

Faith in Action



Anglicans from across the diocese gather at the legislature buildings in a Circle of Support for First Nations demonstrators

Circle of Solidarity: Voices from the Salmon Frontlines

by Terry Jones

On Thursday, November 2, members of the diocese joined a gathering of First Nations, environmentalists and concerned citizens in front of the B.C. legislature to protest against open-net fish farms. The protest follows the occupation of two Marine Harvest farms by First Nations and environmentalists in the Broughton Archipelago at the northeastern coast of Vancouver Island. Protestors wanted to remind the provincial government of their campaign promise to “make sure that these territories and the North Island are cleared of fish farms.”

Chief Ernest Alfred, traditional leader of the ‘Namgis First Nation watched as a sacred fire was lit below the steps of the legislature. He said, “the sacred fire is important because it’s the sound of our ancestors.” He told protestors, “it is important to break down the barriers that cause these problems. The coastline coming all the way down is our territory—the land claims have not been settled here.”

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs travelled from the Okanagan to join the protest. He said he was encouraged by the success shown by First Nations working together to stop projects such as Northern Gateway and Pacific Northwest LNG.

There was a strong diocesan turnout at the demonstration—with representation from the top of the island to the southern tip in Victoria. Lincoln McKoen, incumbent at Christ Church, Alert Bay, St. George, Kingcome Inlet, Fort Rupert, and St. Olaf, Quatsino, attended with his wife, Tanya Packer-McKoen, Incumbent, Manager and Facilitator at Kwakwaka’wakw Contextualized Anglican Church Society. He said, “One of our commitments to reconciliation is to support Nations’ territorial rights—to support them in their struggle for the rights that they’ve always had that were taken away and are being abused.”

Alastair McCollum, Archdeacon of Tolmie region, said, “I am standing here in solidarity, as are

we all, with the Musgamagw of the Broughton Archipelago, and we are encouraging them in their reassertion of their rights to the traditional territories that they have farmed for 14,000 years.” He continued, “the bishop asked me to say that this is not about the science of fish farms, it’s about the reassertion of land rights which are already established and already there, and we stand with them, offering any support we can.”



First Nations’ protestors in front of the sacred fire

Lon Towstego, archdeacon of Selkirk region and the rector of St. Peter & St. Paul, Esquimalt, said, “We are honoured to be here today standing in solidarity with our sisters and brothers from First Nations around this island . . . we feel that it’s Faith in Action—

God’s work—to be here with the people today, prayerfully standing with them.

Craig Hiebert, regional dean (Tolmie) and rector, St. Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay, said, “we have been operating on the illusion that we are people of privilege when, all the time, we are ignoring people who have been here before . . . and pretend that we have all the answers when in fact we don’t. We need to be here in order to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our sisters and brothers so we can learn from them and also so we can be partners in a matter of justice.”

The fight against open-net fish farms is nothing new—it has been active for more than 30 years. Willie Moon, Chief of the Musgamagw Dzawda’enuxw First Nation believes that without change the next generation won’t know wild salmon.

Nanaimo NDP MLA Leonard Krog spoke to the crowd, saying, “You have a new government in Victoria that is committed to implementing the United Nations

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.” Let’s hope and pray this government lives up to its promises.



Advent • Christmas • Epiphany



Photo: Diocesan Post

Bishop Logan Writes

We have begun our annual journey through three great seasons of the church. A sacred journey that has the potential, possibility and promise to shape and transform us as individuals and as a community of faith on the islands and inlets.

Advent - Prepare the way of the Lord

We begin our year again hearing the words of the prophet calling us to get ready because God is about to perform a great act. Prepare, get ready, be expectant and anticipate, for something is about to take place. We are called to be attentive, to stay awake, to watch and be surprised because God will appear in the strangest

and most unexpected ways.

Christmas - God with us

We celebrate the incarnation of God performing this great act. The apostle Paul tells us that when the time was right God sent his Son into the world. God is present and active in our world. God engages humanity and invites us to join in the work of the kingdom. God invites all to meet and greet the babe who will become the Prince of Peace, the one through whom God will bring his reconciliation.

Epiphany - Back to their own country, a different route

We, like the Magi, follow the star and take the good news home—this home where we live. These islands, these inlets, these mountains and valleys are our home. How are we sharing the light of Christ in our homes? How are we living a different way? How are we, each alone or as a parish, manifesting the reality and presence of God in our midst? In all of this we are called to see and hear in new ways—to see and hear beyond the obvious; to see in the ordinary and the unexpected and to hear the voices that are difficult and

hard to hear; to hear the ones we normally might not notice, those on the hills and outside the margins of our sight. As we journey again through these familiar stories, let us pause and wait and hear as ambassadors of Christ, for God is making us ministers of reconciliation. As individuals and as a diocese, what new way will God lead us today and tomorrow?

May God richly bless you as you journey through these seasons of the church year. May you know the humility, the perseverance and the community of shepherds and magi; and in all your journeys may you be blessed by the peace of the Christ Child.

Bishop's Calendar

December

- 1-2 Ministry Discernment Weekend
- 3 Church of the Advent, Parish Visitation & Confirmation
- 5 CCC Buildings Ltd. AGM and Directors' Meeting
- 7 Archdeacons' meeting
- 12 Ordination of Paul Schumacher, St. Peter & St. Paul, Esquimalt
- 14 Finance Committee meeting
- 21 Diocesan Council meeting
- 24 Christ Church Cathedral

Incarnation and Journey

On a hillside and in a manger,
with the poor and by the prophet,
in the traveler and the resident,
a voice of heaven and humanity,
the silence of eternity and the city.

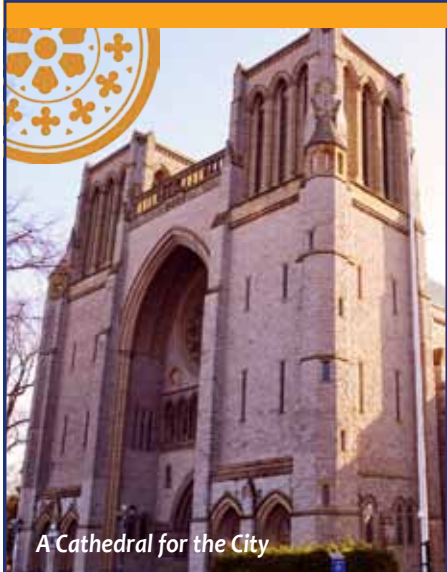
Weary legs and tired minds,
sleepy eyes and troubled souls,
eager and reluctant,
expectant and surprised,
on the edge and at the core.

Through the pain and celebration,
by the memory and in the story,
with the old and through the young,
in the song and by the poet,
at the dance and with the feast,

God comes to us
in the heart and through the journey.

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Submissions

News, letters and other articles are welcome. Please limit articles to 500 words and letters to 200 words. Submissions must include name and contact information of the author.

Pictures must be a resolution of 300 DPI and in sharp focus. Clearly and accurately identify the name of all subjects as well as the person who took the picture.

New Submission Deadlines

January issue - November 28
February issue - December 28
March issue - January 28
April issue - February 28
May issue - March 28
June issue - April 28
September issue - July 28
October issue - August 28
November issue - September 28
December issue - October 28

All material is subject to editing.

Volume 51, No 10

Humanitarian Aid for Myanmar Refugees

PWRDF Corner

By Geoff Strong



"Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you". - Matthew 5:42

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) contributed \$20,000 in October towards a food relief project in Bangladesh for Muslim Rohingya refugees, recently escaping violence in Myanmar. This project is carried out through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB), also partnered by many other Canadian

churches. The combined effort will provide about 18,000 Rohingya refugees with emergency rations of rice, lentils, oil, sugar, salt and high energy biscuits for three months. CFGB program manager, Matthew Van Geest, indicated they "are continuing to monitor the situation of the Rohingya refugees closely, to see if there is an additional food response needed. This coordinated response means less administrative work for individual NGOs, and less risk to local partners working on the ground in difficult situations."

For decades, the Rohingya have suffered discrimination and loss of basic rights in Myanmar, a majority Buddhist nation. Almost 600,000 Rohingya have fled to

squalid, muddy refugee camps in Bangladesh since August 25, when the military began a wave of rape, killing and village burning, following attacks on security posts by a Rohingya militant group. The Myanmar government responded against the Rohingya with disproportionate violence. Entire villages have been destroyed, and there has been widespread panic and flight. The United Nations high commissioner for human rights called the campaign a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing."

Bangladesh is a reluctant host, being an extremely poor country with a population of over 160 million. PWRDF Humanitarian Response Coordinator, Naba

Gurung, says that Rohingya refugees "are making huts wherever they find some space, but they are running out of space in the existing settlements, with a majority of people staying in the open. Many people are arriving hungry and exhausted, with no food or water. Most of them have walked 50 to 60 kilometers for up to six days, and are in dire need of food, water, shelter and protection." A UNICEF report indicates that more than half of the refugees are children, many of them orphaned, starving, in need of medical attention, and at risk of being captured by roving gangs and thrown into human trafficking. These children are seeing 'hell on Earth'. PWRDF continues to monitor this situation, and at

this writing, the situation is being complicated by tropical storms battering Bangladesh.

If you would like to give a gift to a needy family through the PWRDF Global Relations program this Christmas, consider the 2017 PWRDF World of Gifts catalogue in your November and December Anglican Journal, or at www.giving.anglican.ca/worldofgifts. Many of these gifts are matched 6X by Global Affairs Canada. And visit www.pwrdf.org for more information on PWRDF, or contact the PWRDF Diocesan Representative, Geoff Strong at geoff.strong@shaw.ca. Geoff is also available to give a presentation on PWRDF at your parish.

Christmas at St. John the Divine

Advent Procession Sunday, December 3 at 7:30 p.m.

A moving sequence of readings, hymns, anthems, and motets exploring the themes of Advent. Sung by The Choristers of St. John the Divine.

Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 10 at 4:00 p.m.

Urban outdoor retelling of the Nativity Story – rain or shine, dress appropriately! Barbecue & hot apple cider.

Lessons and Carols for Christmas Sunday, December 17 at 7:30 p.m.

The traditional carol service first made popular through the Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College Cambridge. Traditional Christmas hymns, readings, and choral carols sung by The Choristers of St. John the Divine.

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Christmas Eve Sunday, December 24 at 4:00 p.m.

All-Age Celebration of the Nativity Story

Bring the whole family and rejoice at the birth of Christ. Children, especially, are invited to participate in the telling of the Christmas story in word and song.

Holy Communion for Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m.

An opportunity to share in a Eucharist for Christmas if the Midnight Mass is a little late. With the Community Choir of St. John the Divine.

Midnight Mass at 11:00 p.m.

The festive Christmas Eucharist including traditional carols and candlelight. The Choristers of St. John the Divine

Christmas Day Monday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.
Christmas Communion



St John the Divine Anglican Church

Refugee Program Update

By Brian Rendell

The reality of a growing and overwhelming population of refugees needing assistance, and a huge surge in public interest in supporting refugees to Canada, presented the country and our diocese with a major challenge in 2015. Many churches and groups became active in refugee work, and those previously engaged upped their game. Notable among these is the Diocese of British Columbia, which, responding to a pressing humanitarian need, a Christian moral imperative, and a demand-driven process, went from sponsoring less than a dozen

refugees to 350 in just under two years, making us one of the largest sponsoring programs in BC.

This program, which previously had been run almost exclusively through Anglican parishes, now includes a large number of volunteers from other churches and the broader community. As the volume of the work increased, the refugee coordinator and the Diocesan Refugee Committee (DRC) required administrative support to process the large number of applications and to train and support the growing number of sponsorship groups, which represent over 800 volunteers.

Some time ago the diocese agreed to cover the costs of two part-time staff as program coordinators to do this essential work.

Sponsoring refugees, which in many cases amounts literally to saving lives, is supportive of the diocesan vision, in particular "Engaging In God's World." This program has been hugely successful in sponsoring refugees, raising the work of the church in the eyes of the community, and forming ecumenical connections. However, the dramatic growth was responsive to an emergency need in 2015 and the program grew organically without the

benefit of a long-term strategy. Over the past several months the DRC has undertaken a program review and planning process to remedy this shortcoming. This past Saturday the DRC presented the Diocesan Council with an in-depth view of the program, its successes and challenges, and asked for guidance on the level of continuing involvement, and for continued funding. The Council, clearly moved by "the song of the spirit" of compassion for the refugees, unanimously supported the continuation of the program and increased financial support.

Diocesan success in refugee

sponsorship is due to an amazing partnership across our Anglican parishes and with other churches and the larger community. The DRC, led by chairperson Sandra Scarth, has had the benefit of dedicated and able volunteers and program coordinators, Tony Davis and Rebecca Siebert. However the need is great, the work of the DRC is growing, and the committee is small. We would welcome with open arms additional volunteers with a passion to support "the stranger in need." If you would like to join us please contact Rebecca Siebert (rsiebert@bc.anglican.ca) or Tony Davis (tdavis@bc.anglican.ca).

The Inaugural Cowichan Camino Pilgrimage

by Phyllis Thompson

After some overseas experiences and discovering how much walking can be “a way of emotional and spiritual healing and renewal,” the Rev. Selinde Krayenhoff and husband, the Rev. Jim Holland, dreamt of creating “a route in the Cowichan Valley that would allow Anglicans to experience pilgrimage without the expense and effort of traveling abroad. Pilgrims would enjoy the joys of walking while journeying between different churches in the diocese.” (see DP, May 2017)

The Cowichan Camino’s inaugural trek took place this past Thanksgiving weekend (Oct. 7/8): a 25-km distance from the Glenora trail head near St. John the Baptist, Duncan to Sts. Christopher and Aidan, Lake Cowichan; twelve people walked. At an opening brief time of prayer, the pilgrims heard that “one should saunter, and reverently, not hike” on trails like this – “our Holy Land” (John Muir)—and that “pilgrimage is a kind of journeying that marks a move from mindless to mindful, soulless to soulful, travel. The difference may be subtle or dramatic: by definition it is life-changing.” (Phil Cousineau) The journey began in the

morning and people reached Lake Cowichan in time for a special Vespers service in the church, then a full Thanksgiving dinner put on by the parish. The pilgrims enjoyed sharing that meal with parishioners, families, and neighbours. Overnight accommodations were available for the saunterers, so all but two were there on Sunday for breakfast, again well provided by the parish, and the Thanksgiving Eucharist. The hospitality continued at the post-liturgy coffee hour, and one thing the pilgrims could not say enough was “Thanks” at how gracious and wonderful that hospitality was, in every detail, those two days.

I was able to interview the pilgrims Sunday morning; I asked if any had made this kind of journey before, what their expectations were if any, and how they felt about the experience—as individuals and as part of a group of fellow travelers on the same journey. What follows is a blend of their comments.

A number of the travelers said they walk regularly, some daily, and some take hikes; but most were unfamiliar with this kind of walk, and were prepared to be open to whatever occurred on



Cowichan Camino pilgrims set to begin their journey. L to R: Sr. Dorothy Grace Tam, SSJD; Sr. Brenda Jenner, SSJD; the Rev. Jim Holland; the Rev. Selinde Krayenhoff(kneeling); Lois Herda; Ruth Dantzer; Peter Fowler; Bishop Logan; Hamish, the bishop’s 9-year old grandson; Rachel Reynolds; Sr. Amy Joy Wong, SSJD; and Tony Reynolds

the trek. All found the time and walk prayerful, others healing as well; all indicated they trusted that aspects of what they’d experienced would “percolate” in mind and heart later. Some indicated they appreciated the combination of having some “alone time” mixed with various conversations along the way. All sensed the fellowship of a shared endeavour, felt it created an atmosphere of mutual energy. Aware that this was different than what’s thought of as a retreat, they felt that a pilgrimage gives a sense of accomplishing the same thing at the same time, that a bonding occurs when sharing something outside one’s usual daily activities.

All the pilgrims spoke reverently about their response to Nature—the trees, the fascinating blend of maples rising up from within the dense conifers, the mosses, the variegated shades of green, the blend of silence and bird song. This kind of walk allowed them to stop, listen and absorb. Connectedness to God’s creation was palpable: here was this design, not orchestrated or manipulated, yet not chaotic. Here a person could just let it be and rejoice; here one could be fed by part of God’s gift to us.

Selinde Krayenhoff had to return to her home parish Sunday morning, but Jim Holland and Bishop Logan both said it was

intentional to hold the inaugural walk on the Thanksgiving weekend. Its success, as the bishop said, means an annual Cowichan Camino is not only do-able, but may work into the creation of more trails of different lengths, perhaps interconnected, where parishes can be involved along the way. The retrospective benefit to each pilgrim, to each heart and mind, can only be a plus. As Krayenhoff wrote in May: “When on pilgrimage, the walk is the way. Not what one had hoped for, expected, or intended. Whatever one is presented with is what the pilgrimage is all about. What happens is the walk. How one deals with it is the learning.”

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Advent and Christmas 2017

DEC.1	7.30 pm	SOOKE COMMUNITY CHOIR Christmas Concert
DEC.3	4.30 pm	ADVENT CAROL SERVICE
DEC.4	7.00 pm	VICTORIA CHILDREN’S CHOIR Christmas Concert
DEC.6	6.00 pm	ST MICHAEL’S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL Christmas Concert
DEC.10	9.15 am 4.30 pm	CHILDREN’S NATIVITY PLAY ADVENT II: CHRISTMAS IN THE CITY Tales of generosity, hope, and belonging
DEC.13	7.00 pm	GLENLYON NORFOLK SCHOOL Christmas Concert
DEC.17	4.30 pm	A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS
DEC.20	6.00 Pm	CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL SCHOOL Christmas Concert
DEC.23	7.30 pm	THE NIGHT BEFORE THE NIGHT BEFORE with CapriCCio Vocal Ensemble
DEC.24	8.00 am 10.30 am 4.00 pm 10.00 pm	SAID EUCHARIST SUNG MATTINS FAMILY EUCHARIST SOLEMN HIGH MASS OF THE NATIVITY
DEC.25	8.00 am 10.30 am	SAID EUCHARIST SUNG EUCHARIST
DEC.31	8.00 am 10.30 am 2.00 pm	SAID EUCHARIST STORY SUNDAY COMBINED EUCHARIST MESSIAEN’S NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR performed by Donald Hunt, Director of Music at CCC

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Women's Retreat: Rekindling the Fire Within

By Barb Coleman

Rule of Life: Love God, Love Neighbour, Love Self. This was the theme of October's Diocesan Women's Retreat held at Camp Pringle. Facilitator the Rev. Canon Dr. Dawna Wall incorporated the theme of Trinity within Trinities (Hildegard of Bingen) as she encouraged us to see God in everything and see how each aspect of the trinity symbol can be stretched or shrunk as we bump up against the complex characters we meet in daily life. In her opening conference she acknowledged that we come from many places, bringing many spiritual experiences. One common experience within each journey is a time of "longing to rekindle the fire within." She hoped we would make space for everything, see

everything as prayer and be open to making connections of our own stories to God's story as we reflect on the two great commandments, scripture, literature and mystical writers. The meditation and worship sessions, led by the Rev. Clara Plamondon, with music by Diane Bell (including the theme song *I Will Kindle My Fire*), supported the retreat's conferences. A focal point throughout was the altar set with icons of Hildegard of Bingen, Teresa of Avila and Brigid of Kildare, a golden bowl and a shifting 'fire pit' around which stories were told. Dawna commented that the bowl, representing the centre of our being, is God filled with "a spirit of power, love and self-discipline" (2Tim.1:7) which enables us to live a wholehearted life.

In the *Loving Self with Body, Mind and Spirit* session, Dawna noted that for us to live a wholehearted life we need to accept God's mercy and accept that we are worthy to stand in God's presence. This takes being vulnerable, willing to embrace and be embraced, to forgive and be forgiven. She encouraged us to engage in what nurtures us and to hold on to those who care for us. She asked, "What are we modelling to others if not taking care of self?" We need to shift gears and move to a quiet space to grow, see the Light and find God's place inside of us. Just as God's story weaves through complex characters, so does ours. We need to create safe boundaries and live from this "interior castle." (Teresa) She encouraged us to pray through every moment of every day (Benedictine rule, Celtic

practice) and work from our gifts and strengths.

In the session *Loving Neighbour* and focusing on stories of Martha, Mary, Lazarus and Jesus, Dawna pointed out that at times our gifts or needs overlap and may cause us to open up or cause us irritation. The challenge is to keep our egos in balance and use God-given gifts from a balanced place. Noting anxiety is a major 'binding' today that needs to be 'unbound', Dawna encouraged us to work from an enabling perspective and make space for the gifts of the 'other'. Grateful that God is ever present, we should go with gratitude at the pace of the most vulnerable in relationship-building. We should strive to create safe spaces in which to seek common ground.

In *Loving God*, Dawna commented that we have a desire to return and stay in spaces where we have experienced God, but she challenged us to see the Holy in everyday things. We are called to put our whole self into loving God. Dawna said it is important to remember we are made in God's image. She encouraged us to seek ways of holding emotions and needs in balance in a pattern that rekindles the deep, deep joy within and helps us let go of all our fears. A part of loving God is to seek signs of Mystery—internally and externally in our worlds—and continue to tell the story of God's love for us as we continue as companions on the journey.

Shalom in the City

By Rev. Alastair Hunting

This past summer I had the opportunity to take an intensive week-long course at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto. The course was called "The Mission of the Church in the City." It offered perspective and insight into ways of being the Church in 21st century Canada, paying particular attention to engaging with people, community and institutions outside the walls of the church building. The course looked at contemporary urban and town planning models which are seeking to combat "backyarding"—encouraging

people to be more engaged with their neighbours, community, and the world outside. It asked students to consider the spaces we inhabit in our homes and churches and to seek opportunities to widen our spheres.

The course also looked at the politics and dynamics which shape urban life—ways in which wealth and power contribute to poverty and homelessness. The course encouraged us as individuals and as a church to get involved in civic politics and concerns in our communities in order to "seek the שְׁלוֹם (shalom)

of our towns and cities," ways in which the church can influence, advocate and effect greater peace, friendliness, health, prosperity, and closeness for all in the community." We looked at the role of towns and cities in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the New Testament. In many ways cities often get a bad rap in our thinking as Christians and in the way we interpret the Bible. In fact, cities played an important role in the social, cultural and religious world of Israel and the Ancient Mediterranean. Jesus' ministry took place on the outskirts of cities and

Paul's travels and letter-writing happened in urban areas. In the Hebrew Scripture, Abraham is called from his homelands in Mesopotamia, in search of a "great city." Cities provided and still provide, a place of refuge, safety, and community, especially for vulnerable people.

Overall, I took a lot away from this course. My current ministry in Port Hardy brings me and our church at St. Columba's face-to-face with many complex contemporary social and deeply-rooted spiritual questions and issues. I left the course more convinced than

ever that the gospel of Christ is a gospel of inclusion and that our church here is called to be "salt and light." Let us, therefore, as the local church and diocese, continue to seek ways of outreach and inclusion, broaden our horizons, and above all, seek the LORD's שְׁלוֹם (shalom).

Rev. Alastair Hunting is the rector of St. Columba's in Port Hardy. He has a background in street ministry and chaplaincy.

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The Doctor Who Wrote a Bestseller



Reflections

By Herbert O'Driscoll

Dante called Luke “*The Scribe of Jesus’ Gentleness*” and the title is richly deserved. To meet Luke we go to Antioch, capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. The year is 66 AD. Luke is in his early to mid-sixties...

When the letter arrived, hastened by courier from Rome, he knew even before breaking the seal the news it was bringing him. Still, when he did bring himself to read it, it was no less saddening. Paul was dead.

He had already heard of the disintegration of political life in Rome, all brought about by the viciousness of Nero. To

cap it all, a fire had started in the slums, devouring much of the city, following which the growing Christian community had become the scapegoat. In the last few months he had heard of the deaths of many friends. Now death had ended the great friendship of his life.

He began to reminisce. He and Saul, as he then called himself, had met in the university in Tarsus: Luke himself from Syria, trying to decide if he really wished to do medicine, Saul quite certain he would do Jewish Law.

He had often wondered how in the world their friendship had begun, much less lasted. They had been utterly different. He himself easy-going, sensitive, open to the world and to people; Saul, restless, intense, argumentative.

More memories came. In those days a group in the university was forming around the teaching of a rabbi from Galilee who recently had been executed by the Romans. Back then Luke had found it difficult to understand what the

community meant when they claimed Jesus of Nazareth was somehow alive among them. Only when he himself later became one of the community did this begin to make sense to him.

Saul, on the other hand, had been adamantly against the group. He would never forget the day he told Saul he had become a follower of the rabbi of Nazareth. Curtly, Saul had declared their friendship ended. He had been devastated.

They didn’t meet for a decade. He heard of Saul’s becoming an implacable enemy of the Jesus movement. He recalled taking the risk of seeking out Saul, trying desperately to reason with him. The encounter had been painful in the extreme and had ended in utter failure. A few months later he had been appalled at being told that his old friend had actually hounded a young Christian leader named Stephen to his death.

Then out of the blue he had received the unbelievable news that Saul had had a complete and astonishing change of heart.

At first he had dismissed the news as wishful thinking in the Christian community. When it persisted he again sought Saul. This time he could not believe the difference in what he found. Saul claimed to have had a direct experience of the presence of Jesus of Nazareth. He even refused to bear the name Saul anymore, declaring himself ready to become the champion of the Christian movement. This he would do as Paul of Tarsus.

Everything had changed. Their friendship had rekindled. Paul gave the community a much larger vision of the significance of Jesus and of what he could mean for the world. The movement had grown exponentially.

But now Paul was dead, executed by a lunatic who wielded ultimate power as Emperor. In his grief, Luke let the letter drop from his hand. He leaned down to pick it up and in that moment, in a kind of blinding flash he discovered what he had to do with the rest of his life. He would become chronicler of all that was happening in the new Christian movement.

Yes, John, Mark and Matthew had written manuscripts; but, by background and his extensive travels, he would write for Greeks and Romans and Syrians like himself. He, Luke, could write about Jesus for the empire.

And so Luke did. As evangelist, physician, historian, he has given us an incomparable record of Jesus’ compassion—of his wisdom, his gift of healing, his death on the Cross and his rising. For over two thousand years humanity has been in Luke’s debt, and will be so as long as men and women seek the grace and love of the Man of Nazareth.

Perhaps most important of all is a gift that Luke alone has given us. It may have come from his meeting Jesus’ mother, by then in her mature years. Perhaps it is from that conversation that Luke could give us the incomparable language with which we express to this day the beauty, wonder and majesty of the season we will soon call Christmas.

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Christmas Without Gordon

by Adela Torchia

At Christmas, many people's hearts have holes in them where a lost loved one resides. Increasingly in our province of B.C., such loved ones may have been lost to opioid drug overdoses, with over a thousand such deaths by the end of August this year. Our family joined these swelling numbers on September 11 when my twenty-year-old grandson, Gordon, succumbed to this epidemic. His death was no surprise since he'd spent winter 2015 in Victoria's Tent City; then after the summer months back home in Winnipeg, he headed to Vancouver just before Christmas last year. Promising his mother that he'd try to get home for the summer, instead he stayed to enjoy Vancouver's lovely dry summer this year—a treat for the homeless after winters of being continually wet with foot rot and other attendant afflictions.

On one level, Gordon was homeless by choice since his Grandpa in Winnipeg kept a bedroom for him; but after graduating high school and being unable to find a job (partly due to his step-dad not allowing jobs during high school), he became increasingly desperate and alienated from a culture in which he could not succeed. His

upbringing contained various factors to which this “interfering grandmother” objected—but in retrospect it's quite possible that everyone involved was doing the best they could understand to do.

Even without a problematic upbringing, many young people in our society today reach terrible levels of alienation and despair in a culture where they may never be able to afford a family home, and where the world is so challenged by violence, greed and indifference towards so many aspects of earthly suffering. Lies, corruption, dishonesty and apathy can easily seem overwhelming, and drug dealers are lurking on many corners to try and hook the discouraged youth into a quick fix or euphoric high—and of course, each time the high and its duration decrease, creating the craving for bigger doses consumed more often.

After the paramedics found Gordon on the street in cardiac arrest, did extensive CPR to restart his heart, and brought him to St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, his mother, uncle and I travelled there for what would become the last few days of his earthly journey. The ICU staff was fantastically caring given how swamped the staff

had been with such cases for so long. Amazingly they also allow other street friends to visit the dying patient if family allows, so we got a close-up view of these deep and caring street family relationships. Seeing Gordon's life support breathing tubes and his unconscious state, some said to us, “But he's gonna be okay, right? He overdosed before as many of us have also done, and we all recover, right?” No, we had to tell them, no—Gordon was likely brain dead and would probably have to be taken off life support soon. The great tears of anguish that were shed not only by blood family but by street family members was a sight to behold, and the caring staff treated everyone with the utmost dignity.

Just before Christmas 2016, Gordon messaged me to ask for a Christmas gift of bus fare from Calgary to Vancouver, and I told him that I could not countenance paying his way to the fentanyl drug capitol of Canada. So he said, with his characteristic affection and humour, “Okay Grandma, then I'll just have to hitchhike my frozen ass over the Coquihalla.” The Christmas before when he was in Victoria's Tent City, and I was up-island at a sumptuous feast, I felt the contrast between

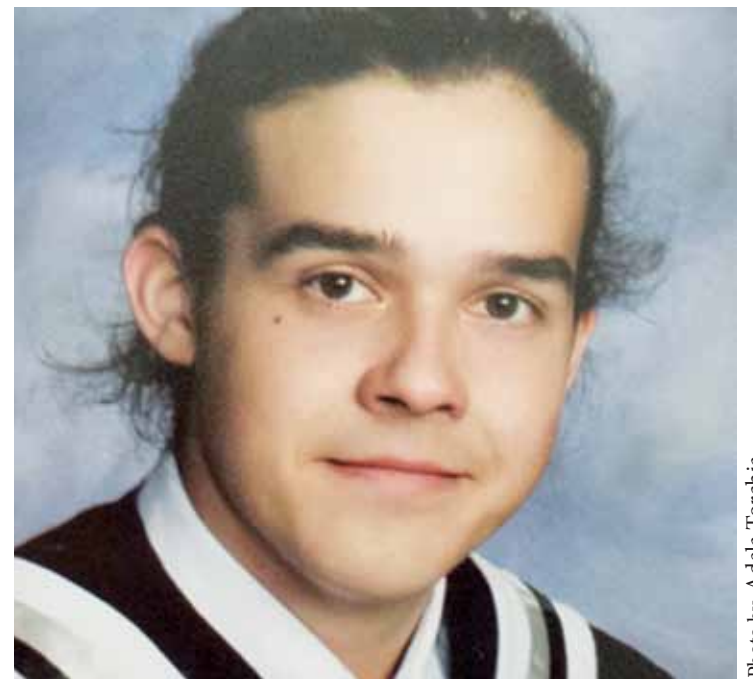


Photo by Adela Torchia

Gordon Daniel Matthew Torchia, high school graduation

his circumstances and mine so strongly, that I was apparently very poor company and will likely never be invited there again (phew!).

And what will this Christmas hold for me and for so many who mourn the loss of a loved one in such circumstances? It will be sad, of course, remembering the sweet little boy as he grew up, the affable teenager so caring and loving to so many—seeing others about his age enjoying the gifts and the feasts all around. And yet we know we are not alone both amongst the living

who also cherish the memory of their lost loved ones, and amongst the heavenly chorus, now potentially including these lost souls who could not manage to make their way in this world, who ‘burned too brightly’ so their light diminished and disappeared too soon. Perhaps with the ears of our hearts we'll hear them humming soft carols filtered through the starlight—angels we have heard on high sweetly singing ...

O come thou Day-Spring, come and cheer ... and death's dark shadows put to flight.

St. Peter and St. Paul Embraces New Ministry Centre in Esquimalt

by Lon Towstego

At the parish of St. Peter and St. Paul, we live by the parish vision, “Embracing and Spreading God's Love.” We also walk with the diocesan vision close to our hearts. As keepers of the vision, it is our belief, hope and prayer that the new housing complex and the ministry centre will further God's work through us in the area.

Our preparatory role has been to drill deep into our parish life, vision, ministries and activities to identify and answer important “why” questions about this development. We are hearing and responding very specifically to the voices of partners around us.

The Township of Esquimalt has identified a need for affordable seniors housing and for responses and alternatives to social isolation.

We are in ongoing conversation with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations and look to find ways to further our relationships

with them. We seek to be action takers with the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We are consulting and asking for their wisdom as we move forward.

The Navy Base, Military Family Resource Center and others have raised the need for intergenerational opportunities and this is another area of focus.

We see the new facility as offering modern amenities for 2018 and beyond—as offering an open community centre feeling that we trust will *Engage God's World*. We see this in the form of being an inviting, open, warm God-centred, Christ-led space for people to gather and to live well together. We are excited to live this next chapter in the story of our parish community.

The Ven. Lon Towstego, is rector of St. Peter and St. Paul, Esquimalt and Archdeacon, Selkirk

Diocesan Council Meetings 2018

St. Paul, Nanaimo **Jan 20 Saturday**
St. Dunstan, Gordon Head **Feb 22 Thursday**
St. John, S. Cowichan **Mar 24 Saturday**

SYNOD 2018 Apr 20-22
Church of the Advent, Colwood
May 31 Thursday

Trinity Church, Port Alberni
Jun 28 Thursday
St. Philip, Cedar **Sep 27 Thursday**
St. Matthias, Victoria **Oct 27 Saturday**
Christ Church Cathedral **Nov 22 Thursday**
St. John the Divine, Victoria **Dec 20 Thursday**

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FAIR & HOLLY TEA

St. Peter, Lakehill Saturday, December 2 10:30am-2pm



High Tea: \$10
Two Sittings: 11:45am and 1:00pm
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Priorities Set at Diocesan Council Meeting

Fly on the Wall

By Catherine Pate

This regular column reports on the activities and decision of Diocesan Council—the “synod between synods” of our diocese.

Ansley Tucker (Christ Church Cathedral) and Tony Davis (St. Philip by-the-Sea), members of the newly-established diocesan stewardship committee (other members: Joy Adams Bauer—St. Paul, Alastair Hunting—St. Columba, Stephen Martin—synod office) presented possible diocesan-wide financial campaign models for input by Diocesan Council. This committee will work with Brian Evans, diocesan stewardship officer, over the coming months to develop a five-year financial campaign plan for the diocese which will be presented to Synod 2018 for approval.

Stewardship Plan Guiding Principles

- Emphasize our partnership in the continued implementation of our shared diocesan vision.
- Generate additional diocesan resources which parishes can

- access for ministry and mission in their local context.
- Increase capacity in parishes, by providing professional assistance in fundraising which might otherwise be beyond their reach.
- Ensure that the diocese can continue to provide financial, human resources, communications, asset management and episcopal support and ministry to parishes.
- Encourage a culture of stewardship and regular fundraising in the diocese.
- Continue to build trust between the synod office and parishes.
- Allow for responsiveness to new or emergent ideas and needs.

More information regarding the diocesan stewardship plan will be shared in future issues.

Refugee Sponsorship Program Presentation

Sandra Scarth, chair of the Diocesan Refugee Sponsorship Program committee, along with Brian Rendell (Bishop’s representative) and Rebecca Siebert and Tony Davis, diocesan refugee program coordinators, presented an update to council on the committee’s work over the last year and made the following

- requests of council:
- The diocesan council approves, in principle, the continuation of the program as an integral program of the diocese.
 - That council approve a five-year program plan.
 - Help recruiting for the committee and constituent (sponsoring) groups.

Diocesan Council acknowledged and thanked the committee for its hard work and moved a motion of support to seek ways (referred to Finance Committee) to financially support the program into the future.

Committee on the Elections of a Bishop

The committee is working on making changes to the canon to bring it up-to-date with national guidelines and practice.

Catherine Pate is the diocesan communications officer.

Faith in Foundation

Personnel Updates

Inductions

Mary-Jane Leewis-Kirk—St. Peter, Quamichan, Sep 9
Meagan Crosby-Shearer—St. Matthias, Victoria, Oct 16

Ordinations

Paul Schumacher— St Peter & St Paul, Esquimalt, Dec 12 at 4PM

Appointments

September

Alan Naylor, interim priest-in-charge at St. Paul, Nanaimo, Sept 1
Ruth Dantzer, permanent UVic chaplain, Sep 1
Brian Evans, diocesan stewardship officer, Sep 1
Greg Lynn, interim priest-in-charge St Mary of the Incarnation, Metchosin, Sep 10

October

Peter Parker— interim priest-in-charge, Parish of

Central Saanich, Oct 1
Blair Haggart—regional dean, Haro, Oct 1
Anthony Divinagracia— interim regional dean, Nimpkish, Oct 4
Bruce Bryant-Scott— interim priest-in-charge, St. Dunstan, Victoria, Oct 16
John Steele—incumbent, St. John the Baptist, South Cowichan, Oct 16

Resignations

September

Philip Wadham—interim priest-in-charge St. Mary of the Incarnation, Metchosin, Sep 3
Rob Szo—incumbent, Parish of Central Saanich, Sep 25

October

John Steele—incumbent, St. Dunstan, Victoria, Oct 15
Bill Poppy, Deacon, Oct 16
Richard Stetson, Parish of Salt Spring January 31, 2018

There are several ways someone may find themselves serving on Diocesan Council. Each region of the diocese elects a clergy and a lay representative. Additional members are elected from the floor of Synod. Others may be appointed, either by the bishop or by Council itself. There is provision for one or more youth representatives (aged 16 to 25 according to the Canons). Diocesan officers are ex officio members, while synod office staff attend with voice, but no vote.

Update on Esquimalt’s New Ministry Centre

by Peter Daniel

One of my first challenges as Asset Manager was to meet with folks from St. Peter and St. Paul’s Esquimalt to start the process of building renewal with them. Now, after several years and countless reports, meetings and input, the project has been submitted for rezoning with the Town of Esquimalt. This journey has not been without a lot of study, concern and change to plans and process.

Throughout, Lon Towstego has participated as an anxious “Shepherd” for his parish flock. Many have been involved deeply; the project is where it is thanks to Lon, Bob Brandle, Chris Pease, Ron Wall, the residents of the Hermitage, wardens and parishioners and many others sharing and working towards a solution that meets our diocesan vision. That vision calls us to use our assets more effectively by sharing them more widely to create new community partnerships.

The result is a new building concept which physically links a new Ministry Centre on the main floor of a new five-story building with the heritage church. Finally, after 150 years, the church will have direct connection with its Ministry Centre. The church may be used for a lot more activities and the Ministry Centre can offer a wide range of services for public engagement. The upper four levels of the new building will provide 24 affordable rental units for independent seniors.

Financing is being provided by the diocese and BC Housing through their Provincial Initiative for Affordable Housing. The diocese and CMHC have provided pre-development funding. Rogers Court Society is sponsoring the project as BC Housing requires “not for profit” Society sponsorship to qualify for funding.

As the project proceeds through rezoning, it will require a Heritage Alteration Permit to connect the new building with the heritage

church. It will also require subdivision of the property to protect the Hermitage Seniors Life Lease project located here, the diocese as underlying land owner, and BC Housing to secure it as project lender.

Staff at the Town of Esquimalt have been particularly helpful in recognizing the needs of this complex redevelopment project and offering suggestions for solving some challenging issues. They have recognized the need for affordable seniors’ rental housing. We have met with our neighbours. Now it is up to the community to offer its input through the rezoning process.

Thanks to the team who has been so deeply involved with me on this journey—Barry Cosgrave and Sian Porter at Number Ten Architecture; John Dam of John Dam and Associates; Deane Strongitharm at City Spaces Consulting; Nathan Lampard, diocesan registrar; Catherine Pate, diocesan communications

officer; and so many professional consultants and advisors.

Importantly, Bishop Logan has played an instrumental role in conceptualizing this important new project by pushing us and the parish to understand the importance of our vision in connecting the new and the heritage church buildings.

I think when you see the images for this project, you will find the result compelling and exciting.

We all expect this project to energize the parish, residents of the new building and the Hermitage building and be a sustainable hub parish that will partner with the community. We anticipate that this flagship project may shape other new initiatives in this diocese.

You may enjoy seeing a brief video of this project by connecting to <https://youtu.be/e-mFlbgf5VI>

Peter Daniel is Asset Manager for the diocese.



Architectural rendering by Number TEN Architectural Group

Photo by Number TEN Architectural Group