

CONNEXION



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Anglican Parish of Central Saanich

Number 58



St. Mary Church

1973 Cultra Avenue,
Saanichton, BC V8M 1L7



St. Stephen Church

7921 St. Stephen Road,
Saanichton, BC V8M 2C3

March 2026

In this issue:

Dates to Note	2
From the Pastor's Pen	3-4
Annual General Meeting	4-5
Cane's Corner	6-10
Parishioner Profile	11-12
Soap for Hope	13
Recipe Page	14
Kingdoms	15-18
Book Review	18
Who's Who in the Pew	19
Around the Parish	19-23
Parish Directory	24

Check your email or the Parish Website for service updates and changes. As health restrictions relax, please practice protocols that make you feel comfortable.

Worship Services

Sundays

- 9:00 am Holy Eucharist

Wednesdays

- 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
(September-June)

Office: 250-652-1611
Email: admin@parishcs.ca
Web: www.ParishCS.ca

Worship Services

Sundays

- 11:15 am Holy Eucharist

Office: 250-652-4311
Email: admin@parishcs.ca
Web: www.ParishCS.ca

Incumbent: Ven. Dr. Lon Towstego

Associated Clergy: The Ven. Bob Baillie,
The Rev. Dr. Brett Cane
Bishop Logan McMenamie
Rev. Paul Schumacher

Deacon: The Rev. Gil Shoesmith



www.ParishCS.ca

Anglican Parish of Central Saanich
St. Mary Church St. Stephen Church

Dates to Note

Our website, www.ParishCS.ca, is the best place to keep in touch with what is going on

Please check the church website and other electronic sources for updates over the next three months. The following are the events which are planned at this time.

- **Sunday services** at St. Mary at 9:00 am. Sunday services at St. Stephen at 11:15 am. unless otherwise noted below.
 - **Wednesday Eucharist services** at St. Mary at 10:00 am with 'Sermon Circle' Bible Study following at 10:45 am.
 - **Saturday, March 14th:** Wardens, Treasurers and Cemetery Managers Day at St. Peter, Lake Hill from 9:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 - **Saturday, March 21st:** Men's Breakfast at St. Stephen at 9:00 a.m. The guest speaker will be Don Wilson.
-

Holy Week and Easter Season Services

- **Monday March 30th:** 4:00 p.m. Evening Prayer Service at St. Stephen.
 - **Tuesday, March 31st:** 4:00 p.m. Evening Prayer Service at St. Mary.
 - **Wednesday, April 1st:** 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service at St. Mary.
 - **Thursday, April 2nd:** 6:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service of Foot Washing, Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar at St. Mary followed by Stripping of the Altar at St. Stephen.
 - **Friday, April 3rd:** 10:00 a.m. Good Friday Stations of the Cross Walk from Centennial Park to St. Mary. For details see the bulletins and website.
 - **April 5th Easter Sunday Services:** 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St. Mary and 11:15 Holy Eucharist at St. Stephen.
-
- **Saturday, May 2nd:** Retirement event for Leslie Pedlow. Time and details to be announced.
 - **Sunday, May 3rd:** Christ Church Cathedral will be the location of a diocesan-wide confirmation service at 4:00 p.m. Contact Rev. Lon for further information.
 - **Saturday, May 23rd:** Spring Fling Sale at St. Mary from 9:30 to Noon.

Prayer Chain Contact

Becky Lowe is the new Prayer Chain Coordinator. Email address: prayers@parishcs.ca

We acknowledge that we gather to worship on the traditional lands of the WSÁNEĆ and Coast Salish peoples

The Parish of Central Saanich gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance provided by the District of Central Saanich by way of its Permissive Property Tax Exemption Program

From the Pastor's Pen

The Ven. Dr. Lon Towstego



The Adventure of Community, a Prayer from Iona

*God who walks with us the adventure of Community,
reminds us of your constant presence.*

When we are full

Gives us strength to bring light to others.

When we are empty

comfort and renew us.

When we need challenge

teach and stretch us

And when we need rest

provide a stopping place on the way.

Fiona Barker,
member of the Iona Community,
with permission

I am honored to serve as your parish priest and walk the journey of faith with each of you and as a community, a family.

Thank you for a productive and helpful Annual General Meeting to guide us. I appreciate all who have put their names forward for new or changing roles.

I give thanks to Bishop Logan for leading us in a Lenten time with Grief and Loss sessions. I see people engaging in this vital and life-giving work.

I will try in the next few Pastor's Pen articles to feature and to thank people that serve in specific ministries. We are each called by God to serve.

Altar Guilds, Parish of Central Saanich

The job description for this ministry reads in part: "To assist the priest and other clergy in the care of God's House and especially with preparation of the altar and sanctuary for various worship services that come up in the cycle of the life of Liturgy in the church."

We have dedicated people: Judi Clark, Becky Lowe, Susan Pullan, Shirley Schwazer and Carol Watkins who do this work at St. Mary's.



The Altar at Bishop's House, Iona Island, Scotland

continued on page 4

At St. Stephen Deb Butler and Lynda Clifford take care of things. Melanie Ihmels is entering into this ministry for a time as part of her learning and preparation.

Thanks be to God for each of you. These groups of folk work quietly and “behind the scenes“ to facilitate worship for all of us. Please take a moment and thank them and/or show appreciation.

Parish of Central Saanich Annual General Meeting

By Ken Pedlow

The Parish of Central Saanich held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, February 22, 2025, at 11:50 a.m. following both a 10:00 a.m. joint service at St Mary and a potluck lunch. The Ven. Dr. Lon Towstego chaired it. Forty-one parishioners were in attendance according to the Registrar and a quorum was declared. The Agenda, Committee Reports, Financial Reports and Budgets were presented as per the packages distributed to parishioners electronically the previous week. Distribution problems were experienced by some parishioners.

The meeting opened with the singing of ‘Lift High the Cross,’ a prayer and a land acknowledgement. Lon reviewed procedural matters, referenced and prayed for those on the Memorial List and appointed Irene Feir as Recording Secretary. The minutes of the previous AGM were approved.

The Team and Committee (Non-financial) Reports were received and reviewed, and a few questions and comments were addressed. The outreach motions for each church were reviewed and accepted as presented. Each involved changes from the previous year’s allocations.

The meeting then dealt with the process of appointment and nomination of the 2026 parish representatives. The Parish Leadership Team for 2026 is as follows:

- Rector’s Wardens:** Robert (Bob) Buchanan (St. Stephen)
Ken Pedlow (St. Mary)
- People’s Wardens:** Mike Philip (St. Stephen)
Marcia McMenamie (St Mary)
- Council Members:** Lynn Fallan and Becky Lowe (St. Mary)
Terry Hartley, & Sharryl Pearce (St. Stephen)
Gill Shoesmith (Deacon)
Jacob Shoesmith (Youth Representative)

continued on page 5

Annual General Meeting *continued*

Synod Delegates: Karen McColm (St. Mary)
Don Wilson (St. Stephen)
Lynda Clifford (alt)

Parish Treasurer: Lynn Schumacher

Thanks were extended for the participation last year of Ian Stuart and Maria King on the Parish Leadership Team.

The Envelope Secretaries for 2026 are Lynda Clifford (St Stephen) and Judi Clark (St Mary).

The Financial Reviewer for 2026 for both churches is Russ Howard. He is the Treasurer for Christ Church Cathedral and the RCMP Vets.

John Beresford, Dawn Goodwin and Lynn Schumacher were appointed to the Cemetery Board.

The second half of the meeting was spent reviewing the 2025 finances for the St Stephen cemetery, the Parish of Central Saanich joint account, the St. Mary financial statements, the St. Stephen financial statements and the 2026 budgets for the two churches. David Cooper offered appreciation of the current operation of the Cemetery. The Treasurer, as well as reporting the detailed documents in the Annual General Meeting Report, provided a narrative budget graphic for those wishing an alternative representation of the finances. David Cooper expressed concern about the relative costs for the Administrator between the two churches. The financial statements and budgets for both churches were passed.

During the meeting, expressions of thanks were extended in writing in the information package to many who have worked so hard this year to administer the parish including the parish clergy, wardens, parish council, office administrator, music leaders and the many parishioners who undertake a wide variety of tasks to keep the operation of the parish functioning effectively. Many thanks are due to the parishioners for their generous support of the parish during 2025. Thanks, and applause were extended to our Rector, Lon, for his leadership over the past year.

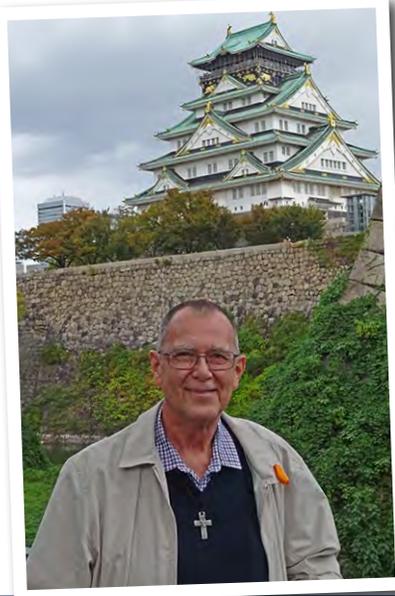
The Installation of Officers is scheduled for both services on March 1, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 with prayer by the Rev. Jacqueline Stober.

*“ Many thanks
are due to the
parishioners for
their generous
support of the
parish during
2025. ”*

Cane's Corner: Travels in Japan, Part 2

By the Rev. Dr. Brett Cane



Castles, Shrines and Temples

This is the second of three articles on my trip to Japan during the first two weeks of November last year. In this article I will be looking at the three castles I was able to see, followed by my impressions of Japanese religion based on my visits to various shrines and temples.

Three Castles

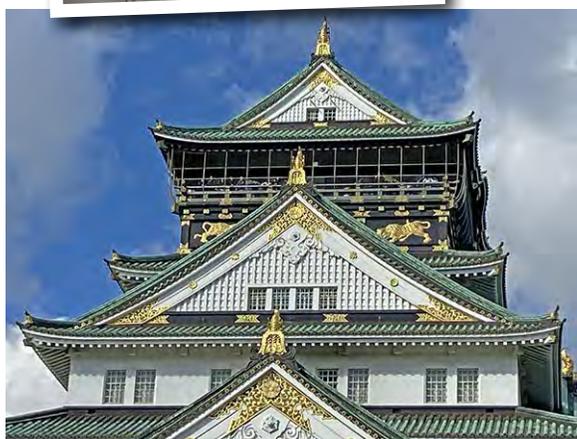
I was told Japan had about 1,000 castles (some sources say up to 5,000) but there are now only about 100 – 12 original and the rest reconstructed. They are amazingly beautiful and quite different from European castles. I was able to visit the two most famous ones – this one in Osaka and Himeji.

Their form is typical of Japanese castles in the 16th century, set up to guard strategic locations. They feature defensive elements like moats, high stone walls, and central keep. This is a close-up of the keep of Osaka Castle, one of those reconstructed (1932).

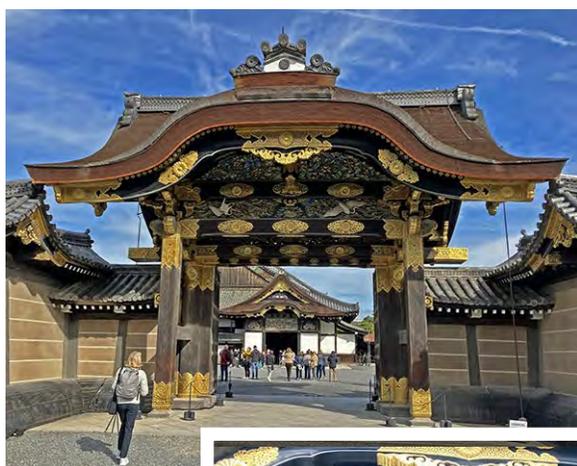
The next castle is not really a castle at all but a palace built within the outer walls of a castle, the Ninomaru Palace. The palace was created for the extravagant five-day visit of the Emperor in 1626 by the Shogun (military dictator) to display his greater power than that of the Emperor.

This gate served as the grand ceremonial entrance and is known for its lavish gold leaf, vivid colours and intricate wood carvings of cranes, lions, pine, bamboo, and plum blossoms.

Inside the palace, the symbolism of the paintings on the walls, different floor levels, and raised ceilings were all meant to make it very clear who fit where in the hierarchy!



Osaka Castle



Karamon Gate



Gate close up



Grand Hall

continued on page 7

Cane's Corner *continued*



Himeji Castle

The next castle is Himeji Castle, a UNESCO world heritage site and the largest and most beautiful of the 12 original castles remaining. It has a network of 83 buildings and is known as the White Heron because of its brilliant white exterior and resemblance to a bird taking flight. It was restored in 2009-2015.

The gates, courtyards and outer walls of the complex are organized so as to confuse an approaching force.

Shrines and Temples

I visited four shrines (Shinto) and five temples (Buddhist) during my time in Japan and rather than describe each one individually, I am going to bring in details from various ones of them to illustrate specific aspects of Japanese religion as I found them.

The main religions in Japan are Shinto and Buddhism, with many people practicing elements of both. Shinto religious sites are called shrines and Buddhist ones temples.

Shinto means “way of the gods” and is Japan’s indigenous religion, with a major emphasis on ancestor-worship and worship of a multitude of kami (nature gods or spirits). A Shinto shrine is immediately recognizable by its traditional wooden or stone gate called a torii, often painted red or vermilion.



Shinto Shrine



Buddhist Temple



Torii

Buddhism blends Indian and Chinese spiritual wisdom with Japanese traditions. Japanese Buddhism has six main branches, the two of which we might be familiar with are Zen (stresses meditation) and Pure Land (stresses faith in a buddha seen as a savior to guide devotees to his pure land of bliss by reciting his name). Access to a Buddhist temple is through an imposing two-tiered gate.

continued on page 8

Cane's Corner *continued*



Buddhist temple gate



Child in kimono



Shinto wedding



Buddhist service

Shinto and Buddhism have co-existed harmoniously over centuries and the Japanese came to see traditional Shinto kami as Japanese versions of Buddhist deities and participate in practices from both religions.

Shinto rituals are intertwined with daily life and cultural festivals and shrines do not typically hold weekly congregational services in the Western sense and individuals usually visit at their convenience for private prayer and worship. For example, children are presented to be blessed by a Shinto priest at ages three, five and seven and wear traditional kimonos for the occasion.

Shinto weddings at shrines are traditional ceremonies where couples receive blessings from kami (gods) with priests, involving purification, prayers, and the traditional sake-sharing ritual. Miko (Shrine Maidens/junior priests) may guide the couple and assist with rituals. There are also large community festivals celebrated at shrines.

Buddhists have regular services, often involving chanting sutras, prayers, and rituals at temples or home altars, especially for daily devotion or major life events like funerals (over 90% of which are Buddhist). I was able to sit in on a Buddhist mid-day prayer service in each of the two centre-city Kyoto temples.

What is common with both religions is people go to both temples and shrines, especially the latter, to obtain blessing, guidance and good luck and to ward off evil.

continued on page 9

Cane's Corner *continued*



Wishing plaques

At the shrine next to the park where sacred deer roam you can buy Ema (wooden votive tablets) described as “wishing plaques” in the shape of deer head where you “write your wishes to the deities.” One Buddhist temple even had machines where you could insert the equivalent of \$5.00-\$10.00 to receive a paper slip with predictions about their luck and guidance for various aspects of life.

In a discussion about getting blessings, etc., I asked our guide (who is very devout) if she had a personal relationship with any of the many nature gods from which people sought guidance or protection and she replied a definite “no”. I was saddened and thought this quite a contrast with Jesus’ invitation to engage with him, “If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me.” (Rev. 3:20)



Fortune-telling machine



Temple poster

However, I was impressed by the wisdom written on a display board in a major Buddhist temple: “To think you know it all – that’s a sure sign that you know nothing at all. To think you know nothing at all – that’s a sure sign what you know has deepened”.

I will finish with some impressive features of both temples and shrines I saw. Beautiful gardens to inspire meditation and tranquility are found in many Buddhist temples.

This temple with its garden is designed to represent the Pure Land.



Garden in Buddhist temple

continued on page 10

Cane's Corner *continued*



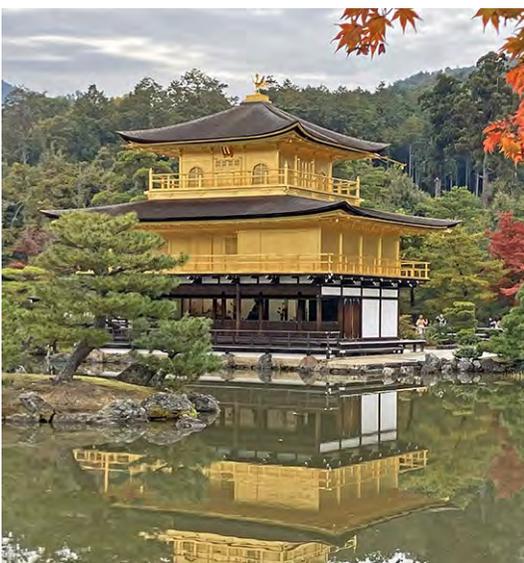
Lake and temple



Tunnel of toriis



Phoenix



Golden Temple

This Shinto shrine is famous for having 10,000 toriis of all sizes given in memory of loved ones, in thanksgiving for successful harvests or donated by a Japanese business. About 800 of the larger ones are set in a row to form an amazing tunnel. It was very crowded (as you can see!)

Another feature is the statue of a phoenix on Japanese temples symbolizing rebirth, good fortune, and protection. A phoenix sits atop the beautiful “Golden Temple” on the outskirts of Kyoto, famous for its top two floors completely covered in gold leaf.

A final delightful feature of temples and shrines is the young people visiting them who are often dressed in magnificent kimonos and very keen to have their photos taken!

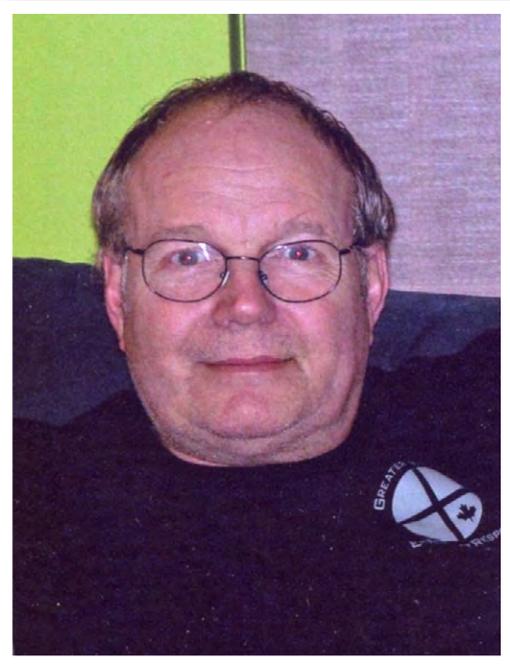
In my final article, I will describe everything else we saw that I haven't covered so far!



Young people in kimonos

Parishioner Profile: Mike Philip

by Sandra Scarth



Mike loves music and it has been an important part of his life. His grandmother was raised in a Catholic orphanage in Aberdeen, Scotland, adopted at age six, and ran away to Winnipeg in her teens where she played the organ and piano at the Orpheum Theatre. His mother was one of the famous Rockettes in New York City and a member of an Army show in World War II along with Wayne and Schuster. His father was not as musical as his mother, but his claim to fame was the honour of a military cross for his participation in the war as a member of the Winnipeg Grenadiers.

Mike met Vera, the love of his life, through friends when he was 18 and she was 15. They shared a love of music and married two years later at ages 20 and 17. Mike had taken courses and worked at Sorrento, so before marrying, he worked there for the summer of 1966. They vacationed at Sorrento for many years after that. It was like a second home for both of them.

Vera's family was also very musical. Her brother did Neil Diamond impersonations and was called Double Diamond! Vera played guitar and wrote music. We now sing one of her hymns at both churches.

Mike and Vera have a long history with St. Stephen's. They began attending in 1977 when services were held in the Saanichton School building to accommodate the large congregation prior to the Hall being built. They had to haul the musical instruments and everything else needed. At Easter they even managed to take the organ!

Vera was involved with the tot lot, kiddie's guitar and sang for the babies. She worked with Joan Gilbert, who taught her how to play guitar and drive a car! Mike was Rector's Warden for several years. They remained at St. Stephen's until there was a change of ministers after the Rev. Ivan Futter left and then joined the Church of the Holy Spirit where again Mike was involved as Rector's Warden. They remained there until that congregation chose to split away from the traditional Anglican church. They then were involved with other churches, including St. Georges and playing with a Praise Band at Sidney Pentecostal. They also tried out Home Church for a year or so.



continued on page 12

Parishioner Profile *continued*



Galilee Music Ministry
Parish of South Saanich
St. Stephen's and St. Mary's
1977 – 1989

Members:

- Eiddwen Thomas, Keyboards and Vocals
- Vera Philip, Guitar and Vocal
- Roger Frampton, Percussion and Vocals
- Mike Philip, Bass and Vocals

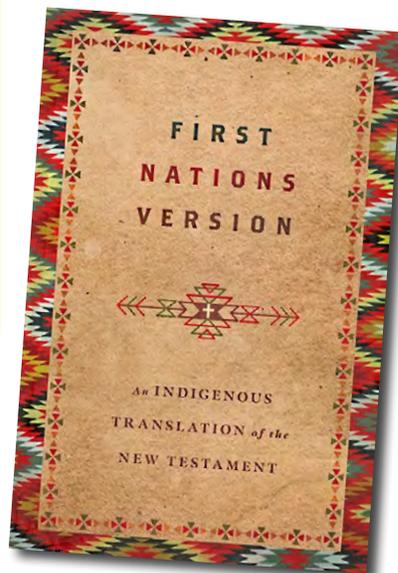
Mike initially worked at Club Tango on View Street. Later he had a “regular” job with Canada Post for 45 years, initially as a letter carrier, but later in a number of indoor jobs. Vera worked at Glendale Lodge and Mt. St. Mary’s as a food server, working with mentally disabled people.

Mike and Vera had two children. Their son Lance is a retired Staff Sergeant with Victoria Police and has three daughters. Their daughter Lyn works as a supervisor at Garth Homer House for people with developmental disabilities. Lyn lives in the same house as Mike, with her separate suite. Lyn has two daughters, Eden and Anna. His youngest granddaughter Anna lives in Alberta and is involved in musical theater.

Mike has always loved dogs. When Vera died suddenly in February 2025, walking their dog Gracie was a real support to Mike. He was still able to talk to his dog-walking friends. Gracie died recently, so he now has his daughter’s dog to walk some days which is a help.

Mike loves to read, particularly First Nations material and philosophy. But his first love is music. He plays the bass in rest homes and markets with his group called *the dead-beat deacons!* In the past, the money they made was provided to CARTS (Christian Action Reflecting the Spirit) that supplied food and clothing to people in need on the streets in downtown Victoria. CART had to be shut down due to Covid.

We are so glad that he has returned to St. Stephens where he plays his bass and has become a warden. We welcome his return!



Soap For Hope

by Marcia McMenamie

A few months ago, Parish Council was asked to think about ways our Parish can live out our call to care for others in our communities. To share the blessings that we have been given and in so doing share the love of Christ with others. This got me thinking what can we do in St. Mary and St. Stephen to do this? There are of course many avenues we could go down. But being realistic about our limitations and yet our desire to reach out to others; I came up with “Soap for Hope.” This is a charity that receives gently used hygiene products and turns them into new products that are donated to those in need.

So, if you have some products that you have been given but don't care for or need, we will take these things and deliver them to Soap for Hope where they will be put to good use. There will be a box marked “Soap for Hope” in the narthex where you can put your items. I will deliver them to the charity when there are a few things accumulated. They also take new items. These are listed on their website, soapforhopecanada.ca

Please give this your prayerful consideration. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to be in touch with me, Marcia McMenamie.



Repurpose With Us

Help Eradicate Hygiene Poverty

Look under your sink. Do you have a hygiene product that doesn't work for you? Stop! Don't throw it away. We can repurpose it to help vulnerable people.

According to the CRD, over 12,000 tons of hygiene waste are generated each year.

Join us in our repurposing journey by donating your extra hygiene products. At our warehouse, we sort, squeeze, fill, wash, and pack these repurposed items before delivering them to Community Facilities that serve vulnerable people.

Let's end hygiene poverty together!

Recipe Page: Orange Olive Oil Cake

Submitted by Nancy Choat

This is a refreshingly easy cake to make for spring! It was featured on the popular tv show, Good Stuff with Mary Berg. It can be made in a round or 9-inch square cake pan. Served with a side of whipped ricotta cheese, honey and whipping cream, it makes for a special dessert to make for friends and family.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1/2 cup of olive oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup of plain yogurt
- 1-1/2 tsps. of vanilla extract
- 3 oranges (see below what to do with them)
- 1-1/2 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup of yellow cornmeal
- 1 tsp of baking powder
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1/2 tsp of salt

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees.
 2. Prepare pan by spraying with non-stick cooking spray and lining it with parchment paper.
 3. Prepare two oranges: peel and thinly slice 2 of the oranges and place the slices in a single layer across the bottom of the prepared pan.
 4. In a large bowl, beat together the brown sugar, olive oil and eggs until well combined. Stir in the vanilla and yogurt.
 5. Add the juice and zest of the third orange.
 6. In another bowl whisk together the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
 7. Add the dry ingredients into the oil and sugar mixture and stir until just combined. Do not over mix! Set the batter aside for 20 minutes to allow the cornmeal to hydrate.
 8. Pour the rested batter over the orange slices and bake for 40 to 45 minutes.
 9. Cool the cake for 15 minutes and then turn it upside down onto a cooling rack to cool completely.
- Serve with a mix of 1 cup of ricotta cheese, 2 tbsps. of whipping cream, 1 tbsp of honey, 1/2 tsp vanilla extract. Whisk all ingredients until it is smooth and creamy.



Kingdoms

By Greg Robinson

Sometimes God speaks to me through His scripture even when I don't want to hear it. Darn. Something else about me needs fixing.

A while back I was reading through the Gospel for the following week's service. The reading was Matthew 6:24. It hit home. "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Wealth."

It is safe to say that Matthew is using the word "wealth" to mean a great deal more than just money. In verse 21 Matthew writes, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". We can safely say that wealth in verse 24 refers to power, money, fame and all human temptations. In other words, I can serve God or I can serve myself. In yet other words, what I do is either for God's kingdom or for my own.

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

I was listening to a song on the Christian radio station and a line jumped out at me: "How can I further Your Kingdom when I'm so wrapped up in mine?" So then, what is God's Kingdom? How do I go about furthering it, and for that matter, what's the point of it all anyway?

OK, I know what my kingdom looks like. My kingdom is very small and very seductive. It's characterized by laziness and self-indulgence. It's all about me. It can be summed up in a popular phrase from the late 1960s – "looking out for number one" – or that other winner – "if it feels good, do it".

But how about God's Kingdom? Well, the Christian church began as a Kingdom of God movement with Christ as King. Jesus inaugurated His Kingdom by His life, death, and Resurrection and then He empowered it with wisdom and courage through the Holy Spirit. Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans that "The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

God's Kingdom is a Kingdom that is identified by the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. This gave me a framework of how my life should be led. This is a short-hand view of the life that God's Holy Spirit, His Still Small Voice in my heart, is calling me to embrace.

God's Kingdom is made up of all of us who know and trust Jesus. God has charged us with the mission of taking His message of truth, love, mercy and justice to the whole world.

God has given us free will to choose or reject this call of the Holy Spirit on our hearts. It leads to a life that brings a peace and joy, which in my view, cannot be obtained in a life that focuses on the self. However, all that is done in our response to this call also reaches into the recreated world to come.

continued on page 16

Kingdoms *continued*

Here's what Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians. "He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things under Heaven and on Earth together under one head, even Christ" (Ephesians 1:9–10). I repeat: "to bring all things under Heaven and on Earth together under Christ."

As an aside, the fact that new creation is for all things on Earth is very good news for those of us who love animals.

The point is that this created world that we know now is an important part of what will be God's "new creation", when Heaven and Earth become one. Death and decay will be no more, God's justice and love will be the law of the land, and we will live resurrected lives, with resurrected bodies, in a re-created world".

In his book *Surprised by Hope* (which I highly recommend), N.T. Wright explains this hope in different words, quoting from Isaiah 11:9. "The Resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and the gift of the Spirit, are designed to make us agents of the transformation of this earth, anticipating the day when we are promised that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea".

I remember a couple of years ago my wife went on holiday with a friend. I was left to look after our home. Home alone. Not a good situation. One of my many shortcomings is that I'm not the tidiest person God ever created. While my wife was away a very advanced form of entropy set in. There was one thing that saved me, and that is the fact that I love my wife. I wanted her to return home and see that she, and the home that we had built together, were cherished and cared for. I couldn't have her coming home to dirty dishes and an unacceptable level of untidiness.

I want to be like that with God and His creation. I don't know when this life will come to an end. When it does, though, I want the part of creation that God has given me control over to look like it's been loved, cherished and nurtured.

So here we are, in that part of the Christian story between resurrection and new creation. We have been given a job to do. We are to build God's Kingdom in preparation for the time when Jesus returns and finishes the job.

I want to go back to what Paul said in Ephesians – that God is bringing together all things in Heaven and all things on Earth. We live in a four-dimensional world. All things on Earth includes all things in the fourth dimension, which is time.

Just think what that means. It means that any act of kindness or love that you or I perform today does not just impact our creation for a moment, a minute, an hour, or even a year. That act of kindness or love has implications for now and

continued on page 17

forever. Everything that we do to build God's Kingdom in the present becomes part of the "Kingdom of God" for eternity.

- When we work to bring God's beauty to this world through a garden, or through a work of art or music, it brings eternal beauty to the Kingdom.
- Every display of unselfish love to our spouse lasts forever.
- Every time we comfort or encourage our children, we are building God's eternal Kingdom.
- Every time we put our own interests second to someone else's, God's Kingdom grows.
- Every act of tenderness to our animal friends brings rejoicing in the Kingdom forever.
- Every time a homeless person is fed and sheltered is celebrated always in God's Kingdom.
- Every prisoner and every victim who is loved and cared about touches the heart of our Lord through eternity.
- Every single heartfelt prayer rings through creation forever.
- Everything that we do with the life, and the time, that we have been given matters – forever.

“When we pray in the Lord's prayer “Thy Kingdom come,” we are essentially praying that God will continue to grow his Kingdom through us...”

When we pray in the Lord's prayer “Thy Kingdom come,” we are essentially praying that God will continue to grow his Kingdom through us, his agents empowered by His Holy Spirit. Secondly, we are praying for Christ to come again in power and glory to bring to fulfillment God's Kingdom, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

It should be the greatest joy in all of our lives to see that in our own small way we are building God's Kingdom. Let us not shortchange ourselves of the joy that God wants us to have when we return to Him our money, our time or our energy as we build His Kingdom. All these things have eternal consequences.

Well, it's back to where I started. I know about all this but still I constantly find myself again and again puttering around in my own kingdom. How can I further His Kingdom, when I'm so wrapped up in mine?

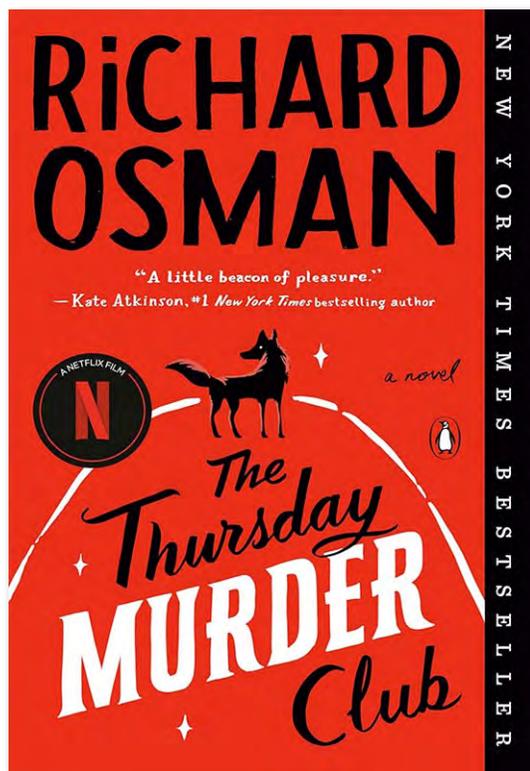
I'll conclude by saying that the best answer to that question that I can come up with is this. Prayerfully, day by day, have my life focus less and less on my kingdom, and day by day, focus more and more on God's Kingdom and His righteousness. On my own, it would be impossible. The good news is that I'm not doing it on my own. I have both the Holy Spirit – His still small voice – and I have everyone in my church family, God's Kingdom people, to walk that pathway with me.

It is exciting. I mean, really exciting. Just think about it. We are the Kingdom.

We really are God's Kingdom here on Earth for today, tomorrow and through to eternity. Christ has given us the job and the privilege of being the instruments of co-creating new creation. We all have a job to do. We are called to share His love in our home, in our community, in our country and to all of God's good creation.

Book Review: *The Thursday Murder Club* By Richard Osman

Review by Nancy Choat



The Thursday Murder Club is a 2020 murder mystery novel, the debut novel by British television presenter Richard Osman. It is the first instalment in his Thursday Murder Club series.

In *The Thursday Murder Club*, Richard Osman, through his wit and intelligence, has provided us with the perfect curl up and read novel for right now.

In a peaceful upscale retirement village, called Cooper's Chase, near the fictitious seaside village of Fairhaven in Kent, four unlikely friends meet weekly to discuss unsolved crimes. Together they call themselves the Thursday Murder Club. They exercise their considerable brain power into the solving of cold case murders from police files secretly acquired by the leader of the group, Elizabeth, a woman to be reckoned with, with her mysterious and shadowy background. When a local developer is found dead, the Thursday Murder Club suddenly find themselves in the middle of their first live case. The friends might be septuagenarians, but they are cleverer than most. Can this unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer before it's too late?

Osman's development of the diverse characters, their numerous secrets and reveals, along with the comic touches makes this an appealing read. When it comes to the elderly, medical issues, physical decline, loneliness, grief and loss are going to play an integral part of their stories.

If you are looking for fun, entertainment, offbeat and engaging mystery, then this book will highly appeal to you.

Who's Who in the Pew? or guess who is sitting in the pew next to you ...

By Marcia McMenamie

Our last parishioner who was featured in our Who's Who in the Pew was Valerie Park. When you see her, please say hello!

Here are the clues for this parishioner. I hope you guess who this lovely person is!

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Where were you born? | <i>Europe</i> |
| 2. What is your favourite childhood memory? | <i>I loved spending time with my maternal grandmother who spoiled me rotten!</i> |
| 3. What is your favourite colour? | <i>Turquoise</i> |
| 4. What is your proudest accomplishment? | <i>A happy marriage with three wonderful children</i> |
| 5. What is your current passion? | <i>Finding and taking photos of Giant Sequoia trees</i> |
| 6. What is a fact about you that most folk don't know? | <i>I am bilingual</i> |
| 7. What is your favourite hymn? | <i>I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" (Kingsfold version)</i> |

Around the Parish

by Ken Pedlow

Here are some of the significant events of the past three months in the parish during this winter.

Saturday, December 6 Saanichton Community Christmas & Hospital Fundraiser



Community Christmas and Hospital Fundraiser



On Saturday, December 6th the 21st Saanichton Community Christmas and Hospital Fundraiser was held in Cooper Hall at St. Mary. The event consisted of a gourmet pancake breakfast and an opportunity for children to have photos taken with Santa. The attendance was very good by members of the community and the decorations prepared by members of the parish were greatly appreciated.

continued on page 20

Around the Parish *continued*



Community Christmas
and
Hospital Fundraiser



National Day of Remembrance for Violence Against Women



Also, on the evening of December 6th a service was held at St. Mary to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance for Violence Against Women. **Melanie Ihmels** and **Rev. Lon** organized this service of readings and music and those who attended found it profoundly moving.

Services of Lessons and Carols

On Sunday December 21st Services of Lessons and Carols and Holy Eucharist were held at both churches. These services are very popular and usually well-attended.

Child's Christmas in Wales



On Tuesday December 23rd the annual Child's Christmas in Wales event was held at St. Mary and has been the case for many years played to a sold-out audience.



continued on page 21

Around the Parish *continued*

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day



With the Christmas decorations completed, the usual pattern of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services were held at St. Mary and St. Stephen. The St. Stephen Christmas Eve service in particular filled the church. Many thanks to all involved in preparing and decorating for these seasonal celebrations of the real meaning of Christmas.



January 18th, The Rev. Jacqueline Stober



On Sunday, January 18th, The **Rev. Jacqueline Stober** was the preacher for both services. Rev. Stober has recently retired from ministry at the Christ Church Cathedral and has joined our parish family. It was wonderful to hear her sermon, and we are very glad she has chosen to join the Parish of Central Saanich.

January 24th, Men's Breakfast



On Saturday, January 24th, the **first men's breakfast** of the year was held at the St. Stephen's church hall. A new and larger crew of preparers was in the kitchen, and a good time of fellowship was enjoyed by all who attended. The plan is to meet monthly, if possible, but the next meeting was scheduled for March so as to not duplicate the February pancake supper.

February 3rd, Melanie Ihmels met with Bishop Anna

On February 3rd, **Melanie Ihmels**, a seminarian in the parish had her first meeting with **Bishop Anna**. This followed the submission of a report by a discernment committee which has met with Melanie over a number of months

continued on page 22

Around the Parish *continued*



to assess her gifts and skills for continuing the process toward ordination to the priesthood in the Anglican Church. The members of the committee were **Rev. Lon, Bob Buchanan, Lynda Clifford, Lynn Fallan, and Ken Pedlow**. The Committee is in full agreement that Melanie would be an immense asset to the clergy of our denomination.

A Visit to Japan



The **Rev. Dr. Brett Cane** on presented his photos on Japan at two sessions on Wednesday February 11th in the evening at St Mary and on Friday February 13 in the afternoon at St. Stephen. A good time was had by all who attended these events, especially by those who are planning to visit Japan this year.

Lenten Services



On February 17th, the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper for the parish was held at St. Mary. A large number of parishioners attended the event and the crew who put on the event, led by **Rev. Lon**, did an excellent job and were also very grateful to all who assisted in the clean-up afterward.

The Ash Wednesday services at both churches which followed the next day were well attended and these saw the imposition of ashes on the foreheads of those who wished. The ashes were prepared the night before from the palm crosses which were distributed at last year's Palm Sunday Service.

Annual General Meeting



The **Annual General Meeting** was held on Sunday, February 22nd after a joint service at St. Mary. See the report in this issue of *ConneXion* for further details on this event.

Recent Deaths

On a much sadder note, we must report on the recent deaths of two of our parishioners.

On December 22nd the parish lost **Mark Perkins**. Mark and his wife, **Fern** have been faithful members for some time at St. Mary although ill health in recent years has

continued on page 23

Around the Parish *continued*



limited their in-person attendance. A firefighter in Victoria for many years he was very proud of his Metis heritage, especially in his later years. Our prayers go out to Fern and their family as they prepare for his upcoming Line of Duty service at the Saanich Fairgrounds on Saturday, March 7th at 1:00 p.m.

On January 14th, the parish lost **Jackie Kolson**, a stalwart member of St. Stephen's for decades. Her death, after a sudden and severe stroke while working at the church, has been very hard on all who knew her and experienced her extensive and varied involvement in the parish over such a long time. Our prayers go out to her husband **Howie** and **her family** as they prepare for her upcoming memorial service at St. Stephen on Friday, April 10th at 1:30 p.m.

Leslie Pedlow Retirement Announced



At the end of January, it was announced that **Leslie Pedlow**, our parish Administrator for so many years, has decided to retire as of the end of March. Leslie has been fulfilling these duties for as long as many can remember but she has reached a point where she will be looking forward to pursuing other interests in her life which have been limited due to the time spent working in the church office. An opportunity to thank Leslie for her role in the parish has been scheduled for Saturday, May 2nd and when the time and details have been worked out they will be provided to parishioners.

Additional Thanks

We are also thankful for the return of **Bob Buchanan**, the St. Stephen Rector's Warden, as he has now recovered from procedures for a detached retina.

And, finally, we are also thankful for the participation and assistance which **Melanie Ihmels** and **Richard Routledge** have provided in the life of our parish over the last number of months. Following in the footsteps of **Matt Humphrey**, **Leslie Flynn**, **Gary Moss** and **Trish Stock**, providing mentoring and training opportunities for aspiring clerical students seems to have become a significant feature of our parish life and as they learn from all of us, we also learn so much from them at the same time. Thank you to all of you for enriching our worship life.

Anglican Parish of Central Saanich Directory

The Ven. Dr. Lon Towstego 250-208-9949 ltowstego@bc.anglican.ca

Parish Council: Ex Officio

Ven. Dr. Lon Towstego
Rev. Gil Shoesmith

Rector's Wardens: St. Mary
St. Stephen

Ken Pedlow,
Robert (Bob) Buchanan

People's Wardens: St. Mary
St. Stephen

Marcia McMenamie
Mike Philip

Members: St. Mary
St. Stephen

Lynn Fallan, Becky Lowe
Terry Hartley, Sharryl Pearce

Youth Representative:

Jacob Shoesmith

Synod Delegates: St. Mary
St. Stephen

Karen McColm
Don Wilson, Lynda Clifford (alt)

Parish Treasurer:

Lynn Schumacher

Leslie Pedlow is primarily at the St Mary's office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm.

At the St. Stephen Church office, **Lon Towstego** will be in the office on Fridays from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon.

Please call or email your respective office for the most up-to-date information on their availability and access to the office.