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Many thanks to the Engnan family for staying behind in the front pew, remaining in their "bubble" for this photo following the installation of the Ven. Fr. Louie Engnan (Dad) as Vicar of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale. The Celebration of a New Ministry took place July 13. Full coverage on pages 18 and 19 of this issue of *Topic*.

Electing a Bishop Is Never Easy

RICHARD GEOFFREY LEGGETT

*Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cathedral; Archdeacon of Westminster;
Chair of the 2020 Episcopal Election Committee*

Soon the Electoral Synod of the diocese of New Westminster will convene to elect a Bishop Coadjutor. We will do so in a context unlike any other in the history of our diocese. Because of this unique context, I want to share some history and information with you on behalf of the Episcopal Election Committee.

Charting a New Course

In April 2013, Bishop Michael Ingham announced his intention to retire on August 31. His announcement cast a new light on the existing canon and regulations regarding the election of a bishop in the diocese of New Westminster. They had not been reviewed or revised in more than two decades. Diocesan Council learned that we were not permitted to take any formal actions until after Bishop Michael actually retired and created what is known as "a vacancy in see."

As a result, the period between September 1 and November 30, the date of the episcopal election, was an intense one. Those responsible for the electoral process were required to provide the Members of the Electoral Synod with information about the candidates at least two weeks before the election. Procedures for the interviewing of candidates and the written materials they were to produce in support of their candidacy had to be developed and implemented in short order.

Following the election and consecration of then bishop, now archbishop, Melissa Skelton, Diocesan Council conducted a review of the canonical and regulatory procedures for the election of bishops in the diocese, whether diocesan, coadjutor or suffragan. Those who had been candidates in the 2013 election were interviewed as were the members of the various committees responsible for the electoral process. This process identified a number of areas for change.

- Rather than a Diocesan Profile being prepared before each election, an on-going Profile should be created and posted on the diocesan website. Diocesan Council should be responsible for maintaining and revising the Profile as necessary.
- The length of notice that a retiring or resigning bishop should give ought to be specified.
- The role of the committee(s) responsible for the electoral process should be more clearly defined, especially in terms of how the nominees were to be vetted to determine whether they were qualified to become candidates for election to the episcopate.
- In order to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility, the Canon(s) should establish principles, values and structure for the election, while the Regulation(s) and Rules of Order ought to describe the procedures to be used in putting those principles, values and structures into concrete operation.

Soon a Diocesan Profile was prepared, arising out of a diocese-wide consultative process. The Constitution and Canons Committee of the Diocese, usually most active in the lead-up to a Synod, was charged with the review and revision of the existing canons and regulations.

In October 2018, a special Diocesan Synod approved,

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Topic Schedule Reminder for Fall 2020

In January 2020, the number of issues per year of *Topic* that will be available in print and distributed to subscribers as a section of *The Anglican Journal* was reduced from 10 to 8. The current *Topic* print schedule is January, March, April, May, June (Summer), September, November and December. In February of 2020 the special 50th Anniversary issue was distributed.

For February 2021, we plan to offer a digital issue of *Topic* which will be found as a link through the diocesan website. For the past 11 years a downloadable PDF of the print version of *Topic* has been accessible on the diocesan website. That will continue.

As this is the first year with a reduced number of issues, you'll see that the date for this issue is September/October 2020. There will not be an October issue of *Topic* in print or online, however please continue to visit the news pages of the diocesan website at www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news for current coverage around the diocese. You are encouraged to subscribe to the weekly Diocesan E-News. Subscribing is quick and easy, just go to the diocesan website at www.vancouver.anglican.ca and scroll down to the footer where you will see the "Sign up for our Newsletter" prompt and follow the steps.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.
Randy Murray

Communications Officer & Topic Editor

Electing a Bishop Is Never Easy

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

in one sitting, Canon 2 *Election of the Diocesan Bishop* and Canon 3 *Coadjutor, Suffragan and Assistant Bishops*. Later in the following year Diocesan Council approved a new regulation entitled *Episcopal Election Process*. With this legislation in place, the course for the election of Archbishop Skelton's successor was charted.

The Joys of an Episcopal Election in a Pandemic

On April 21, 2020, Archbishop Skelton announced her retirement effective February 28, 2021, and called for the election of a coadjutor bishop. A coadjutor bishop is elected to be the successor of the diocesan bishop. The term "coadjutor" means that there is a period of time when both bishops are active in the diocese. When the diocesan bishop retires or resigns, the coadjutor immediately becomes the diocesan bishop.

Electing a bishop, whether a diocesan, coadjutor or suffragan, is a challenge for any diocese at any time. But Archbishop Skelton's announcement presented several challenges.

- It put into play the two new canons and a new regulation.
- It came just after the suspension of in-person worship and meetings and the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent health measures.
- Diocesan and Provincial requirements that the diocesan bishop retire at the age of 70 meant that delaying the transition to a new bishop was not an option.

To meet these challenges Diocesan Council, following the provisions of Canon 2, appointed an 11 person Episcopal Election Committee in May 2020. The Committee reflects the diversity of the diocese in terms of gender identity, age, ethnic and cultural identity and theological perspectives. Its membership is drawn from all the regional archdeacons of the diocese. Its members are:

- Nii K'an Kwsdins (Jerry Adams), *Burrard Archdeaconry*
- Alison Brookfield, *Capilano Archdeaconry*
- Andrew Halladay, *Lougheed Archdeaconry*
- Lindsay Hills, *Granville Archdeaconry*
- Vivian Lam, *Westminster Archdeaconry*
- Richard Leggett, *Westminster Archdeaconry (Chair)*
- Tim Morgan, *Lougheed Archdeaconry*
- Elizabeth Stoute, *Granville Archdeaconry*
- Peggy Trendell-Jensen, *Capilano Archdeaconry*
- Brian Walks, *Fraser Archdeaconry*
- Casper Zusek, *Burrard Archdeaconry*

Canon 2 directs the Episcopal Election Committee to conduct an electoral process that is transparent, fair, accountable, committed to discernment and guided by pastoral concern for the nominees. In addition, the Committee is charged with determining how electronic and social technology is used in the electoral process.

Electing a Bishop While Maintaining Physical Distance

One of the first tasks of the Episcopal Election Committee undertook was the revision of the Diocesan Profile. Since the first version of the Profile was posted to the diocesan website in 2018, changes have been made in the boundaries of regional deaneries and archdeacons. Our diocese in partnership with the other dioceses of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon hosted the General Synod of 2019, and subsequently undertook a number of new initiatives following the General Synod in the areas of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and other ministries associated with our baptismal covenant.

With the completion of the revision of the Profile,

the Committee explored how to fulfill our obligation to conduct third-party professional reviews of the credentials of the nominees. We chose to engage Oxford Document Management, a US-based firm that has conducted similar credential reviews of nominees for episcopal elections in the Episcopal Church as well as ministry professionals in other churches.

We also discussed how best to ensure that Members of Synod had the information they needed to make their decisions. We have asked the nominees to respond in writing to questions related to the Diocesan Profile. We are developing an interview process that will make use of Zoom as well as provide written transcripts as required by the Regulation.

But the real question has always been this: Can we hold an in-person Electoral Synod? Our neighbours to the west in the diocese of British Columbia had already decided that an in-person Electoral Synod was not possible. After considering a number of options, the Committee advised Archbishop Skelton and Diocesan Council that our Electoral Synod will be conducted virtually using all the tools of electronic and social technology at our disposal.

Many of us are already familiar with the use of online technology as a means of nurturing community and conducting business during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. While we all value the advantages of an in-person Electoral Synod, this is simply not possible under existing health restrictions and respecting personal concerns. With the guidance of the Diocesan Chancellor and

Vice-Chancellor and the concurrence of Diocesan Council, the Committee has identified how this Episcopal Election can be conducted in a transparent, fair and accountable manner. Working with colleagues in the diocese of British Columbia, the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer and with additional professional advice, we are creating an environment in which Members of Synod will be able to act as the Spirit gives guidance and wisdom.

We are currently working with *Simply Voting*, a Montréal-based firm that has provided online voting resources that have been used by a significant number of non-profit and for-profit organizations in North America successfully. On the day of the Electoral Synod, Saturday, October 3, 2020 we envision using Zoom or similar conferencing technology for the opening eucharist and the business portions of the Electoral Synod that follow. ✠



More details about the Electoral Synod have been and will continue to be circulated through diocesan communications vehicles (website, email, subscription emails and social media accounts). The diocesan website is www.vancouver.anglican.ca.

It was hoped that diocesan communications would have the list of candidates, photos and biographies and links to interview material in time for inclusion in this September/October issue of Topic. However, that was not possible, so for this information please check this section of the diocesan website: <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/seeking-our-next-bishop>. • Editor

A Prayer for the Electoral Synod

As the day of the Episcopal Election approaches, we invite all the people of the diocese to pray:

*Triune God, Three-in-One and One-in-Three,
you created the Church to embody your mission in the world.
We thank you for the gift of your presence
so that we may be still and know your will for us.
We thank you for Jesus who taught us that
strength and growth come through acts of humble service.
We thank you for the Holy Spirit
sent to lead us into all truth.
Bless the Synod of the diocese of New Westminster
as we prepare to elect a Bishop Coadjutor.
Keep us steadfast in faith, united in love
and courageous in action,
so that we may manifest your love for this world.
This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Friend and Helper.
Amen.*

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



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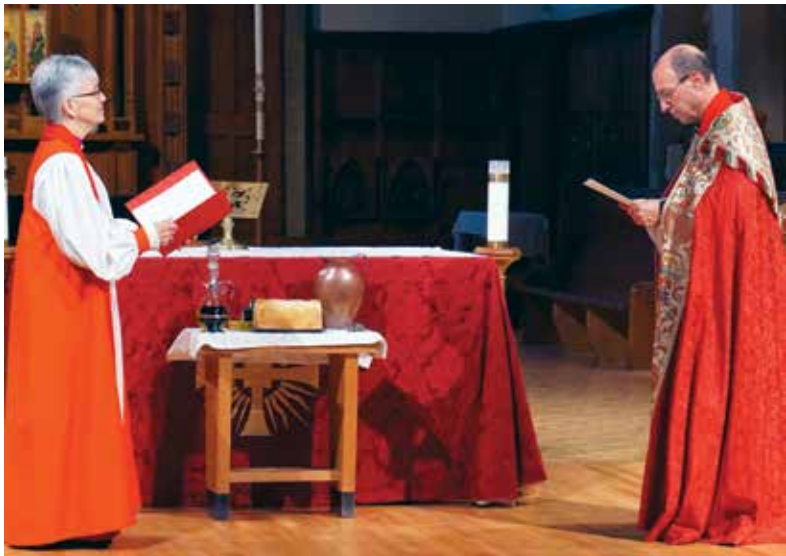
The diocese of New Westminster
The Anglican Church in the Lower Mainland, the Fraser Valley and on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, located on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish First Nations, consisting of 69 worshipping communities.

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Thank you!



LEFT Following the presentation of the Symbols of Ministry and before the Archbishop's request to the congregation that they welcome the new rector with applause, Her Grace says, "Christopher, let all these be signs of the ministry which is mine and yours and is shared by all the people of God." RIGHT The vicar's welcome, full view of the nave and gallery. PHOTOS Randy Murray

Celebration of a New Ministry at Christ Church Cathedral

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

For the first time in almost 26 years a new rector was inducted to serve the Parish of Christ Church Cathedral. The officiant was the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton, Archbishop of the Anglican diocese of New Westminster, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC & Yukon. Archbishop Skelton also preached at the Celebration of a New Ministry on the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (transferred) on June 28, 2020.

The attendance at the liturgy was limited to a total of 50, all those present (there were approximately 40 in attendance) adhering to physical distancing protocols throughout the hour-long worship. Those present were equally divided between clergy and lay with many of the laity present connected to the canonical process that brought about the appointment of the Rev. Christopher A. Pappas as the 14th Rector of the Parish of Christ Church, Vancouver, which has since 1929, been the Cathedral Church of the diocese of New Westminster.

The parishes of the diocese of New Westminster were at the time early in *Phase 2* of the diocesan process regarding in-person worship and as part of *Phase 2*, the Eucharist/Holy Communion was not celebrated (*Phase 3* scheduled to begin August 16 contains a Eucharistic component and will be participated in by those parishes that formulated and submitted a plan approved by diocesan leadership. Christ Church Cathedral is one of those parishes). The Celebration of a New Ministry took place within the context of a standard Eucharist up to the Offertory and then moved to the Sending Out of the Disciples and the Dismissal.

There was music, and it was provided by the Cathedral's Organist and Director of Music, Rupert Lang with soprano soloist, Lucy Smith and baritone soloist, Jake Gramit. Lucy and Jake are married, therefore while seated side by side in the organ gallery they remained in their "bubble."

The parish officers were present and participated in the liturgy, they processed in, presented the new rector during the Covenant in Ministry and read the presentations during the Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry. The Symbols were presented by Cathedral parishioners and by members of Cathedral staff. The bread and wine for Holy Communion was presented by the rector of the neighbouring parish of St. Paul, the Rev. Philip Cochrane.

Cathedral deacon, the Rev. Alisdair Smith was Deacon of the Word and the Cathedral's parish administrator, Vincent Carey filled the liturgical assistant roles including leading the processions as crucifer. The Cathedral's Vicar, the Rev. Helen Dunn welcomed the congregation and presented her new colleague with a Bible during the Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry.

The Archdeacon of Burrard, the Ven. Fr. Kevin Hunt, Rector of St. James', Vancouver was present to welcome his new archdeaconry colleague. Christ Church Parish began as a church plant of St. James' in 1889.

Archbishop Skelton was the preacher. For her text, Her Grace examined the Saints' Day being celebrated at the liturgy and the connections of St. Peter and St. Paul to this historic event in the life of the diocesan Cathedral, Christ Church, Vancouver. She also explored the meaning of internship and the Greek word, *Akoloutho*—"to follow." And wrapped up the exploration with an analysis of the responsibilities of rector and community as they begin a kind of internship:

"Sure, Chris has lots of experience and has accomplished many, many things before he ever got here. Sure, this Cathedral under



The Executive Archdeacon of the diocese, the Ven. Douglas Fenton describes the process by which the new rector has been chosen. PHOTO Randy Murray

THE KNEELERS

HOW THEY ARE BEING USED DURING THE PANDEMIC

SOME WERE LENT OUT BEFORE THE START OF LOCKDOWN

A FEW WERE PILFERED (VERY TRICKY TO DETECT)

THE CLERGY USE THE REMAINDER FOR (SOCIALLY-DISTANCED) TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISES

CartoonChurch.com



LEFT Archdeacon Fenton prepares the oaths and declarations. RIGHT The Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry begins with the presentation of a Bible by Cathedral Vicar, the Rev. Helen Dunn. PHOTOS Randy Murray

Celebration of a New Ministry at Christ Church Cathedral

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Peter Elliott's leadership has accomplished many, many things and has had a ball doing it. But my friends that was then, and this is now. You are being invited today to sign on to a new internship together in following Jesus. In this internship neither Chris nor this Cathedral will be throwing out everything that came before. But, hear this, following Jesus is not about simply continuing what was done before. Following Jesus is always, (God helping us), a new adventure in which we must sort out the specific new ways we will express the self-giving love, the thirst for justice, the commitment to the dignity of every human being, the willingness to lose life in order to gain life and the unquenchable hope that Jesus, himself, is all about. For all these things need to be grounded in the actual context today—the place, the times, the circumstances, the issues, the joys, the fears, the craziness, and the actual people who are already here and the actual people who might come into our orbit.

And, you know what, as I think about what might happen here, in this partnership, I believe that just like before, you're going to have a ball together."

A video and the text of Archbishop Skelton's sermon are available on the diocesan website.¹ And a very fine live stream produced in-house by Cathedral staff is available on the Cathedral's YouTube channel (Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver).²

Fr. Chris Pappas began his ministry at the Cathedral on June 1. He was born in New Jersey, raised and educated in the United States and has spent a considerable portion of his career in ministry in the diocese of Edmonton. Prior to his new appointment at Christ Church Cathedral he was Rector of Holy Trinity, Edmonton. He began his ministry at Holy Trinity in 2010.

On the day of his appointment, March 15, 2020 Fr. Chris supplied the following biographical material to diocesan communications:

In addition to being the Rector of Holy Trinity, Edmonton, Chris was the Diocesan Archdeacon for Congregational Development. He recently completed a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Studies at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, in Berkeley, California, on the characteristics of leadership in transformational congregations.

Chris received a BS in Biology from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and a PhD in Biomedical Science: Neuroscience from the University of Connecticut. His area of research was glial physiology, with a focus on astrocyte ion regulation. He received a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School and a Certificate in Anglican Studies from Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. He also received a Doctor of Ministry from Church Divinity School of the Pacific with a dissertation topic on Leadership in Transformational Parishes.

He was ordained a deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Eau Claire and priest in the diocese of Edmonton. Chris has previously served as a regional dean, a member of executive council and as a territorial archdeacon. He has also been involved in church growth and has served on various community and church committees, including Executive Council, co-chair of the National Worship Conference, and the Vital Healthy Parishes initiative, and the Alberta Government Working Group on the Banning of Conversion Therapy.

Chris has also served in the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island where he was a member of the Diocesan Congregational Development Commission and as a seminarian in Connecticut. After growing up in the Greek Orthodox Church, he brings a deep love and reverence for the mystery of our faith and enjoys the rich liturgy

and symbolism of the Anglican Church. Chris is a strong proponent of ecumenism, and interfaith activities; served the soldiers of the South Alberta Light Horse at the regimental church, is active in community organizing and in the Church's mission in the world.

He is an avid reader of Science Fiction and Fantasy as well as enjoying history and current events. Although retired from rugby and riding a motorcycle, he still enjoys yoga, cardio and weight training, bike riding, squash, snow shoeing as well as other physical activities. Chris is a big fan of Monty Python, the New York Yankees, the Boston Celtics, and the University of Connecticut Huskies basketball teams and is a soccer fan. He is also a big fan of theatre and the arts and has acted in a number of *Fringe Productions* at Holy Trinity and has been host of the monthly *Open Stage*. He is active

in promoting the Arts, supporting artists and providing good, life affirming art for the community.

Rev. Pappas is scheduled to be installed as Dean of the diocese of New Westminster at the September 12 Working Retreat Day of Diocesan Council. Coverage of the installation will be available online via the new pages of the diocesan website and in an upcoming issue of *Topic*. ♦

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¹ <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/podcasts/media/2020-06-28-internship-akoloutheo-to-follow>

² <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGfh54nYryKFzLSnjv02qgw>



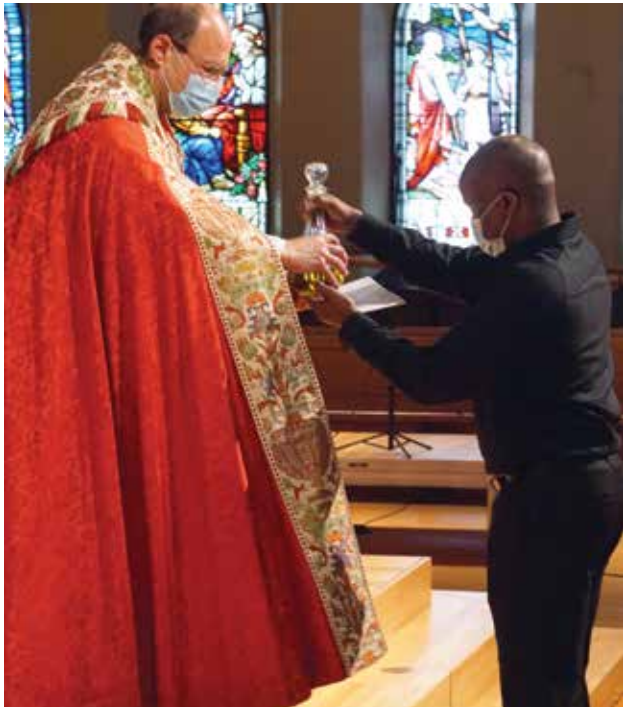
Warden Emily Pritchard reads the text of the presentation as Rev. Pappas receives the Bible. PHOTO Randy Murray



Warden Mike den Haan reads the text of the presentation of the keys. PHOTO Randy Murray



Rejoice presents the water for baptism. PHOTO Randy Murray



Monte presents the oil for anointing. PHOTO Randy Murray



Upon receipt of the keys Rev. Pappas says, "I invite you all to join with me in welcoming all who would come into the fellowship of the people of God." PHOTO Randy Murray



For the first official time as rector, Rev. Pappas shares the peace of the Lord. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT The new rector listens to the applause of welcome. RIGHT Organist and Director of Music Rupert Lang accompanies soloists, Jake Gramit and Lucy Smith as they sing the Postlude, Purcell's *Sound the Trumpet*. PHOTOS Randy Murray



Archbishop and rector listen to the Postlude. PHOTO Randy Murray



Cathedral wardens, archbishop and rector. Observing physical distance. PHOTO Randy Murray



Fr. Matthew. PHOTO Tallulah Photo



Distribution centre for emergency groceries. Fr. Matthew is picking up for delivery to vulnerable families. PHOTO Tallulah Photo

Fr. Matthew Johnson | Street Outreach Initiative & COVID-19

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

Street-involved adults living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) struggle daily with poverty, mental illness, drug addiction, alcoholism, violence, social isolation, and with the legacy of past traumas. In the midst of this, Street Outreach Priest, Fr. Matthew Johnson, seeks by word and deed, to remind each person he encounters of their infinite value in the eyes of God. The DTES is a parish where anything can and does happen, where no day is typical, and where Jesus Christ is found in the least expected persons and places.

The COVID-19 time of social distancing has impacted everyone, but modern technological tools have been utilized to keep communities connected, however, Fr. Johnson's "parish" is not reachable by Zoom, therefore it was and remains difficult for him to maintain active contact relationships with his community.

Fr. Matthew was kind enough to take the time to answer some questions for *Topic* with a focus on how the Street Outreach Initiative (SOI) is navigating the COVID-19 crisis. Please note that this interview took place in mid-spring of 2020 prior to the Province of BC entering *Phase 3* of the COVID-19 restart plan, June 24.

Q. Thank-you, Fr. Matthew for speaking with us. Please tell us a few things about SOI that readers may not know, and also please give us a little bit of background about, and a timeline describing the beginnings of the ministry?

A. My work in the DTES began with a debilitating episode of depressive illness. The late Fr. David Retter, then-rector of St. James' Church (SJC) invited me to stay at the St. James Clergy House, where I began my convalescence. It was then, in the very depths of my own journey, that I started to walk through the surrounding community, meeting people on the street. Many of these men and women were in the depths too, yet they didn't have the support and resources I did.

I met a man who had just completed a penitentiary sentence for homicide. He was homeless and trying to get help with his addiction (drug use is common in prison) but getting nowhere. Coming to know him, I discovered there was almost no "social safety net", if you're on the street and addicted or mentally ill. I assisted him in practical ways but perceived that it was the moral support and accompaniment of a priest that made the difference for him, in recovering his morale, reconnecting with family, and moving home. That's when the idea of the outreach germinated.

Later, in 2004, with Fr. Retter's permission, and the mentoring of outreach worker Dr. Judy Graves, ODNW, *The Steps* project began as a part-time experimental outreach of SJC, with me as outreach worker. It grew from there.

In 2005, with the support of Bishop Michael Ingham, the Street Outreach Initiative was formed as a joint ministry of the Diocese of New Westminster and SJC, with the significant partnership of investors from the broader community. We are very much a ministry of the diocese, but our parochial and spiritual home is SJC, where I am a member of the clergy team. SOI is rooted in the Anglo-Catholic tradition of urban clergy outreach, and in SJ's history of engagement with the people who live in this large parish, which is coextensive with the DTES.

By the grace of God, and the help of many wonderful people, we've been rolling

now for 15 years.

Q. Although BC didn't go into "Lockdown" to the same extent as many other places around the world, *Phase 1* must've restricted your access to your parish, how did you deal with that, and how did you remain connected?

A. With the onset of the pandemic and *Phase 1*, at first I had permission to continue operations as long as I could maintain the required precautions. After a couple of weeks though it became apparent that this was not possible, and we had to suspend the on-street walks. This was a difficult call.

Other fronts, through which we engage the community were also denied us. These include the trauma workshops we host, weekday masses attended by community members, the elder-and-priest rounds, as well as *fifth step* addiction recovery meetings, and in-person pastoral counselling. Also, the St. James *Open Church* project, which offers street-involved residents access to the church for quiet, prayer, welcome, and refreshment, was also suspended. All normal ways of engagement were cut off!

We adjusted a bit by using phone and text to communicate with some of our members who had phones. Beyond Vancouver, I spoke with members in places like Northern Saskatchewan and Vancouver Island. I even heard a confession by phone. We've made contact with thousands of street-involved brothers and sisters through the years, but we keep a list of roughly 450 regular contacts. Street Outreach Deacon, Joyce Locht and I began praying daily for them and for all who live and serve in our Parish. Naming and picturing each person, and holding them prayerfully before God helped, given the pastoral longing we had to be with them.

Q. Please describe a little bit of how you interact/ liaise with the St. James' ordained and lay staff? Did this change at all during *Phase 1*?

A. With the closure of all churches including SJ, office interaction went virtual. I come to the empty Parish Centre once or twice a week for mail and paperwork. SOI's Administrative Associate, Anna Wood and I maintained active contact by phone and email. Consultation with our Advisory Group is by email. Meetings with the clergy and lay leaders are by Zoom, and it sure makes meeting easy. I'm not much into social media, but whoever invented Zoom should get a direct pass to Heaven.

St. James' is also using Zoom for its Sunday Liturgy. I'm amazed at how effective this is. You can't offer a High Mass online. Without ritual movement, chanting, the sight and fragrance of incense, and the feeling of bells resounding. But these low-key Liturgies of the Word, led by Fr. Kevin Hunt (Rector of SJ), have been incredibly nurturing and successful. Deacon Joyce and I even used Zoom to offer a Christian Formation session, on practices for coping with stress and anxiety related to this pandemic.

Q. Does SOI partner with any other compassionate service groups, and how are different organizations handling the pandemic, specifically regarding aid to street-involved adults?

A. Yes, we do partner with other groups. SOI has a longstanding relationship with *Watari*, an amazing organization which specializes in cross cultural outreach. With the support of St. James' rector and the wardens, we began the extensive paperwork and permission process required for *Watari* to use our kitchen for community meal

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*“Although this has been a trying time,
I see Jesus Christ everywhere in this neighbourhood.
He is present, in a sacramental way,
in our sisters and brothers on the street (Matthew 25:40).
And I see God present in the amazing community response to this pandemic.”*



Putting on the mask and going out to the street collage. PHOTO Randy Murray

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

preparation. The diocese was quite thorough—let me tell you!—in rightly requiring advance safety planning and accountability for this. Now, with all the approvals, Watari are preparing meals at SJ for vulnerable families in the community. There is also a grocery delivery service for low income families, and I’ve done some driving for them—making new contacts in the process.

Although they’re not a partner, I want to mention the DTES Response Fund,¹ which was first off the mark with the pandemic, ahead of the city and most other organizations, in reaching out to residents of the privately-run Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels. These hotels are typically in appalling condition, with little care for the tenants.

My colleague, the Rev. Laurel Dykstra, Gathering Priest of *Salal + Cedar Watershed Discipleship*, and some of its members have been active volunteers with many others in this, at a nearby receiving and distribution facility. They provide necessities like meals, soap, toilet paper, hand gel, facemasks, cleaning solution, and even pet food, directly to the vulnerable residents of these hotels. Their rapid deployment, excellent safety protocols, and effective work are inspiring.

Q. What do think will be the long-term result of closing the Oppenheimer Park tent city?

A. Before I comment on the Park or the neighbourhood, let me say that I speak as a worker in, and not a resident of, the DTES, so I don’t speak for the community.

Others I respect will disagree with me, but overall, I believe it was right to end the tent city in Oppenheimer Park. Thousands of residents of the DTES depend on that park as a life-giving place of refreshment, community life, and programming. They have been cut off from this for about 18 months by the tent city and the significant safety problems. When you reside in a nine by ten foot room, you need a place to go, with greenery and trees and birds, where you can hang out, sip a coffee, and meet friends, away from the noise and tension of the street. The tent city was begun out of a genuine desperation for housing. But in my view it descended over the months into a dysfunctional and dangerous place. People were assaulted, weapons were constantly being confiscated, and on New Year’s Day a St. James’ parishioner and member of our diocese—a gentle, generous, community-minded man—was murdered there. This shook our church and the surrounding community to the core.

Although some did not leave willingly, most campers have accepted new residences or hotel accommodations, with some supports and resources. But the fact remains that we have a severe shortage of low-income housing in

the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). Where will the next tent city spring up?

Q. Respecting confidentiality completely could you talk a little bit about how members of the community were handling Phase 1 and how they are doing as Phase 2 is rolled out.

A. Though necessary, the lockdown measures of Phase 1 have been generally difficult for community members. There are probably a hundred critical drop-in facilities and programmes for residents that are either cancelled outright or drastically scaled back. Numerous outreach programmes, ours included, were suspended. Sunrise Market, an affordable source of fresh vegetables, meats, and groceries was closed—leaving no comparable option for thousands on low incomes. It has now re-opened (as of this writing in late May).

Q. Is there any specific data that you are aware of that reports on the incidence of infection and illness amongst the DTES community?

A. Wherever there is poverty there is diminished health and poor outcomes. And at the start of this pandemic I was deeply concerned for the medical well-being of our members in the DTES. Indeed, I anticipated many funerals. The novel coronavirus is particularly hard on those with pre-existing medical conditions, and the physical health of many DTES residents is marginal at best. Countless persons suffer from serious malnutrition. Many others have chronic health conditions that make them susceptible. Lots of folks have compromised immune systems and are less able to fight off infection. And numerous others suffer respiratory disease, making them particularly vulnerable to this respiratory tract infection.

Although I don’t have detailed statistics, so far it seems the street-involved community has been spared a major outbreak. And this, both with residents and with programme workers, who are conscientious about not bringing the virus into the community. Given the high density of people here, and people’s medical vulnerability, this is nothing less than a miracle. There are no guarantees, but may God grant that this reprieve continues. With autumn and winter rains though, people will spend more time indoors, and that could increase transmission.

Q. How are you approaching Phase 2? What would you like to see happen during Phase 2 in terms of awareness and support of those in the community you serve?

A. It has been hard to be separated for many weeks from our members.

As we cross into Phase 2, I have made several reconnaissance missions onto the streets, to gauge whether safe street work is possible. I’ve experimented with a fabric

mask, which I was concerned would send the wrong message. I’ve avoided physical contact and observed meticulous hand washing. I wore my black clerical shirt, but without the white collar, which might send a mixed message when combined with a mask.

I was surprised that even with the mask, all my usual contacts, and others I know less well, recognized me readily. So, apparently the mask does not pose a major barrier for now. Although I cannot control all the variables, as someone who is careful, I feel reasonably safe. And without any major outbreak to date, I estimate the population here poses about the same hazard level as shopping at grocery store or pharmacy, or riding in an elevator in my building.

Having consulted the Outreach Advisory Group, which includes nurses and an outreach worker, who contributed numerous cautions, currently I have permission from Archbishop Skelton and diocesan leadership to re-engage on the street.

Q. Where is God and the Church in this time?

A. Although this has been a trying time, I see Jesus Christ everywhere in this neighbourhood. He is present, in a sacramental way, in our sisters and brothers on the street (Matthew 25:40). And I see God present in the amazing community response to this pandemic. This includes faith-based organizations like First United, UGM, the Sisters of Charity, Khalsa Aid, Salal + Cedar, Jacobs Well, Mission Possible, the Salvation Army, 24/7 Prayer, local intentional communities, and others. The St. James Music Academy deserves special mention for their outreach to families. I see God at work too through other organizations like Watari, DTES Response, Aboriginal Front Door, the SRO Collaborative, the Portland Hotel Society, and the Carnegie Community Action Project, to name a few.

It comes down to this... When we act, God acts.

Q. Although the world is somewhat on “pause” the mission of God on earth through the example of Jesus Christ is never on pause and ministry requires financial resources. How can people give to sustain the ministry of SOI and what are some of the imminent needs?

A. SOI operates through the generous support of many people. We welcome new partners interested in supporting this work. Contributions can be made directly to “Diocese of New Westminster” with “Street Outreach Initiative” on the memo line or by donating online (select “Giving Type” and scroll down to “Street Outreach Initiative”). At this time though, given the present needs in the Downtown Eastside, I encourage those who feel moved, equally to consider a gift to *Watari*⁴ or DTES Response⁵—both of which have online websites.

Q. Is there anything you’d like to add?

A. The one thing I will add is that although there has not yet been an outbreak, the DTES residents are still up against the considerable challenges they faced before the pandemic. Opioid overdoses continue unabated. The lack of affordable housing leaves an increasing number homeless, including more and more seniors. The conditions of available housing are frequently appalling. Resources and housing for the mentally ill are minimal—falling way short of real needs. Many with mental illness remain untreated, isolated, and extremely vulnerable, without help or hope. The lack of beds at addiction detox, treatment and recovery facilities, prevents those who are ready to make a change from acting on it, before the urge to use inevitably returns. Poverty, as it is experienced by these groups, and by many others in our midst, reduces life to a stressful daily struggle, which slowly grinds a person down.

Tackling these challenges is not impossible. And for the fiscally minded, addressing these needs upfront, is much less expensive overall than the cost of failing to do so. The representatives we elect need to be pressed on these matters of public policy. And we [all] must do the pressing! The wealthy and influential among us, may be especially well positioned to gain access to government ministers and leaders, and to raise the needs of the marginalized with decision makers. All of us can and must vote. But we must also seek out and speak directly to our MLAs and City Counsellors, about our concerns for the “least of these” among us. Those the Lord names as his brothers and sisters—and ours. ✠

LINKS AND MORE INFORMATION:

¹ <https://dtesresponse.ca/>

² <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-s-oppenheimer-park-empty-of-people-and-tents-officials-clean-site-1.5563919>

³ <https://pushpay.com/g/vancouveranglican?src=hpp>

⁴ <https://www.watari.ca/>

⁵ <https://dtesresponse.ca/>

Robert (Bob) MacMillan, ODNW

March 15, 1933 – April 1, 2020

Robert (Bob) MacMillan died April 1, 2020. He was invested into the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster as a member of Church of the Holy Spirit, Whonnock in November 2013.

According to his executor and family friend of almost 50 years, Deborah Sproule, Bob was born in Vancouver, March 15, 1933 and was a longtime member of Holy Spirit, Whonnock. At that parish he was the organist and also active on parish council. He continued serving the parish until he was no longer able to play the organ or attend church due to physical disabilities. From July 2017 onward he lived with Deborah and her husband and they cared for him until early 2019, when he became unable to walk and needed additional care. He went into residential care in Chilliwack and then to the Tabor Home in Abbotsford where he died. Deborah was with him for the last three days of his life and in her note to the Archbishop's office she wrote, "he did not pass alone, which we are so grateful for."

He is survived by an older brother in California, a nephew in Australia and a niece in Kelowna.

Here is the text of the Citation that Bob received when he was invested into the ODNW:

Bob has attended various Anglican parishes over the past 40 years as he and his wife moved around the Lower Mainland. Currently, he serves the Church of the Holy Spirit as Bishop's Warden and is an important leader in this community.

A Celebration of Life will be held later in the year, when hopefully people can attend. Diocesan communications will circulate the information about Bob's service when it becomes available. ✠



Bob being congratulated by then-Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz following his Investiture into the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster in November 2013. PHOTO Wayne Chose

*Give rest, O Christ, to thy servant with thy saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more; neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

Gwenith Mary Lamacraft, ODNW

April 7, 1930 – June 10, 2020

When the founders and developers of the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster were meeting in 2008, to establish the eligibility criteria, rules and the Regulation that would govern the Order they were likely inspired by a number of the faithful, those current day saints in the diocese with whom they had connected over the years. And there is no better example than Gwen Lamacraft. Gwen was invested into the Order in its inaugural year of 2009. The Citation, read at her investiture November 3, 2009 is as follows:

Gwen's service and leadership has extended to all levels of our Anglican Church. Through difficult times Gwen has remained a faithful member of Holy Cross, most recently serving as a Bishop's Warden since 2006.

The Citation is brief with a slight air of melancholy in the second sentence, but it says much about this remarkable person who touched the lives of so many in our diocese. In that first sentence, just 13 words, we read "service," "leadership" and "all levels." And in the second sentence we hear that although things may have been "difficult", Gwen remained because of her commitment to her faith, her parish family and to the Church.

Gwen was a tremendous supporter of the concept of the extended diocesan family. She aided, encouraged and inspired all of us who serve the Mission of God through Jesus Christ as our vocation.

I could go on and share my personal memories of Gwen, but so could literally hundreds of others, probably best to read the heartfelt words written by members of her family (who with much affection refer to her as Aunt Gwen) and published in the June 19, 2020 issue of the *Vancouver Sun*.

Gwen passed away peacefully in her 90th year on June 10, 2020, in Vancouver, BC. She was surrounded by family, friends, and her priest. Gwen was predeceased by her only sibling, brother Harry Lamacraft (Doreen) in 2014. Survived by her immediate family, nieces Karel Gemmell (Gord), Wendy Dodd (Barry), and nephew Brian Lamacraft (Lisa), her grandnephew and nieces Daniel Gemmell, Katie Gemmell, Michael Dodd (Amanda), Andrea Lee (Keith), and great-grandniece Mary-Jane Dodd. Gwen was born on a farm near Bangor, Saskatchewan, second child of Arthur and Charlotte Lamacraft. Gwen lived her early youth in Bangor and in Waterhen, Manitoba. Her teen years were spent living in Summerland, BC. Gwen graduated from Summerland High School in 1948, and immediately started her career with the Bank of Montreal until transferring to Vancouver in 1950. Gwen resigned from the Bank in 1952, to join the Women's Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Gwen returned to the Bank of Montreal in 1955, and commenced a long career, including work in senior positions across branches in Vancouver until her retirement in 1986. She resumed working for the Bank again in 1988, working part time at Vancouver Main Office until retiring a second time in 2009. Gwen was also a current member of the Bank of Montreal Pensioners Association (BOMPA), sat on the Board of Directors, and was instrumental in organizing various fundraising ventures and social activities.

Gwen started going to church in 1960, after her father passed away. Her experience with St. Peter's Anglican Church, now Holy Cross Anglican Church filled a need in her life. Gwen became more involved in the choir and selecting hymns; she felt that you don't just sing the words, you convey the message they give. The Church became an essential part of Gwen's life; she said it's



Gwen Lamacraft immediately following her Investiture into the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster, 2009. PHOTO Wayne Chose

what kept her going and where she found peace in her heart. We always remember Aunt Gwen baking dozens of pies and making hundreds of pounds of pickles for the church bazaars. She was also a committed supporter of Camp Artaban. Gwen became ever more involved in the Church locally, provincially and on a national basis. She sat on numerous committees and held important positions. All of her work with the Anglican Church led to her being awarded the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster which was presented to her at Christ Church Cathedral. This was a cherished moment in her life.

Gwen was an active member of the Richmond Seniors Centre and a member of their Glee Club.

Gwen was a member of the Royal Canadian Legion and in earlier years made an effort to help sell poppies for November 11.

As a recipient of a total hip replacement, Gwen spent 12 years on the Volunteer Committee of the fundraising arm of the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation and participated in the Hip Hip Hooray annual walk, being the top fundraiser for ten of those years.

Gwen was a bachelorette throughout her lifetime. She was always attentive to her immediate family, her Church family, her Bank family, and her many personal friends. She was supportive to those in need and spent a great deal of time and effort tending to their personal, medical, or financial affairs, and was a dedicated estate executor for many of those friends.

Gwen was the glue in the Lamacraft family. She organized family trips to meet and stay connected to our extended family across the Prairies and in Great Britain. Her home was the "Lamacraft Hotel" where any family member or friend was welcome to stay. Gwen was a beauty in her younger years, she was a Can-Can dancer with her sister-in-law Doreen, she loved jokes and toasts, was a fabulous cook and baker, loved her Reno bus trips, her family get togethers, and always the *Happy Birthday* song was sung in person, on the phone, or left on the voicemail for every single birthday, every year. Gwen will be greatly missed by all those who knew and loved her.

Many thanks to the Classified Department of *Post Media* for supplying diocesan communications with the text of the obituary.

A joyful celebration of Gwen's life was celebrated at Holy Cross on July 27. In lieu of flowers, donations were gratefully accepted and directed to the Vancouver Children's Hospital Foundation. ✠



The parish gathers under the spring blossoms. PHOTO Cliff Caprani



Roses. PHOTO Cliff Caprani

What it is to Tend a Garden

LIZ MACDONALD, ODNW
All Saints' Ladner

Wherever a church is situated, there is a good chance that there will be some grounds to be tended. Older churches have graveyards in various stages of maintenance, while newer buildings may have land given over to parking lots, perhaps with some shrubbery, a grassy area, or even a beautiful and innovative Memorial Garden. The grounds of other churches are showcases of horticultural talent, with neatly manicured lawns, clipped bushes, beautiful beds of perennials, and trees of just the right height for shade.

A church may be secluded in a rural landscape or in a busy urban area; many will have congregations verging on retirement, and others have components of vibrant youth and young families.

In Ladner, the Parish of All Saints' is fortunate to have a prime downtown location which is "on show" 24/7. The grounds comprise a 360 degree canvas of landscaping possibilities with a combination of soils, full sun and part shade in the different areas. The church was rebuilt on the original site in 1985, and the grounds were landscaped by a horticulturist who preferred curved lines and a more "natural" approach to herbaceous borders. Trees were planted surrounding the church; specimen Magnolias, Dogwoods, Cherry and Pines, and flowering shrubs were strategically placed among the perennial borders. Lawns were maintained by willing parishioners, and the semi-annual garden "clean ups" were happy get-togethers with free pizza, donuts and coffee.

Time moves on as do people, and though still willing, none of us are as young or sprightly as we were 30 years ago. Our gardens continue to flourish, but everything is bigger, higher and denser. It requires patient but constant attention from those who love the joys of seeing new plants thrive and the satisfaction of weeding, dead-heading, staking, pruning and raking mountains of leaves in the fall!

I can put myself in this category, for though our lawns are professionally tended, and we are now blessed with a sprinkler system in most areas, there never seems enough time or good weather days to achieve what is needed. Tending these gardens is like painting the Forth Bridge in Scotland, for it is said that as soon as the whole span is painted, it is time to start again! The nursery rhyme *Round and Round the Garden* takes on a whole new meaning, but it is a reality which brings many rewards, as well as a stiff back and creaking knees.

I am now concentrating on introducing more perennials, and the construction of a new wheelchair accessible ramp has opened up a new area where a stone bed displays potted plants which can be easily moved and kept to a more manageable size. A beautiful lychgate is flanked by flower boxes and climbing roses while in another area, espaliered apple trees compete for space with rampant poppies, bluebells and a variety of bulbs in spring. Our Memorial Garden is a peaceful and sunny area with a selection of seasonal bulbs, annuals, and small flowering shrubs, some donated by families whose loved ones are interred here.

A garden is a place where one can lose track of time, become absorbed with caring for the earth and plants, enjoy the silence, which is punctuated with birdsong, and be surprised by the resiliency of new life emerging each spring.

It is a place for renewal of creation and spiritual reflection, restoring the soul and allowing for a different perspective on life itself. The time and effort are well worth it, for as the saying goes, "One is nearer to God in a garden than anywhere else on earth."



Lychgate. PHOTO Cliff Caprani

I'd like to think that the time spent in this ministry is just one of the ways in which I can give to God, my church and the wider community, for despite many trials, errors, and some failures too, gardens give us what we all seek, inner peace, and meaningful activity. ✝



Through the garden gate on the parish grounds. PHOTO Cliff Caprani



Solana and the author doing what they love. PHOTO Cliff Caprani



Spring blooms. PHOTO Cliff Caprani



Street view of the East side garden. PHOTO Cliff Caprani



The Order of the Diocese of New Westminster for 2020

It has become a cliché to say that the year 2020 (so far) has been unlike any year in most people’s living memories. Every aspect of our lives is affected by the coronavirus pandemic and that is certainly true of the activities of the diocese of New Westminster. Since 2009, the Investiture of New Members to the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster (ODNW) has been one of, if not *the* most popular and best attended diocesan event. For the first six years the Investiture took place at Christ Church Cathedral within the Celebration of the Eucharist on the Sunday closest to All Saints’ Day. Since then the event has been celebrated at New Westminster’s Massey Theatre. In 2015, the celebration was again within the context of the Eucharist, and in 2016 and 2018 within the context of Morning Prayer.

This fall, new members will again be invested, and as gathering in large groups inside a theatre is not something that will happen until *Phase 4* of the provincial Restart Plan, ODNW organizers have arrived at a creative solution. There will be six ceremonies scheduled to take place in the six regional archdeaconries on three different days over three months. They are:

Saturday, October 17

- 10am | St. Dunstan, Aldergrove, Archdeaconry of Lougheed
- 2pm | St. Mark, Ocean Park, Archdeaconry of Fraser

Saturday, November 7

- 10am | Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Westminster, Archdeaconry of Westminster
- 2pm | St. Mary, Kerrisdale, Archdeaconry of Granville

Saturday, December 5

- 10am | St. Catherine, Capilano, Archdeaconry of Capilano
- 2pm | St. James, Vancouver, Archdeaconry of Burrard

The 2020 Investiture will be the 10th Investiture in 12 years as following the 2015 event the award ceremony was converted from an annual to a bi-annual occurrence. Archbishop Skelton will officiate at the liturgies and preach. Attendance will be limited and by invitation. Each event will receive news coverage from diocesan communications and will be video recorded and edited for release and distribution after December 5.

As for the traditional photograph of the new member wearing their ribbon and medallion and receiving congratulations from the archbishop, that is still being discussed, as are the possibilities involving taking six group photographs.

There are 44 Parish Nominees, 9 Bishop’s Nominees & 1 Honorary Inductee

In the document presented to Diocesan Council on June 10 for information, Archbishop Skelton included the following information to Council:

Review Committee & Bishop’s Approval

“Under the terms of Regulation 22, I re-appointed Mrs. Ginger Shaw, Ms. Margaret Briscall, and Ms. Valerie Hobson (all members of the Cathedral Chapter) as my advisory committee on the parish nominees for the 2020 Order of the Diocese of New Westminster cycle. The Committee met on Monday, June 8, 2020, to review the nominations. By motion, the committee certified the documentation of the nominees (Moved Margaret Briscall, Seconded Valerie Hobson, Carried unanimously). I participated in the Committee’s review and I approve the nominees as listed.”

- Archdeaconry of Burrard**
- Mrs. Ely Cato • St. Margaret, Cedar Cottage
 - Mr. Colin Ensworth • St. Thomas, Vancouver
 - Ms. Amy Grant • St. Paul, Vancouver
 - Dr. Brian Rocksborough-Smith • St. James, Vancouver
 - Ms. Danilla Severin • St. Michael’s Multicultural, Broadway
 - Ms. Kate Walker • Christ Church Cathedral
 - Mr. Teofilo Bosaing • Bishop’s Nominee
 - Mr. Ted Chiasson • Bishop’s Nominee
 - Mr. Kevin Smith • Bishop’s Nominee

- Archdeaconry of Capilano**
- Ms. Wendy Bain • St. Stephen, West Vancouver
 - Mr. Tony Dodd • St. Catherine, Capilano
 - Mrs. Mary Ann Fee • St. Christopher, West Vancouver
 - Mrs. Shirley Marcino • St. Agnes, North Vancouver
 - Mr. Ian McBeath • St. Francis-in-the-Wood, West Vancouver
 - Mr. Larry Terrace • St. Clement, Lynn Valley
 - Ms. Pamela McElheran • Bishop’s Nominee



Linda Adams, ODNW, the first person to be invested in the inaugural year, 2009. PHOTO Wayne Chose

- Archdeaconry of Fraser**
- Mr. Les Edmonds • St. Mark, Ocean Park
 - Ms. Fran Fagan • Holy Trinity, White Rock
 - Mrs. Chris Goater • St. Cuthbert, Delta
 - Mr. Leo Golden • St. Michael, Surrey
 - Mrs. Sue Paege • All Saints, Ladner
 - Ms. Dianne Stebbing • Church of the Epiphany, Surrey
 - Mrs. Lynn Turner • St. Helen, Surrey
 - Ms. Gail Revitt • Bishop’s Nominee
 - Captain Oscar Pinto • Honorary Recipient

- Archdeaconry of Granville**
- Mrs. Sarah Burns • St. Philip, Dunbar
 - Mr. Doug Chivers • St. Anselm, Vancouver
 - Mrs. Barbara Dawson • St. Faith, Vancouver
 - Ms. Judith Downes • St. John, Shaughnessy
 - Ms. Joan Harvey • Holy Trinity, Vancouver
 - Marianne Huestis • St. Mary Magdalene, Vancouver
 - Mrs. Judith Parkes • St. Mary, Kerrisdale
 - Ms. Sharon Grove • Bishop’s Nominee
 - Mr. Glen Mitchell • Bishop’s Nominee

- Archdeaconry of Lougheed**
- Ms. Judy Beale • All Saints, Mission
 - Mr. Tony Cook • St. George, Fort Langley
 - Mrs. Deb Edwards • St. Thomas, Chilliwack
 - Ms. Fran Froehlich • All Saints, Agassiz
 - Mrs. Noreen Jones • St. Dunstan, Aldergrove
 - Mrs. Rebecca Kozol • St. George, Maple Ridge
 - Mrs. Wendy Pearson • Christ Church, Hope
 - Mrs. Leanne Power • St. John the Baptist, Sardis
 - Mrs. Rosemary Stasiuk • St. John the Divine, Maple Ridge
 - Mr. Ken Storozuk • Bishop’s Nominee



David Rushton, ODNW was one of a number of nominees unable to attend the 2018 ceremony, he received the ribbon and medal in late March 2019. PHOTO Mary Horton

Christ Church Cathedral Vicar Appointed Chair of Worship Planning for General Synod 2022

RANDY MURRAY (PREPARED WITH FILES FROM HELEN DUNN)
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

When asked about her initial reaction to receiving a letter of invitation from Archbishop Linda Nicholls to Chair the Worship Planning Committee on behalf of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) for General Synod 2022, the Rev. Helen Dunn, Cathedral Vicar had this to say:

“I keep telling people that when I received the primate’s letter, I checked the name and address three times to make sure she had the right ‘Helen’ (as there are a lot of us ‘Helen’s’ in Anglican-Land!). I should’ve known better than to doubt the primate.”

Rev. Dunn then contacted Archbishop Skelton and Christ Church Cathedral’s rector, the Rev. Christopher A. Pappas and they both gave their blessings resulting in her acceptance of the appointment “with great pleasure.”

This role will involve working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada’s (ELCiC) counterpart for the joint portion of the meeting and planning the remaining several days of General Synod worship as well. The co-chairs are appointed by the National Bishop and the Primate. In addition, they will appoint two members (or equal numbers) from each church, in consultation with the co-chairs. The Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry (ACoC) and the Assistant to the Bishop for Worship (ELCiC) are *ex-officio* members of the Worship Committee.

The Synod will take place in Calgary at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT). Calgary is Helen’s hometown so she will be very familiar with the location.

Prior to her ministry at Christ Church Cathedral which began September 1, 2017, Helen was the Assistant to the Rector at Cathedral Church of the Redeemer in Calgary. Helen studied at St. John’s College, Durham University, UK and Briercrest College in Caronport, Saskatchewan. She aims to hold a broad theological perspective and has coordinated a variety of liturgies in her ministry thus far—everything from confirmations and ordinations to National Indigenous People’s Day and a multi-site funeral for 1,000+ family members and friends of Vancouver philanthropist and businessman, Robert H. Lee, CM, OBC. Helen also served on the General Synod 2019 Worship Planning Committee under the leadership of the chair, the Very Rev. Peter Elliott and former chair, the Rev. Martha Tatarnic.

With General Synod 2022 now slightly under two years away we asked Rev. Dunn how she plans to approach her role:

“The first thing I’d like to mention is that the letter from Archbishop Nicholls came just days after we learned of the Rev. Margaret Waterchief’s death. Margaret was a Blackfoot Elder and the first Indigenous woman to be ordained in the Anglican diocese of Calgary. I hope we can find a way to honour her in 2022. When I was reading the terms of reference for the committee, the part that jumped off the page was the responsibility we have to act in ways that ‘respect the inclusivity of rites and persons.’ There are so many qualified and passionate lay and ordained people in the ELCiC/ACoC and I can’t wait to see how the Spirit will lead us in celebrating God’s broad, inclusive church!”

As Chair of Worship Planning, Rev. Dunn becomes one of the 12 members of the General Synod Planning Committee (GSPC) which is a sub-committee of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) and reports to Council. A schedule of meeting dates will be set at the first meeting (TBC) and will also include one meeting following General Synod 2022. It is expected that regardless of the future of the current pandemic the majority of meetings will be held online through Zoom.

When asked for comment about the appointment of Rev. Dunn, Archbishop Skelton had this to say:

“I’m thrilled Helen has been invited to take on this important

role. She has the skills, the experience and the temperament to do an excellent job of chairing the team that will plan the worship for General Synod 2022.”

Please keep Rev. Helen Dunn in your prayers as she begins this exciting phase of ministry. ✚

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For those who are interested in more details about the Worship Planning Committee, the TOR is downloadable at <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/christ-church-cathedral-vicar-appointed-chair-of-worship-planning-for-gs2022>.

.....

“I’m thrilled Helen has been invited to take on this important role. She has the skills, the experience and the temperament to do an excellent job of chairing the team that will plan the worship for General Synod 2022.”

Archbishop Melissa Skelton



The Rev. Helen Dunn. PHOTO Andrea Wilson

The Order of the Diocese of New Westminster for 2020

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Archdeaconry of Westminster

- Mrs. Sylvia Bradley • St. John the Apostle, Port Moody
- Mr. Bill Douglas • All Saints, South Burnaby
- Mrs. Pat Henderson • St. Timothy, Brentwood
- Mrs. Fay Klassen • St. Mary the Virgin, Sapperton
- Mrs. Val Krause • St. Stephen the Martyr, Burnaby
- Mr. Bruce Middleton • St. Catherine of Alexandria, Port Coquitlam
- Mrs. Muriel Minshall • St. Laurence, Coquitlam
- Mrs. Birgit Petersen • Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Westminster
- Ms. Maureen Shirley • St. Barnabas, New Westminster

Honorary Inductee

Captain Oscar Pinto will be invested into the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster as an honorary inductee. Here is the Captain’s biography submitted to the Archbishop’s office last June:

Captain Oscar Pinto began his sea career with the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) in 1973, and worked his way up, getting his

Masters and Command in 1982. Oscar joined Valles Steamship Company Ltd. of Hong Kong in 1986, and then sailed onboard their various oil tankers as Master until 1992, before becoming Superintendent of the shore management team, responsible for Health, Safety & Environment (HSE) and Human Resources (HR). He came to Vancouver in 1995, relocating with Valles from Hong Kong, and has been an active member of the local marine community ever since. Oscar sits on numerous boards, including as Chairman of the International Ship-Owners Alliance of Canada Inc. (ISAC, 2005–present); Chairman of the INTERTANKO-North American Panel (NAP, 2014–present); Director of the Board of Valles Steamship (Canada) Ltd. (2002–present); and also holds an executive role as Treasurer on the Board of the Chamber of Shipping of BC (March 2019–present). He has been a Director of the Board of the Chamber of Shipping since 2018. Additionally, he sits on the Programme Advisory Committee of the British Columbia Institute of Technology (2013 – present).

Oscar has always exhibited a great concern for the welfare of the crew with whom he sailed, and provided mentorship and support for all seafarers, especially those from his native India. This background served him well as a Director of the Board of the Mission to Seafarers of Vancouver from 2000–2007 and 2010–2019 for

a total of 16 years of service. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Roberts Bank Seafarers Centre, acted as interim Chair through times of transition, and brought his experience to the work of caring for the seafarers.

Oscar and his family are active members of the parish of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in South Delta, supporting parish outreach to temporary migrant workers and the homeless and marginalized around Ladner. He has been a long-time member and Chair of the Rotary Club’s North Shore Chapter. Oscar has demonstrated effective leadership which has gained the respect and admiration of others. He has also demonstrated a deep concern for the marginalized and actively responded to their needs.

Captain Oscar Pinto will join the other five honorary members of the ODNW:

Terry Aleck, ODNW • Invested 2019

Bette Geddes, ODNW • Invested 2019

George Macintosh QC, ODNW • Invested 2011

Ludmilla Herbst, ODNW • Invested 2011

Tim Dickson, ODNW • Invested 2011 ✚



The three ordinands — the Reverends Amanda Ruston (left), Steve Black (middle), Leah Skuro (right) — receive the laying on of hands from Archbishop Melissa Skelton, June 20, 2020. PHOTOS Randy Murray

Interviews with the Newly Ordained Reverends Black, Ruston & Skuro

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Saturday, June 20, 2020, Stephen Black and Amanda Ruston were ordained by Archbishop Melissa Skelton to the diaconate as transitional deacons on the track to being priested in the Anglican Church of Canada at a later date. Also ordained to the diaconate that day was Leah Skuro, who being raised up by her parish of All Saints', South Burnaby, and completing a ministry internship at Holy Trinity Cathedral has begun her ordained ministry as a deacon in God's Church at All Saints'.

The newly ordained Reverends Black, Ruston and Skuro are well known in their parish communities of Christ Church Cathedral, St. Andrew's in Langley and All Saints' in Burnaby, however diocesan communications thought that folks might be interested to learn some more about these three clergy as they continue on their journey, two moving towards the priesthood and one resuming her service to her community but now as an ordained person.

Many thanks to Stephen, Amanda and Leah for taking the time to answer the following questions:

Q. In 50 words or less please describe how you came to faith?

Amanda: I grew up in the Anglican church. My mum, sister and I went to St. Dunstan's, Aldergrove and that's where I was baptized (by Archbishop Douglas Hambidge). Despite falling away from the church for a time in my adulthood, it was that foundation that held me while I was gone, allowed me to sustain a strong faith and relationship with God, and which eventually drew me back, where I am grateful I ended up in the parish of St. Andrew's.

Leah: I was raised in the Anglican Church. As a cradle Anglican I went to church faithfully every Sunday and found church to be a very safe place to be, and that when I prayed for something God always listened. Then life took me down a very bad path and I found myself at the brink of death. I had been through every type of abuse you can imagine. There I was with two daughters and nowhere to turn when I remembered that I had turned away from the church so I went back terrified that I would be turned away. I was so wrong, the people at All Saints', Burnaby took us in and loved me until I could love myself and they helped me get help for my addiction. Slowly, but surely, I started to get well, my body healed first, then my emotions, and with it my faith grew increasingly. Again, and again, God was answering my prayers put me on a path to where I am today. I was able to help my children by being a better mother and I am now a Great-Grandmother. I am 33 years clean and will never forget what God has done in my life.

Steve: I found God (or better, God "found" me) roughly 40 years ago while living on the street following *The Grateful Dead*. I was given a Bible while hitchhiking to San Francisco, and I had religious experiences reading it (and still do...).

Q. Was there a particular moment or experience that signaled that you were being called to ordained ministry, or was it a gradual

*"Then I heard
the voice of the Lord saying,
'Whom shall I send,
and who will go for us?'
And I said,
'Here am I; send me!'"*
Isaiah 6:8

development?

Amanda: Some time after I had been serving at St. Andrew's (in a variety of roles), the deacon (and my now dear friend) — Rev. Helen Lingham — asked me to discern for the diaconate. I was surprised and a bit reluctant but after some time of prayer and discernment, I agreed. About halfway through my parish discernment process, it became clear to me and my discernment team (separately) that I was in fact called to the priesthood. So, it was both: the moment I was asked by Helen, and the gradual awakening to the true name God has given me.

Leah: It was on a night when I was volunteering in a Women's prison when one of the women thanked me for what I do at the jail and that she found that I had a gift of loving the unlovable. Then when I was praying one night, the Lord told me that I must work for him now and no one else. It was gradual, but the Lord kept knocking; so, when my life felt the time was right, I answered.

Steve: It was a gradual experience — a long winding road, if you will. I sought ordination in 2001, but ended up following a more academic route at that time, and in recent years have come back to a sense of calling to ordination.

Q. How would you describe the discernment process, what surprised you, what challenged you?

Amanda: The biggest surprise and delight was how much and how quickly it changed and transformed me. Part of that is being open to transformation, of course, but my experience has been that when you are truly open to it, God works wonders within you.

Leah: Well, my process was very long as there were many bumps along the way, but it eventually came through in God's time. The only challenges I had were my own self-confidence with which I was helped through internships, thanks to Archdeacon Richard Leggett, Vicar of Holy Trinity, New Westminster.

Steve: The process was well explained when I first voiced

an interest, so I wouldn't say there were any real surprises. The main challenge for me is simply the time involved. I understand the value of a slow and careful process, but I am eager to get on with things.

Q. Describe your theological education? Do you think it has prepared you for ministry?

Amanda: I am only partway through my Master of Divinity degree, but what I have learned so far has been invaluable; I have benefitted greatly from a combination of academic and pastoral education that has been a great foundation for practical ministry so far. That said, I think my life experience has been equally as important. Life teaches you things that a formal education never can, and every experience is relevant and weaves itself into your ministry. I have also had a fairly lengthy career as a graphic designer, and I am a visual artist — this aspect of my being greatly influences my theological conceptualization, my understanding and contemplation of the mystery of God, and my delight in the beauty of Anglican worship.

Leah: My education consists of Education for Ministry (EfM), many courses at Vancouver School of Theology (VST), my involvement in the diocese, my work as an addictions councillor working with women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), and my own school of hard knocks. My internship at Holy Trinity was eye-opening as well. Yes, this has prepared me.

Steve: I have fond memories of my theological education. Good times! I believe my time at theological colleges and seminaries provided a great deal of important experience and insight from which to draw. For the most part I feel prepared for ministry.

Q. Although it's very early days, how would you describe your ministry style? Are there any individuals who have inspired, supported, guided you in your journey?

Amanda: There are SO many people who have supported, inspired and guided me along the way! No one can do this alone — it absolutely takes a community of support and prayer, and I am so grateful for every single person who has prayed for me and supported me in a variety of ways. I'm not sure I am able to identify my ministry style — maybe someone else could. I think I might be too close to the subject. I can say I am super passionate and energetic, and that in ministry I am most passionate about helping people deepen their relationship with Christ. Some of my favourite ways to do this are preaching, teaching, and liturgy. I also LOVE a good juicy theological discussion!!

Leah: My model for my style is to be like Jesus, to love unconditionally and be human with everyone. Yes, there are many women who have inspired me as well as many clergy with whom I have been fortunate to work with.

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Confirmation by Another Road

JESSICA SCHAAP
Missioner for Christian Formation, diocese of New Westminster

It was about six weeks into the pandemic and I was out on my daily walk in my East Vancouver neighbourhood. I was looking for some fresh air after sitting at my laptop in the home office. The idea almost felt like a download into my head. Why not do an online confirmation preparation course with the whole diocese?

Preparing for confirmation during the COVID-19 pandemic has a poignancy. Confirmation is a sacrament of touch and touch is one of the very things we can't do in the church or anywhere really at the time, except now with a very small circle. No hugs or handshakes at the Peace, no casual comforting hands on an arm, no brushing up at a potluck. And, in these times, we've faced bewilderment as so many of the sacraments are no longer easily received. Which is why perhaps offering more and different preparation for this particular sacrament seemed the next right thing to do.

The pandemic also opened up the opportunity to gather people from all over the diocese to explore faith using Zoom. Many of us are now used to attending worship, work meetings, and family visits with platforms like Zoom, Skype or Facebook Messenger. Now, for many of us, Zoom fatigue is real but it also offers gathering, conversing, listening, and learning. It seems we're also at a precious time when we have the newfound ability to experience faith formation in a different way.

The next thing to figure out was what topics and how would they be taught? After poring over catechisms and curricula, I chose *Transforming Questions*, a free program from *Forward Movement*. *Forward Movement* is a ministry of the Episcopal Church (TEC) that seeks to empower disciples. *Transforming Questions* dives into the core questions of Christian faith and human life:

- Can we question our faith?
- Who is Jesus?
- Is prayer answered?
- How do I read the Bible?
- Why is there suffering?
- What is a baptized life?

I liked how it started with big, existential questions first than with a prescribed list of topics.

The course also offered broad and sound theology, an Anglican ethos, and a format that invited lots of discussion allowing people to wrestle with their questions in the company of one another and the Holy Spirit. There was one small hitch—would *Forward Move-*

ment allow us to adapt the course to a Canadian Anglican context? All the prayers came from the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* and there were references to TEC peppered throughout.

In a phone call a few weeks before the launch date, Scott Gunn, the executive director of *Forward Movement* and one of the writers of *Transforming Questions* along with Melody Wilson-Shobe, said, "Definitely! Go ahead and adapt the *Transforming Questions* course. We're delighted you want to use it." He gave us carte blanche to edit, adapt, and even redesign the look and feel of the course guidebooks. "But," he said, "the only thing I ask in return is that you promise to share it with the rest of the Anglican Church of Canada to use as they want too." We were only too happy to do so. There is a paucity of resources like this for the Canadian Anglican church and yet reinventing the wheel didn't seem necessary either. Adapting a solid curriculum and offering it online seemed the way to go.

But would anyone want to actually sign up? Offering a course in the summertime, traditionally a time of rest and the ceasing of church programs, was risky. Plus, it was still a pandemic. Plus, it was 11 weeks long. That is a big commitment. Would people want to do another thing on Zoom? With people they didn't know, perhaps?

The course was also reconceived to have "crowd-sourced" leadership. Each week a different clergy leader would offer the presentation on a core question. And each week small group facilitators would meet with three other people in breakout rooms to help guide discussion. That meant over 20 people would be needed to offer leadership during the program.

The number of registrants needed to make the course a go was 12. I'd hoped for 20 in all. Two weeks before launch we'd reached 15. Then the numbers began to grow. I was scrambling to find skilled small group facilitators. Many people I called, emailed, or was referred to, said enthusiastic *yeses*. The week before the launch, the facilitators gathered on Zoom to do an orientation to the program and to the small group format. It was also the last day to register. We had received 35 registrations!

So far, *Transforming Questions* has offered engaging presentations and deepening discussion and relationship. The Confirmation service at 3pm on Sunday, September 27 at Christ Church Cathedral will be a joyful celebration of the sacrament of the Holy Spirit's strengthening through touch for a group who have been prepared in some ways very differently. May their commitment and curiosity transform and bless us all. ✠

GRAPHIC Designed by Lauren Odile-Pinkney



Interviews with the Newly Ordained Reverends Black, Ruston & Skuro

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Steve: I hope my ministry style will be one of humour and holiness. There are too many people who have inspired me to mention them all. However, when I think of ministry style, my mind intuitively moves to the example set by Peter Elliott (retired Rector of Christ Church Cathedral and Dean of the Diocese of New Westminster, 1994–2019), who has a wonderful blend of "lightness" and seriousness. He is a wonderful leader who makes me want to do better, but who also does not lead me to being overly worried about making mistakes along the way.

Q. Which passage from scripture best illustrates your call to ministry?

Amanda: It changes every day, which I think is exciting. This week it has been *Isaiah 6:8*: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'"

Leah: *Psalms 116* and *Romans 12:2* "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Steve: I have just finished reading the book of Ruth, and I think it nicely illustrates how God works within the very ordinary and "normal." While I have experienced much that is wondrous in my life, it is "God in the normal" that best illustrates my call to ministry.

Q. How do you see your ministry developing over the next five years?

Amanda: I am finishing up the summer at St. Andrew's, and then will be placed somewhere else in the fall. I need

to finish my degree, so I will be serving and studying simultaneously. I am hoping to learn more about running a parish and will be serving in my new placement. I imagine potentially preaching, pastoral care, liturgical participation, Christian formation, etc. I am drawn to parish ministry, so that is where I ultimately see myself, but I'm sure that God has surprises in store—that is part of the fun!

Leah: I am hoping to do some connecting in our community letting them know we are in the neighbourhood, and perhaps connecting with other churches around All Saints, Burnaby to see if we can do shared ministry.

Steve: There is no substitute for experience on the ground. I have trouble imagining what awaits me five years down the road, but I know that along the way I will be stretched and challenged. I have many things I hope to do and to try, and if I am fortunate, maybe one or two of them will take flight.

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

Amanda: Please continue to pray for me, and for my fellow ordinands—we cannot do this work without your love and support!

Leah: I would like to add a great big thank you to those who helped me along the way. God's Blessings on you all.

Steve: "Well, I ain't always right but I've never been wrong

Seldom turns out the way it does in a song
Once in a while you get shown the light
In the strangest of places if you look at it right"
(From *Scarlet Begonias*, lyrics by Robert Hunter) ✠

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

DEADLINE FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS
September 20 for the November issue

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



The three new deacons prepare to dismiss the congregation following the Episcopal Blessing. PHOTO Randy Murray

Ordinations in the Holy Church of God

On the Feast of Bernard Mizeki (transferred)

RANDY MURRAY

Communications Officer & Topic Editor

Ordinations to the Diaconate of Stephen Black, Amanda Ruston and Leah Skuro by the Most Rev. Melissa Skelton took place on Saturday, June 20 at 10:30am. This was the first in-person diocesan liturgy since the March 9 installation of the Rev. Katherine Hough as Vicar of St. Augustine's, Marpole. The liturgy was celebrated at Christ Church Cathedral. This was also the first in-person diocesan liturgy since in-person worship was suspended by Archbishop Skelton on March 18. With the June 14 phased re-opening of parishes in play, the directives and guidelines for in-person worship were at that time in place and those parishes that wanted to open were following the *Phase 2 (diocesan Phase 2 which does reflect the guidelines of provincial Phase 2)* protocols that involved many restrictions including rigorous adherence to physical distancing and limiting attendance to a maximum of 50, or an amount of people gathered who can safely and consistently maintain a two metre physical separation.

For the Ordinations on June 20, the congregation was

by invitation and reservation only and restricted to the aforementioned total of 50 which included the ordinands, sanctuary party, Cathedral/Synod staff and audio/visual staff. *Storybubble* media did a great job of the live stream and if you didn't view the service please check it out on YouTube.¹

Christ Church Cathedral's rector, the Rev. Christopher A. Pappas coordinated the rehearsal before the liturgy and welcomed the congregation prior to the Procession, both those in the building and those watching online; the Cathedral's organist and Director of Music, Rupert Lang, provided music for reflection and prayer; Director of Parish Administration, Vincent Carey oversaw the set-up of the chancel entrance/altar area and served as crucifer; the Rev. Jim Short, a United Church minister and military chaplain read the first reading, *Baruch 4:21-24* (Padre Short is from Ladner where the now-Rev. Steve Black has been serving his internship at All Saints'); the Rev. Helen Lingham, deacon at St. Andrew's, Langley was the psalmist leading

the reading of *Psalms 116:1-8*, (St. Andrew's is the now-Rev. Ruston's home parish); the gospeller proclaiming *Luke 12: 4-12* was the Rev. Carole Neilsen of Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Westminster (Rev. Neilsen was standing-in for the now-Rev. Skuro's presenters who were not in attendance); Archdeacon for Deacons of the diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Bruce Morris was present in his official capacity and he also served as the litanist; and the Ven. Douglas Fenton, Executive Archdeacon of the diocese officiated during the signing of the Declarations and led the reading of *Veni Creator Spiritus* prior to Archbishop Skelton beginning the Prayer of Consecration. Archbishop Skelton was the officiant and preacher.

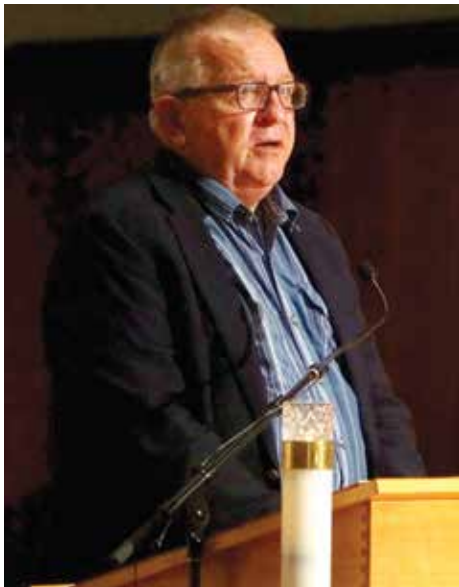
In her sermon, Archbishop Skelton presented detailed information about the martyr, Bernard Mizeki whose Memorial Feast Day on June 18 was being celebrated that morning. The archbishop wove in the experiences and the call to vocation of the three ordinands within the context of Mizeki's faith, ministry and martyrdom. She began her



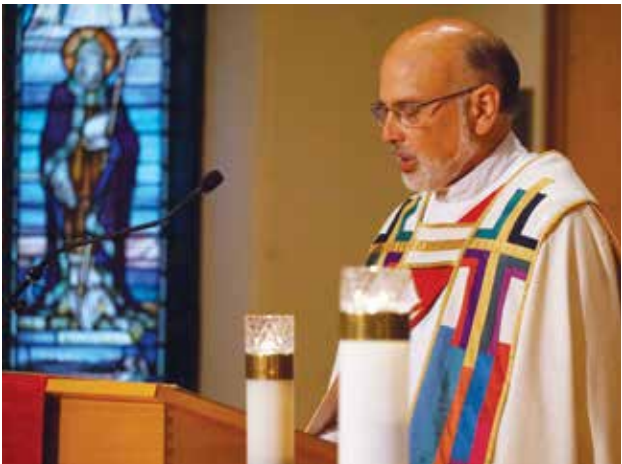
Cathedral and Diocesan Greeter extraordinary Jane Dittrich with Leah Skuro prior to the liturgy. PHOTO Jane Dittrich



Amanda Ruston (right) and one of her presenters, the Rev. Andrew Halladay (left) during the rehearsal. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT Rev. Jim Short with the first reading from the Book of Baruch. RIGHT Amanda waits to sign the Declaration as the Ven. Douglas Fenton prepares the paperwork. PHOTOS Randy Murray



Archdeacon Bruce Morris leads the litany. PHOTO Randy Murray



The ordinands at prayer during the litany. PHOTO Randy Murray



With mask in place, Archbishop Skelton sanitizes in preparation of laying on hands. PHOTO Randy Murray

sermon saying, “To ordain a group of people on the feast day of a martyr is always a little tricky. For it would be easy to fall into rather predictable tropes that neither honour the real life, sacrifice, and context nor give anything meaningful to the ordinands and their supporters in their context. And what makes this day even trickier is that the martyr is Bernard Mizeki, a much celebrated figure in the Anglican Church in Africa, a three day festival with preaching, singing and dancing figure in the Anglican Church in Africa.” The sermon is available on the diocesan website.²

The Rev. Black was presented for ordination by Dr. Megan Otton and the Ven. Richard Leggett. Dr. Otton, a long-time liturgical assistant at Christ Church Cathedral has served with Rev. Black at the Cathedral in that capacity for many years, and the Ven. Richard Leggett is Archdeacon of Westminster. The Rev. Ruston was presented by the Vicar of the Parish of St. Andrew the Apostle, the Rev. Andrew Halladay with Alison Minto. The Reverends Black and Ruston were ordained to the Transitional Diaconate as they are on track to be priested.

The Rev. Skuro was presented by the Rev. Barbara

Blakey, a long-time honorary assistant and interim at Rev. Skuro’s home parish of All Saints’, Burnaby, and Heather Duff. Rev. Skuro, currently an intern at Holy Trinity Cathedral begins her ordained ministry as a deacon.

Although celebrating a liturgy with strict adherence to physical distancing protocols can be challenging, the Ordination went forward without any perceivable glitches. Families of the ordinands and other family groups present gathered together in their “bubbles.” It was uplifting and inspiring to see Rev. Black with his spouse and children sitting together. Rev. Black’s family assisted him in the traditional “vesting according to the order of deacons” following the laying on of hands by the archbishop.

Please keep the newly ordained in your prayers as they begin this new phase of ministry. ✠

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnyWke6dgM8&feature=emb_logo

² <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/podcasts/media/2020-06-20-ordinations-on-the-feast-of-bernard-mizeki-transferred>



Rev. Black receives a Bible from Archbishop Skelton. PHOTO Randy Murray



The group photo with all participates observing physical distancing. PHOTO Randy Murray

Infinitely More

JASON WOOD

Postulant for Ordination, diocese of New Westminster, Youth Ministry Coordinator, St. Laurence, Coquitlam

“Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever. Amen.”

We say these words at the close of every *Infinitely More* worship gathering. These words are potent, vital, life-changing. World-changing, even.

Infinitely More is a new ecumenical ministry energized by and for young adults in the diocese of New Westminster and beyond. Early in 2019, myself and Lauren and Jonathan Pinkney, all of us youth leaders, discovered between us a common longing. We wanted to be able to worship with music that captured our hearts and invited our enthusiasm, while still moored in the liturgical and contemplative depth of our tradition. We were also grieved by dissatisfaction over the aching absence of young adults in our denomination.

United by this, we began connecting with young adults in our region. We didn’t want to replace the typical parish church; instead, we want to empower it and extend its reach to those we have largely been failing to engage. Together with Cameron Gutjahr, Amanda Millar, André Stephany, and Chris Barr, we began to create a worship group. We designed a simple liturgy for worship: an hour or slightly more, beginning and ending with written prayers, interspersed with Scripture readings, but primarily held together by music and centering in space for creative and contemplative prayer. Afterward, we would continue the community and find a local pub for drinks and conversation.

We held our first worship gathering on a Saturday night at St. Laurence in Coquitlam last September. The liturgy felt a little cobbled together, and our band wasn’t always in tune, but as we sang *Beautiful Things* by Gungor and entered into prayer, we knew something holy had taken place. Two months later, we moved to Holy Trinity Cathedral, a central, Skytrain-accessible location for people coming from across the region. There was something sublimely beautiful about singing contemporary praise in the traditional space of a cathedral, a sense of the eternal ancient-future to which robust worship calls us.

We gathered there twice, and then COVID-19 shut down in-person gatherings across the diocese. Didn’t see that coming!

Yet even though the ministry was relatively new and our participants few, we decided to continue *Infinitely More*. So, we moved online. And I am so glad we did. Conducting worship online has called out a whole new set of skills and possibilities for this ministry. We had to learn to record and mix our instruments and design visual liturgy. We reached out to young adults around the region to record themselves reading the prayers. And the result is a video liturgy we are delighted to share broadly. You can find it at <https://tinyurl.com/IMYAWorshipJune27>.

Whether you identify as a young adult hungry for



The Reverends Cameron Gutjahr and Jonathan Pinkney on the left and Lauren Odile Pinkney and Jason Wood on the right. PHOTO Lauren Odile Pinkney

community and for an encounter with the Holy, or simply as someone who’s curious about a new form of worship, we’d love for you to join us. Our next gathering is Saturday, September 26 at 7pm. Depending on COVID-19, we might be online or in-person... but the Triune God we

worship — and our need for that God — remain the same.

Together let’s reclaim faith in a God constantly breaking beyond the confines of our mediocre expectations, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. ✦



Jason Wood singing during the Zoom worship. PHOTO Lauren Odile Pinkney

Just Envision the Arms of God Going Around You

ANNE FLETCHER

Topic Contributor, Christ Church Cathedral

Cheryl Parker had to ask what it was — that beautiful splash of gentle colour, lavender and pale green — across her dying mother’s utilitarian hospital bed.

“A prayer shawl,” a nurse at the Norfolk Hospital Nursing Home in Simcoe, Ontario told her, it was knitted by a member of the home’s auxiliary.

Called from Vancouver to sit with her unconscious mother in February 2015, Cheryl watched until death came a day and a half later, as nurses and doctors tended their patient, carefully replacing the prayer shawl over her each time.

“It was a source of comfort.” To me, she adds. “Mom never knew it was there.”

From Gambier Island, Liz Dunbrack tells it straight. “I’m a beginner knitter going way back.” But she keeps at it, remembering the instructions given to her decades ago in the Girls’ Auxiliary at Montreal’s St. Matthias Anglican Church — pray as you knit.

She’s mostly mastered a simple pattern for a prayer cloth, “I still make... I drop a stitch and rip the knitting back until I can pick it up again.”

Everyday pretty well, the 5" x 7" patches come off her needles as she prays for those who will eventually receive her knitting “for strength and ability to face whatever they’re facing.”

And for herself. “I feel very close to the good Lord.”



Cheryl Parker of St. Mary Magdalene still treasures the prayer shawl given to her mother shortly before her death in February 2015. PHOTO Cheryl Parker

In North Delta, Bonny Amor opens Canada Post-delivered parcels containing Liz’s prayer cloths, and sews the blocks into colour-coordinated, 18-patch shawls.

Although she’s the administrative force behind Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver’s prayer shawl ministry, “the funny thing is I wouldn’t consider myself a knitter,” she says. “I wouldn’t know how to follow a pattern.”

But when she was given a prayer shawl herself at a parish nursing conference, she was hooked. “It was just the fact that someone had taken the time and prayed for us. It blew me away. I get choked up even now thinking about it.”

Bonny started knitting shawls for family and friends and anyone she knew who was going through a rough time, a category which could include just about everybody, sooner or later. “I would give it to that person and say, ‘Just envision the arms of God going around you’ and I could see people kind of relax.”

After she was handed the Cathedral’s prayer shawl file a few years ago, she went looking for help. “I just kept on asking people, ‘Do you knit? Do you knit?’”

Her team of nine turned out about 80 shawls last year, in all sizes and shapes and colours and textures. “The only guiding rule is that you pray... it’s not an in-depth intellectual process. You just go with the flow and give your best intentions to the person who will get the shawl.”

Donations of wool and money have kept the knitters going, but with the congregation’s cupboards now nearly emptied of spare yarn — “we’re getting pretty slim pickings” — the ministry has this year, for the first time, a line item in the budget to buy supplies. (Bonny appreciates all donations but does hope she’s used up every last ball of leftover, super-fine baby wool that’s out there.)

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CoViD Myths: Informing Opinions

In conversation with myth-busting website builder, Ryan Bowie

RANDY MURRAY
Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Saturday, May 23, diocesan communications received an email from Ryan Bowie, a fifth year biology student at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) in Abbotsford. The email contained a link to a website that he had created that lists and debunks some myths about the coronavirus caused illness, COVID-19 that has the entire planet in the grip of a pandemic.

Ryan has more than just a casual connection to the diocese of New Westminster, his father is the Rev. Paul Bowie, Rector of All Saints', Mission and Regional Dean of Yale. Ryan contacted diocesan communications in hopes that we would be able to distribute the link and therefore help increase SEO (Search Engine Optimization), that much covered digital process that propels websites to higher rankings in the lists that are the results of folks searching for information using search engines, or a search engine or... Google. We contacted Ryan and he was happy to speak with us about his website. In response to the question, "What is the goal, the desired outcome for this website?" he replied:

"The goal is to empower people with trustworthy information so they can make informed decisions about COVID-19. I like to think of my site as a resource for people to help them think critically. There's a lot of misinformation that sounds like it makes sense and a lot of videos with people that effectively explain their theories on 'what COVID-19 really is' and I think there needs to be more people spreading trustworthy information as well."

The ultimate outcome for this site is that it can be found on international search engines so that anyone around the world can easily find the site and benefit from it. The more work I put in and the more people that go to the site the closer I get to being found by people beyond BC or Canada. Currently, BC is doing relatively well compared to other places in the world, and so that's why I want to get the site out to a larger audience."

We asked Ryan if there was a particular moment or event that inspired him to create the website and... where do the myths come from? He said that earlier in the pandemic's timeline he had received a link to an audio clip from his mother. Ryan quickly realized that it contained misinformation. He went on to say:

"Shortly afterwards I got the same clip from another friend, so



Ryan Bowie Selfie, May 27, 2020.

I decided to contact close friends of mine and offer to give a critical eye to any COVID-19-related info they were unsure about. Eventually, family and friends were sending me enough material that I decided the most effective way of going about it was to make a website. It was a way of cataloguing all the work I'd done as well as make it accessible for anyone who needs it."

Most of the myths I get are from people sending me requests to clarify things or articles they think would be of interest to me. Other ways include sourcing info from social media and news, but also checking other myth-busting sites and finding myths that they debunk as well."

In terms of reliable sourcing Ryan is committed to using information from websites for governments, universities,

relevant organizations (the World Health Organization or medical organizations), highly credible fact-checking groups, and news sites that contain clear and fact-checked quotes from experts. He also refers to scientific papers for his responses.

Ryan would like the website's content to continue growing. There is a section at the top of the home page for updates when new information comes out and he will need to revise and keep those posts current. When asked about his current activities, goals and more imminent plans, Ryan was happy to share:

"My goal is to get into military medicine and go overseas to help in critical areas. I got into the Canadian Reserves in December 2019 and I hope to use their paid education program during medical school. I've also been helping run drop-in and intramural indoor soccer at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) for the last three years and I have been playing club soccer since Grade 1. I am also a tenor for the Nota Bene Singers, although we haven't been practicing because of social distancing."

I am planning on taking the MCAT, the Medical College Admission Test, and my military training is still being confirmed, so I am still planning out how much time I can put into the site. It's tricky because my schedule is practically full until my next semester of school, so I'm trying to sort out the scheduling for myself. The site is very important to me and so I will try my best to keep working on it. But posts usually take 7+ hours before they're ready, so I'm worried people will think it's not going to be updated while I'm working if I'm only doing a couple hours a day on it. One step at a time though. I'm currently just working on getting it out there."

Now of course, there are many myth-busting websites out there in the digital world, however this is a homegrown site designed and built by a young scientist in our community. The link to Ryan's new website *CoViD Myths: Informing Opinions* is at <https://www.covidmyths.ca/>. Please take a look and consider circulating it and sharing it with family and friends. ✦

For more myth-busting also visit the World Health Organization's website at <https://www.who.int/>

Just Envision the Arms of God Going Around You

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Gifted with COVID-19 time, she put together 12 prayer shawls between March and July. When all the shawls knitted during this pandemic can be blessed, as usual, at a Sunday morning service, "we're going to need a wheelbarrow to take them up to the front."

That's a good thing, says the Cathedral's vicar, the Rev. Helen Dunn, because "we're always running low."

In normal times, she keeps a prayer shawl in her office. "They are one of the first things I offer to people when I meet with them for a pastoral visit, 'would you like to sit with a shawl while we talk and pray?'"

At the end of the visit, "I've been able to offer this symbol of the prayers of the Cathedral community to take home with them."

At a post-service Cathedral family lunch one Sunday, Bonny introduced the children to prayer shawls, and made sure each child had one to keep, including one young boy notable for his young-boy energy.

His mother later sent Bonny a photo of her lively son, cuddled into his prayer shawl, sound asleep.

Cheryl keeps her mother's shawl draped over a deacon's bench in her living room and wears it to her home parish of St. Mary Magdalene each February to commemorate her mother's death.

"It reminds me of Mom," she says, "... and of the fact that someone was kind and loving enough to make it for someone she didn't know and would never meet." ✦



Prayer cloths knitted by Liz Dunbrack of Gambier Island, and sewn into prayer shawls by Bonny Amor of Christ Church Cathedral. PHOTO Bonny Amor



A Prayer Of Blessing

*May God's grace be upon this shawl...
warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing.
May this mantle be a safe haven... a sacred place of
security and well-being...
sustaining and embracing in good times as well as
difficult ones.
May the one who receives this shawl be cradled in
hope, kept in joy, graced with peace,
and wrapped in love.*

Blessed Be!

"I Have it on Good Authority that the Archdeacon of Fraser is a Great Guy."

The installation of the Venerable Louie Engnan as Vicar of the Parish of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale

RANDY MURRAY

Communications Officer & Topic Editor

On Monday, July 13, 2020, the Ven. Luisito (Louie) Engnan, Archdeacon of Fraser and Vicar of St. Michael's, Surrey was installed as Vicar of the Parish of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale. Archdeacon Engnan will continue his ministry in all three roles.

The parish has a loyal and committed congregation and they are delighted to have a new vicar following a decade of interim, part-time and Sunday Supply ministry. Although led by an excellent group of clergy during those years, including substantial periods of time under the leadership of the Rev. Paul Borthistle and later the Rev. Grant Rogers, the uncertainty had worn on the members of Christ the Redeemer (CtR). There was certainly an air of relief mixed with the joy of renewal in the sanctuary on the evening of July 13 as the new vicar was welcomed by the parish. As the diocese was still in *Diocesan Phase 2* there was strict adherence to physical distancing except for families in their "bubbles" of which the Engnan family made a fine example (see Front Page photo). Masks were worn, there was no singing and of course no Celebration of the Eucharist.

The Executive Archdeacon of the diocese, the Ven. Douglas Fenton officiated as well as performing his usual duties overseeing the Covenant in Ministry. Archbishop Skelton was spending the month of July in Seattle with her husband the Rev. Eric Stroo. Rev. Stroo was unable to cross the border into Canada due to COVID-19 cross border travel restrictions. Archbishop Skelton wrote a letter to the parish, expressing her love, her congratulations on the happy occasion and her optimism for the future of CtR's ministry.

Wardens, Sue Foulds and Cheryl Anne Archibald, ODNW with the participation of parish administrator, Annie Smith; parish musician, Cecilia Kim and parishioner, Sue Spivey led the worship with the welcoming, presentation of the new priest, reading the scriptures, leading the worship with instrumental music and leading the prayers.

Archdeacon of Lougheed the Ven. Allan Carson was the preacher and he took the Gospel text, the parable of the Sower for his text. However, before he began his examination of the text and its relevance to that evening's liturgy, he began his sermon by saying:

"We've all heard of 'the summer of love', and I have no idea what year that was? (1967... • Editor) Maybe that was just most summers... I don't really know, but I do know that in years to come when people reflect back on 2020, there might be a lot of reminiscing about how great January and February were. They were amazing months, we could do incredible things; we could shake hands; we could sit beside each other; and, we could have a celebration like a celebration of new ministry, and we could just let in as many people at the door as wanted to show up. We could sing, we could laugh, we could smile together. We can still smile but we have had to learn to smile with our eyes as often our mouths are hidden behind a mask. It feels a bit sterile to be kept six feet apart with our faces covered, it doesn't line up with how a celebration should feel. Yet, here we are gathered together in the midst of all the challenges and the restrictions we face to celebrate the start of a new ministry."

The Rev. Stephen Laskey, Regional Dean of Peace Arch and Rector of St. Helen's, Surrey was present to ironically welcome the new vicar to the deanery where Fr. Louie has

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The Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Douglas Fenton introduces Fr. Louie as ordained leader of the shared ministry of the parish and leads the applause of welcome. PHOTO Randy Murray



Dannah Engnan and Annie Smith share a chuckle during the pre-worship rehearsal. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT The new vicar processes in with the wardens. RIGHT The archdeacon gathers the wardens and the new vicar for the Covenant in Ministry, all participants respecting physical distancing. PHOTOS Randy Murray

“I Have it on Good Authority that the Archdeacon of Fraser is a Great Guy.”

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been a rector and vicar for many years and more recently, the regional archdeacon. Rev. Laskey’s greeting was followed by another visit from Archdeacon Carson, who during his welcome to the vicar read the letter written by Archbishop Skelton to the parish. In the irony department, Archdeacon Carson ramped it up a notch, cheerfully telling the new

vicar that he can testify on good authority, that the Regional Archdeacon, the Archdeacon of Fraser is a “great guy.” Well, of that there is no doubt. Please keep the Parish of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale in your prayers as they begin this next phase of mission and ministry. ✠



Receiving the keys to the buildings during the Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry. PHOTO Randy Murray



Archdeacon Fenton reads the Archbishop’s License. PHOTO Randy Murray

*“We could sing,
we could laugh,
we could smile together.
We can still smile
but we have had to learn to smile
with our eyes
as often our mouths
are hidden behind a mask.”*
The Ven. Allan Carson



A “greeting” from the Archdeacon of Loughheed. PHOTO Randy Murray



All stand for the Dismissal. PHOTO Randy Murray

Bell’s Hall Demolition

There was more renewal happening on the Christ the Redeemer (CtR) property in the month of July. The aging and ailing Bell’s Hall, the adjunct structure built in the mid-20th century on a section of land that would eventually also contain the current CtR church building was finally razed, leaving a good sized lot located to the west of the church, across the street from a number of homes in the Cloverdale residential neighbourhood. The need to demolish the dilapidated building and clear the ground for something new a week before the installation of the new vicar was a powerfully optimistic sign of hope for the future. ✠



Bell’s Hall soon to be a memory. PHOTO Submitted



The initial demolition. PHOTO Submitted



Just a few scraps of foundation remain. PHOTO Submitted



A new lot. PHOTO Submitted



St. Philip's roof replacement completed. PHOTO Randy Murray

St. Philip's Roof Replacement Project

CONRAD GUELKE, ODNW

Founding Editor of Topic, St. Philip's, Dunbar

The Parish of St. Philip's is located in the heart of the Westside of Vancouver — on West 27th Avenue, just west of Dunbar Street. The church community was founded in 1925 and its first building was what is now the church hall which was completed in 1929. Construction of the church building commenced in 1941, during the Second World War and was completed in less than two years. The debt-free building was consecrated November 12, 1945. The church roof has been replaced twice during its lifetime. The last time was in the late 1990s and, given that asphalt shingles typically have a lifespan of less than 30 years, roof replacement was becoming a priority for the parish. As if to put an exclamation mark on this reality, leaks had occurred in the church hall that required temporary repairs. Buckets in the hall were frequently deployed following rainstorms.

Before starting on the roof replacement project, the Property Committee of the parish commissioned a building condition assessment and 30-year capital plan study (depreciation report) from a local Vancouver consulting firm (AWQS Consulting). The report evaluated the church's physical infrastructure and long-term replacement needs.

The building study looked at all facets of the building — external and internal — and identified when routine maintenance and replacement should occur together with an estimate of the projected costs. Debbie Matheson, an incoming assistant warden and trustee at the time, remembers reading the depreciation report and its associated costs with a sinking feeling of dread.

Not surprisingly, job #1 was replacement of the roofs on the church building, the church hall and the rectory.

Other items were also identified, and the report is a useful planning document, not only for the Property Committee, but especially for the parish trustees charged with approving annual budgets.

It was evident that the parish would need to raise considerable funds to finance the proposed roof replacement as its cost far exceeded the annual building maintenance budget. A fundraising team was appointed and, with external professional assistance provided by Waller & Associates, proposed a fundraising campaign — *Under Our Roof and Beyond Our Walls*.

Before launching the campaign, the fundraiser undertook a feasibility study to determine how much might be raised in a three-year capital campaign, given the proposed use of the funds to be raised. In this instance, Waller & Associates reported back that a target of \$1.5 million over three years would be achievable, with the proceeds split between buildings and programs.

The capital campaign was launched with a professionally published prospectus, training for volunteers, and weekly executive meetings. Parish leaders led teams of trained visitors who went out in pairs to visit every household in the

parish for an hour or so. Warden Debbie Matheson recalls that this remarkable sustained effort over two months served also to build connections, open channels of communication throughout the parish and provide a listening ear to parishioners as they talked about St. Philip's.

The three-year campaign is in its second year but, based on donations already received in year one, it was evident



Roofing materials and a dumpster for the old shingles on the grounds in front of the Fireside Room. PHOTO Randy Murray



Roofing materials, rubber tiles etc. stored in front of the parish sign. PHOTO Randy Murray

that there would be sufficient funding for the roofs.

While there were members of the Property Committee who had experience with roofing projects, the committee recommended that the parish retain the services of a professional project management team to oversee the process of developing roof specifications and also acting as the owner's representative for the duration of the project. AWQS Consulting in partnership with Enduring Construction was selected for this task. A roof inspection company (BC Roof Inspections) was also hired to write the specification and to oversee the work of the selected roofing contractor.

The project managers and the roofing inspection company prepared tender documents for the roofs on the three buildings. Bidders were invited to submit proposals for a baseline bid using asphalt shingles (estimated lifespan 30 years) but could also offer the option of rubber shingles manufactured from recycled car tires which, while more expensive, had a projected life of over 60 years. Bids were requested from three roofing contractors, two submitted proposals.

Following the analysis of the bids and presentations by the contractors, the contract was awarded to Penfolds Roofing and Solar who, in addition to the base bid of asphalt shingles throughout, offered recycled rubber "Eco" shakes on the church building and church hall which would cost a further \$30,000. This option was recommended by the Property Committee. However, the parish trustees, with financial constraints in mind, selected the all-asphalt shingle option. The Property Committee was less than happy with this decision. Fortunately, at this stage, a parish benefactor, who chose to remain anonymous, stepped up with a donation of \$30,000 to enable "Eco" shakes to be used.

Initially it was determined that construction on the roof would start after Easter. That all changed with the COVID-19 lockdown. However, given that roofing is a socially distanced occupation, work was able to proceed in late-May and was completed by the end of July. In addition to Penfolds Roofing and Solar, other sub-contractors included McMahon Stucco and EB Painting.

The parish is pleased with the final results and, according to the rector, the Rev. Stuart Hallam:

"The use of 'Eco' shakes sends a clear message to our community that St. Philip's stands for the 'Kingdom' principle of justice in the world, not only for the planet, but in all aspects of our common life and ministry."

One of the important themes in the Capital Campaign, Under our Roof and Beyond our Walls was a vision for St. Philip's to move towards becoming a Centre for Social Action and Spirituality. I realized before I arrived that this was a path that the parish had already begun with its history of sponsoring

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refugees and work with the homeless. But once I was in post, and as I got to know the wider parish, I understood that many within the wider Dunbar community were firmly in the 'spiritual' but not religious camp and that the area had a very strong social conscience. It was clear to me that developing St. Philip's with justice and spirituality at its heart would offer the best possible option for growth moving forward.

Having an environmentally sustainable roof clearly projects who we are and what we stand for and has already begun many a conversation with those in our community who feel the same, which is at the heart of our mission to go 'Beyond Our Walls.'"

People's Warden, Debbie Matheson, represented the parish leadership for the duration of the project, signing change orders, watching the budget spreadsheet and interacting with the project managers, crew and other trades. Through the website and the parish weekly email bulletin, Debbie kept the congregation informed on the progress of the project while the worshipping congregation was effectively banished from the work site by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Debbie, keeping parishioners apprised of the roofing project, and other property improvements, was an effective way to show gratitude to the donors, to encourage them to fulfill their pledges in year two, and to inspire new donors to join the effort. The seeds bore fruit.

The lessons learned from this project would include the following:

- Conduct a long-range study on the state of the parish buildings.
- Use this information in making the case for a capital campaign.
- Have a professional fundraiser conduct a feasibility study on how much might be raised.
- For a major project like a roof, hire project managers to represent the parish and coordinate the work of the roofing and other contractors.
- Keep the parish well informed throughout the process so that the opportunity for unsolicited donations (anonymous or otherwise) is possible.
- Hire a roof inspection company to ensure that the work is undertaken in accordance with the specifications

The parish of St. Philip's now has the prospect of remaining dry for the next 60+ years, during which time the programs it delivers will continue to benefit the community beyond its walls. ✚



A look at damage to the old asphalt tiles. PHOTO Randy Murray



More worn tiles. PHOTO Randy Murray



In late May, the rector, the Rev. Stuart Hallam and Organist/Director of Music Michael Murray pose for a shot with the Penfold's signage. PHOTO Randy Murray



LEFT Finishing off an overhang section in June 2020. MIDDLE Rev. Hallam offers a prayer of blessing on the project and thanks for the pie. RIGHT As the work neared completion, parish leaders gathered together with the Penfold's crew and hosted a pizza and beer celebration. PHOTOS Randy Murray



LEFT Enjoying pizza and beer after a hard day's work. RIGHT Rev. Hallam poses with the principal Penfold's roofing crew members. PHOTOS Randy Murray

AROUND THE DIOCESE

• Urban Aboriginal Ministry Communications •

Although diocesan communications have provided coverage since the fall of 2019, many of you may not know about Urban Aboriginal Ministry (UAM) under the leadership of the Rev. Vivian Seegers and its vital work with Indigenous people in the city. During the COVID-19 crisis this ministry has brought needed supplies and spiritual connection to vulnerable people. Donations have dropped but needs have increased.

UAM is also the recipient of care + share financial support for 2020 and 2021. care+share is the diocesan flow-through

financial resources initiative that directs voluntary contributions to recently established ministries selected at Diocesan Synod.

UAM have launched an eNewsletter and a website. Please join the mailing list by sending an email to Michel at michel@urbanaboriginalministry.com in order to receive information and links. And visit and bookmark the website at <https://urbanaboriginalministry.com>.

Volunteers are needed, please contact the Rev. Vivian Seegers by email at vivian-seegers@hotmail.com.

Please keep UAM in your prayers. ✝



Drum Circle during WinterFest 2018.

• New Purpose for an Unemployed Bell •

The former CPR train engine bell that rang in the tower of St. Catherine of Alexandria, Port Coquitlam for almost 36 years found new life during its current residence at the home of St. Catherine's parishioner, Bernie Poitras, ODNW. The bell (forged in 1957) that called the faithful to weekly worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals and celebrations like the arrival of a New Year was joyfully rung many more times by Bernie at 7pm, in concert with the banging of posts and pans in his neighbourhood, to show appreciation for front line health care workers, first responders and essential service personnel. This was a practice that became very much a part of all our lives during the

SUBMISSION Ann Blue, ODNW

months of April and May last spring. The church that housed the bell was



Bringing the bell to the ladder September 1999. PHOTO Ann Blue



Halfway down. PHOTO Ann Blue



The bell in the shed. PHOTO Ann Blue



LEFT Made it safely. RIGHT A close-up of the bell in the shed. PHOTOS Ann Blue

• Newcomers Report •

SUBMISSION Shannon Muir, ODNW; Chair of the Diocesan Refugee Unit & a founding member of REST



Neema with new laptop. PHOTO Shannon Muir



Neema with the quilt. PHOTO Shannon Muir

Neema

Regional Ecumenical Sponsorship Team (REST) on the North Shore is very pleased to congratulate Neema, on completing her first year in Canada. She is originally from Democratic Republic of the Congo and was a refugee in Uganda before being sponsored. She has worked hard through many struggles and is planning to attend Laurentian University in Ontario this fall. She wants to study Economics. Thanks to support from the Archbishop's fund for Newcomers, our group was able to present her with a new laptop to help her with her studies. We also presented her with a beauti-

ful quilt, donated through St. Clement's in North Vancouver, one of the churches in the REST group.

Neema sent this message in a card:

"May God bless my unknown aunties and uncles in the parish. You made a big change in my life."

And her adoptive father and co-sponsor, Mambo, wrote this message:

"All parish members are the light in the middle of the darkness of our time."

Best wishes to Neema in her studies and to Mambo and all of his family members. ✝

Sewing Machines

On Saturday, June 20, we had a wonderful occasion with Sewing Machines!

Sheila Johnston, ODNW and Simon Johnston, ODNW donated two brand new sewing machines! The sewing machines were given in memory of Sheila's late parents, Eric and Madeline, who were kind and loving and who taught by example to "give what you can, when you can."

Sheila and Simon heard that there was a need and purchased these beautiful machines which bring new opportunities to the families who received them. The recipients were Mambo and Beatrice, receiving the machine in the white box, and Leena and Majed, receiving the machine in the brown box.

Thanks to everyone for a wonderful, joyous occasion and for Wilna Parry, ODNW for connecting the machines with the recipients! ✝



Simon and Sheila Johnston have received some treats from Leena and Majed. PHOTO Shannon Muir



Sheila with Mambo and Beatrice. PHOTO Shannon Muir

AROUND THE DIOCESE

• Holy Spirit, Whonnock Goes on Zoom for Canada Day •

SUBMISSION Miranda Sutherland AUTHOR Jean Davidson

Holy Spirit Anglican Church, Whonnock/Maple Ridge, celebrated Canada Day for the first time in recent memory, with an early morning church service via Zoom. The online liturgy was attended by the regional MP and MLA, worshippers from nearby parishes and across the country, and Holy Spirit parishioners. The Honourable Bob D'Eith, MLA representing the electoral district of Maple Ridge-Mission played the prelude music. Before politics Bob worked as an entertainment lawyer and is also a founding member of two well-known BC bands, *Rhymes with Orange* and *Mythos*. The Honourable Marc Dalton, MP representing the federal electoral district of Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge, addressed the online congregation, quoting scripture and offering a prayer. The two legislators also shared Canada Day reflections from their perspectives as representatives to federal and provincial governments.

Mayor Mike Morden sent a message, which was read. Participation by Murray Moerman of the Ridge Meadows Ministerial and Rev. Andrew Halliday of St. Andrew's, Langley, reminded us of connections to other faith groups locally and to the wider Anglican Communion. Vicar of Holy Spirit, the Rev. Miranda Sutherland preached the sermon, taking as her text *1 John 4:7* "Beloved, Let us Love One Another." Fabulous parish musician, Sanne, who is also the Principal Violinist of the Ab-



The Honourable Bob D'Eith, MLA for Maple Ridge-Mission. PHOTO Screenshot from the July 1 Zoom recording.



The Honourable Marc Dalton, MP, Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge. PHOTO Screenshot from the July 1 Zoom recording.

botsford Youth Orchestra, played the Royal and National Anthems and other Canadian music as the parish gave thanks for Canada, and prayed for our country's future, its challenges and its responsibilities. ✚



The Rev. Miranda Sutherland on location in the church's chancel. PHOTO Screenshot from the July 1 Zoom recording.

• Ladner Parish Embraces Digital Technology •

SUBMISSION Robin Ruder-Celiz

Many thanks to the Rev. Robin Ruder-Celiz for sending in these photos of a collection plate with a QR code that was made ready for the Parish of All Saints', Ladner's re-opening for limited in-person worship on July 5.

QR codes were developed in Japan in 1994 in order to track various aspects of automobile manufacturing, however they had many other applications and by 2011

millions of people using mobile devices were using them to make purchases, donate money, etc. Your smartphone becomes the QR scanner which will take you to a standard URL like the donation and giving page of a church website as in this scenario.

Fr. Robin is happy to report that the QR scan works great and in the second photo we see Theeps Theeparajah demonstrating the ease and convenience of this technology. ✚



• St. Stephen's, West Vancouver During COVID-19 •

SUBMISSION Hilary Clark

St. Stephen's, West Vancouver has been serving its large varied congregation during the pandemic with online offerings initiated by the rector, Canon Jonathan LLOYD. On Mondays a group gathers via Zoom to research and to discuss Mark Oakley's insightful book, *The Splash of Words, (believing in poetry)*. Oakley is Chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral in London England, and a visiting lecturer in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Kings' College, London. His approach to poetry is moving and inspirational. The small book is a treasure.

Wednesday morning is chosen for the rector's regular "drop-ins," only in this case the drop-in is online, and bring your own coffee. Thursday is choir day with the parish's minister of music, Dr. Annabelle Paetsch, who manages to lead a choir practice via Zoom from her office where she accompanies the singers on the piano, or digital keyboard, while teaching them the basics of the music they have been sent via the internet. She has combined the church choir and St. Stephen's Community Singers (each rehearse separately via Zoom) to produce a commendable choral sound from 20 or so singers, each in their own home. This online preparation resulted in a virtual choir video of the South African tune, *Mayenziwe (Your will be done)* released in June, after 300 views on its initial posting, the video can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/IJ3wpf8fQIU>.

Friday is the day for Bible study with Canon Donald Lawton who leads the group online from his home in Squamish.

For Sunday worship, Canon LLOYD presents an edited version of the Prayer Book morning service from the altar of St. Stephen's, in the silence of the empty church, framed by the stained-glass east window. Readers are selected from the parish and offer a lesson and a psalm. The service is preceded by a selection of piano or organ preludes by Dr. Annabelle Paetsch (sometimes with a vocalist) who then follows the service with a postlude.

The church community connects by internet, telephone, and mail. We all pray for a successful end to this pandemic and that our congregation stays well until we can return to our church building.

Ordination Celebration

On the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul on June 28, Canon LLOYD, marked 30 years of ordained ministry. He was joined by several surprise visitors. His brother, Canon Nigel LLOYD (of Salisbury Diocese, England) read the Gospel and his sister-in-law, Canon Jane LLOYD (also of Salisbury Diocese) led intercessions. On that same Sunday Jane was marking 40 years of ministry, and Nigel, 39 years. Jonathan's daughter, Emma (a teacher in Sussex, England) shared the first reading. The preacher was the Executive Archdeacon of the diocese of New Westminster, the Ven. Douglas Fenton, who will mark 40 years since his ordination later this year.

Jonathan was ordained at Southwark Cathedral, London in 1990, after a professional career in psychiatric social work. He was principal social worker at St. Christopher's Hospice, London, which is the first modern teaching hospice in the world. Over three decades, Canon LLOYD has served as an Anglican priest in ten countries, including as Archdeacon of Germany and Northern Europe. In 1975, he was arrested and deported from South Africa by the *apartheid* regime whilst working for the Anglican Church. He returned to South Africa in 1993, to serve as a mediator and monitor with the World Council

of Churches in townships in KwaZulu/Natal in the turbulent period before the first elections.

Jonathan said, "I thank God for the Christian communities I have been privileged to serve, and for all they have taught me." ✚



Screenshot from the YouTube post of the "virtual" choir performing *Mayenziwe*, Dr. Paetsch is in the centre on the drum and Canon LLOYD may be seen three down on the left. (NOTE: This is a modified screenshot as the original image did not fit in the layout)

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Clergy News Around the Diocese •

A Rector for St. Clement's

Archbishop Skelton has appointed the Rev. André Marc Stephany as the next rector of St. Clement, Lynn Valley effective September 1.

Rev. Stephany was ordained to the transitional diaconate on June 15, 2019 and began his ordained ministry as Assistant Curate at Christ Church Cathedral. He was priested January 18, 2020.

Here is an excerpt from a letter that Rev. Stephany sent to the Parish of St. Clement's on the day of his appointment, May 31:

I was born and raised in the Black Forest in Southern Germany, right on the borders of Switzerland and France. Probably growing up in a region where borders don't matter much is the reason why I have always felt at home in other countries and enjoyed getting to know new people and cultures.

In school, I was always known as "the politician." After I had given up my childhood dreams to either become an Egyptologist, a captain of the sea or the Phantom of the Opera in Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, politician was the new career of my heart. This career plan became quite serious and probably culminated with running as one of the youngest candidates for the Federal General Elections in 2009. I finished school in the same year and went to University.

My first degree was in History and English and part of the training to become a teacher. My vocation to serve in the Church developed and deepened parallel to that. So, it came that, while studying, I did the training for Lay Ministry in the German Protestant Church before I realized that my vocation was one to Ordained Ministry.

Consequently, my second and third degree followed in Theology. I was really lucky with the variety of places where I was able to study. My studies led me to Constance and Freiburg (Germany), Durham and Cambridge (UK), Basel (Switzerland) and to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, where I lived in a Benedictine Monastery and served at St. George's Anglican Cathedral in my

free time.

Before 'coming home' to Vancouver, I served at Basel Cathedral and two other parishes in Basel, Switzerland.

I am really excited and looking forward to joining St. Clement's and the wider Lynn Valley community and, especially, to get to know you. May our journey in faith together be blessed and may we help each other to grow ever deeper in the awareness of God's wonderful love and care for us."

Rev. Stephany will be inducted Rector of the Parish of St. Clement, on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (September 8) at 7pm. The Rev. Helen Dunn, Vicar of Christ Church Cathedral will preach. ✦



The Rev. André Stephany. PHOTO Submitted

Interim Dean Appointed at the Vancouver School of Theology

Vancouver School of Theology (VST) is honoured to announce that the Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred has been appointed Interim Dean for the 2020–2021 academic year. This appointment commences on July 1, 2020 and will continue until a permanent appointment is announced.

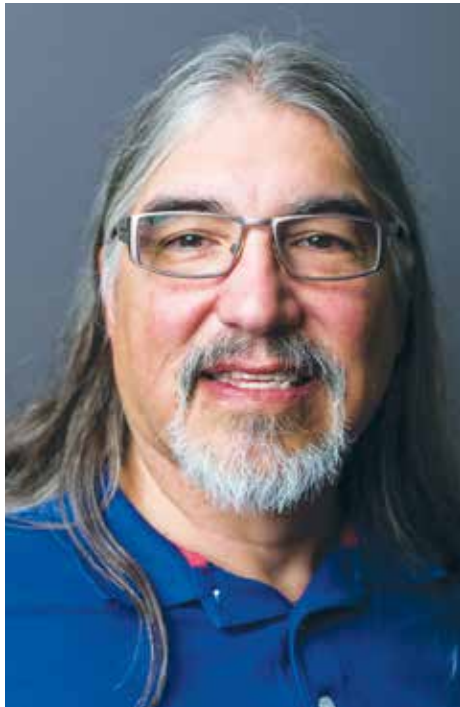
Dr. Aldred succeeds, the Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls who retires after 17 years of faithful service as VST Dean and faculty member.

Dr. Aldred is also the director of the Indigenous Studies Program (ISP) at the Vancouver School of Theology whose mission is to partner with the Indigenous Church around theological education. Ray also leads the Teaching House That Moves Around (THTMA), an internationally recognized initiative that addresses the need for truth, reconciliation, and healing among Indigenous peoples, and to foster greater understanding for all societies. During this interim period, the THTMA will continue with the organizational support of ISP team members Hubert Barton (Nisga'a) and Catalina Parra. Under Dr. Aldred's leadership, VST annually hosts the Indigenous Summer School, drawing faculty and participants for intensive dialogue and training on prevailing issues, and leading towards formal academic accreditation, as well as providing insightful professional and continuing education. The Summer School was offered online this year through distance delivery.

Recently, Dr. Aldred collaborated with VST faculty member, Rabbi Dr. Laura

Duhan-Kaplan to author *The Spirit of Reconciliation*, a multi-faith resource, and a joint project of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the Vancouver School of Theology.

Dr. Aldred is ordained with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada. His teaching and research specialization are in narrative and systematic theology within the indigenous context. He is a writer and a frequent presenter and speaker, guest lecturer across North America. ✦



The Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred. PHOTO Submitted

A Vicar for Christ the Redeemer

The Ven. Louie Engnan has been appointed Vicar of Christ the Redeemer, Cloverdale effective June 1. He continues to serve St. Michael, Surrey as their vicar. This partnership with a shared priest has been long in the making and will allow each parish to strengthen its ministry in the respective

parishes which share a common border. He remains in his diocesan ministry as Archdeacon of Fraser.

A Celebration of a New Ministry took place at Christ the Redeemer on Monday, July 13, coverage of that liturgy is available on pages 18 & 19 of this issue of *Topic*. ✦

A Rector for St. Faith's

SUBMISSION Many thanks to Gillian McIntyre & the St. Faith's Search Committee

The lay leadership of the Parish of St. Faith's announced that Archbishop Melissa Skelton appointed the Rev. Adam Yates, Rector of St. Faith's Anglican Church effective September 1, 2020.

Originally from Virginia, Adam spent his childhood outside of Washington, DC with summer visits to the cabin his grandfather built in Ontario. He travelled a circuitous route that led him to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Connecticut in the fall of 2012.

Attending Northland College in Wisconsin and obtaining degrees in environmental sciences and religion, Adam then went on to obtain his Master of Divinity from Chicago Theological Seminary. Raised in the United Methodist Church, during his religious studies Adam explored a variety of Christian traditions and found himself drawn to the liturgy of the Episcopal Church. He interned at an Episcopal Church in Chicago.

In addition to his part-time work at St. Stephen's, Adam serves as the Secretary of

Convention for the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, does consulting work with Episcopal churches in long-term transitions, and also serves on various diocesan councils, commissions and multi-parish networks including the Faith and Order Commission, the Climate & Environment Ministry Network and the Digital Ministry Network.

In discussing the church of the future, Adam believes it is a church that takes the Good News of Jesus out into the world. "A church that proves its relevance not just by the words it says but also by the way it lives out and embodies those words in the world."

Adam currently lives in Andover, Connecticut with his husband, the Rev. Matthew Emery, Senior Pastor of Storrs Congregational Church, and their two pets, a cat named Demon and an energetic beagle named Daniel.

The Induction will be on the Feast of St. Matthew (September 21) at 7pm. The Rev. Christopher A. Pappas, Rector of Christ Church Cathedral will preach. ✦

Farewell Rachel!

After three years of exemplary service to the parishes, clergy and members of the diocese of New Westminster, Rachel Taylor, Administrative Assistant to the Finance Department, the Archbishop's Office, the Diocesan School for Parish Development, Pre-Authorized Donation Facilitator and staffer who is always willing to pitch in and

fill many additional roles completed her ministry on July 31, 2020. Rachel moved to Victoria to be close to family.

We will miss you Rachel. Please keep Rachel, Coral and their families in your prayers as they move forward in their lives and ministry. ✦



LEFT Rachel Taylor cuts the cake. PHOTO Bill Siksay RIGHT Rachel's last day on Synod Staff, July 31. PHOTO Randy Murray





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OPINION

The Woman at Jesus’ Feet in Luke 7:36–50

STEVE BLACK
Christ Church Cathedral

Luke tells a story of Jesus enjoying a meal with a Pharisee, when a woman arrives and wipes Jesus’ feet with tears and ointment. The Pharisee is scandalized, and Jesus responds by telling a parable, and then speaking words of forgiveness to the woman (*Luke 7:36–50*).

A Question of Sources

Mark also tells a story of a woman anointing Jesus. However, she does not anoint his feet but his head. The timing is also very different—in Mark this episode occurs shortly before Jesus’ death, while in Luke it occurs much earlier in Jesus’ ministry. The story in Mark is not about forgiving a sinner as it is in Luke, but about devotion and a prophetic understanding concerning Jesus.

Matthew follows Mark; the episode is placed in the same time frame, and the all the important details are the same.

John is a strange mix of details of what we find in Luke and Mark. Agreeing with Mark, this event happens shortly before the passion. Also agreeing with Mark, in John this story is not about the forgiving of a sinful woman, but about a woman who is prophetically anointing Jesus “for the day of his burial” (*John 12:7*; compare with *Mark 14:8*, and *Matthew 26:12*). However, John agrees with Luke that the woman anoints Jesus’ feet, and not his head. To my mind, the parallels in John provide some of the more compelling evidence that perhaps John knows the synoptic tradition.

Is Luke Misogynistic?

Has Luke taken a prophetic act by a strong and courageous woman and turned it into a story of a loose woman being forgiven? Has Luke robbed this woman of her leadership role, subjugating her into the role of a deviant who needs forgiveness? Does this reflect a bias *against* women on the part of Luke? Many scholars believe that it does.

If we remove the ointment from the story, then what is left is very different from what we have in Mark, which is one of Luke’s key sources. What is left is the story of a sinful woman, coming to Jesus, weeping and cleaning his feet with her tears. It is a strangely erotic act. Imagine Jesus reclined with his feet outwards, after the fashion of meals of the day. Now imagine a woman gently laying right next to Jesus’ feet and gently wiping his feet with her tears and hair. I for one would probably be troubled, just like Simon, his pharisaic host!

Luke’s story is radically different from the anointing stories in Mark and Matthew. The only thing that suggests that it somehow may be linked, in terms of source criticism, is the ointment. Without the ointment, I think we would not have a great deal of problem suggesting that this story is not the same story as what is found in Mark, and that Luke is leaning on another tradition—perhaps “Q,” or the so-called “L.”

What I propose, is that perhaps Luke had a distinct story about a sinful woman washing Jesus’ feet with her hair—a version that says nothing about ointment. He noted a surface similarity with the story of the woman anointing Jesus with oil in Mark and decided to conflate the two stories. He added into this story the ointment from the Markan story. Having utilized that detail from the story in Mark, it would have been redundant for him to replicate the story again in his narrative in the week before the passion, so he dropped the Markan version from his narrative, having taken the key element of ointment from it.

Does this absolve Luke of the charge of being a misogynist? If my reconstruction



Woman wipes Jesus’ feet with her hair.

is correct, then Luke is not transforming the prophetic sign act of the strong woman in Mark into a weaker instance of a sinner being forgiven as much as he is preferring one story over another.

That being said, I think that perhaps we might not be quite grasping the nuance of “sinners” in the Lukan corpus. It is no small thing to be a forgiven sinner in Luke. It is Luke’s Gospel that has Jesus say, “I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance” (*Luke 15:7, 10*). Perhaps the best example is found the Acts, the sequel to the Gospel of Luke. There Paul/Saul is a raging sinner opposing the new Christ movement with all that is in him, but once forgiven, this same man becomes one of the key heroes of the book.

So, being a repentant sinner in Luke is not a demotion. It is an honor—something to emulate.

Simon & Hospitality

The woman shows up and is weeping at Jesus’ feet. Simon, the host of the dinner party, is troubled, and as I mentioned, understandably so. “Surely,” he thinks, “this man knows what sort of woman this person is—how can he just sit there and permit this indecent display!?”

So, Jesus tells a parable. Two people are forgiven different amounts. Who loves more, the one who has been forgiven much or the one who has been forgiven little? Simon rightly answers Jesus, the one who was forgiven much.

Jesus then goes on the attack. Speaking to Simon, he says, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet” (*Luke 7:44–45*).

Some have suggested that Simon had grossly mistreated Jesus with a failure of hospitality. The argument goes that it was common for hosts to wash feet and greet guests with a kiss, and that Simon, by not doing these things, sinned against Jesus. I think this sort of interpretation buries the strangeness of the story.

John Nolland writes, “To provide water for guests to wash their feet after travel is well attested... but is not indicated in Jewish literature to be a normal provision for guests.”¹ This means that such behavior is not the expectation, meaning Luke is not emphasizing that Simon failed in his duty as a host, but that the woman’s actions possessed a certain extravagance. The woman, who had (presumably) never actually met Jesus had a deeper connection with him than Simon who had. She “got” what Jesus was about. There was a deep drama playing

out in her. Simon was so worked up about propriety that he missed the sacred drama unfolding before him.

Simon & Forgiveness

Jesus concludes his conversation with Simon by declaring, “her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little” (*Luke 7:47*).

The obvious implication is that the woman is the one who has been forgiven much, while Simon is the one who has been forgiven little.

I don’t think we should assume Jesus is speaking ironically. That is, there is no reason to argue that Jesus is suggesting that Simon hasn’t really been forgiven, or that his sins really are not really “little.” Some wish to suggest that Simon was just as bad a sinner in his own way, but that he did not recognize his error like the woman did. In short, that he was like the Pharisee of *Luke 18:11–14*, who declared his own righteousness but did not return to his house “justified” as did the repentant tax collector. Simon does not parallel the Pharisee of that parable well. Simon does not proclaim his own righteousness and is only challenged by Jesus because he was not extravagant in his hospitality in a way that paralleled the woman. In a way, Jesus was being unreasonable in his response to Simon, and this makes the story jarring (and interesting).

The Woman & Forgiveness

Jesus turns to the woman, and says, “Your sins have been forgiven you.” Some at the table are troubled because Jesus presumes to forgive sins. But they (along with most readers it seems) are not paying attention to the grammar. This statement is in the perfect tense, not the present. The perfect tense speaks of something that happened in the past with direct implications for the present. This means that the forgiveness of which Jesus speaks has already happened for this woman. She has already been forgiven. The other grammatical detail that is often missed is that this statement is in the passive voice. The passive voice can be a way of saying something without identifying the subject doing the action. “You have been forgiven” does not actually say who the one is who is doing the forgiving. This can be fixed by adding a “by XXX.” “You have been forgiven *by God*”—“You have been forgiven *by me*.” As it is, the agent doing the forgiving is not stated, although it seems to me most likely that Jesus is declaring that the woman has been forgiven by God.

Jesus ignores the peanut gallery complaining about his actions and continues speaking to the woman: “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” “Being saved” is also in the perfect tense, suggesting that whatever this refers to, it has already happened. Jesus is affirming for the woman (and for us) that she has already received salvation and forgiveness.

This part of the story has more in common with the story of the healing of the Paralytic (*Luke 5:17–26*,² see also *Matthew 9:1–8*, and *Mark 2:1–12*) than it does with the story of the anointing of Jesus (*Mark 14:3–9*, *Matthew 26:6–13*, and *John 12:1–8*). ♦

¹ Nolland, John. *Luke 1–9:20. Word Biblical Commentary*; v. 5A. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1989, p. 357

² In *Luke 5:23* Jesus says to the paralytic “your sins have been forgiven you” (ἀφεῶνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου). This is also in the perfect tense. This contrasts what we see in both Mark and Matthew, which have Jesus forgiving the paralytic using the present tense.

Of Elections, Bishops, Kings & COVID-19

HERBERT O'DRISCOLL
Retired Priest of the diocese of Calgary; former Dean of the diocese of New Westminster & Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver

An election. It sounds so simple. A community, a population, an organization needs to recognize the person to whom they will look for various elements of leadership. Yet down through history that word election has assumed many forms.

Those many forms tend to come from the various rules set up around a particular election. At best these rules ensure fairness, at worst they can exist precisely to ensure the election is unfair. For centuries one such rule was that you had to own land to vote. Sometimes only the members of a certain class were eligible. Again, it is not that long ago that women could not vote, or members of certain ethnic or faith groups. There have been elections that contradict the whole electoral concept. In dictatorial regimes there can be an election with a single name on the ballot, that of the dictator. All one can do is vote Yes or No, the latter not without personal risk.

The history of the English church provides a wonderful election story. It is May 1162, Henry the Second is king. A new Archbishop of Canterbury is to be elected. The electors will be the community of the Prior, Monks and Canons of Canterbury. Henry needs his friend Thomas Becket to be his ally in the vast land struggle between church and monarchy.

Henry's solution is simple. He composes a message to the Chapter, and has it delivered by three senior bishops. While it assures the chapter that they may elect whom they wish, they should be aware that the king's desire is that Thomas Beckett be elected as archbishop. So much for our

contemporary ideals about election!

All of which brings us to the pending episcopal elections in BC and New Westminster. In their own way it will add yet another chapter to electoral history. The electors cannot gather because of virus restrictions so that the process of election

will be done online. Strict rules will govern the whole process.

And while there will quite properly be differing opinions about a final choice, the only kingly or spiritual voice whose wishes will be sought in prayer will be that of God's Holy Spirit. ✠

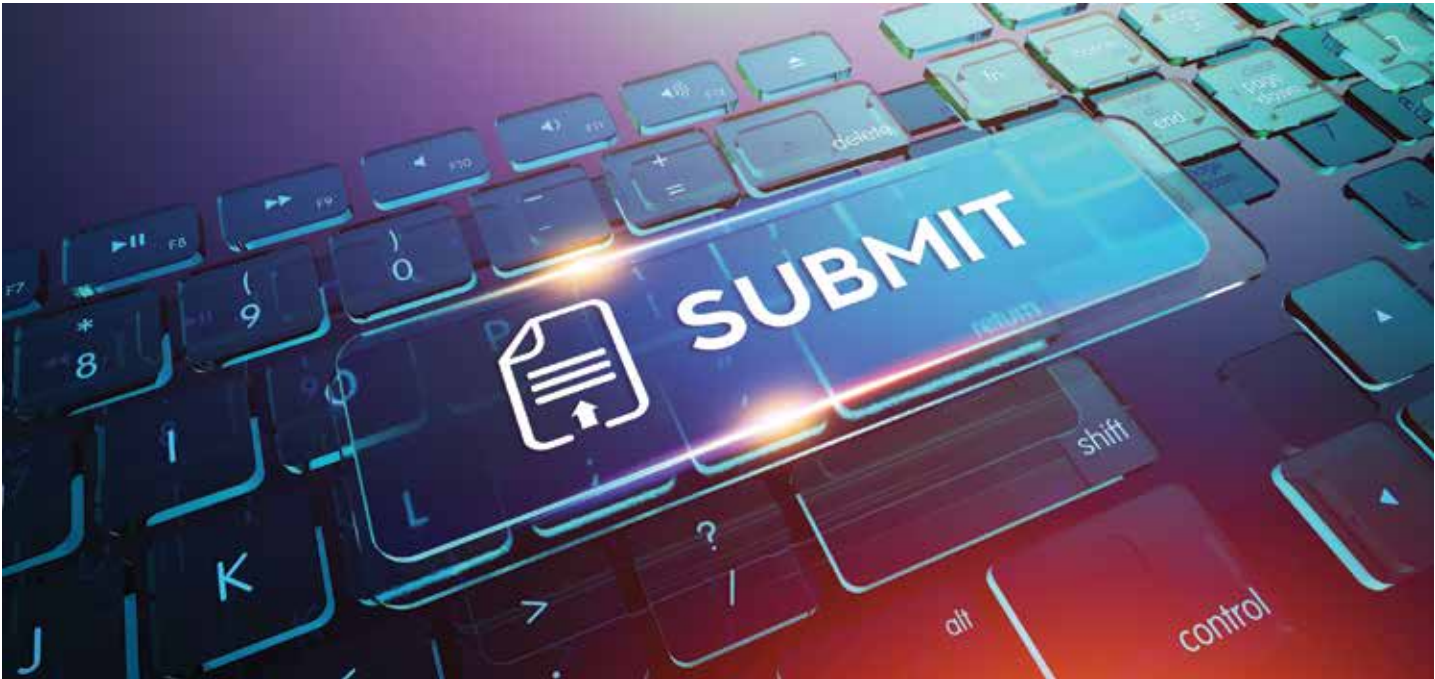


PHOTO gocmen (iStock ID 1146311517)

Diversity in Church Leadership
Sometimes, the most important thing
that I can do is just to get out of the way...

CAMERON GUTJAHR
Rector, St. John's, Squamish

In the fight against racism, privilege and power play important roles, and our ability to recognize where they exist is crucial. Learning about these things is a process, marked by slow realizations and sudden epiphanies. As people of faith, I think it is important to share our learnings—our testimony—with one another. Here is a story of one of mine.

Some years ago, I attended Diocesan Synod where we were electing delegates to go to General Synod (the meeting that the Anglican Church of Canada holds every three years).

One major area of focus that year was diversity, and there was a desire to see more diverse representation in our various groups and councils, which, among other things, were overwhelmingly white. This, of course, included our delegates to General Synod.

Therefore, we encouraged new people to let their names stand for the election, diversifying the field of candidates.

However, when the election took place, it was the same people who were elected again, mostly those who had been before, all

white. The thing was that all our intentions were good, even those who were elected, but we missed something important. We were treating this as if the “game” was fair, but it isn't. Those elected had the power, from name recognition, but also from their whiteness.

If we had wanted things to be different, those with power could and should have removed themselves from the race, including myself.

This might seem counter-intuitive for many active, well-meaning people, like me. I want to speak up, jump in, do something, help. However, sometimes those things can be unhelpful. Sometimes, the most important thing that I can do is just to get out of the way—stay silent so that other voices can be heard.

John the Baptist said that “he must increase, but I must decrease” (*John 3:30*), to amplify the voice of Jesus, and so it is with us.

May we decrease so that the powerless, the voiceless, the oppressed and vulnerable, whom Jesus identifies with, may increase.

Thanks be to God! ✠

PHOTO wildpixel (iStock ID 1208283946)

OPINION

Archbishop Skelton’s Pastoral Message Regarding Racism

A few days after the May 25 murder of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man killed by a Minneapolis police officer, the United States and in fact the whole world reacted to this horrific event. On May 30, Archbishop Skelton distributed the following message to the diocese and beyond. • Editor

It is difficult to decide where to start on any communique to all of you related to racism and racist acts today. Whether it’s stories from here in Canada related to aggressive acts toward Canadians of Chinese, Japanese or Filipino heritage, discrimination against a First Nations man just doing his banking, the disturbing increase in anti-Semitism world-wide, or the stark images of African-American men pursued, threatened and murdered in the US—the times we are in continue to remind us that not only is racism not dead, racism seems to have become stronger or perhaps more exposed in the midst of this pandemic.

Due to my upbringing in the American South and what seemed to be its single-minded focus on the black/white race struggle, the Canadian race issues related to Indigenous Peoples and Canadians of Chinese, Japanese and Filipino heritage have been one of the most important learnings during my time in Canada. But racism is not just an American or Canadian issue. Racism is a universal human issue, a universal evil. And, of course, on account of this reality, racism is also a Christian issue.

Racism is a Christian issue because we know that from the beginning our Creator delighted in variety and created a world of astonishing diversity. Racism is a Christian issue because our faith tells us that we are all created in the image of God and as such deserve lives of safety, dignity and possibility. Racism is a Christian issue because “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Racism is a Christian issue because at our baptism we renounced “all powers which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God” and we pledged “to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity



PHOTO G. Guy 44 (iStock ID 1239302207)

of every human being.” And so, beloved in Christ, as I write this on the Eve of Pentecost, the story of a group of people speaking different languages who through the power of the Holy Spirit heard the same stories about the power of God’s love to renew a broken world. We stand here remembering again the long and sad stories of racism suffered by the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the acknowledgment of that racism that still exists. We stand here shaken by the stories of Canadians verbally and physically

attacked by other Canadians, who, assuming that they were from China, held them responsible for the current pandemic. And we stand here holding in our heads the frightening and de-humanizing image from the US of a white police officer kneeling on the neck of an African-American man and the images of the violent protests in many cities. We stand here with all these things. And my prayer is that we also stand here with a new resolve. We must, we must, strengthen our commitment to working on the racism that we

ourselves carry within us—for no one is exempt from racist beliefs, tendencies and actions. And we must, we must, wherever possible, stand up for and stand with our siblings in Christ who look different from us, who sound different from us, who practise different cultures from the cultures we grew up with and who suffer in ways that we must always be open, with humility, to learn more about. God will be our helper in this work. God will be our companion in this work. ✚

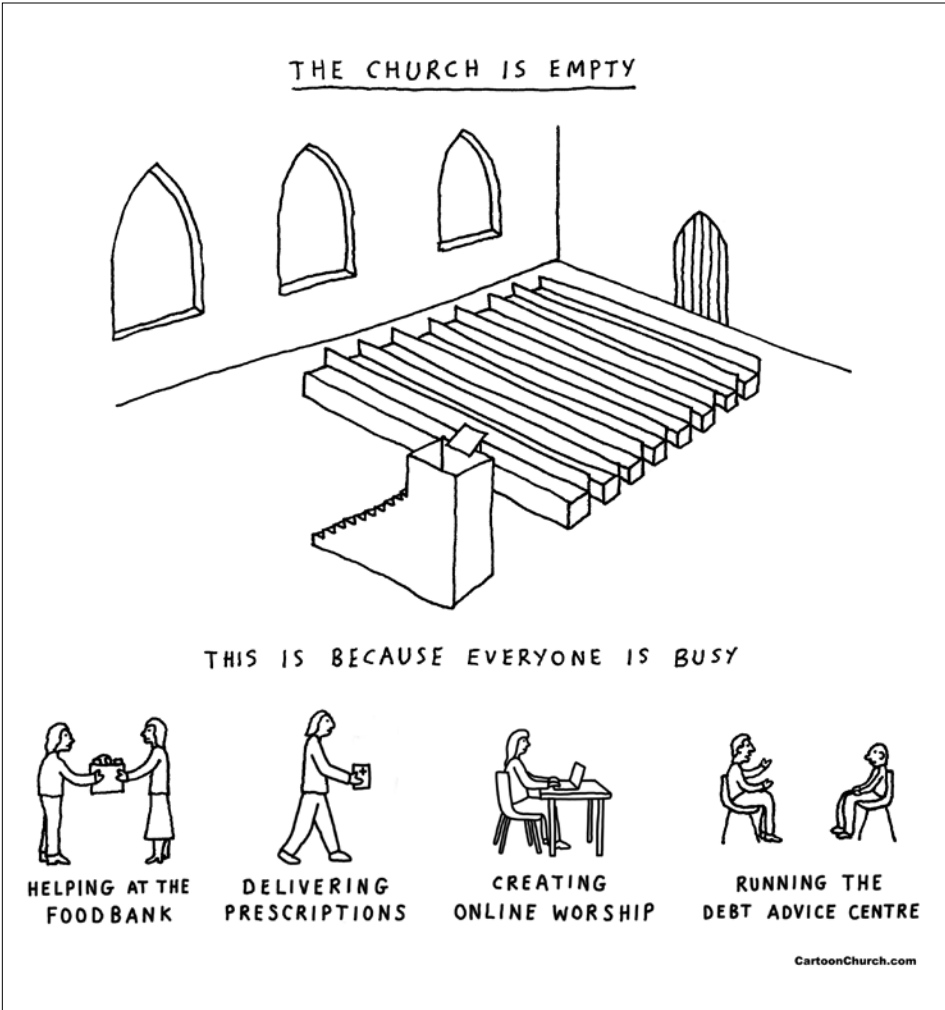
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ADELA TORCHIA
Victoria, BC

In the June (summer) edition of *Topic* I was delighted to read Charlie Demers’ insightful piece called *God Didn’t Send COVID-19*. And yet it’s not wrong, as he says, to turn to God to make sense of things. Demers cautions us not to waste this opportunity for reflection and change: “...it would be worse to come through a crucible like this unchanged, having learned nothing.” He speaks of our “global society which has made an idol of the profit motive” and how that contributed to our COVID-19 vulnerability.

It was also good to learn from him about Karen Armstrong’s intriguing non-literal reframing of the Exodus story, with the possibility that instead of the 40 year geographical journey, it may have been “one socioeconomic class’ relatively short distance exit from exploitation” perhaps simply forming “a loose confederation of hilltop peasant communities.” Changing how we view a long familiar narrative can help expand our perceptions so that “as we consider the present plague besetting our Egypt, we can imagine an escape to the Promised Land... as an insistence upon doing things differently.” And he ends by pointing out that this Exodus has already started in all the extra caring and sharing inspired by the virus. “It means that we begin to see selfishness clearly again; not as the engine of innovation, but as a tyranny.”

Demers’ smooth interweaving of cutting-edge theology with socioeconomic and personal development themes—is an inspiring response to COVID-19 reminding us that crisis and opportunity are two sides of the same coin. ✚



First Notions

NII K'AN KWSDINS
Missioner for Indigenous Justice Ministries

Moving Away From Racism

The subject of racism has been in the news a lot lately. In the training video, *The Spirit Has No Colour*, made to sensitize the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) around Aboriginal issues, Leonard George from the Burrard band, pointed out that Indigenous people have always heard they were bad. This is how Indigenous people felt growing up. Many today still feel that they are no good.

The normalization of a “bad” Indian was just a part of the language and behaviour toward our Indigenous people. We, as Indigenous people, accepted that image of ourselves. When you are constantly reminded that you are just an indian and going nowhere, you start believing that is who you are as a person.

That kind of racism still persists to varying degrees and also in varying degrees in different places. It is not the blatant open racism that makes the news, but the kind that is part of everyday life. In the early years of my life I was called “chief” or “injun” and other words. No one, either non-native or native, thought to speak up about that. It was just the way people talked. When I was in high school, my principal said that I would never make anything of my life.

That residue of the way we spoke about Indigenous people in our day, remains in our lives. It is only recently that it has become the topic of conversation. Now our people finally feel that they have the power to speak up and change the way that we are seen. We are asking to be seen as equals, rather than as inferiors, or for example, as mascots when it comes to sports team names.

We are slowly freeing ourselves, and the next generations, from the negative ways we had learned through repetition and outside actions of how we see ourselves. I have heard many Indigenous young people say that it is time to move on from talking about the injustices of the past, and to focus on creating a different future. They are finding their strengths.

The values held by Indigenous peoples are now being recognized and this will lead the way into the future. In my grandparents’ day, and in my early days, we could not protect our forests, our fishing, and our lands from being stripped for their commercial value. Today we can take the lead in protecting what is left rather than giving it over to government and the business community. And people and churches are standing with us.

There is still a long way to go but there are many signs of progress. We saw the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, our National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, our own Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon, and the Bishops of the Yukon and BC speak out against inequality.¹

Another hopeful sign is that the Chief of



LEFT Chief of Police Adam Palmer speaking at a luncheon on February 23, 2018 honouring Nii K'an Kwsdins. PHOTO Randy Murray RIGHT Erasing Racism. IMAGE iStock (ID 1206840197 VPD)



LEFT Chief Palmer and Nii K'an Kwsdins at lunch. RIGHT Nii K'an Kwsdins displays the award he was given by the VPD for his lifetime of service to his community helping Indigenous youth and young adults in Vancouver. PHOTO Randy Murray

the Vancouver Police Department has put together a new committee of Indigenous people to learn how they can serve our people better.

We are grateful for all the new opportunities for communication so that our people

can share who we really are. We hope that racism will become a thing of the past, and that instead of being seen as inferior we can be seen as people with cultural value and values that will help create a healthier world for us all. ✦

¹ <https://www.anglican.ca/news/statement-on-conflict-on-wetsuweten-unceded-territory/30025668/>



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