

# MAY 2026

# FAITH TIDES



Photo: Josh Hawkenson



Bishop's Column: Reaching across diocesan boundaries to work together

Young adult ministry gaining momentum at St. Barnabas

Let's dream big on music education

# May 2026 content

By Faith Tides

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# Reaching across diocesan boundaries to work together



*Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee presiding at the closing eucharist of the 2026 diocesan clergy conference. Image credit: Jenny Repogle*

*By Anna Greenwood-Lee*

It has been a joy to travel across our beautiful diocese these past weeks and months. I can report that from Port Alice to Salt Spring, and from Tofino to Sidney, our parishes are growing both in numbers and in Spirit. There is a renewed sense of hope, possibility and mission as our parishes find new ways to welcome and include people into the life of Christ.

However, instead of focusing on the signs of life in this diocese, I'd like to share with you that at the provincial level of our church life, I also see signs that "the future is not going to look like the past and the future is bright."

Our diocese belongs to the ecclesiastical province of BC and Yukon, and we are blessed that John Stephens, bishop of New Westminster, also serves as metropolitan. A couple of years ago John organised a provincial summit to get leaders from across the province together to look at how the six dioceses in our province can work together.

One of the main outcomes of that summit was the provincial congregational development school that will, in May, see its first round of graduates from the two-year program. Lay people from all six dioceses met four times in person and six times on Zoom over the two years to learn how to create healthy and dynamic congregations. We'll be celebrating those who have completed the program later this month at the congregational school meeting in Terrace, BC. In September we'll be welcoming a new cohort into the program.

All the congregational development school participants report that while the content of this program is

excellent, what is truly invaluable are the relationships that are being made across parish and diocesan "boundaries" as Anglicans in this part of God's creation.

In early July, those elected to Provincial Synod will be meeting for a couple of days in Kelowna with bishops and other representatives from across the province to think creatively about how we can work better together as a province. There is already work going on looking for efficiencies in administration and policy.

The reality is that three of the six dioceses in the province (our diocese, the Diocese of New Westminster and the Diocese of Kootenay) are big enough to have synod office staff teams while Yukon, Caledonia and Territory of the People are so small they have very few if any synod office staff.

The Diocese of Caledonia is the smallest diocese in the province and the one that is most in need of support. Bishop David Lehmann has no paid administrative support and, in addition to his considerable duties as bishop, he also looks after the cathedral congregation. I have no idea how he does it all.



In  
April,  
our

*David Lehmann, bishop of the Diocese of Caledonia, at the 2026 diocesan clergy conference. Image credit:*

*Jenny Replogle*

diocese welcomed Bishop David and the clergy of the Diocese of Caledonia to our clergy conference in Parksville. David was the preacher at our closing eucharist and it was such a joy to have him and his clergy with us. Their diocese is geographically huge but very small in numbers of clergy. There are currently only three full-time paid clergy other than Bishop David. Like all dioceses across Canada, he has a few vacancies to fill and is hoping that by year end that number will have increased to five. Lay people from Caledonia have participated in our lay leadership in worship course organised by Ingrid Andersen, so that their diocese, like ours, can continue to have worship in communities that cannot always have clergy.



*Clergy of the diocese at the 2026 clergy conference in Parksville.  
Image credit: Jenny Replogle*

Diocesan boundaries are inventions of the system and, while sometimes useful, must be disregarded if and when it makes more sense to work together as the body of Christ in order to nurture believers and serve our communities. Just as our diocese is growing in relationship with Caledonia, the Diocese of Yukon has been growing in relationship with New Westminster. Flights are such that it is relatively easy to get to

Whitehorse from Vancouver, and clergy from New Westminster have been travelling to Whitehorse to do Sunday coverage when the clergy there are on holiday. The need for this may increase as the Dean of Yukon, Vincent Fenga, was recently elected as their bishop.

The Territory of the People and the Diocese of Kootenay already share many things, including their annual clergy conference. Our own Jenny Replogle was invited to be the speaker at their most recent gathering.

Just as I think it is a sign of hope and growth when parishes in our diocese reach across perceived boundaries to work together, I see tremendous hope and growth as we reach across diocesan boundaries. We are at a stage in history when we must reflect on our governance systems and how they do and do not serve our mission as God's people. I am grateful to serve with colleagues who are willing and able to do that work. The future of the ecclesiastical province of BC and Yukon is not going to look like the past. And that future is bright!

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# Young adult ministry gaining momentum at St. Barnabas



*Attendees at a Sanctum Easter dinner. Image credit: Josh Hawkenson*

*By Sarah Evans*

Young people are looking for spiritual life and they're looking for spiritual life made for them. At St. Barnabas, we've had the gift of young adults, seeking a rich tradition of worship and faith, pouring through our door. Nearly every week, there's a new young adult wandering into our hall with a story about seeking a richer faith. Just as often, we see that young adult coming to our next event and joining our growing community.

Our St. Barnabas young adults' group, newly minted "Sanctum," is led by young adults for young adults seeking a rich tradition of faith. The Anglo-Catholic

tradition offers young people a tie to a deeply sacramental expression of Anglicanism. It offers something real and tangible in a world consumed by image and performance. As young people seek identity amidst the fractures, the sacramental life offers a connection and belonging that nothing else can. We believe that fostering scriptural and theological integrity connects people.

Every week, we gather a little differently. Our mainstay is our theology study group, in which we discuss scripture, theology and faith practice. The key point for outreach is our biweekly social group. Oftentimes, we meet in local pubs or around kitchen tables. Other weeks, we're having campfires, dinner parties and hiking excursions. Regardless of what we do, we focus on ministry and creating a place where people feel they belong.

Holy Week is a special time of year where we see our church communities near constantly. While the commitment to attend Thursday through Sunday is daunting, we found our group willing and eager to put in the effort. More exciting still, we had several of our group baptised or confirmed into the Anglican Church. Baptism and confirmation are significant commitments and to see young people commit themselves to God is beyond thrilling. After the busyness of Holy Week, we hosted one last event, an Easter dinner. What was meant to be a small gathering quickly overgrew the apartment we usually host in. At the last minute, we were kindly offered to use the St. Barnabas rectory... thank goodness!

We pray to continue having this "problem," and we pray that we are ready to serve this growing community. God is working here and we are excited to see so many young people seeking God through the

sacramental life. As newcomers continue to come in the door, we're excited to walk alongside. For those returning after time away, we're excited to watch faith reignite. For those making our group a weekly habit, we're grateful.

As we continue to foster a young adults' ministry here in Victoria, we ask your prayers that our new members find a place in our community. Please pray for the growth of this ministry. St. Barnabas is one church of many in the world seeing this revival in young people and we ask your prayers that we navigate this momentum with grace.

If you're curious about what we do or looking to connect, we would love to hear from you. If you're a community member who is interested in supporting the work we are doing (we always need somewhere to host!), we would love to hear from you too. There is momentum here and God calls us forward.

Please feel free to email one of the Sanctum co-leads, Sarah Evans [sarah.evans.4268@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.evans.4268@gmail.com) or Josh Hawkenson [jhawkenson9@icloud.com](mailto:jhawkenson9@icloud.com)! We'd love to hear from you.

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## Ripples – May 2026



*Pictured (l-r) are Liz Kuglin-Alyea; Theo Robinson, the incumbent at St. Peter, Quamichan; Adele MacLeod; Marianne Nicol and Liz Williams. Image credit: Karen McCullough*

*By Faith Tides*

### World Day of Prayer

#### St. Peter, Quamichan



*Pictured are (left) Trish Pebbles, who co-led the World Day of Prayer service; and (right) gathering for tea, coffee and fellowship. Image credit: Karen McCullough.*

On Thursday, March 5, St. Peter, Quamichan hosted an ecumenical service for World Day of Prayer. A total of 66 participants from several Duncan churches were in attendance, including Duncan United Church; the Anglican Churches of St. John the Baptist, Cobble Hill and St. John the Baptist, Duncan, Duncan Seventh-day Adventist Church, and St. Edward the Confessor Catholic Church.

St. Peter's was one of four churches on Vancouver Island hosting World Day of Prayer services this year. The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement that brings Christians of many traditions together to observe a common day of prayer each year.

Through preparation and participation in the worship

service, we can learn how our sisters of other countries, languages and cultures understand the Biblical passages in their context. We can hear their concerns and needs and can join in solidarity with them as we pray with and for them. In this way, it is possible to enrich our Christian faith as it grows deeper and broader in an international, ecumenical expression. This year's World Day of Prayer service focused on the hardships of our Christian sisters in Nigeria.

After the service, all attendees were invited into the church hall for coffee, tea and treats. This gave us all a chance for fellowship with Christians of other denominations. We are all God's children bound together by our love of Christ.

*By Karen McCullough*

### Holy Week

#### St. George, Cadboro Bay



*Left to right: the altar at St. George decorated for Holy Week; an Easter cross; a parishioner has her feet washed; on Palm Sunday St. George held a reading of "Women at the Well" by Carolyn Pogue, a play reflecting on Jesus' Holy Week journey. Image credit: Sheila Hofmeyr*

#### St. Michael and All Angels, Chemainus



*Left to right: Palm Sunday with Norman Knowles, the incumbent at St. Michael and all Angels; candles on the altar for the Service of Shadows; Sally Pilyk receives a foot washing from Norman Knowles; and an almond, buttercream and coconut frosted lamb cake created by parishioner Jodie Phillips. Image credit: Jodie Phillips*

## Let's dream big on music education



*The choirs of King's College, Cambridge and Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria perform together. Image credit: Derek Ford*

*By Donald Hunt*

On April 11, the world-famous Choir of King's College, Cambridge gave a sensational, inspirational and, I believe, transformative performance at Christ Church Cathedral. This group of impressive young people also sang with the Victoria Symphony on the back of a full Easter season back home.

As I reflect on the weekend and my conversations with their director, Daniel Hyde, the subject of music education emerges as a theme. Let's face it: music

education in Victoria is in trouble, though not for lack of skilled and hardworking teachers, parents who understand and care or students who thrive in the joyful and disciplined environment that music-making fosters. Music education is in trouble because of the steady whittling away of financial resources in the public education system.

[Cuts to funding for music programs in SD61's schools](#) seem to be a depressing annual event. And even when students and [private donors come forward](#) to keep things going for another year, we all know that this issue comes up every year because music education is simply not valued in the way it should be.

So, what is the solution? For inspiration, let's look at the ecosystem where an ensemble like the Choir of King's College can flourish, training 8- to 13-year-old youngsters to sing with understanding and delight. It's no surprise that the UK is where some of the world's best choirs and musicians are trained and educated, even with their own troubling pattern of [steady cuts in government funding](#).

Despite these cuts, UK music educators continue to push for better access to music for all children. Increasingly, cathedrals — the keepers of a centuries-old choral tradition — have been stepping up to fill the gap left by government cuts.

Some of England's 42 cathedrals have recently joined the National Schools Singing Programme, a privately funded initiative that sends choral specialists into public schools. [As reported in the Church Times](#), “[These] cathedrals have been chosen for their diversity and their capacity to reach some of the most music-deprived areas of the country. Their inclusion... means that the National Schools Singing Programme is

expected to reach around 20,000 children in more than 200 state schools every week.”

Under a new generation of leaders, our tradition is neither elite nor ossified. Quite the opposite: It is reaching more people, and it is under constant renewal.

St. Paul's Cathedral (where our own choir will be singing services this summer) is also responding to a growing need for music education in public schools. Their choral partnership programme, led by William Bruce, now reaches over 30 schools. The purpose of St Paul's Cathedral choral partnership program is simple, says Bruce: “to provide high quality music education.”

Here at Christ Church Cathedral, we continue to focus on choral music education and outreach, taking on projects to build up our relationship with local school choirs. I reviewed some of these about a year ago in a piece published in *Faith Tides* ([Cathedral connects young people to music education](#), September 2025). But there's still lots of work to be done.

Could the cathedral be a partner in launching a transformative expansion of choral and music education in Victoria? Such an initiative could enrich young lives, strengthen community connections and preserve a centuries-old musical tradition for a new generation.

I invite you to dream with me. The cathedral's reputation for excellence in music education makes it an ideal place to ignite passion for music and performance, where young people can soar higher than they ever thought imaginable with instructors and musicians of distinction.

We are still in the early stages of achieving this vision, but I can feel a buzz in the air after the exhilarating performances by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge. I believe that the enduring legacy of their visit could be a bold next step for the future of music education in Victoria. Join me in making that vision a reality.

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# Wondering together at the ecclesiastical province summit in Kelowna



Photo by [Mike Benna](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By *Andrew Stephens-Rennie*

In July of this year, the provincial house of bishops and provincial council are gathering in Kelowna, BC, to discern faithful next steps in sharing work and witness throughout the ecclesiastical province of British Columbia and Yukon.

This work began in earnest with a provincial gathering in November 2023. When we gathered in Vancouver three years ago, participants imagined we would speak about efficiency and shared services. However, it was vital for each of us to start from a different place. We knew that whatever steps were taken at a provincial level, it needed to connect people with God and each other, to empower all God's children to faithfully proclaim and embody the gospel in our rapidly changing communities.

Participants asked, "How might we harness provincial and diocesan structures to more effectively and efficiently support local Anglicans, congregations and ministries in their worship, work and witness?" The church's ancient wisdom grounded us. We anchored our gathering in prayer and deep listening for God's words of invitation. We gathered to deepen trust amongst all the baptized: lay leaders, deacons, priests and bishops alike.

As we attended to God's invitation and how God was stirring within and amongst us, several commitments emerged.

A province-wide Bible study was born. Lay and ordained leaders across the province formed the provincial school for congregational development. While practicing skills in developing and growing congregations, participants build relationships and share knowledge across geographical lines. Work is underway to develop a province-wide, trauma-informed safeguarding policy.

Three years later, this work is reconvening in Kelowna. The work of the 2023 summit took several first steps in discerning God's presence and invitation. The 2026 gathering can build on this foundation. What more can

be done together to support local communities as we seek to embody and proclaim the gospel today? What emotional, spiritual and practical work will help us to step boldly and expectantly into God's future?

While I don't know exactly how this group will move forward, having participated in the first gathering, I do have my hopes.

First, I hope we will dream big. The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news in communities like ours that are full of despair. We are so used to thinking about dwindling attendance and resources, I wonder what it would look like to depend on a God who is bigger than our bank accounts, volunteer capacity or our ability to ask or imagine.

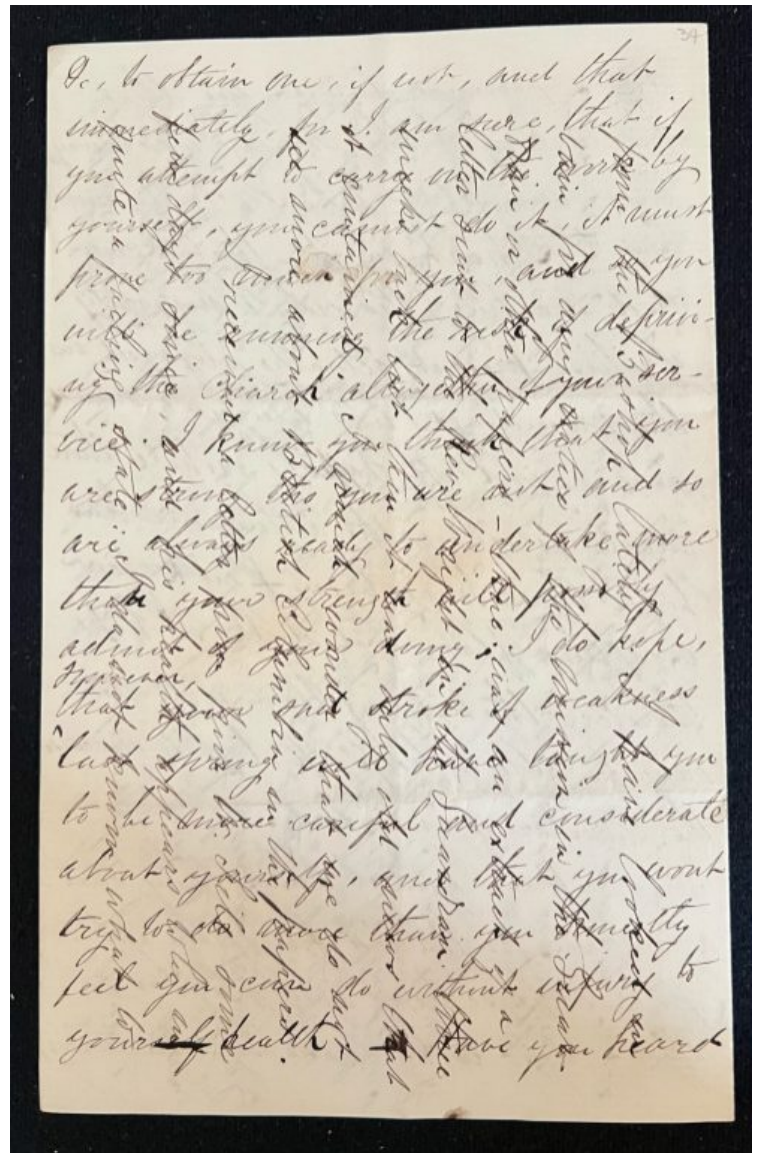
Second, I hope that we will continue moving from theory into practice. We've taken a few tentative steps. This is good! Let's identify the gifts that exist throughout our province, and find ways to better share them in the service of God and God's world.

Third, I hope we will set goals and be accountable to one another. If we envision a functional model for shared administration, governance, policy or episcopal ministry, let's set a goal and a timeline. If we light upon new ways of funding ministry, let's identify the next steps in that process.

Finally, let's depend on God and on Christ's body, the church, praying ceaselessly for one another, offering and asking for help.

# Saving paper the 19th century way

By Justine Soles



The item featured in this month's post is unusual, not in content, but in the way it was written. This is an example of a crossed letter, a rare and exciting find in the archives. Letter writers in the 19th century would use this technique of cross-writing or cross-hatching to

save on limited stationery and high postage costs, without compromising on letter length.

A writer would fill a page with text in one direction, then rotate the paper 90 degrees and continue writing across the original lines, resulting in a dense block of handwritten text. This letter is from the Bishop Hills collection. It is addressed to an unnamed person in British Columbia from St. Augustine, Canterbury, in the year 1860.

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## When things turn out differently than we'd hoped



Photo by [Diogo Fagundes](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By *Lisa Alexander*

I've been reflecting on how often I'm caught unawares in situations where I'm expecting one thing and something entirely different happens. Not the happy coincidence sort of difference, where you leave the

situation with a good story or a warm feeling, but the sort of difference that leaves you feeling at best slightly unmoored and at worst, troubled, angry or hurt.

In 2018, my friend Suzanna was in Europe for a sabbatical and had arranged to meet up with her brother, Jake, and his wife, Sophia (one of my closest friends), in Lisbon to celebrate Sophia's 40th birthday. So, Suz and I hatched a plan that I would fly in to surprise Sophia. What could possibly go wrong?

Um, the fact that both of us had forgotten or didn't truly know that Soph hates surprises? Or perhaps the fact that without telling Suz, Soph was considering this trip to Portugal as her long-delayed honeymoon and had said "yes" to meeting Suz for the weekend to be polite? Without dwelling on the details, the surprise did not bring the joy we had intended and ended up falling flat. I was crushed and everything felt awkward.

We visited Bélem, known for its famous pastel de nata (Portuguese egg custard tarts). As part of our explorations, we were looking forward to visiting the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology. We arrived at the museum and purchased our tickets, but when I turned around to find my friends, no one was waiting for me.

Jake was wandering in one direction, putting his headphones on, and Soph was already over at the other side of the hall, looking at an exhibit. I had assumed we'd wander the museum together, chatting and enjoying each other's company. I was still feeling wrong-footed that my surprise had landed flat, and I'd hoped the visit would give us a low-key way to connect and ease past the tension. When no one was waiting for me, I immediately felt a rush of shame and anger. The story I was telling myself was that I was being rejected

and punished. This was their way of showing me how much I wasn't wanted.

What I didn't know was that Soph and Jake had long ago worked out a system whereby they normally parted ways on outings like this, as Jake is very introverted and prefers his own company and zero chit chat when viewing art. Soph is equally happy to wander and see what catches her attention. One of the ways they love connecting is exchanging their thoughts and stories afterwards. They moved smoothly into their system and I was left floundering.

I would like to tell you that I immediately realized I was telling a story in my head, but that simply isn't true. I skulked around the museum close-ish to Soph and was offended by Jake's behaviour. It never occurred to me to be curious about whether this was normal for them. I tucked the hurt in deep and kept looking for more evidence that things were wrong between all of us.

In her January column ([Walking home by another road](#)), Bishop Anna invited the diocese to let go of our accumulated grievances and reminded us that we can only move at the speed of trust: "As we begin 2026, I invite all of us in the diocese to be honest, with ourselves and one another about our accumulated grievances. Then find ways to do the work of truth telling, repentance and forgiveness." As we are getting

close to the halfway mark of the year, I am calling us back to this exhortation from our bishop.

The Portugal story surfaced for me this week because a few days ago, Soph and I "visited" over a video call. We have lived in different provinces since 2016 and keep in touch via text and FaceTime. Our friendship suffered after the Portugal trip. It took us time to repair things. We tried hard to listen carefully to each other's perspectives and find ways to live with the reality that something broke during that trip. We gave each other space and time.

I think what finally worked is that we let go of any grievance we had with each other. I love Soph, the way her mind works, the way she loves Jesus and smashes the patriarchy, her eye for art, how truthful she is and how widely she opens her heart to love. I know how much she loves and admires me as well. The fact is, we chose to stay friends, and we both know we are richer for this choice.

It's time: let accumulated grievances go. Be honest with yourself and with one another. Find the ways to do the work of truth telling, repentance and forgiveness. Reach out to me if that's hard and you and your parish need encouragement and help. Do this work because it's worth it and God calls us to do it. Know in your bones that God walks with us, before us and behind us, equipping us and calling us into truth and healing.

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