tom Robbins, in *Skinny Legs and All*, says about the Day of Judgment: "Every day is judgment day." ♣

Thanks to Anna Baignoche for her editorial help with this piece.

### Language that Honours God

PETER NIBLOCK

Retired Priest of the Diocese of New Westminster; Former Rector, St. Mark's, Ocean Park

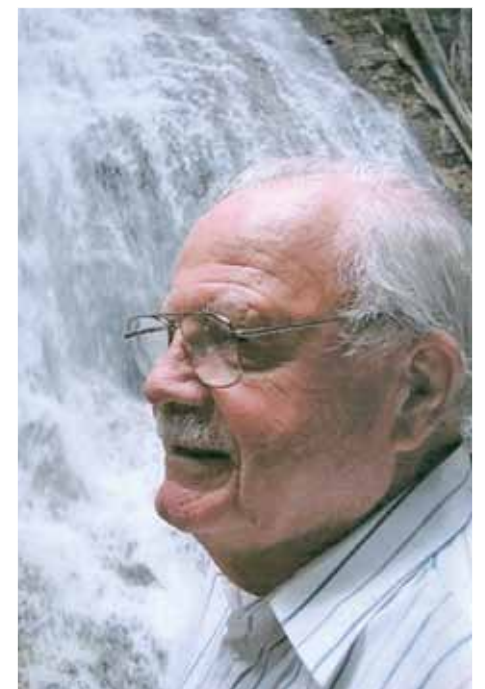
There is widespread misunderstanding in our Anglican tradition about the function and choice of language in our worship and it is commonly assumed that the language of the street is what was provided when both the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) appeared in the English of Shakespeare's England. The Bard made a point of giving us street talk in the mouths of Falstaff and his low-life friends, which was in marked contrast to the language of the Court and Palace. Archbishop Cranmer, who with Tennyson is justly deemed the finest expositor of the English vowel, gave us the BCP of 1549 in a style of English truly befitting worship, but it was not that spoken by Falstaff.

In the present day we have witnessed a desire, indeed a seeming obligation, to use

the nod to a modern version of Falstaff's English in casting aside the poetry of the past. My sense is that this reduction of our liturgical language to a lowest denominator has run its course and is now found wanting. In sartorial terms we have been misled in thinking that underwear is the new norm for those who would be properly dressed. The door opened by Cranmer is beginning to open once more but this time for the very best English that the 21st century can provide and should employ.

It is not the vowel only that has suffered in the gradual erosion of the best that English can offer. The pronoun has suffered as well, not in its ordinary use but with respect to God, and to the point that for those who would refer to the Deity by any of the 120 metaphors available to us

in Scripture, and others, *You* is the only pronoun now available. The third person singular—*He, Him, His*—is off the table. Yet ironically we still begin the Lord's Prayer with *Our Father*. We might well wonder if this is where the axe will fall next. There is urgency here because the best English that hymn and liturgy deserve and require is hampered like one who has lost a leg. A language saddled with repetitions of *God* is so seriously flawed as to be beyond repair. The only alternative, short of never referring to God at all, is to create, like prostheses, new pronouns applicable to and befitting God alone. For our poets, here is a challenge fraught with peril yet truly one best construed as a labour of love. ♣



The Rev. Peter Niblock in front of Margaret Falls located near Salmon Arm in BC's Interior. PHOTO Margaret Marquardt





# Diocesan Youth Movement

## YOUTH CONNECTIONS

News & Events for Youth in the Diocese of New Westminster

**youth groups •**

For Parish Youth Groups go to <http://tinyurl.com/DNW-Youth>

**contact •** The Rev. Ruth Monette,  
*Acting Director for Mission & Ministry Development*  
 rmonette@vancouver.anglican.ca  
 604.684.6306 ext. 219

# Who We Are In God's Love

SUZANNE MORGAN  
*St. Helen's, Point Grey*

Greetings to all! I'd like to tell you about our wonderful youth at St. Helen's, Point Grey and how our Church community at St. Helen's supports the spiritual growth of our children.

Last night was Friday night and I was taking my son to youth group a bit late. He had just returned from a grade 6 camping trip, and after a quick dinner and shower, he eagerly jumped into our van. It was a lovely spring evening and we went to Trimble Park, across from the Church. When I pulled over, the passenger door sprang open and my son hit the ground running. After he vaulted the fence, and was halfway across the field to join the kids and youth leaders in the park, he turned back, returned to the van and shut the door! We both laughed. I guess I used this little vignette to share with you the wonderful energy of youth (don't you wish you could buy it?) and how much my 12-year-old son loves his friends from St. Helen's.

St. Helen's offers youth both a weekly Friday night youth group and on Sunday mornings a weekly youth programme called, *Journey to Adulthood*. Friday night youth group has paid leaders and Sunday mornings has volun-

teers. The combination of Friday night youth group and the Sunday morning programme has been successful. Our Friday night youth group has grown from 3 kids to 21! At St. Helen's the kids are involved as acolytes or crucifers on Sunday mornings and also sing in the Church choir. Some of the things we have done together with the youth this year are: going on the Walk for Reconciliation; writing a Christmas Pageant and performing it (super fun!); preparing Christmas packages for Neighbourhood Ministries; a ceilidh party; mason bee house building; and recently, helping with the Easter Vigil by dancing classical Indian dance, singing, staging a puppet show and dramatic story telling.

Behind all of this have been dedicated parents and leaders. We are having a great time.

A couple of years ago I traveled to Taizé with four youth from St. Helen's and I came across the phrase, "Who we are in God's love." It was the title of one of the talks a Taizé brother was leading. The phrase has stayed on my heart since then. This wonderful time our kids are having, with good friends and their dear families keeps me in that Holy Spirit—God's presence in our lives together. ✠

Children, Youth and Leadership of the St. Helen's, Point Grey Youth Ministry photographed prior to attending the Diocesan Arts Ministry presentation of *The Selfish Giant* at St. Philip, Dunbar on May 2nd, 2014. PHOTOS Randy Murray

Back row: The Rev. Scott Gould, Christopher Mortensen, Chester Gould, Sean Mortensen, Kyle Vavasour, Kevin Zakresky, Katie O'Brien, Suzanne Morgan and Jim Hodgson.  
 Front row: Kathryn Mortensen, Veronica Gould, Phineas Gould and Laura Leighton. Chris and Kathryn Mortensen were in the production of *The Selfish Giant* and Scott played in the band.



Jim Hodgson, Sean Mortensen and Kyle Vavasour.

Phineas and his turtle "Turta."

Katie O'Brien, Veronica Gould and Laura Leighton.

