

SEPTEMBER 2025

FAITH TIDES



Bishop's Column: The empires
of the world and the Kingdom
of God

Shane Parker elected 15th
primate of the Anglican
Church of Canada

New regular column: Ripples
of change across the diocese

The empires of the world and the kingdom of God



Photo by [Mauricio Artieda](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By Anna Greenwood-Lee

Since the escape from slavery in Egypt and being called to be covenant people in the promised land, our story has always been intertwined with the story of empire.

At the course Christine Conkin and I taught at Sorrento Centre this summer, which we will be revisiting at the upcoming [Women's Retreat](#), we traced the progression, through the Biblical texts, from living in the Egyptian Empire, to becoming the people of Israel, to being occupied, ruled and conquered by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans.

No sooner is Jesus born than the Roman Empire is so threatened by his birth that an edict to kill all male children under two is issued. His followers soon

recognise that he, not Caesar, is the son of God and they are drawn, as an occupied people, to the kingdom of God. For, unlike the empire, it is a kingdom where all are loved, all are fed, all are treated with dignity and respect. The Kingdom of God is such a threat to the empire that Christ is arrested, tortured and crucified.

The early centuries of Christian history have many martyrs, as the early Christians were considered traitors to the empire. However, with time the empire started to see the efficacy of the Christians and, in much of the Western world, Christianity became the empire. Empires will always and everywhere co-opt land, peoples and religions to bulk up their power and influence. Religions and people will always and everywhere be tempted by the trappings of empire. Proximity to power, prestige and influence is always tantalizing.

Fast forward to the mid-point of the turbulent 2020s and we are once again in the midst of empire and emperors. The empires that we are most aware of right now are the empire that Trump is desperately trying to dominate, and the empire that Netanyahu is desperately trying to expand.

Both men are behaving like ruthless and violent emperors. Both face significant opposition from their own peoples. Both have religious leaders in their own countries who support them. Both have religious leaders in their own countries who oppose them.

As part of the course at Sorrento, we watched the documentary *God & Country* (which you can rent on AppleTV for a few dollars) that highlights Christian nationalism in the United States and especially its role in the January 6 attack on the Capitol and the rise of Trump.

Christian nationalism is the belief that a country, and sometimes its leaders, is ordained by God and can defend its actions and power by calling on God's favor and the country's preferred place in salvation history. As eight bishops and six theologians said in a 2024 publication of The Episcopal Church *The Crisis of Christian Nationalism*, Christian nationalism is idolatrous and "consists of assumptions about white supremacy, Anglo-Saxon nativism, patriarchy and militarism."

In the face of all of this, Richard Rohr's recent publication *The Tears of Things: Prophetic Wisdom for an Age of Outrage* is a timely and helpful read. Rohr reintroduces us to the ancient prophets (the same ones we've been hearing from all summer in church) and reminds us: "Besides being truth-tellers, they were radical change agents, messengers of divine revelation, teachers of a moral alternative and deconstructors of every prevailing order." He talks about how "they introduced a completely novel role into ancient religion: an officially licensed critic, a devil's advocate who names and exposes their own group's shadow side!"

As people of God, we are at a stage in history when we must listen, once again, to the cries and tears of the prophets. We must be willing to see our own religion's, our own group's, shadow side.

As someone who lives in Victoria, British Columbia, and who leads an organisation that is only at the very beginning of repenting for our role in the colonialism of these islands and inlets, it would be foolish of me to point at other empires without also looking at the one I am complicit with and benefit from.

To that end, I would point you to a prophet of our own

time and place, Canadian journalist Omar El Akkad. His book *One Day, Everyone Will have Been Against This* is a must read. El Akkad reminds us of a repeating pattern in history. Whether it be residential schools in Canada or the current invasion of Gaza, one day, after the powerful have finished benefitting from their colonial aggressions, those same powerful people will posture and decry past injustices.

As we begin another church year, Diocese of Islands and Inlets, may we pay attention both to the empires of our day, but foremost, to the voice of God in our day, to the cry of the prophets in our day. May we remember that our loyalty is never to the empires and emperors of the day but always and everywhere to the Kingdom of God and the true son of God, Jesus the Christ.

Ripples of change in the diocese

By Faith Tides

Following the great response to the call for stories for the [Signs of new life in the diocese](#) piece that appeared in the May 2025 issue of Faith Tides, we have decided to make this a regular feature. The column will now be called Ripples and we will be sending out an email to all churches at the start of the month to gather stories. The intention is to provide a space where churches and their communities can share short stories that might not merit a full article – they can even be as short as a single photograph. In this way we can share how our churches

are sending small ripples of change out into their communities and beyond.

The River Playgroup at St Barnabas, Victoria



Photo credit: St Barnabas Church, Victoria.

New life begins in small, tender ways — a child's laughter, the warmth of shared tea, hands busy with craft and song. At The River, our community gatherings nurture growth, creativity and connection.

The River Playgroup meets every Wednesday morning from September until June. We offer all-natural toys, imaginative play, circle-time and gentle spiritual care for parents and tots. Entrance by donation.

The River at Home is a cozy seasonal program for ages 5–12. Through stories, crafts, nature walks and cooking, children explore the rhythms of the year. Four-week sessions, \$80.

The River Harp is our newest offering — a Waldorf-inspired music program for ages 0–5, where little ones discover joy through harp, song and rhythm. \$48 per four-week session or \$15 drop-in.

Come be part of something simple and beautiful. All are welcome. For more information, visit [The River](#)

[Playgroup pages on the St Barnabas website.](#)

Quilts for care homes



Photo credit: St Peter's, Campbell River.

Thanks to the kind-hearted quilters at St Peter's, Campbell River, residents in local care homes will receive a beautifully crafted handmade quilt. Dedicated volunteers generously offer their time and skills to create quilts infused with love and warmth in every stitch. When a family loses a loved one, they can take the quilt home as a cherished keepsake. Each quilt serves as a heartfelt gift, providing invaluable comfort to the residents.

Get out of the church...

...and worship in the garden instead!



St Peter's, Comox has made the most of their outdoor

worship space this spring, with parts of the Easter Vigil, the Easter sunrise service and the Low Sunday Earth Day service all taking place in God's creation, with birds and beasts adding to the sounds of praise echoing through the grounds.

Pies raise funds for the community

By Sue Smith,



Photo courtesy of Sue Smith.

Rector's Warden

At St Mark's, Qualicum Beach, a sale featuring our famous "Holy Roller" pies as well as used clothing, jewellery and shoes took place in late July. Funds of over \$2000 were raised to support parish outreach programs — the Oceanside Hospice Society and Trillium Lodge. In addition, summer clothing was donated to the Manna Homeless Society and Salvation Army with warmer clothing put away until the fall. The efforts of all the volunteers ensure that St Mark's continues to support our community.

St Michael's, Chemainus celebrates retiring incumbent

By Jodie Phillips



Patricia and Michael Wimmer cut the retirement party cake at St Michael's, Chemainus. Photo courtesy of Jodie Phillips.

Our beloved Michael Wimmer served the parish successfully and wholeheartedly, for a dedicated 18 years. He retired on June 29, 2025. On June 27, the parish gathered to give Michael and his wife, Pat, an unforgettable retirement party in the hall.

The People's Warden, Sophie Ward, Michael Wimmer, Michael's wife,

Patricia Wimmer, and Rector's Warden, Patricia Sunderland sat at the head table. They were showered with gifts and a poem written by Julia Barton.

There was a very entertaining musical performance, by music director, Christine Dandy (piano), Peter Weinkam (violin) and Trish Weinkam (piano). Presented with their classical talent and comedy!

Eric Partridge retires



By Naomi Racz

This summer Eric Partridge retired from his role as the diocesan executive archdeacon, a role he stepped into at the beginning of 2023. The executive archdeacon is charged with oversight of all the regional archdeacons. Eric also advised and assisted the bishop in the oversight of the diocese, provided clergy with pastoral support, served on committees as the bishop's appointee and assisted in the worship and work of the cathedral.

Prior to being appointed executive archdeacon Eric had served as the incumbent at St Andrew's, Sidney since 2017. In 2022, he was installed as a canon of the cathedral.

Eric grew up in Baltimore, where he was involved in The Episcopal Church and felt called to be ordained. Eric resisted this call for years and instead worked as a teacher, a lawyer, a small business owner and a government bureaucrat. None of these careers felt quite

right, but over the years he had distanced himself from the church.

It was a Remembrance Day service at St Matthias in Victoria that prompted Eric to heed God's call to ordination. Eric eventually completed a doctorate in ministry at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon. For his doctoral research Eric looked at how a daily practice of gratitude could help combat loneliness.

The synod office will be hosting a farewell party for Eric on Wednesday, Sept. 3, at 3 p.m. to which all are invited. There will be drinks and snacks.

Cathedral connects young people to music education



Young choristers at St Andrew's, Sidney. Image courtesy of Christ Church Cathedral.

By Donald Hunt

Cathedrals have music in their DNA, and as Anglicans, we hold firmly that making beautiful things (including beautiful sounds) is a worthwhile mission. For centuries, Anglican cathedrals have been centres of immersive music education, and the product of that education has, in turn, been a means of engaging with the wider world.

Here at Christ Church Cathedral, we have a vision of being “an Anglican centre for spirituality, learning, culture, heritage and community” not only for our city, but for Vancouver Island and all of the islands and inlets that encompass our wider diocese.

How does this play out in our music ministry, and in particular, our music educational programming for young people?

Cathedral's new youth choir gets high schoolers singing

In the fall of 2024, a small group of former young choristers and other high school singers from the cathedral community began rehearsing with the cathedral's assistant director of music, Mark McDonald. This new youth choir for high school-aged students is proving to be a way to engage students with cathedral life while they work on honing their skills as musicians.

On Wednesday, June 4, the youth choir sang their first evensong service on their own. The future is bright for the next generation of choral singers!

Two informal performances by visiting high school choirs

On April 29, Grant High School (Portland, Oregon) sang a stunning concert for our Cathedral School

students as part of their Canadian tour. A few weeks later, choirs from École Harrison (Brandon, Manitoba) enjoyed marveling at the cathedral's architectural beauty, hearing the organ and singing in our generous acoustics. The Manitoba choir stayed and observed a cathedral choir rehearsal and were told a bit about the music programs and services here.

Kaleid Youth Choir gala concert



Over 400 choral singers from ten youth choirs across BC (including three local high school choirs from Oak Bay, Reynolds and Belmont) gathered in the cathedral on the first Saturday in May for Kaleid Choral Festival's Hope Lingers Here gala concert. They were treated to a demonstration of the organ by Mark McDonald, and I was asked to conduct a massed choir piece by Cree/Anglican composer Andrew Balfour.

Young chorister evensong at St Andrew's Church, Sidney

On May 10, our own young choristers sang a special choral evensong service for the parishioners of St Andrew's, Sidney. Last year, they did the same thing for the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island. This is one way the cathedral engages Anglicans beyond the cathedral parish.

Evensong with the Seattle Children's Chorus

On May 25, the Seattle Children's Chorus joined the cathedral schola for evensong, singing their own arrangement of John Rutter's *The Lord bless you and keep you* and a fantastic arrangement of *All creatures of our God and king* by Seattle composer David Hendrix. Could this experience inspire any of these students to one day enroll at the University of Victoria or the Victoria Conservatory of Music, and seek out musical opportunities at the cathedral?

Young chorister installations

On Sunday, June 1, we installed three new young choristers. This is the ministry for which I am most proud. These young musicians rehearse four mornings a week and sing evensong every Wednesday during the school term. They are formed by the reciting of psalms, the singing of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis, through teamwork, striving for excellence and the joy of choral singing. During their time in the choir, they become part of the very fabric of the cathedral church.

And more...

In addition to all this, we also welcomed several elementary and high school classes for cathedral tours. The tours were led by Jonathan Thomas, dean of the cathedral, organ scholar Amiel Elfert and Mark McDonald, and covered everything from church history and architecture to spirituality and music.

And if all that doesn't seem like enough, the cathedral bells were pealing more regularly over the Victoria Day long weekend because of a visiting bellringers' weekend, brought together by the cathedral's

wonderful change ringers. In fact, this is another growing area of connection with our Cathedral School, as a new program is underway for young bell ringers.

We live in a society where music education is undervalued and constantly under threat. We live in a region recently labelled "the most secular diocese in North America." We also live in a world where loneliness has become an epidemic. Why? Social media, an individualistic society and a lack of spiritual life are just some of the reasons.

I am proud to be an Anglican because we measure the value of music making for the beauty it brings into the world and not for the money it makes. I am proud to lead the music at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria because every time a new person comes through the doors to make music, it feels like a win. I am proud of the choral programs we offer because they provide purpose, meaning and connection, all while forming young people in the ancient practices and texts of our faith tradition.

Photo gallery: summer events across the diocese



By Faith Tides

Faith Tides may have been on its summer break, but there have been a number of events across the diocese since the June 2025 issue went to press. Here's a photo gallery to catch up on all that's been happening.

Confirmations at the cathedral

Diocesan-wide confirmations took place on May 4 at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria. There were 27 people confirmed from across the diocese during the service.



May 4 confirmands in Christ Church Cathedral. Credit: J. Abram Photography

Ordination of Rebecca Yeo and Mona Smart

On June 8, Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee ordained Rebecca Yeo and Mona Smart to the sacred order of priesthood.



Induction of Juli Mallet

On June 15, Juli Mallet was inducted as the incumbent in the Parish of Salt Spring Island.



Pride 2025

A number of synod and diocesan staff members took part on the 2025 Pride parade in Victoria on July 6.

Diocese launches online learning series for parishes

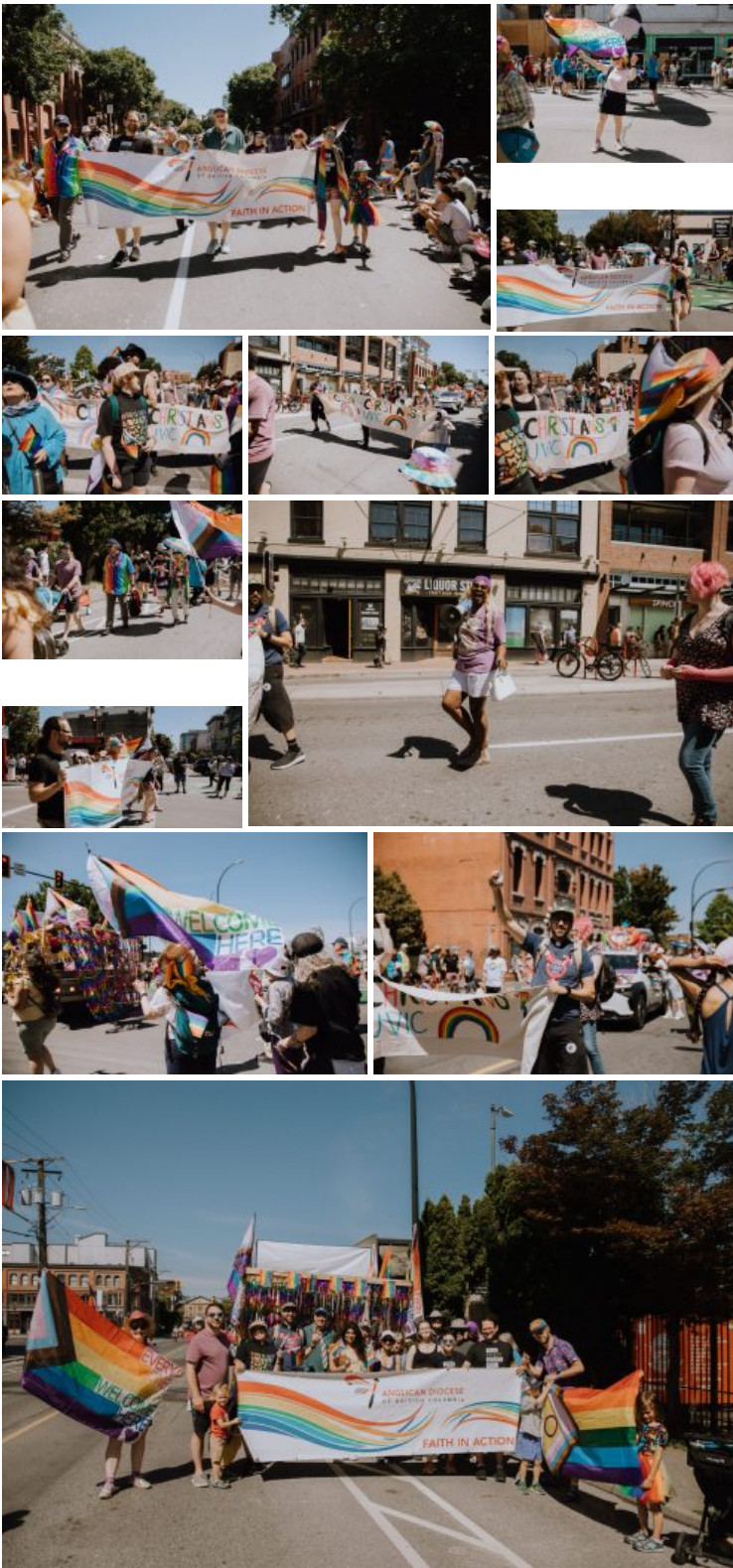


Photo by [Unseen Studio](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By Faith Tides

The Parish Learning Hub is a new, annual, online learning series provided by the synod office. The topics for this year's series were based primarily on requests made by parish administrators. Everyone is welcome to attend these free sessions, regardless of their role within the parish or whether they are a volunteer or employee.

Sessions will take place on Zoom, on the last Tuesday of the month (with the exception of the first session). Each session will be 45 minutes long with 15 minutes for Q&A.

To attend this year's series (individual sessions of interest may be selected), please [complete the registration form](#).

Below is an outline of the sessions. If you have suggestions for topics for next year's series, please [complete the request form](#).

Everything Microsoft Office 365

Date: Sep 29, 2025

Instructor: Anna van der Hooft

Are you a parish administrator or a volunteer stepping into the parish administrator role? Perhaps you are the incumbent of a small parish where there is no parish administrator? This presentation is designed to teach the basics of Microsoft Office 365 from the ground up. Topics covered will include multifactor authenticators, creating and archiving emails, the information security policy, updating contacts and updating passwords.

Canva, Word and Excel

Date: Oct 28, 2025

Instructor: Shantal Hetlinger

Canva is a design tool that assists with the creation of PR materials for websites, posters, social media and much more. Shantal will provide an interactive introduction to the graphic design platform as well as teaching the basics of Microsoft Word and Excel formatting.

Finance Q & A

Date: Nov 25, 2025

Instructor: Meghan Thonger

Basic bookkeeping at the parish level is sometimes managed by a professional bookkeeper but often it is looked after by a volunteer. Sometimes this job falls under the job description of the parish administrator.

Meghan will provide a brief overview of the program QuickBooks and the dos and don'ts of basic bookkeeping at the parish level.

Using SharePoint

Date: Jan 27, 2026

Instructor: Anna van der Hooft

SharePoint is a Microsoft application allowing organizations to store and safely share content and information. This can include documents, photos, videos and financial information, to name a few. Anna will provide a tour of SharePoint and discuss the file storage methods being used at the parish level. This conversation will also cover how to move information over to SharePoint.

Safe Church & Youth Programs

Date: Feb 24, 2026

Instructor: Karen Hill

Our Safe Church and youth programs are an important part of our parishes, providing safe spaces but also providing proof to our insurance provider that we are doing our due diligence. If you are a parish administrator, safe church liaison or another volunteer or employee who supports these types of programs, this episode of the Parish Learning Hub series is for you.

Connecting Apps & Cyber Security

Date: March 31, 2026

Instructor: Anna van der Hooft & Dwayne Robinson

An in-depth session on how to connect your iPhone, android phone, laptop (Windows or Mac) and

desktops to various apps. This session will also review the basics of cyber security and what to do if you suspect hacking. Special guest Dwayne Robinson will join us from The Private Network. Dwayne has an extensive background in cyber security and will be there to share his perspective and answer any questions.

Cemeteries and Insurance

Date: April 28, 2026

Instructor: Mark Oldnall & Zena McCreary

Mark and Zena bring you the basics of cemeteries and insurance for volunteers or parish administrators. Topics covered will include licensing, what to report and the most common mistakes they both see in their line of work.

Website Management & Copyright

Date: May 26, 2026

Instructor: Anna van der Hooft

Do you manage a parish website, Facebook or Instagram, or support livestreaming services? Then this session is for you! Anna will go over copyright for both music and photos, the basics of the Tithe.ly website template and common problems she sees and supports parishes with.

Shane Parker elected 15th primate of the Anglican Church of Canada



Archbishop Shane Parker, the 15th primate of the Anglican Church of Canada © Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

By Naomi Racz

The election of a new primate took centre stage at General Synod 2025, held in London, Ontario on June 23-29.

Back in April, the order of bishops selected four candidates for the office of primate: Christopher Harper, Greg Kerr-Wilson, David Lehmann and Riscylla Shaw.

The election was held on June 26, in St Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario. The day began with an opening worship, to mark the fact that the election is a

process of spiritual discernment.



Bishop Susan Johnson © Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

During the opening worship Susan Johnson, who retired from her role as national bishop of the Evangelic Lutheran Church in Canada this year, delivered a short sermon, offering words of encouragement to the primatial candidates and the clergy and laity who would be voting that day.

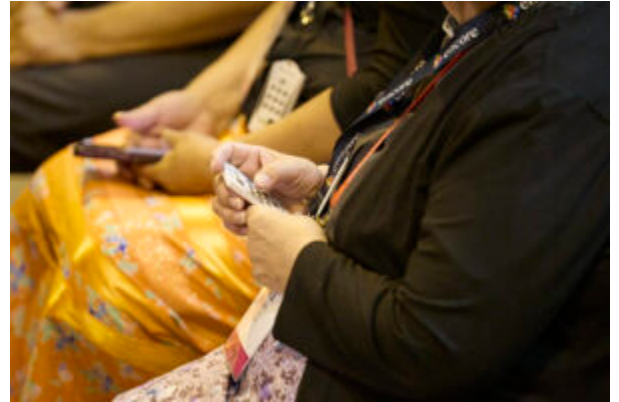
“The Holy Spirit is here to do her job,” said Susan. “To give you guidance and wisdom and confidence and courage to face this day.... It’s time for us to soar on wings of eagles and to remember that in the end this is God’s church. It’s God’s church and all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well.”

After the eucharist, the bishops left the cathedral to sequester themselves away in a hotel across the road where they would be watching a livestream of the election.

Ian Alexander, who is a parishioner in our diocese and has served as prolocutor of the Anglican Church of Canada since his election to the role in 2023, then promptly began proceedings. Ian explained how the election would work.

The orders of clergy and laity were seated on separate sides of the cathedral and their votes would be counted separately. To be elected primate, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes in both orders. Under canon law abstaining from voting is not allowed. There were still several abstentions throughout the election process, but in those cases, there were not enough abstentions to change the outcome of the ballots.

Ian



Delegates voted using electronic clickers © Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

explained that after the second ballot, any candidate who receives less than 10% of the total votes is removed from the ballot. If every candidate receives at least 10% of the total votes, the candidate with the lowest combined vote in both orders is removed. After the second ballot, either order can bring forward a motion to request that the order of bishops nominate more candidates.

After the second ballot, David Lehmann was removed from the ballot and the order of laity put forward a motion to request further candidates from the order of bishops.

[According to an article in the Anglican Journal](#), the mover of this motion was youth delegate Rebecca

Michael, who “was concerned two of the candidates whom she saw as the more progressive choices among the original slate might split the vote between them, resulting in another of the candidates, whom she saw as more conservative, taking the lead.”

The motion was successful, and the order of bishops nominated a new candidate: Shane Parker of the Diocese of Ottawa.

After the third ballot, Christopher Harper had the lowest combined vote share and removed himself from the ballot. In the fourth ballot, Shane Parker narrowly missed being elected when he received 52% of the votes in the order of clergy, and 52 out of a possible 104 votes in the order of laity — just 1 vote short of the required minimum of 50% plus one vote needed to push him over the finish line. Gregory Kerr-Wilson received the lowest combined percentage of votes and asked to have his name removed from the ballot.

Christopher Samson, a member of the order of clergy, then put forward another motion for more candidates. He told Synod this was because he and other clergy members felt “in good conscience we can’t vote for either of the remaining candidates” though he didn’t state why.

That motion failed, leaving just Riscylla Shaw and Shane Parker on the fifth ballot. Shane Parker was then elected with 65% of the votes in both the order of clergy and laity. The bishop’s bell, which is only rung upon the election of a Bishop of Huron, was ringing during the announcement of Shane’s election.

Shane Parker then led the bishops back into the cathedral to a round of applause. Ian Alexander presented Archbishop Shane with a wooden cross and

the then primate-elect was reminded of his baptism with water collected from every diocese, including our own.

Offering a few words, Archbishop Shane told of how, as a child, he had played in the insulation that was waiting to be installed in the attic of St Mary Magdalene in Fort Nelson. Using this as a metaphor, he spoke of how “insulation can be helpful, and insulation can insulate us. It can insulate us from God. We can be insulated from one another. We can even be insulated from our truest selves.

“Our church at this time needs to remove a lot of insulation. We need to feel the cold and the heat, and the wind and the fire. We need to understand our context without the insulation that has built up over so many years: insulation between us and the world around us, between us within our church, between us as human beings.

“The next three years will be a time of removing insulation so we can feel the Holy Spirit, so that we can feel and hear one another and so that we can have the courage to create the church that we must be at this point in time.”



A packed St Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, during Archbishop Shane Parker's installation as the

15th primate of the Anglican church of Canada ©
Brian Bukowski/General Synod of the Anglican
Church of Canada.

Archbishop Shane will turn 70 in May of 2028, raising concerns that there would then be a short period with an acting primate before the next General Synod. However, chancellor Clare Burns clarified that General Synod 2028 could be held before the primate's birthday.

Prior to his election as primate, Shane Parker was the bishop of the Diocese of Ottawa. Indeed, Shane has spent his entire ministerial and episcopal career to date in that diocese. [His biography](#) mentions his commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and his close ties with the Diocese of Jerusalem.

During his time as bishop of Ottawa, Archbishop Shane led significant change in the culture, structure and operations of the Diocese of Ottawa, and it looks as though he will be applying this experience to his role as primate. In his statement of his vision of the role of primate, Archbishop Shane writes that there is an urgent need for major changes in the national structure, operations and culture of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Archbishop Shane's installation took place on June 29 at St Paul's Cathedral, closing out the week-long General Synod. The *Anglican Journal* has published [an article about the service](#), and [a recording is also available to watch](#). A [video recording of the election](#) is also available.

Dioceses in BC join Alongside Hope's Wild Ride to light the way to safe births



Pictured are (left) Freitas from Alongside Hope partner EHALE and Ancha Amido Abdala (centre), a midwife at Muripotana Health Centre in Nampula, Mozambique, with her colleague. Image courtesy of Alongside Hope.

By Jacqueline Tingle

Alongside Hope's 2025 Wild Ride aims to raise funds to equip eight off-the-grid rural health clinics with life-saving renewable energy. Thanks to a generous donor, all gifts this year will be matched, doubling the impact.

At Muripotana Health Centre in Nampula, midwife Ancha Amido Abdala used to begin every night shift in

darkness, with no lights, no power and no possibility of admitting patients after dark. In 2022 that changed, when Alongside Hope and partner EHALE installed a solar suitcase — a bright yellow, wall-mounted box powered by solar panels. Inside, it holds LED lights, a fetal Doppler, headlamps, phone chargers and a thermometer. The suitcases are made by We Care Solar.

Abdala says it made an immediate difference. “There was no way to handle medical materials in the dark,” she recalls. After lighting went live, women began coming to the clinic at night; births increased, and transparency improved because the patients’ companions could follow procedures clearly.

“I gave birth at night,” said one new mother. “I felt very happy because I could see what the nurse was doing.” In districts with installations, night-time births rose by about 17 percent, and more than 80,000 babies have been safely delivered since 2016, thanks to the installation of 80 solar suitcases across the province.

This year, Alongside Hope’s Wild Ride aims to raise \$52,000 — enough for eight suitcases — and dioceses across BC are out in force to support the fundraising efforts.

In the Diocese of Kootenay, Bishop Lynne McNaughton, who is a veteran cyclist of the Wild Ride is ditching her bike this year in favour of walking 200 kilometres. “I walk a fast two kilometres up into the orchards near my house, a steep climb up onto the ‘bench’ where I can see a stunning view of Okanagan Lake. One Saturday at the end of the summer I’m inviting people to join me for a five or 10 kilometre walk in a forest park in Kelowna.”

Bishop Lynne was inspired to get involved when seeing the solar suitcase demonstration at General Synod. “The suitcases are a brilliant design, portable and practical. They meet such a crucial need. I love walking and walk anyway so why not make that walk count for joining God in God’s work of mending the world.”

At St Timothy’s in 100 Mile House, BC, Shelby Byer and other parishioners will be walking 100 miles. And Joy Gothard is spearheading the Kamloops WaySeekers of St Paul’s Cathedral as she rides her e-bike from Kamloop to St Peter’s in Monte Creek five times (200 km). She also plans to host a walk in the alpine meadows of Sun Peaks.

The people of St Timothy’s and St Paul’s, both located in the Territory of the People, are following in the footsteps of their bishop, Clara Plamondon, who will be making 50 prayer flags.

“I love the idea of creating a visual symbol of our prayer for the people and communities that will be supported and helped through this initiative,” says Bishop Clara. “I will be making the prayer flags from various fabrics and colours with a focus on Mozambique and Madagascar. As I create the flags, I will be taking time to learn about these two countries, their culture and ways. I will be praying specifically for those who will benefit from the gift of these solar suitcases.”

The Wild Ride is part of a larger initiative to provide 35 solar suitcases in Mozambique and 14 solar suitcases in Madagascar. The Coming Alongside Hope with Light project has a total budget of \$320,000. All donations will be matched, up to \$150,000, so \$170,000 needs to be raised to ensure all 49 suitcases are installed.

How to Help

It's not too late to join the Wild Ride and help provide clinics with renewable energy in Mozambique and Madagascar. The Wild Ride continues until the end of October, and anyone can take part, as part of a group or as an individual. Walk, cycle, knit, bake, paddle, pray, sing — choose any activity you enjoy.

Register today at alongsidehope.org/wild-ride. And if you have any questions or need help, contact volunteer coordinator Kim Umbach at kumbach@alongsidehope.org

And if you can't join the Wild Ride this year, you can still help provide solar energy in Mozambique and Madagascar. Give at alongsidehope.org/wild-ride.

Three religious traditions dear to me all share a common insight: within each of us there is a twoness, an ordinary or conventional self and an ultimate Self. Those three traditions are Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. Christians don't ordinarily talk about two selves—the expression is not native to Christian vocabulary — but we share an analogous insight.

The ordinary self is the small, everyday self we identify with — the one with a name, habits, fears, worries, addictions, loves and cares. This is the self that goes by the name “John.” But Hindus and Buddhists insist that this is not the only self. This is only the conventional self. The ultimate Self is our true and deepest nature. For Hindus, this Self is divine. It is ultimate reality called Atman or Brahman. It is infinite, inexhaustible and marked by radiant and infinite compassion.

Buddhists worry about “self” discourse and prefer to talk about no-self. But they, too, hold that we are not just our little imperiled and anxious selves. At the heart of Buddhist wisdom is the truth of interrelatedness. To be is to be related. Or as Thich Nhat Hanh put it, none of us exist; we only interexist. We are interbeing. From this perspective, we are not discrete selves but one node within the entire web of existence. When we wake to this reality, we become manifestations of infinite and unconditioned compassion, which is our true nature. Compassion is the only true way to live when I see that I am not “I” apart from “you.”

Is there a Christian way to speak of our conventional selves and an ultimate Self? Absolutely! This theme is repeatedly sounded by St Paul, who invites us to die to self to live in Christ. As St Paul puts it, “For I through the law died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...” (Gal 2: 19-20).

The ordinary self and the divine Self



Photo by [Nigel Tadyanehondo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By John J. Thatamanil

Learning from Hindu and Buddhist wisdom

Passages such as this are beloved by Christian mystics who walk the journey of dying to their ordinary selves so that the mind of Christ can become realized in them. No longer just John that lives, but Christ who lives in me — what a holy yearning, to be so transformed and claimed by the spirit of Christ that I become Christ!

I confess that most days I am so preoccupied with John's problems, anxieties and insecurities that the idea that Christ can dwell so richly in me that I become Christ's love incarnate in the world seems fictive. Really, *me*? I can not only love *like* Christ, but I can also *become* Christ? "Whatcha talkin' bout, St. Paul? Do you know what a hot mess I am, Paul, buddy?" Of course, Paul would counter that if he, a persecutor of Christians — by all accounts a hot mess himself — can become Christ, you and I can too. That is the experiential ground of the good news he proclaims; he knows what Christ has done and is doing in him, yes, even him!

As I read the daunting news that comes at us daily, news of capricious cruelty from high places, trying to confront or even witness what we are up against is daunting. Me? I am called to face and fight such evils in Christ's name for the sake of the beloved community he brings into the world? Wow, that's like bringing a peashooter to battle against guided missiles.

St Paul's message and Buddhist and Hindu wisdom insist that we are never just our puny selves. We are never alone, and we are always more than we think we are. But they also insist that this insight cannot remain a mere notion in our noggins. We need practice! We need silence, meditation and contemplative prayer. When you sit in silence and meditate, you come into exquisite and even agonizing awareness of the contrast

between your personal pettiness and the grand claims that these traditions insist upon: "your deepest and truest nature is infinite and unconfined compassion — yes, you John, you!" In Christian language, you are fallen and finite, and yet you are also, without question, made in the image and likeness of God, and that very likeness can be recovered in you!

Our Hindu and Buddhist neighbours insist that our beliefs cannot save us. Practices don't save either, but they are indispensable means to opening to what the infinite is always already working in us. Practice is the doorway between our everyday selves and the divine Self we are called to be and become. In the power of this divine Self, we are more than conquerors in the love of the one who loves us.

'I felt God tapping on my shoulder'

By Norman Knowles



Norman Knowles

In this edition of My Journey we meet Norman Knowles, who joined our diocese in July as the incumbent of St. John's in Duncan and St. Michael's in Chemainus.

I grew up in a small, rural village (Ilderton) in southwestern Ontario. My parents were

hardworking people who instilled in me a strong sense of right and wrong but were not church goers. They did, however, like the local Anglican priest, Gerry Johnson, who visited everybody in the community, whether they went to church or not. He would drop in at least once a month. He did not push religion but connected with my parents on a personal level and was always there to provide comfort and support when needed. He remains, for me, a model priest.

When my grandmother expressed concern that none of her grandsons had been baptized, my parents asked what we thought about the idea. After some reflection, at the age of about seven I was baptized one Sunday afternoon in Grace Anglican Church.

By my early teens, I stopped attending church. It was on our annual family vacation, while sitting around a campfire and gazing at the sky in wonder, that I really knew there was a reality greater than myself. For as long as I can remember, I have been able to find God in nature and have always made it a priority to seek it out whenever life gets too busy or challenging.

On a grey November day in my second year at Huron College, I wandered into the college chapel. It was All Saints Day, a service was in progress, and I decided to stay. I immediately felt embraced by the warm surroundings of the chapel, uplifted by the glorious music and taken in by engaging preaching that challenged me to think rather than telling me what to think. When the celebrant elevated the host during the eucharist, the sun came out and shone through the stained glass, forming a rainbow in the cloud of incense that hung over the altar. I knew at once that I had found a spiritual home.

I began to attend a city church (St. John the Evangelist)

with a group of friends from Huron and started confirmation classes. As an introvert, I had a perhaps overly romantic view of the medieval monk hunched over his manuscripts in the library and separated from the world. As it happened, the call to join a religious order conflicted with my deepening relationship with my future wife, Margaret Anne. We married at the end of our undergraduate studies and together we went off to complete master's degrees in history at Queen's University in Kingston, where we became active members of the cathedral parish.

We were at Queen's for only a year, before we left for Toronto where I started a PhD at York University on the Loyalist tradition, and Margaret Anne a master's in museum studies at the University of Toronto. We joined St. Thomas's Church, Huron Street where I served as synod youth delegate, parish archivist, member of the outreach committee and parish lay representative on deanery council.

From time to time, individuals would ask me if I had considered ordination — which I had not. I did, however, join the Education for Ministry group at St Thomas's and threw myself into biblical study and the practice of theological reflection. The experience impressed upon me the importance of equipping lay persons to live out their baptismal ministry and resulted in a 25-year association with EfM as a mentor and trainer.

Following the completion of my doctoral degree, I was awarded fellowships at the University of British Columbia and the University of Calgary. Eventually, I became one of the founding faculty members of St. Mary's University, a small liberal arts college rooted in the charism of the Second Vatican Council. I had always dreamed of being a faculty member at a small,

student focused institution committed to social justice and the reconciliation of faith and reason.

Wherever we lived, I was active in the church at both the parish and diocesan level. Whenever I felt God tapping on my shoulder and calling me to something more, I tried my best to ignore it. One day, however, the tapping became too persistent, and I decided to test it once and for all. I met with Archbishop Curtis, filled out the necessary documents, wrote the required essays and before I knew it, I was ordained to the diaconate and a few months later the priesthood. I articulated a bi-vocational call as both a scholar and a priest and did not expect to earn a livelihood from full-time ministry.

Following ordination, I joined the clergy team at St. Paul's, Calgary where I happily served for nearly twenty years. I would occasionally be assigned to another parish. One of these, St. Edmund's, was an inner-city parish unable to afford a priest but which nonetheless served its community by running a food and clothing bank. My time there impressed upon me just how much good, committed Christians can accomplish even when resources are limited.

When the incumbent at St. Paul's went on long-term disability in the spring of 2023, I was invited by the parish council to serve full time on an interim basis; I was on a year-long sabbatical from my university position at the time. I found the experience both spiritually and professionally uplifting and began to feel a longing to enter into full-time parish ministry. After several months of discernment, I decided to test my sense of call and began to apply for positions. Much to my surprise, I was invited to interviews and offered placements. And so here I am, blessed to serve the parishes of St. John's, Duncan and St. Michael's,

Chemainus.

First Nations Version of the New Testament 'deepens racial stereotypes'



First Nations Version of the New Testament. Image from InterVarsity Press.

By Martin Brokenleg

In 2021, Terry Wildman, who is of Ojibwe (Ontario, Canada), Yaqui (Sonora, Mexico) and European decent, published a translation of the New Testament that is intended to be "by and for the Indigenous Peoples of North America." The translation, called the First Nations Version, is written in English, but is intended to reflect the idioms, speech patterns and rhythms of Indigenous languages and oral traditions. Wildman was supported in the writing of this translation by a translation council and Indigenous reviewers from different geographic

regions. The First Nations Version of the New Testament has since sold hundreds of thousands of copies and a First Nations Version of the Psalms and Proverbs was published in August 2025.

The First Nations Version is being used increasingly in Anglican churches in Canada. However, not everyone is supportive of the translation. Martin Brokenleg is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and was a professor of Native American studies at Augustana University in South Dakota for 30 years. He also served as professor and director of the Native ministries programme at the Vancouver School of Theology. He is an honorary assistant at Christ Church Cathedral and St Barnabas Church in Victoria. Below Martin shares why he is opposed to the First Nations Version. — Naomi Racz, Editor

I should begin by saying that I have discussed the First Nations Version of the New Testament with fellow Indigenous clergy mostly in the USA, since a full one half of The Episcopal Church's native ministry is in South Dakota where I grew up and have family. I am minimally active in my retirement, mainly preaching at St Barnabas parish in Victoria and very rarely at the cathedral. I have not been a part of Sacred Circle for some time. This is due to my mobility issues and belief that younger people should be active in the Circle.

I was initially enthusiastic about such a version. I have always found Anglicanism to be Christianity in English clothing. That was a reason I explored another venerable tradition and was ordained in the old calendar Greek Orthodox Church for 15 years. I tried to find what in Christianity was not embedded in western culture. There, I found the faith embedded in Greek or Russian culture. I returned home to the Anglican church although it was still very English but

was at least quite familiar. As a long-time professor of Indigenous studies, I can attest to an ever-increasing understanding of the unchangeability of culture. In the 19th century almost all scholars thought culture could be changed. I thought religion could be distinctive from culture but my 15-year exploration proved me wrong.

I find most Canadians in the church are now incredibly supportive of things Indigenous. I think this accounts for the enthusiastic welcoming of this text said to be an Indigenous version. I do not find it so and am more convinced that encouraging its use may deepen unfortunate racial stereotypes. One Indigenous priest who is very active in Indigenous communities, mainly urban, says this is the "Tonto Talk" New Testament. I agree with him.

This text is not published by any known biblical scholars who might enlighten a new translation. Finding the appropriate exegetical base with a Greek text is complicated enough. This version adds another layer of distance by use of names from 19th century literature with Indigenous characters. This requires a reader to learn yet another layer to understand the text.

Further, the diversity of cultural vocabulary in Indigenous communities makes it highly unlikely that more than one language community or one culture group can generate a version that might clarify the text for their readers and listeners. After all, anthropologists find more cultural variability among Indigenous North Americans than anywhere else in the world. This variability leaves a committee, such as the one that worked on this version, using what they believe to be general Indigenous terms that speak to more than one Indigenous group.

It takes only the slightest move to slide into the stereotypes we find in film and elsewhere. We may be familiar with the stereotypes of people with African ancestry perpetuated by Stepin Fetchit and Aunt Jemima. This Indigenous version of the New Testament is dangerously close and may even have crossed the line into that dynamic while supposedly portraying Indigenous culture. For that reason, I am totally opposed to any use of this version. The only factor that would worsen the use of this version is if that decision were not made by a totally Indigenous group of people.

I am content to recognize that the texts we use are Greek and from another culture. I am also content that I belong to a community that is essentially The Church of England. Cultural differences can be managed by Indigenous people. My medicine man grandfather was fluent in five Indigenous languages. Use of this version does not speak to Indigenous people in the church as much as love, caring and justice do.

‘A deeper intimacy with our creator’



Photo by [Erez Attias](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By G. Wayne Short

“In the tiny spaces between breaths and the silence between your thoughts, I have placed a door that leads directly to me.” — Rumi

Oblation.

It’s a strange word out of the writing and records of monastic communities ancient and modern. From this word we have a more familiar one: *oblate*. Oblation means “offering.” In July last year I became an oblate of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) founded by Dom John Main. His vision was to have a monastery without walls upholding Benedictine values of silence, stillness and simplicity, rooted in the gospel.

In my oblation, or offering, I made lifelong promises of obedience, stability and conversion to the work and mission of WCCM. Its mission is to teach, encourage and support the practice of silent meditation as a holistic spiritual practice for all people.

In monastic circles the running jest is that almost anyone can learn to become a good oblate, but priests have the most difficulty. The reasoning has logic because they’ve already been formed in biblical studies and theology and have enjoyed a privileged part of their institutional contexts. It is difficult to make the adjustments necessary to simply be of service, not to direct, or be in charge, or be the learned one, the one the institution grants privileges to because of their ordination.

My process of becoming an oblate lent itself to shedding my priestly identity, aided by moving and

anonymity over these past several years. This stripping away of my priestly status enabled me to be more receptive of my own being, of the presence of the spirit within beholding me and enabling me to experience God in silence and stillness without the need of liturgical words and actions.

While my letting go was reluctant, it was necessary to have a “spirit of poverty,” an interior experience where we are completely naked before God, in that we bring nothing, offer nothing and expect nothing.

It is a condition described in the writings of the desert fathers and mothers and many monastics. In this way of being, we develop a deeper intimacy with our creator. The prayer of pure silence is a shaping influence, one that we are physically unaware of in the practice but bleeds out into all areas of life.

While technically not performing customary priestly roles, I am still a priest, even one with an unused license. I am a priest on my knees cleaning the floor in our soup kitchen, shovelling compost for a friend, preparing old furniture, leading meditation online or walking and praying in nature. Now, as an oblate, I am committed to be of service in the mission and work of WCCM.

If you have questions or would like to know more about Christian meditation, please contact me at mcast709@gmail.com.

How should the church communicate?



Photo by [Megan Lee](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By Naomi Racz

As the editor of a diocesan newspaper, I have taken an interest in the recent discussions around communications and the Anglican Journal at the national level and the reports published by the primate's commission, as well as the recent resolutions at General Synod. I thought I'd offer readers of Faith Tides an overview of these discussions. While I will be keeping an eye on further developments, I don't offer an opinion, one way or another, on how the question in the title of this piece should be answered. But I would be delighted to hear from readers, and you are always welcome to send a letter to the editor to faithtides@bc.anglican.ca.

In 2023, a primatial commission, officially titled Reimagining the Church: Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century, Structures & Resources, was set up to

find solutions to some of the church's challenges. Last summer, the commission released a document with seven "hypotheses" that were intended to be provocative and stimulate creative solutions.

The seventh hypothesis states: "It is time to end independent editorial journalism funded by General Synod." Although it doesn't specify the *Anglican Journal*, the Journal is the only independent journalism funded by General Synod.

Most of the dioceses in the Anglican Church of Canada have their own version of *Faith Tides* (you can see a list of them on the [Anglican Journal website](#)), and these regional newspapers are closely intertwined with the *Anglican Journal* as they are all printed together. The cost of that printing is largely subsidized by a Canadian Heritage grant. An end to a printed *Anglican Journal* would likely spell the end of printed diocesan newspapers.

Faith Tides (then the *Diocesan Post*) reduced the number of print issues it put out in 2021 and moved to an online-only format at the start of 2022. The *Faith Tides* website is hosted on the [Anglican News Canada](#) platform. The *Anglican Journal* and eleven diocesan newspapers now use this platform, with more planning to join, and it is provided by the national office at no cost to the dioceses.

At the time that we made the decision to move to online-only, the national church's director of communications had reported to the 2021 Anglican Editor's Association conference that while the Journal and diocesan newspapers would be in print until at least 2026, declining circulation of the Journal would impact how much money it received from Canadian Heritage.

Another motivation to move our diocesan newspaper online was that the lead-in time needed to print the paper and post it out from Toronto (where the *Anglican Journal* is based) means that the deadline for completing an issue is usually a month in advance of the publication date. The Journal also does not publish a print edition in July or August. So, reporting on a Synod happening between the end of May and the end of August might not appear in the newspaper until the October issue goes to press.

In fact, that very scenario played out recently as the 2025 General Synod took place on June 23-29. To provide timely reporting, the *Anglican Journal* posted news updates on its website. The Journal may have begun life in 1875 as the *Dominion Churchman*, but most readers in 2025 expect news to travel faster than the printing press and postal service can allow. I say *most* because there are readers who do not, for various reasons including geographic location, have the option of accessing an online-only publication.

The debate around the circulation and printing costs of the *Anglican Journal* and the diocesan newspapers has been rumbling on for many years. When the primatial commission released its seven hypotheses, it seemed as though the future of the newspapers might once again be under threat. However, at the March 2025 Council of General Synod meeting, council voted to recommend that the print format and journalistic mandate of the *Anglican Journal* be scrutinized, but that there should be no changes to the format of the Journal for the next three years.

The new members of the Council of General Synod elected at General Synod in June could decide to change this three-year timeline. Assuming that doesn't happen, the *Anglican Journal* and its diocesan sections

would continue to publish in print until at least 2028.

At issue is also the journalistic mandate of the Journal. The Journal is an independent entity that exists to provide journalistic reporting on the Anglican Church of Canada, while also being funded by the Anglican Church of Canada.

At the same Council of General Synod meeting where members voted to maintain the status quo with regards to the Journal's format and mandate, the primate's commission presented six "pathways" for the national church to explore to meet the needs of a smaller membership base.

The fourth pathway, as outlined in the document *Creative Pathways* is about communications and would involve the communications committee and the director of communications (at the national church

level) "examining the current mandate, format and funding model of the communications department." This would include exploring the purpose of the *Anglican Journal* and hearing from Anglicans across the country to gather their perspectives on whether the Journal is valued as a journalistic enterprise or as a communications tool.

The Council of General Synod voted to commend the six pathways to General Synod for discussion and further action. At General Synod in London, Ontario, a resolution to pursue the six pathways passed 199 to 14. The resolution also asks that the primate and Council of General Synod report back to the members of General Synod annually on the steps being taken to implement the pathways. So, Anglican editors across the country will be watching and waiting to see how the church decides to communicate in the future.
