

# DIOCESAN EPOST

Celebrating the Diocese of British Columbia

A Section of the ANGLICAN JOURNAL

APRIL 2021

## A fellowship of Anglican women

*Mother, daughter and friend living, laughing and praying together*

BY NAOMI RACZ

Buying a new house is often an exciting experience and can symbolise different things for different people, depending on what stage in life they are at: whether it's buying a first home, symbolizing independence and freedom; up-sizing to accommodate a growing family, symbolizing hope for the future; or down-sizing after the children have left home, symbolizing a mix of emotions and a fresh start.

For Deborah Rivet, 68, parish administrator at St. John the Baptist, Cobble Hill, the purchase of a new home, just over one year ago, symbolized many things, including family, friendship, faith and fellowship. Deborah bought the house together with her mother, Elsie Kershaw,

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*(from left to right) Deborah Rivet, Elsie Kershaw, and Stephanie Wood; bottom: Stephanie, Deborah and Elsie in their prayer area.*



## Transformation in the church

BY GYLLIAN DAVIES

*Zoom brings intimacy and accessibility*

Perhaps I was one of the lucky ones. Having beloved family and friends living all over North America, I already knew Zoom worked. Because of Zoom, I could feel close to far away dear ones. That was not the story for most people when the pandemic lockdown began. Among our parish members, I heard responses ranging from "I'm not a computer savvy person" to "I can use it but I don't like it" to a simple and clear "No way!" Nevertheless, many jumped in. What choice did we have? Parish council, wardens, and committee meetings needed to continue. And they did: on Zoom. Still, resistance and discomfort with computers and the Internet made Zoom seem an unfriendly and inaccessible "thing" to many.

One year on, this feeling has radically shifted. In our church, study groups (Advent, Lenten) are thriving. The numbers are growing. Those who were originally resistant or adamant that Zoom was not for them have changed their minds. Why? How did this happen?

Christmas had a lot to do with it: aching and yearning hearts were eased by Zoom time with family. Turns out Zoom could be a friend, not an obstacle

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# Hallelujah, Anyhow



FROM THE BISHOP'S CHAIR

THE RIGHT REVEREND  
ANNA GREENWOOD-LEE

Just over one year ago, on March 13, 2020, Bishop Barbara Harris died in hospice, and the Anglican Communion lost one of our great leaders and prophets.

Born in 1930 in Philadelphia, Harris grew up in a world and church such that the bishop who confirmed her wore white gloves so as not to touch her hair. He did this whenever he confirmed “blacks.”

The great-granddaughter of a slave, Harris marched with Martin Luther King Jr. She had a distinguished and trailblazing career in public relations that began with

lots of travel in “colored only” train cars and culminated in her being head of PR at Sun Oil Refining Company.

Over her lifelong relationship with the church, she went from junior choir member to rector’s warden and lay preacher. She was ordained a priest at the age of 50. Ten years later, in February 1989, Harris was the first woman in the Anglican Communion to be consecrated as bishop. She served as suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Massachusetts until her retirement in 2003.

While attending seminary in Massachusetts, I was blessed to be at several services where Bishop Harris presided. She was a fierce five-foot-tall presence. She carried the words, “the power behind you is greater than the obstacles in front of you” in her pocket. She never shied away from speaking against racism, sexism and homophobia. She was clear that we must be wary to never “temporize with injustice, nor make peace with oppression.”

The title of her memoir, *Hallelujah, Anyhow*, comes from a spiritual hymn of the same name.

*When you're feeling down and out,  
Throw your hands up high and shout  
Hallelujah anyhow.*

*'Cause I'm wrapped up, tied up,  
tangled up in Jesus.*

*Singing Hallelujah anyhow.*

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## Bishop's Calendar April

- 1 Preaching for Maundy Thursday at Trinity Anglican + Lutheran Church, Port Alberni (pre-recorded)
- 3 Presiding at Easter Vigil, diocesan-wide event (live-streamed)
- 4 Preaching for Easter Sunday at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria (live-streamed)
- 5-9 Holy Week: No appointments
- 10 Leading worship and attending the Diocesan Women's Retreat (Zoom)
- 12-16 National House of Bishops Meetings (Zoom)
- 14 Tolmie Regional Meeting (Zoom)
- 17 Nimpkish Regional Meeting (Zoom)
- 18 Preaching at St Peter & St Paul, Esquimalt
- 21 Selkirk Regional Meeting (Zoom)
- 24 Haro Regional Meeting (Zoom), Cowichan/Malaspina Regional Meeting (Zoom)
- 29 Diocesan Council (Zoom)

This calendar is up to date at the time of publication. Check the bishop's schedule online for changes. [www.bc.anglican.ca/bishop/](http://www.bc.anglican.ca/bishop/)

## Diocesan Post

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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.

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Volume 55, No 4

# Finding home

*New report on housing in the U.K. relevant to B.C.*

BY NANCY FORD

*On February 20, 2021, the Church of England released a landmark new report, Coming Home, which sets out a bold new vision for housing and community. Our dean to the city, Nancy Ford, draws on the report in her own reflection on the current housing crisis in our local community. The Church of England's full report can be read here: [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/priorities/coming-home](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/priorities/coming-home).*

“Whole sections of our society, including people of all ages, are affected by the housing crisis, but it is those caught in poverty who are bearing the brunt of this injustice.”

This is an accurate description of what we know to be true in British Columbia. The quote from the Archbishop of Canterbury names the reality in the United Kingdom. It is a global reality.

Our recent snow and below zero temperatures during a pandemic have highlighted the fact that after years of work, planning, housing starts and a myriad of programs, we still have people living in tents. While some things have changed, much has not.

In a “normal” year, the extreme weather protocol would have been triggered by the expected temperatures and predictions of snow. Extra shelter beds and warming centres would have been opened. Sadly, the pandemic has meant fewer shelter beds are available. There was a herculean effort to find other shelters and warming places. Yet many stayed in their tents, fearful of losing their tents and possessions. This is unacceptable.

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*The high cost of housing has precipitated a deluge of evictions. This is deep injustice.*

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The question is, What can we do as faith communities? The charity model of temporary “solutions” and disconnected pockets of well-meaning projects has not changed the systems that perpetuate homelessness. Scripture is full of stories that deal with the use of land and the repercussions when neither the people nor the land are treated with respect. We need to be mindful of those stories.

The pandemic has laid bare the inequities in our society. It has shown how poverty is stigmatized and homelessness is perceived as a product of poor behaviour. The symptoms of trauma added to the stigma of poverty create discomfort for those of us who have safe, stable homes.

The story of the bent-over woman in Luke's gospel comes to mind. The woman had been bent over “with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years.” Imagine “the spirit” was a series of life events.

At birth she was nearly left to die. An unexpected child and female, her arrival stretched the limited resources of a poor family. They frequently moved in the middle of the night to avoid eviction. Nothing was secure. Early on, she grew afraid to be noticed. That was when it became difficult to stand up straight. Being noticed meant blame and violence. When she was old enough, she married a man who seemed loving and different. But familiar patterns resurfaced. He became violent, then left. She worried about money; how to feed and house her children? Her childhood had not provided her with ideas or options except to hide. Standing up for herself seemed impossible, being bent over, hidden, was familiar. She was used to the rude comments and shoves and knew to avoid those who scuffed dirt into her face.

She had heard rumours of Jesus. A distant memory of hope propelled her to take a risk. She came into the synagogue as Jesus was teaching. Jesus, aware of her, stopped and healed her. She could look people in the eye. Before she could rejoice in her freedom, the leader of the synagogue chastised Jesus for healing on the sabbath. But Jesus said: “...ought not this woman... whom Satan bound for eighteen long years,

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# Cold-weather shelter returns to Parksville amid COVID-19 restrictions

*An update on St. Anne and St. Edmund cold-weather shelter*

BY CHRISTINE MUISE

In the February 2020 issue of the *Diocesan Post*, then-editor Susan Down reported on the cold-weather shelter being run out of the historic St. Anne's Church in Parksville. The effort was led by Christine Muise, priest associate at St. Anne and St. Edmund, Parksville, along with a team of volunteers and support workers. St. Anne and St. Edmund, Parksville, was one of a number of local churches that banded together to form OHEARTS, which stands for Oceanside Homelessness Ecumenical Advocacy Response Team Society, in response to the lack of a cold-weather

shelter in the Parksville area. Unfortunately, shortly after the article ran, the shelter was forced to close due to the pandemic. St. Anne is a compact, 125-year-old church without proper plumbing, so it was not possible to follow protocols around physical distancing and hygiene. Christine Muise offers an update on the shelter following the closure and the what led to the shelter being re-opened for winter 2021. ■

When the closure happened, OHEARTS pivoted to find shelter for previous guests. We immediately got a couple of seniors

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## Finding home

*Continued from page 3*

be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?’ When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.”

Her view of the world before she was healed was shaped by despair and fear. The synagogue leadership’s view was defined by human interpretations of rules and rigid theology. Without Jesus’ actions, fear would have met fear. Nothing would have changed. Healing and justice had come together.

The church has a mixed history when it comes to social action and justice. There

are wonderful local projects that have required risk, vision and commitment. They do make a difference. However, the high cost of housing has precipitated a deluge of evictions. This is deep injustice.

The Anglican Church of Canada in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is working on projects and education. The work has been bolstered by the federal government’s 2017 National Housing Strategy. Nationally, there are unique partnerships with faith groups and communities, such as KAIROS. Yet we have bus shelters in Winnipeg used by homeless people who cannot find shelter elsewhere. What are we missing?

Faith communities want to effect change. Might we create local and national

programs so that extreme weather shelters are no longer necessary? I wonder what the formerly bent-over woman might advise? She might ask that we reconsider the theologies and practices that have allowed systemic poverty and homelessness to flourish. How might we as prayerful and thoughtful communities discern God’s call to justice making? How might we change the questions we ask? Might we think of homes, not shelters? ■

*Nancy Ford is Christ Church Cathedral’s deacon to the city. In her role, she serves both as the face of the Church in the world — especially in places of deep pain, injustice or marginalization — and as the voice of those on the margins to the church.*

## Hallelujah, Anyhow

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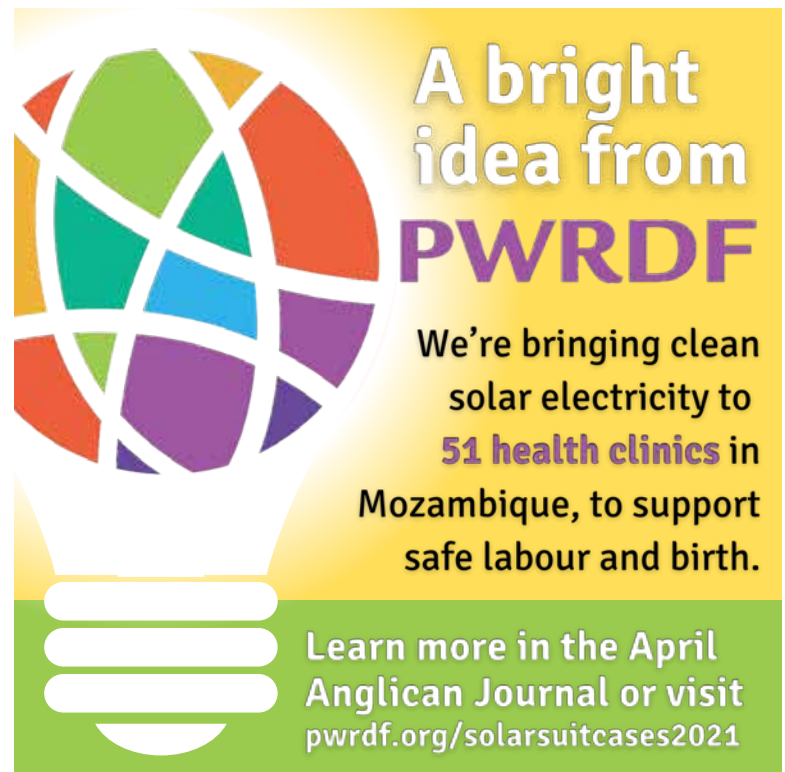
In the memoir, Bishop Harris talks about how some things, such as systematic racism, would cause her to ask, “What’s the opposite of hallelujah?” As she rightly remarks, “The damnable thing about institutionalized racism is that well-meaning white folk don’t have to do anything overt to ensure its perpetuation.” But somehow, throughout her life, she managed both to speak truth to power and to *Hallelujah, Anyhow*.

This Easter, a second COVID Easter, I invite you to join me in shouting, boldly and joyfully, *Hallelujah, Anyhow!* At Easter, we enter the *paschal triduum* — the great liturgy that takes us from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday — knowing all too well the reality of suffering and death, of injustice and oppression, but also trusting that suffering and death never have the last word. The power behind us, which is the power and grace of God, is indeed greater than any of the obstacles that are ahead of us.

Bishop Harris would talk about being *Easter people in a Good Friday world*. “The thing about being Easter people,” she would say, “is that we are prisoners to hope.” Easter people are faithful and steadfast, like the women who stayed at the foot of the cross, who went to the empty tomb.

This Easter season, may we remember that the resurrection is not the end of the story; it’s just the beginning of a new chapter, when we follow the risen Christ out into the world to share Christ’s love: to heal, to love, to serve.

He is risen. His is risen indeed. Even during a pandemic, we can *Hallelujah, Anyhow*. ■



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## Cold-weather shelter

*Continued from page 3*

into an operating hotel and, with the help of a worker from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, we were able to access another hotel for five more. Each day through March and April 2020, OHEARTS continued to link guests and other outreach agencies to see what services could be found. By the end of April, OHEARTS had established a 16-bed-capacity “COVID-19 Response Shelter” in an operating hotel.

*It took us four days. The pandemic has shown us that we can pivot quickly to new realities and new ways of being.*

Since last April, OHEARTS has worked to shelter 44 guests. As Nancy Ford’s reflection “Finding home” (p.3) mentions, there need to be many more opportunities for what I call “homefulness.” OHEARTS has been successful at getting five people into more permanent housing. It is evident from the guests OHEARTS has worked with, that a variety of housing models is needed, along with various levels of support and other services for success. The biggest need in this area, likely across the country too, is fast access to primary care, addiction care and mental health care — and a multitude of pathways to community,

to treatment and to recovery. Integral to this success is the incorporation of peers and people with lived experience. The lack of fast access to care means that people experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental illness are exposed to even greater suffering and trauma.

On January 11, 2021, the Public Health Officer wrote a letter in support of OHEARTS opening St. Edmund Hall. As the temperature and snow were falling, the need for shelter space was felt. On Sunday, February 14, following a conversation with Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee, OHEARTS was given permission to use St. Edmund hall provided there was funding from BC Housing and insurance coverage. On Monday, February 15, MLA Adam Walker was in communication with BC Housing. On Tuesday, February 16, Perry Perry of OHEARTS was negotiating a budget with BC Housing. On Wednesday, February 17, that budget was approved. On Thursday,

February 18, the insurance was in place, and at 8 p.m. that evening, St. Edmund Hall opened its doors to OHEARTS guests. The cots, linens and supplies, and the adherence to public health protocols, with safe distancing and hygiene in place, were prepared by St. Anne and St. Edmund staff.

It took us four days. Four days of concerted effort and HEART. Only four days of collaboration and communication. The pandemic has shown us that we can pivot quickly to new realities and new ways of being. If we could consider housing “essential” because it is, then we could create the networks and linkages to more permanent, long-term options. It is time to pivot. It is time to listen to the science and research that makes housing a priority, along with all the necessary supports and community-building initiatives for continued success. This suffering on the streets and rough living is unnecessary. ■



*St. Edmund Hall, which opened as a cold-weather shelter in February 2021. Photo by Christine Muise.*



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# Nature and the church

*How the natural world shapes our worship spaces*

BY NAOMI RACZ

Here in the Diocese of Islands and Inlets, we're lucky to be surrounded by beautiful natural spaces — oceans, beaches, mountains, and forests — and to share these islands and inlets with a diversity of wildlife, from large charismatics, such as orcas and bears, down to the smallest life forms.

Nature imagery abounds in the Bible, and many see in the natural world both the work of God and a call to care for creation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, green and blue spaces have become more vital than ever, as indoor spaces have been shuttered.



*Stained glass window depicting an arbutus tree in Christ Church Gabriola. Photo by Don Butt.*

This spiritual connection to nature, and to the environment of the West Coast, comes together in many of the diocese's churches. For some churches, this connection is quite literal as they were built from locally sourced materials. St. Christopher and St. Aidan, Cowichan, for example, is built entirely from local timber. Stained glass windows also offer a connection to the wider natural world. At Christ Church Gabriola, the stained glass windows in the sanctuary feature local trees that complement the images depicting

teachings from the Bible. The trees featured include arbutus, dogwood, and Douglas fir. The stained-glass windows were all designed and installed by local glass artist Darlene Mace-Harvey.

Karen Hollis, minister at Christ Church Gabriola, sees the windows as a bridge between the church's local context and God's larger story: "I consider all of Gabriola Island sacred space; so often when walking the trails or beaches I encounter thin places that help me see through the ordinary into the mystery of God's creation. I walk in awe and wonder at the trees and rocks with which I share a home. The windows in our sanctuary echo these thin spaces and transport me somewhere. I regularly find my eye lingering on them as they draw me into mystery. The windows hold space for us in worship and offer beauty and layers of meaning: they are unimposing, they don't force their stories on worshippers, rather, they stand with an open invitation, like a tree in the forest, for someone's eye to pause and look again, to find a thin place where their stories invite us deeper into our own story, into God's story."

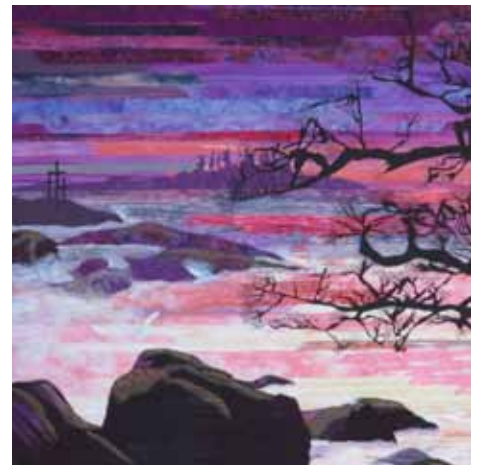
At St. Philip-by-the-Sea, Lantzville, a series of quilted tapestries — again made by a local artist, Coreen Zerr — depict the changing seasons (both in the natural world and the church) and the landscapes of Vancouver Island. The tapestries range from a family of deer in snowy woods (Christmas) to stormy seas (Lent), and from a sunrise over mountains (Easter) to a rich underwater world of whales, fish and plants (Advent). Annie Smith, people's warden and head of the altar guild, had this to say about the tapestries: "Our wall hangings bring so much delight and joy to the people who step into St Philip. Pre-COVID-19, our church was used by many local community groups, and very often some of our guests would return to take a closer look at the wall hangings. Many people in our church community are environmentalists and appreciate the detail crafted into each picture and their subtle messages."

While cemeteries might not immediately come to mind as a place to connect and commune with nature and God, many of our diocese's cemeteries offer just that. At St. Peter, Quamichan, the historic cemetery slopes



*Arbutus tree in the cemetery at Holy Trinity, North Saanich. Photo by Jim Kingham*

down from the church to the surrounding meadows and contains graves dating from 1866. The graves are shaded by oak and fir trees, while the ground is seasonally carpeted with wild flowers. The cemetery is a point of pride for parishioners, but it also attracts visitors from outside the church community. Some are simply stopping to stretch their legs, en-route to other destinations on the island, while others visit for a leisurely stroll. As well as the history and beautiful flora, visitors are often treated to sightings of squirrels, rabbits and deer, as well as the calls and songs of quail, woodpeckers and owls. In pre-COVID-19 years, the cemetery has played host to the Chocolate Lily Festival and musical performances.



*Tapestry depicting a seascape to represent the turbulence and starkness of Lent. Photo by Les Smith.*

## Reflections on nature at Holy Trinity, North Saanich

BY JIM KINGHAM AND JUDY GERRETT

“Morning has broken,” and the bells of Holy Trinity welcome all into the church’s quiet, spiritual presence. Flowers and greenery, lovingly arranged by the altar guild, highlight the sanctuary, nave and narthex. With each liturgical season, the church becomes a hive of activity as members of the Guild gather with their secateurs and imaginations to fill the window boxes in the nave and transform the narthex with a wide variety of gifts from their gardens. Easter is a particularly special time as birds nesting with their eager chicks just outside the open windows join the congregation in songs of praise and thanksgiving. Surrounded with beauty, love and joy, we are fully connected with nature, and “all things bright and beautiful.”

Holy Trinity in North Saanich is a peaceful blend of sacred ground for worship, contemplation and remembrance. Every approach to the church invites a stroll through nature, with large, mature trees, both deciduous and coniferous; flowering and evergreen bushes; and crocuses and daffodils in the springtime. The cemetery part of the church property has seen improvements in drainage and irrigation, allowing for the introduction of more varied trees in recent years.

To enhance the feeling of an oasis of tranquility, evergreens define the perimeter along the southern boundary, and provide screening along the fence line that separates the cemetery from the nearest road. There are park benches at appropriate spots around the perimeter, which are frequently used by those who just want to sit a while in the shade and fondly remember lives shared.

Throughout the fair weather of spring, summer and fall, parishioners often linger on the pathways through the cemetery when on their way to, or departing from morning services. Even on those days when there are no services, the cemetery is frequently visited by parishioners and others from the wider community. The church and its cemetery, now more than 135 years old, form a centrepiece of the annual North Saanich Flavour Trail, when a few members of the parish don period costumes and explain the unique contribution of this heritage church, the church at the heart of the community, to the traditions and evolving culture of the area.

If that grand old Garry oak in the centre of the cemetery could speak, what tales of spiritual restitution might it tell?

Even in the more urban areas of the diocese, moments of connection to the natural world can still be found through the church. In Nanaimo, the grounds and gardens of St. Paul offer a vital green space in the mostly grey downtown inner harbour area. The garden was created with the vision and hope that it would be a place to gather, entertain and reflect. The garden was also designed to be beneficial to the local environment, with flower beds that are maintained to minimize water usage and plants that support local birds and insects, including daffodils, rhododendrons, tulips, weigela and holly berries. There are benches where people come to eat their lunch, commune with nature, listen to the birds and connect with friends and neighbours.

At St Mary, Oak Bay, a cloistered garden was established at the church in the late 1950s. A local family looked after the garden and left money to pay for its maintenance, but over the years, despite ongoing maintenance, the garden was left looking unloved and uncared for. In 2018, a team of parishioners led by then-warden Jane Anderson had the vision to set the garden to rights.

The gardening team became aware of the Quiet Garden Movement in the U.K., which seeks to nurture outdoor spaces for quiet reflection and prayer in a range of settings, including churches, private homes, schools and hospitals. The movement takes as its leading example the periods of time that Jesus spent in nature to pray. The team also envisioned the garden at St. Mary as a space for the community, from seniors in senior homes, who often don’t have a lot of outdoor space, to the children in the pre-school based in the church hall.



The cemetery with spring flowers at St. Peter, Quamichan. Photos by Kirsten Evenden.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the garden has also become an extension of the worship space. During the brief period that worship was permitted in the church, chairs and speakers were set up in the garden, so that anyone who wasn’t comfortable with being inside the church could still enjoy the services. St. Mary has also been engaging the local community during the pandemic, by using the garden in a number of inventive ways. In the spring of 2020, at the beginning of lockdown, Craig Hiebert, priest at St. Mary, recorded videos in the garden capturing the

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## Transformation

*Continued from cover*

or the enemy. Christmas presents of tablets and iPads arrived. Technology and devices were updated. Frustrating experiences due to outdated equipment and limited Internet access diminished. Emmanuel, God-with-us working in mysterious ways, doing infinitely more than we could ask or imagine!

And it also turns out Zoom facilitates a transformation in group dynamics. With delight, I watched study groups grow in intimacy, in their willingness to be vulnerable, in a tender sharing and exposure of growing edges. People were talking about loving the groups. Word was spreading. More people were signing up. What was going on?

First, I think using Zoom allows us to operate from our safest place: our homes. And we can show as much or as little of our home as we wish by how we situate ourselves. We can give others a glimpse of who we really are by what we choose to show. I think of Bishop Logan “Zooming” with us from his kitchen, a bright and friendly place. I think of various clergy “Zooming” services from their homes, offering intimacy and vulnerability, and sharing the burden of lockdown restrictions. I think of people doing prayers from their gardens.

Zoom allows us to share with others what we treasure and appreciate: photos of family, bits of nature, beautiful art, colours, textures, the quality of light in a room — all ways of giving glory to God, of thanking God for our lives. It’s a far

cry from the “church basement” habitat we tend to accept as adequate space for encountering the Spirit. Beauty, safety, and comfort do feed our souls, nourish kindness, and invite us closer to God.

With Zoom, we focus in on each other’s faces. Close up and intimate, we can see the nuances and subtleties of expressions as people reach for words to articulate their spiritual explorations. It’s like a one-on-one conversation. And everyone can hear! What a boon to not miss out on things because of not catching all the words. Those who are hard of hearing know how awkward it is to be constantly asking people to repeat things. No more of that!

Also, it’s immediate. We turn on our computer, everything is at hand, no need to drive or gather things together before leaving. Driving on dark roads at night — a challenge for many — is not necessary. All voices are heard from as we go round the screen. An increased awareness of giving each person equal air time seems to prevail. The arrangement of windows is not the same on everyone’s screens, so each participant invites the next person to go, creating further connections.

There are limitations. The optimal number of people in a group seems to hover around nine. Perhaps that is our comfort zone for the number of faces we can hold in our awareness at one time. Increasing numbers beyond that seems to create a concurrent decrease in that beautiful intimacy. With more than nine or ten, people become more cautious, less willing to show vulnerability. And then intimacy and deeper sharing takes a hit.



*Gyllian Davies.*

There are limits, too, to our ability to sit still in front of a screen. Meeting for an hour leaves people wanting more. Meeting for longer than that seems to exhaust concentration and engagement. People can get “Zoomed out” and become wary of the experience.

So now, moving forward, we can remember those familiar phrases: “The church will never change.” Or how about, “Change in the church is glacial”? Or maybe the cry of the frustrated: “We’re called to be the church of Christ, not the historical society of Christ!” Zoom, agent of change and transformation in the church. Who knew! This is something we want to take with us into our brave new future. Thanks be to God for opening our collective minds and hearts to this way of being together. ■

*Gyllian Davies is incumbent in the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island.*

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# Calvary



## Reflections

BY HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

*Herb O'Driscoll's newest book of memoirs, I Will Arise and Go Now: Reflections on the Meaning of Places and People, was released Feb. 17 by Morehouse Publishing.*

### Jerusalem, April 1993

We had come to Jerusalem in January, knowing that we would be there for almost four months, an academic term in the life of St. George's College. My responsibility was to travel around the area with groups of clergy from many places in the Anglican communion, linking various places with the Gospel passages where they are mentioned, and suggesting ways in which their preaching might feature these places.

You can perhaps appreciate how and why I treasure those few fleeting months in my life. However, as with everything in life, the time came for it to end. It was a Sunday afternoon; all our things were packed, ready for an early departure the next morning. We had some free time before the evening meal. How would we spend our last few hours in this ancient city?

The decision was not difficult. We walked from the College down Nablus Road to the Damascus Gate. Entering

the Old City, we found ourselves in the labyrinthine network of streets that forms the souq until we suddenly turned into the open area that fronts the entrance to the huge Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We stood for a moment at the slab of stone where long tradition says that Joseph of Arimathea and others anointed Jesus' body for burial. Then we climbed a flight of stone steps to the place where we wished to spend our last afternoon in Jerusalem.

I had been in this place many times with clergy from the college. It had come to captivate my wife Paula and I more than any other place in our travels around the Holy Land. To explain why, I need to share with you something of the long story of this place, and to describe our surroundings.

Long before the towers of Canterbury stood above the fields of Kent, long before the Dome of the Vatican dominated the cityscape of Rome, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stood here as witness to the imperial instincts of Constantine and the piety of his mother Helena. In the fourth century, she had come with all the authority of her position and title to seek for the sites of the death and resurrection of Jesus. What she encountered was the local Christian community. They had preserved the memory of where the Lord had been crucified, and the location of the tomb from which he had been raised.

Actually, there had been an earlier visitor on the same quest. In the year 160 CE, a bishop named Melito had come from the city of Sardis to verify the places in the Gospels. He, too, had been led by the local Christians. Two centuries later, when Helena in her turn was shown the venues sacred to Christian memory, she brought to bear the vast resources of her son's empire to build this massive shrine over them. Ever since, this huge church has

been the focus of memory and pilgrimage for most of the Christian world.

We climb the flight of stone steps and find ourselves in a small, highly ornate, dimly lit chapel. The focus is the altar. Here, day after day, year after year, pilgrims come from far and near. On one wall of the chapel, there is a stone ledge that can serve as a seat. So we sit and watch as people do the simple actions that we ourselves have done in this place. We watch as people drop to one knee, making the sign of the cross. We watch as a mother lifts a child to kiss the icon near the altar and then kisses it in turn herself. We watch as pilgrim after pilgrim kneels on the floor before the altar, then moves forward underneath it and extends an arm down through a small opening to touch a rock beneath.

No ordinary rock, this is the top of an outcrop that rises from the floor of the stone quarry that lies far beneath this great basilica. Into its surface, the upright of our Lord's cross would have been embedded. Here the crosspiece that he had carried from the nearby city gate was fastened. Here our Lord died.

This is where we wished to be on our last day in Jerusalem. When the last pilgrim of the day had passed through, we stood and moved to the altar to do again what we wished to retain as a lifelong memory. Taking turns, we knelt on the floor, stooped under the altar, leaned forward, and extended an arm into the small opening until we could feel the hard surface of the rock.

So much pours into the mind at such a moment that words cannot do justice to the experience. We get up, turn, cross the chapel to the stone steps and leave. Yet there is a sense in which we have never left this holiest of places. ■

*Herb O'Driscoll is a retired priest, author, hymn writer and conference leader.*

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# Messages in glass

*St. Mary, Oak Bay, parishioner publishes new book*

BY NAOMI RACZ

Over the last year, Elizabeth Laugharne, a parishioner at St. Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay, has used the free time created by the pandemic to pen *Messages in Glass*, a book about the history and biblical messages behind the 54 stained glass creations in or hanging on windows at St. Mary. The book also features colour images of the windows.

St. Mary was established as a parish church in 1911 and received its first stained

glass artistic creation in 1924. Each window is dedicated to the memory of an individual or church group. *Messages in Glass* will be published in May 2021 and promises to be an insightful read for parishioners and anyone interested in the history and artistry of stained glass. When St. Mary is able to open its doors to visitors again, the book will also serve as a useful guide to the church's windows.

Elizabeth Laugharne is a retired health care professional and has been a parishioner at St. Mary for over 10 years. Laugharne is also a volunteer church archivist at St. Mary, and her interest in the stained glass windows was prompted by the many enquiries she receives about them. As her interest slowly grew, Laugharne was determined to ensure that the windows were properly documented and that their magnificence would be acknowledged. It is Laugharne's hope that readers of *Messages*



Elizabeth Laugharne.

*in Glass* will receive as much joy in reading it as she has had in writing it.

All profits from the sale of the book will go towards the fund for the preservation and restoration of the windows. For further information or to pre-order your copy, contact St. Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay, at 250-598-2212 or [mmcgahon@st.marysoakbay.ca](mailto:mmcgahon@st.marysoakbay.ca). You can also contact the author directly at 250-658-2548 or [elaugharne@shaw.ca](mailto:elaugharne@shaw.ca). ■

# Nature and the church

*Continued from page 7*

sound of songbirds and posted them to the church's website and social media, as a reminder that despite current events, spring was still on its way. For Remembrance Day, stones were spray painted red and black, and visitors to the garden

were asked to place the stones on the ground to form the image of a poppy. Remembrance reflections were also posted throughout the garden. At Christmas, visitors were invited to decorate the garden's crab apple tree, and dozens of ornaments appeared on the tree.

Whether it's stained glass windows, tapestries, carvings, cemeteries, or

gardens, churches in the Diocese of Islands and Inlets have plenty to offer in terms of opportunities to reflect on and enjoy the natural world and its importance to spiritual practice. And while our churches continue to be shuttered, many of these natural spaces have become more important than ever. ■

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## Anglican women

*Continued from cover*

91, and her friend, Stephanie Wood, 48, assistant curate at St. John the Divine, Victoria — and for all three women the new home has meant a new lease on life.

Deborah was a widow and retired from her role as incumbent at St. Peter, Quamichan, when she moved in with her parents to help care for her father. After her father died, her mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and both were keen for a fresh start. Elsie had been dreaming of living in a waterfront home for years, and now that her husband was gone and she was approaching 90, it felt like the right time. While caring for her father, Deborah had been renting out her house in Cowichan Bay through Airbnb, and Stephanie had made a small investment in the Airbnb business. The cards seemed to fall into place: Deborah suggested that they sell her mother's home and the Airbnb property, pool their money and buy a house for all three of them to live in together.

Using their combined resources, Deborah, Stephanie, and Elsie were able to buy a beautiful waterfront home in the Arbutus Ridge community for over 50s. The community has a pool, and there are lots of activities to take part in, such as tennis, golf, a choir and a Bible study group. Each member of the household has her own bedroom and bathroom, and Deborah and Stephanie share an office space, and even a desk. There's also a large open-plan kitchen and dining room. And then there's that view. When I interviewed Deborah, Stephanie, and Elsie over Zoom, Stephanie told me, "Every morning Elsie stands at the window and says, 'We are three lucky ladies!'"

Lucky indeed. Not only have they been able to buy a dream home, but their household seems to operate like a well-oiled machine. Deborah takes care of the finances and, as a former caterer, likes to whip up delicious meals every evening. Stephanie, meanwhile, is head housekeeper, as well as a nurse to Elsie — before receiving her calling to the

priesthood, Stephanie worked as a nurse practitioner for 21 years, including caring for long-term care home residents. "It feeds the part of me that needs to care for people. Making the beds too, that's the nurse in me," says Stephanie.

And Elsie? "She's the queen, she's Lady Kershaw," says Deborah, as all three women descend into laughter.

It is clearly a household that often resounds with their infectious laughter and joy. At one point in our discussion, I ask if there is a particular community of women, whether present day or past, that they find inspiration from or model themselves after. "Yes," says Deborah, "we're the Golden Girls, except we pray together and don't date as much." More laughter ensues.

The three women pray together every day at 8:30 a.m., before meals and at 9:30 p.m. During Lent, they've also been taking part in compline at St. John the Divine every Tuesday evening over Zoom. There are also plenty of theological discussions going on in the household. Deborah is an Education for Ministry (EfM) group mentor, so the readings and preparation she has to do often bring up interesting questions. Their discussions range across many big issues, including medical assistance in dying (MAiD), same-sex marriage, and the role of God in the COVID-19 pandemic. Deborah and Stephanie also often discuss their sermon ideas — Deborah sometimes covers for St. John the Baptist's incumbent, John Steele, on Sundays, and she has an altar set up in the house.

Deborah envisioned the house as a place where she could support her mother in her mother's most twilight years, while also being able to do the kind of ministry she couldn't do if she needed to be out of the house constantly. Before the pandemic, Deborah was able to host a group for widowers that attend St. John the Baptist. "As a widow myself, I can understand what they're going through," says Deborah.

Stephanie feels that their faith and their work within the church is key to the harmonious and joyful nature of the household. "I love my role at St John's and

Deb loves hers. We're doing what we love. 'The joy of my Lord is my strength,' that's what it is. The house is joyful; life is good."

"Absolutely," chimes in Elsie.

"We want our home to be a place of welcome and hospitality," says Stephanie. Deborah agrees, "This is an open and welcome home. With this house, I want to do the ministry I want to do and be the daughter I want to be. My mum was a nurse, my dad was a carpenter. They gave me a nice, comfortable middle-class upbringing. I'm grateful to be able to give my mum this life. I'm grateful for the way she participates in the household. She didn't read for a long time, but now, during our prayer sessions, she's started reading again. She loves reading the Lord's Prayer. I'm grateful I haven't had to put her in care; she wouldn't have had the length of life she's had."

When I ask if there are any downsides to their living arrangements, Deborah jokes, "Every now and then I think it would be nice to have a boyfriend. But then I think, I don't want to change things! We live cooperatively. I think more women should live like this. We're a team. There's no question about what each person's role is. It's better than any marriage I've ever had!"

Stephanie agrees, "There's never any tension. We are giving of ourselves to each other. We sacrifice for each other, but it doesn't feel like a sacrifice."

On that note, and with a hearty welcome to visit them whenever I am in the area and COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, we sign off from our Zoom call. But their infectious laughter, sense of joy, and deep faith stay with me for days to follow. I'm left wondering about a question that has been on a lot of minds throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: what is a church without its buildings? While Deborah, Stephanie and Elsie will be the first to throw open their doors when that is possible, and all three women clearly love their house, it is their unique roles and personalities and their deep sense of faith and justice that make their house a home. ■

*Naomi Racz is the editor of the Diocesan Post.*

## The work that Jesus prepared us for



### My Journey

BY HEATHER CUTTEN

*Heather Cutten is deacon at St. John the Baptist, Duncan, and St. Peter, Quamichan.*

I grew up in Halifax, N.S., in the 1940s, the sixth of seven children. We lived in the city until I was 15 years old, then the family moved about 25 miles outside Halifax, where my dad built a home for us and my parents lived until their passing. I have always gone to the Anglican Church. I went to Sunday school and joined the choir and youth group. In those days, we had rallies, where all the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada would march through the streets with banners flowing to gather for a day of sermons and prayers.

After finishing high school, I enrolled in what was then called vocational school and took a business course, which covered shorthand, typing and business machines. From there, I went to my first job as a stenographer for the Department of Education, in the adult education department. I was there for about three years before I became an employee of CBC, in the small business management training section of the information services department, as a secretary. Years later, after being away and returning to Canada, I worked with Sears Canada for 16 years, both as lead coordinator and as a decorating consultant.

After two years at CBC, I met my husband Mark, who had been taking

his chartered accountant degree, and in 1967 we married and stayed in Halifax for a year. In 1968, we left for the West Indies with the firm Keats, Peat Marwick and Co. and stayed in Trinidad and St. Lucia for five years. Our son, the oldest of three children, was born there. We had our second child in Winnipeg, where we again worked with the firm for a year. Our third child was born in Calgary, where we lived for 27 years.

We are now retired on Salt Spring Island, where we live a very quiet and comfortable life. I first became interested in becoming a deacon after a synod where Nancy Ford and the deacons at the time put on a demonstration and film about deacons and their role in the church. I thought about it, then decided no! I had been on every committee and had been warden in the church on Salt Spring Island, so maybe this was just going too far in joining another facet of the church. But God had different ideas, because the idea just wouldn't leave me. I decided to give it a try after being approved to enter the program.

I trained from 2010 to 2013, doing courses through the diocese, as well as taking two courses at the Vancouver School of Theology (VST): one with retired priest Harold Munn and one with the now-president of VST, Richard Topping.

From there, I became a postulant at St. Michael and All Angels in Chemainus. I worked alongside the people of Penelakut Island at the food bank, the neighbourhood house and the school (elementary) breakfast program. I was there for five years and made many good friends. I was asked to marry two couples of the Penelakut Tribe, which I did, one on the island and one in the church in Chemainus. This opportunity provided great inroads to getting to know a lot of the Penelakut people, and I enjoyed my work there immensely.

I was then moved by the bishop to work with the church in Duncan,

where I am now entering my third year. Before the pandemic, I worked at the food bank and Warmland House. It is quite different, not only because of COVID-19, but also because the drug addiction and poverty problems are so intense there, I haven't been able to make the same inroads in the same amount of time as I did in Chemainus. Being off for a year with the pandemic has put things behind too.

My ideal posting would be to work amongst children and families, similar to the work I did in Chemainus. I am also on diocesan council, as well as being a representative for the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer.

I think the greatest challenge we face in the Anglican Church is letting go of the past and moving into the future and to what it is going to look like. Times and people have both changed, and technology has shown us how church can be and that people can and will adapt to it.

The most unusual sermon I have ever heard — and unusual is not the word I would use for it, but awakening sermon — was by Dr. Martin Brokenleg, when he told us what bishops face and how Bishop James Cowan even had death threats sent to him. This was during a time of change concerning same-sex blessings and the closing of some of the churches. Bishop Cowan was retiring, and Bishop Logan had just been elected. In fact, I, along with two others, was Bishop Logan's first ordination.

On a Sunday morning in pre-COVID-19 times, because I live on Salt Spring Island, I have to be up at 4:30 a.m. to get ready to cross over to Vancouver Island on the ferry. The only ferry that will get me there on time is the 7:00 a.m. one, as the next ferry doesn't go on Sunday until 9:15 a.m. These early mornings give me time to reflect and prepare me for the morning ahead.

This has been my work as a deacon and the work that Jesus and the disciples prepared us for. ■

# Lifelong learning

## *Educational Trusts Board administers education grants for clergy and laity*

BY IAN ALEXANDER

Over the past two months in the *Post*, we've been telling you about one of the major activities of the diocesan Educational Trusts Board: the John Albert Hall lecture series. In this issue, we'll conclude the series by describing the other funds the board looks after: how they came to be established and how they're used for the benefit of the diocese.

As its name implies, the Educational Trusts Board (ETB), in addition to sponsoring the John Albert Hall lectures, administers legacy trusts for educational grants to clergy and lay members of the diocese. There are several different categories, named for the individuals whose generous bequests created the endowments, which the board has the happy responsibility to steward. Altogether, the current capital value of the assets administered by the ETB is approximately \$2.8 million. Normally, only the accrued value of the income earned from these investments is available for distribution. In any given year, that typically amounts to about \$90,000 — depending, of course, on market fluctuations.

Support for clergy education comes from the Mann Trust. When Florence May Mann passed away on Christmas Eve, 1983, she left the bulk of her estate (over half a million dollars) to establish the C.H.G. Mann Trust, named for her late husband, Charles Henry Guy Mann, a chartered accountant and Oak Bay municipal councillor who came to Victoria from Fort Frances, ON, and died suddenly in 1958. (Both are interred in the columbarium of Christ Church Cathedral.) Florence's will specified that the money should be used "for training of men for the ministry and post-ordination study." A decade later, our long-time diocesan chancellor,

the redoubtable Constance Isherwood, applied legal precedents to determine that women were also eligible to benefit from the fund. Today, income from the Mann Trust supports three programs: the Mann Scholarship, for ordination candidates to pursue theological studies; the Mann Fellowship, for ordained clergy to undertake post-graduate work or extended study leave; and the Mann Bursary, for clergy to attend short-term courses, seminars, workshops and conferences.

Anglicans on these islands and inlets who are not ordained can also apply for financial support to pursue education and training in areas relevant to their faith and vocation as part of "the ministry of all the baptized." These lay training grants come from the Lay Ministry Trust (created through the sale of the rectory trust from a disestablished parish), the Flitcroft Trust (endowed by the late Stanley Flitcroft, a long-time West Coast educator who died in Victoria in 1976), and the Swallow Trust (named for Frances Ellenor Marguerite Swallow, who passed away in 2004).

Individuals interested in accessing any of these funds must make a submission to the Educational Trusts Board, which meets five times a year to review applications and make decisions on the distribution of funds. For lay training grants, applicants are asked, among other things, to explain in some detail how the proposed study "will contribute to the advancement of your own personal, spiritual and professional development." The maximum amount awarded for lay training is usually \$1,000, though higher amounts can be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Many people across the diocese, including paid staff, volunteers and folk from the pews, have benefited from these educational subsidies, and used them for everything from deepening their spiritual life, to upping their professional skills, to acquiring certification in pastoral care. Organizers of training programs can now also apply for financial assistance for some or all of their registrants.

Catherine Dafoe Hall, who is currently serving as interim priest at



*C.H.G. Mann. Photo: Diocesan Archives.*

St. Peter, Campbell River, and who is the national director of the Education for Ministry program across Canada, testifies to the lasting value of this kind of support: "When I was a younger woman, a small amount of assistance from the diocese enabled me to enroll in the Education for Ministry program for two years. This was crucial in my formation as a lay person, serving my parish and the diocese. Later, EfM was part of what supported discernment of vocation to the priesthood and a move to seminary. I remain grateful for this assistance all these years later."

The Educational Trusts Board encourages all members of the diocese to consider pursuing further education, training and formation in the faith, and to access the diocesan trust funds designed to help them do so. Comprehensive policy guidelines and application forms are available on the diocesan website at [www.bc.anglican.ca/diocesan-committees/other-committees](http://www.bc.anglican.ca/diocesan-committees/other-committees). Please take careful note of the application requirements, and also the deadlines by which submissions must be received in order to be dealt with in a timely manner. The next intake dates are as follows:

April 15 (for consideration in May)  
 May 15 (for consideration in June)  
 August 15 (for consideration in September)  
 October 15 (for consideration in November)

*Ian Alexander is a member of the Educational Trusts Board.*

# Streamlining to stay strong



## Fly on the Wall

BY CATHERINE PATE

*This regular column reports on the activities and decisions of Diocesan Council, the “synod between synods” of our diocese. Download monthly meeting minutes at [www.bc.anglican.ca/diocesan-committees/diocesan-council](http://www.bc.anglican.ca/diocesan-committees/diocesan-council).*

The February meeting of the diocesan council focused on two significant items of business: streamlining bureaucracy and long-

term sustainability for the diocesan Refugee Sponsorship Program.

### Streamlining bureaucracy

Council approved motions directing the canons committee to prepare draft canonical wording changes to Canons 3 and 4. The changes are to stipulate that the frequency of Diocesan Council and finance committee meetings going forward will be five times a year with additional meetings being called as necessary, and that the number of voting members of Diocesan Council be 20. The draft revised canons will be voted on by Diocesan Council at its April meeting and then put to a final vote at Synod on May 29.

### Long-term sustainability of refugee sponsorship

As reported last month, with the year-over-year growth in demand (over 800 refugees welcomed in recent years) and the corresponding increase in diocesan financial support for the Refugee Sponsorship Program, it is necessary and appropriate for diocesan council to develop a long-term sustainability

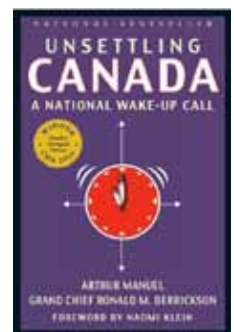
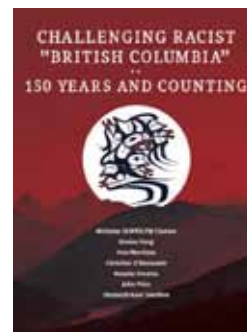
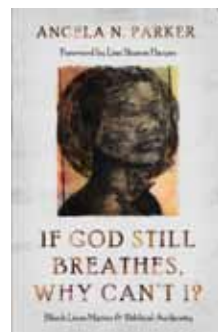
plan for the program. To that end, the bishop has appointed a task force to make recommendations to the diocesan council by summer 2021 about the feasibility of moving the program out from under the diocesan umbrella and into the community in much the same way as Threshold Housing and Loaves and Fishes before it. In considering this decision, the council acknowledged that the diocese can be proud of the program and the reputation it has across the country as a best-practice model. However, with climate change and ongoing economic and political strife worldwide, the need will continue to grow at a pace unsustainable under the current model. This plan, once developed and approved by council, is expected to leverage support and expertise currently unavailable to the program. As part of these efforts, the council also approved a reduction in funding to be allocated in the 2022 and 2023 budgets, with the shortfall expected to be picked up through sources outside of the diocese. ■

*Catherine Pate is director of communications for the diocese.*

# New anti-racism resources added to the diocese website

BY CATHERINE PATE

In the summer of 2020, with the killings of multiple Black and Indigenous people in the United States and Canada at the hands of police officers, anti-racism protests spread throughout the world, and a racial reckoning seemed to be stirring. The ripple effects of this movement have been felt in all sectors of society, and faith organizations like our own have begun to ask the question, in arguably more



intentional ways than ever, “how can we do better?”

In our ongoing effort to decolonize the church, we have added a new section to the diocesan website, consisting of recommended resources to help individuals and communities seeking to become anti-racist. In this section, you will find books, websites, podcasts, videos and

more to help you begin or continue your journey of truth-telling and healing from the harms of colonialism and whiteness. Visit the anti-racism resources at: [www.bc.anglican.ca/resources](http://www.bc.anglican.ca/resources).

If you have recommendations (particularly Canadian resources) to add to this list, please contact [communications@bc.anglican.ca](mailto:communications@bc.anglican.ca) ■

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