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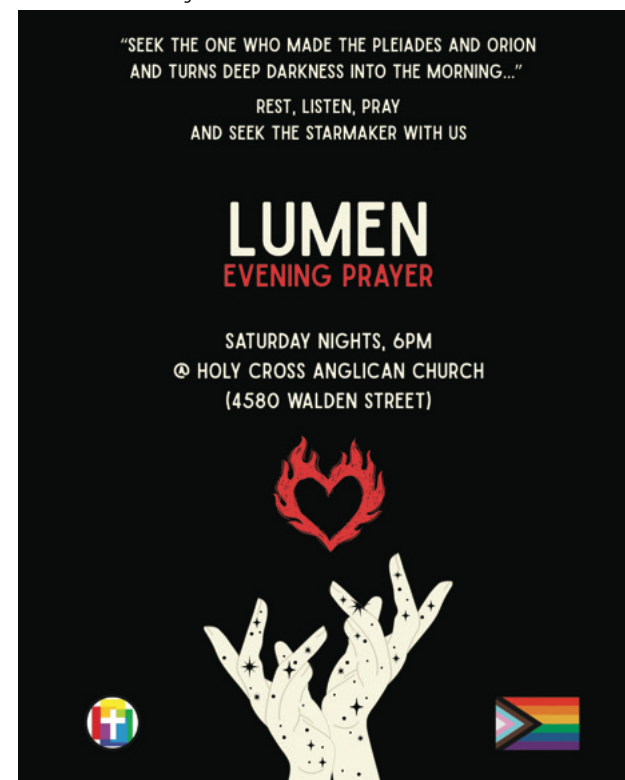
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Lumen Prayer Service
A New Take on an Ancient Weekly Service

THE REV. CLARE MORGAN

Holy Cross Japanese Church set up for the Lumen service of Evening Prayer.
PHOTO: Rev. Clare Morgan



I crack open the door of the church onto the blue dusk, pleased that there's no rain tonight, and drag out the sandwich board: "Seek the One who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning."

It's Saturday, 6pm, and time for Lumen Evening Prayer at Holy Cross church in Vancouver. It's a small church on the corner of a tree-lined residential street just off Main St.

Lumen came about partly because I wanted Holy Cross to have an evening service, but mostly because one day while I was flipping through the Book of Alternative Services (like you do), I came across a service I'd never seen before. It was called "The Vigil of the Resurrection," on page 133.

Intrigued, I read through it. It's an alternative form of Evening Prayer for Saturday evenings, intended to be observed after the Service of Light on page 61. It's short, only four pages, and much of it does not vary week by week. Psalms play a significant role. A selection of Gospel readings are provided that all detail resurrection appearances of Jesus. A thanksgiving for water and interaction with the baptismal font is included. Finally, a truly beautiful set of closing prayers round it out:

O God who brought your people out of slavery with a mighty hand, strengthen us to take our stand with you beside the oppressed of the world, that in the victory of Christ every fetter of body, mind, and spirit may be broken, and the whole human family, restored to your image, may sing your praise in joy, freedom, and peace; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

The notes on the inclusion of this liturgy in our prayerbook are tantalizingly short as well: "A different and optional form of office has been provided for use

on Saturday night, where desired. It is a revival of an ancient weekly welcome of Sunday as the Lord's Day. The basic Christian festival is Sunday as the commemoration of the resurrection of the Christ; the vigil, dating back to the fourth century and mentioned in both Apostolic Constitutions and the journal of Egeria, provides opportunity for highly-focused liturgical expression of this theme." (p. 43)

After some reaching out to people I thought would be interested, and a couple of trips to London Drugs for a host of candles (most of them fake to be less anxiety-provoking in our all-wooden church!), we held our first Lumen on February 21st.

The mood inside the church was calm, reflective, and reverent. I gathered the candles around the baptismal

font, which I moved to the front to become the focal point of the space, making a sort of gateway between the gathered faithful and the altar, which we shall not approach until the glory of Sunday, but sits above us on the raised chancel, reminding us of Christ's liberation and sacrifice. We sang, kept watch, and prayed...and then, herbal tea!

We'd be thrilled to welcome you to Lumen: Saturdays at 6pm at Holy Cross (4580 Walden Street). The service runs about 25 minutes, so you can even still get in some Saturday night partying! ✦

Rev. Clare Morgan is Vicar of Holy Cross Japanese Anglican Church and an assistant priest at Christ Church Cathedral.

Art Journalling

IRENE MCGUINNESS with files from TOPIC staff

"Art accepts all the sadness, and transforms it implicitly affirming that beauty is essentially the presence of God."
- Sr. Wendy Beckett

This winter, The Centre for Spiritual Renewal gently expanded its spiritual palette by introducing creative journalling into its Wednesday evening offerings. What began as a simple invitation soon became something more - a quiet response to a deeper longing. As more of us seek ways to expand our spiritual hearts through creative expression, a beautiful circle of participants stepped forward, ready to explore what might unfold on the page.

Journalling has long been a sacred companion for those desiring deeper self-understanding, and this gathering was no exception. For five weeks at St. Dunstan's in Aldergrove, we met in a spirit of openness and curiosity, discovering how creative journalling can

be both nurtured by faith and nurturing to it in return.

Each evening began in meditation, resting gently with a few verses of scripture. From that stillness, we listened inwardly - noticing where the words stirred us, challenged us, or invited us deeper - and then carried those movements of the Spirit directly onto our journalling pages.

What unfolded was more than writing. It was shared presence. It was witness. It was community formed through ink and intention. The spiritual collectiveness that emerged felt both rich and expansive, inspiring not only weekly gatherings but the desire for a full day devoted entirely to journalling. In giving ourselves permission to create, reflect, and share, we discovered again that the soul speaks most clearly when it is given space - and a willing page.

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EDITORIAL

Peace, the Breath of the Eternal

ARCHBISHOP JOHN STEPHENS

We are in the midst of the fifty days of the Season of Easter, a time set aside to continue to reflect on Christ's resurrection and the way it shapes how we live each day and walk in this world. There are many things that can pull at our attention spans, but how do we keep turning our thoughts to the new life that Jesus offers us through the empty tomb?

On the first Sunday after Easter, in the Gospel reading for that day, the resurrected Jesus says to his gathered disciples, "Peace be with you." He says it three times. There is something to this, as clearly Jesus prayed that they might know peace and continues to pray that we might be shaped by it.

In his message for the World Day of Peace on January 1, 2026, Pope Leo XIV reflected on the word peace and offered these words: "In order to overcome the darkness, it is necessary to see the light and believe in it. This is a call that Jesus' disciples are invited to live in a unique and privileged way; yet it also finds its way into every human heart. Peace exists; it wants to dwell within us.

It has the gentle power to enlighten and expand our understanding; it resists and overcomes violence. Peace is a breath of the eternal: while to evil we cry out "Enough," to peace we whisper "Forever." Into this horizon the Risen One has led us. Sustained by this conviction... peacemakers continue to resist the spread of darkness, standing as sentinels in the night."

We are called to live into this peace that Jesus prayed for his first followers and for all of his followers down through the centuries. Our world needs us Christians to be people of the resurrection and be focussed upon the forgiveness and new life offered through the empty tomb.

On May 24, across the diocese and around the world, we will celebrate Pentecost and the arrival of the Holy

Spirit. The Spirit that came in wind and fire continues to blow through the Church and call us to live into the peace that Jesus prayed for us. The same Spirit continues to bring wisdom and purpose to all that we do.

On May 29 and 30, we will gather as a diocese for our Mission Conference, and we anticipate the guidance of the Holy Spirit upon us as Christians on this day. We will come together to see and know that the Spirit continues to call, change, renew and strengthen the Church in this day. Come and be part of this, as we celebrate the peace that Jesus offers.

May we live into this season of Easter in a way that gives purpose to all our living, so that indeed we may know the voice of the risen Christ speaking directly to us: Peace be with you. ✠

A stained glass window at St Mary's, Lambeth depicts the events of Pentecost. PHOTO: Fr. Lawrence Lew, OP/Flickr



...while to evil we cry out "Enough," to peace we whisper "Forever."

Clergy & Staffing News

The Rev. Justin Chang has announced his resignation as Rector of All Saints, Burnaby, effective the end of April, 2026. He remains a priest in good standing in the Diocese of New Westminster with permission to officiate and is discerning what his next steps will be. ✠

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The Rev. Vivian Lam returned as Rector of St. John's, Port Moody. She is assisted during this gradual return by the Rev. Angus Stuart. ✠

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



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The Anglican Church in the Lower Mainland, the Fraser Valley, and on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, located on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish First Nations, consisting of 62 parishes and 4 worshipping communities.

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Thank you!

Enjoy the Easter Honeymoon

THE VERY REV. KEN GRAY

The late Christian educator, John Westerhoff, once described the Easter Season as the “honeymoon of the church.” His point is simple - in the Easter season, everything seems to work out, and to work well, through the early stages of the post-resurrection church. Everything is possible; there are no restraints on love’s accomplishments. If there are struggles, help in the form of pentecostal Spirit is on the way.

To all who believe, who welcome the gift of faith, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead will affect and infect the community of Jesus’ followers. Life is sweet in the community of Christ. There are, however, exceptions to such an understanding. Luke’s history in the Book of Acts describes one colossal “whoops” moment. Starting at the end of chapter two, we hear:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common.”

(ACTS 2:42-44)

Such trust in God and in each other - sometimes called “Jerusalem communism” - does not last long. Things change rapidly just three chapters later.

“Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife’s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles’ feet.” (5:1-2)

To say that things don’t go well for both Ananias and Sapphira is an understatement. Once the deceit is discovered, Peter challenges Sapphira:

*Some honeymoon; some church.
Here’s the truth. There is no perfect
church, anywhere, anytime.*

“How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.” (5:9)

Some honeymoon; some church. Here’s the truth. There is no perfect church, anywhere, anytime. I love the quip from the 19th-century preacher and evangelist, Charles Spurgeon. A new Christian once asked for direction to the “perfect church.” Spurgeon had none to suggest, though he suggested that once they found it, they should avoid it, as they would only spoil it. Point taken.

A healthy, honest spirituality acknowledges the beauty and benefits of faith, while engaging the challenges of holy living, both individually and communally. If the message of Easter is inexhaustively positive, experience teaches that the Church has its fair share of problems, of disappointments, of outright failure - you don’t get one without the other.

Presently, our church at every level faces significant evolutionary challenges. Our responsibility is to retain

what is good and beautiful from our tradition, to move through our failures, and to create something beautiful once more. Such is our “living tradition.”

I have always liked the theology of co-creation, so well expressed in the hymn text by Walter Farquharson.

*God who fills the earth with beauty,
God who binds each friend to friend,
God who names us co-creators
God who wills that chaos end;*

Creator God, in Jesus calls us onward, despite failures and setbacks, because there really is no better way to live.

*Grant us now creative spirits,
Minds responsive to your mind,
Hearts and wills your rule extending
All our acts by Love refined. ✠*

The Very Rev. Ken Gray is the former Dean of the Territory of the Peoples. He is involved in the Social Eco-Justice Group of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia/Yukon. In addition to being an avid photographer, he also writes a daily blog, Take Note (<https://take-note.ca/>) where he reflects on life, music, politics, retirement and much more.



St. Paul's Cathedral, Kamloops. PHOTO: Ken Gray

You'll Never Walk Alone

Rev. Brian Choto installed as Rector of St. Alban's, Burnaby

ALICIA AMBROSIO

The Rev. Brian Choto was formally inducted as Rector of St. Alban's church in Burnaby on February 2 - the feast of The Presentation of Christ. The faithful waiting embodied by the prophets Simeon and Anna in the scriptures recall the faithful waiting of the parishioners of St. Alban's, waiting since 2023 for their next rector.

In his sermon, the Rev. Simbarashe Basvi said, “Candlemas is a feast of waiting fulfilled. Simeon waited. Anna waited. Israel waited. And when the moment came, they recognised Christ because their waiting had shaped their faith. St. Alban's, this is your story too. You have waited for Brian. You have prayed, discerned, hoped, interviewed, and waited some more. And you did it with grace and patience. You know how to wait without losing heart. You know how to hold hope without letting it slip away.”

Rev. Basvi said he met Rev. Choto 25 years ago in their native Zimbabwe. They met when Rev. Basvi - then a seminarian - was sent to a parish where Rev. Choto was Rector. “I made all the classic Ordinand mistakes,” Rev. Basvi said. “But Brian was patient. He corrected gently. He guided firmly. He let me grow. He never crushed the zeal of a young ordinand. He shaped it. And that is the mark of a true priest.”

Addressing Rev. Choto, Rev. Basvi said, “Just as Jesus was brought into the Temple: not to be hidden, not to be preserved, but to be revealed, so too your ministry here is not for quiet maintenance but for holy revelation.”

Rev. Choto came from a parish in Zimbabwe with over 1000 parishioners. St. Alban's is smaller. “But hear me clearly: A smaller congregation does not mean a smaller ministry. Sometimes it means deeper ministry. More personal ministry. More transformative ministry. Jesus changed the world with twelve.” Rev. Basvi said.

Turning to a sports metaphor and soccer, Rev. Basvi recalled the Liverpool FB motto and anthem, “YOU WILL NEVER WALK ALONE.”

Brian, as you begin ministry here, remember: You will never walk alone. You have Jesus Christ. You have the Archbishop. The Executive Archdeacon. The Archdeacon. The Regional Dean. Your fellow priests. The wardens and council. The parishioners. And of course, Wendy and Rufaro. This is your team. And this team plays for the Kingdom of God.

Today, we hold the light of Christ again. We place it into your hands, Brian. And into the hands of this parish. May your ministry together be:

- a light to Burnaby • a witness to Christ • and a sign that God still keeps His promises, Rev. Basvi concluded.



Top Left: Archbishop John Stephens and Rev. Brian Choto at the altar during the Celebration of the Eucharist.

Left: Rev. Brian Choto presented as the new Rector of St. Alban's Anglican Church, Burnaby.



Above: Rev. Simbarashe Basvi preaching at the Service

Left: Archbishop John Stephens and Rev. Brian Choto stand together after the formal installation service.

ALL PHOTOS: Alicia Ambrosio

Following the sermon Executive Archdeacon Nick Pang administered the Oaths and Subscriptions and formally issued Rev. Choto's license to officiate in the diocese.

The Venerable Ruth Monette, Archdeacon of Westminster, said a few words welcoming Rev. Choto to the archdeaconry to which St. Alban's belongs. She said “this parish is so excited to have you!” She then said when thinking about a welcome gift to give Rev. Choto she reflected on her own experience as an immigrant to Canada. “I didn't know what my parishioners know about their own history,” so she took it upon herself to learn what her parishioners knew about the history of their country and city. In that spirit she presented Rev. Choto with two books: Canada: A Peoples History and a book about the history of Burnaby.

Rev. Choto was then presented with the symbols of ministry by parishioners before the service continued with Archbishop John Stephens presiding over the Eucharist.

After the service, the parish gathered in the parish hall for fellowship with Rev. Choto, his wife and child.

Mission Conference Weekend 2026: Moved by Mission, Guided by Spirit

In the years following the pandemic, many churches have found themselves asking new and important questions. The disruption of those years changed how we gather, how we connect with our communities and how we understand our calling as the Church. Across the Diocese of New Westminster, clergy and lay leaders alike are sensing that this moment invites us not simply to return to what was, but to listen carefully for where the Holy Spirit may be leading us now.

The Mission Conference Weekend, May 29-31, 2026, invites Anglicans from across the diocese to gather around that discernment. Centered on the theme “Moved by Mission, Guided by Spirit,” the weekend will be a time of prayer, learning and imagination as we explore how the Church is being called to live more deeply into God’s mission in this moment.

Archbishop John Stephens invites Anglicans from across the diocese to participate in this gathering as an opportunity to listen together for the Spirit’s guidance. “This weekend will bring our diocesan family together,” he says. “It is an opportunity to deepen our shared sense of purpose and to imagine the future of ministry in our communities.”

A highlight of the weekend will be the presence of Bishop Michael Curry, former Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, who will serve as the keynote speaker. Known and loved across the Anglican Communion for his joyful proclamation of the Gospel and his call to follow the way of love, Bishop Curry will help guide participants through the theme of the conference and reflect on how the Church can live more faithfully into God’s mission in the world today.

Participants can expect a rich and varied program shaped by voices both from within the diocese and from the wider church. Through workshops and shared conversations, the conference will explore some of the most pressing questions facing the Church today.

How do we proclaim the Gospel in ways that connect with people today? What might it look like to preach

and communicate faith in fresh and creative ways?

How do we continue the Church’s journey of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, not only in word but in practice and relationship?

What does it mean to be missional here and now - in our neighbourhoods, among new generations and in a rapidly changing social landscape?

Participants will also hear from leaders within the diocese who are exploring new expressions of lay ministry, youth ministry and the wisdom Indigenous perspectives

bring to the life of the Church. These conversations will be practical as well as hopeful, offering examples of how parishes are discovering new ways of living into God’s mission.

The conference will also include Open Space gatherings, offering opportunities for reflection and conversation in a variety of settings.

Underlying the entire weekend is a shared recognition that the Church is living through a time of change - but also a time of possibility. Mission Conference Weekend 2026 offers an opportunity to pause together, listen and encourage one another as we step forward into God’s mission.

Anglicans from across the diocese will gather not simply to discuss the future of the Church, but to discern how we might move into that future together, guided by the Spirit. ☩

Continued from page 1



Various forms of art-focused prayer and creative contemplation have become popular in recent years.

Visio Divina is the practice of using artwork to pray. The Centre for Contemplation in Action offers an explanation of Visio Divina on its website, drawn from the writing of Christine Valter Painters. You can read the article by going to <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/visio-divina-a-practice-of-sacred-seeing/>. Further resources can be found at abbeyofhearts.com

The various books by Sr. Wendy Beckett are also good, accessible introductions to one way of experiencing art as meditation and a way of connecting with what God might be saying to us.

Art journaling, or using doodling or painting in prayer can take many forms. Praying in Color offers tips on how to try it out if you’ve never tried it before. prayingincolour.com/praying-in-color

Many spiritual directors incorporate creative practices or art journaling into the spiritual direction journey. ☩

Attendees take part in an Art Journaling workshop at St. Dunstan’s parish. PHOTO: St. Dunstan’s, www.st-dunstans.ca

All are encouraged to submit letters, articles, reports on parish activities, opinion pieces, photos, & more for consideration to be published in Topic

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