



Faith / Tides

RENEWED HEARTS, RENEWED SPIRITS, RENEWED PEOPLE

March 2022 Faith Tides

This PDF is a simple printable document of FaithTides online, which can be found at faithtides.ca. Questions or comments can be sent to the editor at faithtides@bc.anglican.ca.

Looking injustice in the eye

By Anna Greenwood-Lee

Recently I found myself talking with members of the Parish of Pender and Saturna Islands and one of them reflected that COVID-19 has brought out both the best and the worst in people. We had been talking about how disturbing it was to see the images of Confederate and Nazi flags in Ottawa as part of convoys protesting vaccine mandates. That this transpired was bad enough, but that it happened on the national day of remembrance for the Quebec City mosque shooting — and that the act of remembrance in Ottawa was cancelled for fear of violence — is a sad and tragic testament to how white supremacy and Islamophobia are an all-too real part of Canadian society. We must do better.

As baptized people, we cannot turn a blind eye to this type of violence and hatred. We are called to respect the dignity of every human being and to strive for justice and peace, and clearly, there is much work to do right here in our own country.

Six men died in the shooting in Quebec City while at prayer. Their names were Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Abdelkrim Hassane, Azzeddine Soufiane and Aboubaker Thabti. They were fathers, husbands, loved ones, colleagues and Muslims. I heard a piece on CBC Radio about them and, not surprisingly, they continue to be deeply, deeply missed by their loved ones, communities, coworkers and the remaining members of the mosque.

The radio piece talked about how members of the mosque shared not only worship but meals; how the members supported one another through the tough times and cheered one another during the good times. All of us who are also members of worshipping communities can only imagine the horror and loss of having six beloved members shot while at prayer — and another five seriously injured.

March marks the beginning of the season of Lent. It is a season of self-reflection, penitence, prayer and almsgiving. Thank you to all who are marking Lent with us by taking part in the [Intersections series](#)¹ to look at the history of racism here in BC. The interest has been phenomenal, and we are already planning additional sessions. My hope is that over the next year or so most members of our diocese will take part in a session and that this will also be an opportunity for us to invite the wider community to join us in the important work of dismantling racism. While the first two series are already fully registered, more sessions will be added in the spring. Email synod@bc.anglican.ca to be notified when the next set of series is scheduled.

We must all find ways to intentionally create a Canada of love, justice and inclusion. We must all stand up to hate, white supremacy and violence, in all its forms. As Desmond Tutu once famously stated, “Those who turn a blind eye to injustice actually perpetuate injustice. If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

Celtic spirituality and the great injustices of our times

By Adela Torchia

Book Review: Persistent Resistance: Calls for Justice from the Celtic Traditions: A Collection of Essays edited by Ellyn Sanna. Vestal, NY, Anamchara Books, 2019.

Although Celtic Christianity predates Roman Christianity in the Celtic Isles by centuries, it is often seen as a superficial New Age flower-power mashup — accused of being “pagan” by those unaware of the fuller positive meaning of that word. Or people are attracted to Celtic spirituality for all its seeming gentleness and

1. See <https://faithtides.ca/history-of-racism-in-province-highlighted/>.

earth-honouring poetry prayers, without realizing that there's also a feisty justice-seeking side to it as well. Truth be told, I was among that latter group for a long time, and may have still lingered in the midst of this mistakenly shrunken interpretation were it not for this new collection of essays on Celtic calls for justice. While the first eleven short chapters are written by six main contributors, the book is also liberally sprinkled throughout with framed boxes of wit and wisdom drawn from numerous historical, literary and social justice heroes, who are given brief contexts in the twelfth chapter, "The Inspiration of Others' Lives."

The book begins by clarifying how the word "Celtic" is used in this volume, and how hard the word is to contain in any one definition, and then states the following:

"At the same time, we want to affirm that the spiritual characteristics so often labeled 'Celtic' are not unique to Celtic culture and tradition. They are particularly shared by many forms of indigenous spirituality, including that found in Africa, Australia, and the Americas. 'Celtic spirituality,' however, is a term that's more familiar to the average reader."

Indeed, many Indigenous traditions around the world resonate with the values and foci of what we've been calling Celtic spirituality. Therefore, a greater understanding of the one helps us appreciate these others as well.

The book goes on to deepen the understanding of these interconnections:

"The attributes most valued by adherents of Celtic spirituality — such as harmony with Nature, connection between the physical and spiritual worlds, and mystical experiences — are in fact common to indigenous groups worldwide. 'Celtic' Christianity has found enthusiastic reception in communities with predominantly black believers in Africa and among Christians in First Nation communities in North America, where the [shared] values ... are perceived as antidotes to colonialist versions of the Christian message. These 'indigenous' values are by no means exclusive to pink-skinned people nor are they to people of browner pigmentation! They

are the universal domain of people who originally lived in tune with the natural world (which is the root experience of all humans)."

In the first chapter, "What is Justice?", Marjorie Bennet speaks of how she grew up in a church in which the justice of God meant God's need to punish us for our sins, and that Jesus' main role was to save us from this punishment. Bennet left behind that punitive understanding of a God who could not forgive us unless "His" son was tortured and violently killed. And she has been delighted to find in the Celtic view a Jesus concerned with building God's reign in concrete ways, including lifting up the poor and vulnerable "from political and social oppression" by welcoming the marginalized, preaching on sharing wealth to meet everyone's need, healing the sick and so on. Bennet also cites the excellent Celtic theologian Pelagius, or Morgan of Wales, who was similarly focused on helping the poor and oppressed by resisting systems of injustice.

In Chapter IV, Ellen Sanna speaks of those who have an "ostrich mentality" that implicitly condones injustice: "A selfish outlook that refuses to be disturbed by the plight of those who don't have the luxury of burying their heads to escape a harsh reality." In Chapter VI, we see a comparison between some basic Celtic tenets and the Jewish notion of "shalom," which Walter Brueggemann called a "vision of wholeness" linking people not only with the divine, but with each other and the whole Earth "in a healthy, inclusive web of relationship." Brueggemann sees shalom as pointing to the divine spirit who "is on the side of justice ... concerned for the wellbeing of those who lack the power to secure it." Therefore, Celtic ideas about justice are similar to deeply rooted Judeo-Christian ideas.

While this book counsels humility and as much gentleness as possible in confronting the many sources of injustice in our world, it's no accident that one of the first framed wisdom quotes is from Elie Wiesel: "I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim."

This is a stellar and wisdom-filled book, bringing much hope for a world of greater justice and peace. Often, Celtic spirituality is seen as being so gentle and benign that it would barely cause a ripple on the vast sea of human challenges to justice and equality. But as this collection of essays from a number of well-qualified authors demonstrates, Celtic spirituality also has “teeth” and “muscles” for addressing the great injustices of our times.

St Mary memorial garden consecrated, virtual tour created

By Selinde Krayenhoff

Memorial garden consecrated by bishop

Over five years of vision, determination and grace finally brought the long-awaited day when the memorial garden at St Mary, Nanoose Bay could be consecrated. On Jan. 15, Bishop Anna arrived at St Mary to find 33 people gathered in the memorial garden, some of whom had the ashes of loved ones resting underneath the gathered feet in unmarked plots.

The memorial garden was originally designed by Frank Fenn in 1996, and since then the surrounding shrub and flower gardens have been lovingly cared for by our parishioners. The ashes of 81 loved ones have been interred over the past 26 years and there are plots available for another 525.

In order to protect the interred remains in perpetuity, it became necessary to register the memorial garden. That process was started in 2016. The smallest parcel of land that could be registered on the title was a parcel of 2.45 acres of the total 7.5 acres of church property that had been given to the diocese in 1981 by Lt.-Col. Jack Bagley.

The memorial garden, along with the church, hall, parking lot, septic field and property back to the railway are now registered as one lot in the Land Title Office and

will always be considered part of the “cemetery.” To comply with the regulation that human and animal remains cannot be interred on the same parcel of land, the subdivision of the seven acres into two parcels allowed the establishment of the St Francis pet memorial garden in a corner of the nearly five acres of forest on the larger parcel.

The frustrations and experience of repeated hoop jumping faded away as we stood around as a parish, remembering our loved members who have passed and acknowledging how precious and fleeting this one life is.

Heather Utley and Mary Holte both had their husbands interred in the memorial garden and they offered the following reflections on the garden:

It is a tranquil and lovely garden in our own neighbourhood where my family and I can come and spend time remembering my late husband and reflecting on happy memories. I enjoy planting flowers there too, knowing he would laugh when the deer come and eat them! (Heather Utley)

The moment my husband died I knew I was standing on holy ground. Knowing that he now rests in holy consecrated surroundings that will be there for perpetuity gives me even deeper peace. (Mary Holte)

Reaching out, welcoming in

At St Mary, Nanoose Bay, on each Sunday’s bulletin cover you’ll read (in large print): “Reaching out, and welcoming in.” But how to do this during a pandemic? We have been challenged to become more creative.

In the fall, we came up with an exciting idea for inviting our neighbours safely into our space. Parishioner John Sandiford asked Karen Kenyon of Dream Homes Vancouver Island Group, Royal LePage, and the folks at Artez Photography Corporation if, through donations of money and talent, they would help create a virtual tour of our buildings and grounds. And they said, “Yes!”

Now we can invite those people who have driven by St Mary hundreds of times, and perhaps wondered “What is it like inside that little church?” to visit from the safety and comfort of their own homes.

Walking through the doors of a church for the first time can be intimidating. Our hope is that by viewing our space online, and through visiting our website, our neighbours might feel more comfortable coming to our hall, our church, our memorial garden or the St Francis pet memorial garden.

A secondary hope is that potential renters will check out our space before contacting us, allowing them to get a better sense of whether we would be a good fit for their purposes.

And who knows what other wonderful encounters might happen? We’re excited to find out. Watch the video below and then explore the church buildings and grounds with a [3D tour](#)¹.



2600 Powder Point Rd - St Mary's Anglican Church - ARTEZ

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=3nPKV7kXhYI>

Living out the Sermon on the Mount

By John J. Thatamanil

This past week, I finally got around to reading a letter of historic importance — lost for nearly 90 years and republished only last January. On Oct. 17, 1934, a 28-year-old German pastor wrote to a revered Indian leader who had just turned 65, requesting permission to visit and study under him. He writes with new urgency as he feels time slipping away:

1. See https://youriguide.com/2600_powder_point_rd_nanoose_bay_bc/.

“It is no use to foretell the future which is in God’s hands, but if not all signs deceive us, everything seems to work for war in the near future, and the next war will certainly bring the spiritual death of Europe. What we need therefore in our countries is a truly spiritual living christian peace movement. Western Christianity must be reborn on the Sermon on the Mount and here is the crucial point why I am writing to you. From all I know about you and your work after having studied your books and your movement for a few years, I feel we western Christians should try to learn from you, what realisation of faith means, what a life devoted to political and racial peace can attain. If there is anywhere a visible outline towards such attainments, than I see it in your movement. I know, of course, you are not a baptised Christian, but the people whose faith Jesus praised mostly did not belong to the official Church at that time either. We are having great theologians in Germany — the greatest of them being to my opinion Karl Barth, whose disciple and friend I am happy to be — they are teaching us the great theological thoughts of the Reformation anew, but there is no one to show us the way towards a new christian life in uncompromising accordance with the Sermon on the Mount. It is in this respect that I am looking up to you for help.”

The writer was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the recipient, Mahatma Gandhi. The trip never materialized. Eleven years after sending that letter, Bonhoeffer was executed by the Nazis. Dietrich never met Mohandas, the man whom he so deeply venerated.

The letter will not leave me. Watching the rise of the Nazis, Bonhoeffer worried about the “spiritual death of Europe.” Living in the aftermath of that second gory war — not just its brutal battles but also the Holocaust and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — we know Bonhoeffer was not wrong in the slightest. But if he was on target about diagnosis, surely Bonhoeffer was also right about his proposed cure, namely a return to the Sermon on the Mount.

British Columbian Anglicans recognize that our established institutional forms are dying. Grief is unavoidable as our ranks dwindle. Still, we would be wise to heed Bonhoeffer’s confidence in and hope for

rebirth: the credibility of any future Christian faith hinges on faithful discipleship to Jesus' teaching. Bonhoeffer was pleased with the theological recovery of Reformation teaching about justification by grace; but he knew that it wouldn't do. A living and costly discipleship to the nonviolent teachings of neighbour and enemy love — a Christianity of deeds not just creeds — was the urgent need of Bonhoeffer's century, as it is of ours.

Do we have evidence to support Bonhoeffer's spiritual intuition? Let's ask, where was Christian faith most vibrantly experienced in the last century? Ironically, in a Hindu living out the Sermon on the Mount and in his Christian disciple's reception thereof. That disciple? Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. About Gandhi, Dr. King, Jr. writes the following:

“As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform. Prior to reading Gandhi, I had about concluded that the ethics of Jesus were only effective in individual relationships. The “turn the other cheek” philosophy and the “love your enemies” philosophy were only valid, I felt, when individuals were in conflict with other individuals; when racial groups and nations were in conflict a more realistic approach seemed necessary. But after reading Gandhi, I saw how utterly mistaken I was. Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. Love for Gandhi was a potent instrument for social and collective transformation. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and nonviolence that I discovered the method for social reform that I had been seeking for so many months.”

When Bonhoeffer, Gandhi, and King concur, we'd best pay heed to them. The question is, how? What would it mean for BC Anglicans and other Western Christians to live out the Sermon on the Mount in the wake of residential schools and colonialism more broadly? What meaning can the Sermon on the Mount have in a time of climate disaster? How can we best listen to and learn from our neighbors of other traditions on how to live out

the Sermon? We cannot know the answers until we patiently raise and pray these questions. Wrestling with these questions together will be essential if a living Christianity is to be reborn here in British Columbia.

The letter from Dietrich Bonhoeffer is quoted as is, spelling errors and all, as published by Clifford Green under the title “Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Letter to Mahatma Gandhi” in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History's January 2021 issue. The letter from Martin Luther King, Jr. is quoted from The Radical King, edited by Cornel West.

‘Love is a many-splendored thing’

By Herbert O'Driscoll

You may remember this as the title song in a long-ago movie of the same name. The stars, as we used to say, were William Holden and Jennifer Jones. The other day, I found myself humming the melody, and since a remembered melody is a sure way to open one's memory banks, I found myself recalling two quotes I had saved, two beautiful expressions of human love.

As you well know, the fact that something happened long ago does not mean it cannot become a gift again when you rediscover it in your study. For a fair number of years, I have been adding to what is now a sizable personal anthology of both prose and poetry. So, without further ado, I reach for one of five large three-ringed binders.

Here we are, under the Ls. Madeleine L'Engle was married to Hugh Franklin for many years. After he died, she used the experience of their years together as the basis for one of her many books. She called it *Two-Part Invention: The Story of a Marriage*.

When you come to think of it, a “two-part invention” defines exactly what a marriage must be if it's to survive. Here is a short extract:

“Our love has been anything but perfect and anything but static. Inevitably there have been times when one of us has outrun the other and has had to wait patiently for the other to catch up. There have been times when we have misunderstood each other, demanded too much of each other, been insensitive of the other’s needs. I do not believe there is any marriage where this does not happen. The growth of love is not a straight line, but a series of hills and valleys. I suspect that in very good marriages there are times when love seems to be over. Sometimes these desert times are simply the only way to get to the next oasis, which is far more lush and beautiful after the desert crossing than it could possibly have been without it.”

The second quote that I brought up from the depths of my study is from a book called *Mortal Lessons*, written by surgeon Richard Seltzer, who also had a gift for reflecting on the human condition.

He describes a visit to a young woman he has just operated on. When he arrives on the ward, she is just waking from surgery. Sitting by the bed, holding her hand is her young husband. They have been married a very short time.

The surgery had entailed severing a tiny but significant nerve that affects the muscles of her mouth. Seltzer made every possible effort to follow the curve of her flesh so that he could remove the tumour, but it was simply not possible to avoid severing this tiny nerve. As a consequence, her mouth droops on one side. The young woman speaks:

“Will my mouth always be like this?” she asks.

“Yes,” I say, “it will. It is because the nerve was cut.”

She nods, and is silent. But the young man smiles.

“I like it,” he says. “It is kind of cute.”

The husband then bends to kiss her, and Seltzer remarks that the husband “twists his own lips to accommodate to hers, to show her that their kiss still works.” Seltzer finds himself recalling the ancient Greek belief that the gods

were known to appear as mortals, and he lets the wonder of the moment hang in the silence of the dimly lit ward.

Two moments of human love as “a many-splendored thing.” As I replace the original quotes in the large ring binder, I resolve to take it from the shelf more often.

I have come home

By Jeanne Forte

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Victoria, a navy baby. My dad retired from the navy and entered a career as a commercial fisherman in the spring and summer and a professional musician in the fall and winter. Many summers were spent along the west coast of Vancouver Island in little-known places such as Sooke, Jordan River, Ucluelet and Tofino. These were idyllic summers full of sand, sun, waves and sleeping on the beach. After graduating from Belmont Senior High School, I attended the University of Victoria for a time, but spent many years wandering Canada, Europe and later Southeast Asia — all while married and raising two sons.

What were your early religious influences and experiences?

My spiritual DNA springs from Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Salvation Army on my maternal side and the Methodists on my paternal side. I was baptized at St Peter, Belmont Park. For many years I attended Sunday school at Langford Baptist Church and began playing piano for services at age 11. I returned to, and fell in love with, the Anglican way as I became an organist at St Peter, Belmont Park at 15. The Anglican church has been my spiritual home since that time, though I have explored other denominations and faiths.

What studies have you done?

I attended seminary at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in California and was ordained in 1999.

Can you tell us a bit about your career within the Anglican church so far?

My first parish was the Highwood Parish in rural Alberta. It was an incredible proving ground for my ministry. Newly single in 2005, I returned to Northern California as rector of an historic church in Benicia, where I retired in 2018.

I have “come home” to British Columbia, and now find myself as the part-time incumbent at St Columba, Tofino. It is wonderful to be home!

Did you pursue another career previously?

I have always been involved in music, as a piano player, organist, chorister and choir leader. After a bachelor’s degree at the University of Calgary, I joined the university library staff in technical services, specializing in religions, languages and music.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I consider my career to have been one blessing following another. But one event stands out: when St Paul, Benicia (California) found itself on a three-year Abraham Path Initiative we held occasional services with people of various faiths. During one Sunday service there was in attendance a rabbi who gave the “drash” (sermon), an imam who said the prayers, a Sikh group that invited us to their upcoming celebration, members of the Baha’i community and various other people of faith and no faith at all. The joy at the centre of this moment has stayed with me. “Abraham’s tent is large, with many entrances, and there is a place for all.”

What do you see as the greatest challenge in the Anglican church?

How do we, moving into the future, express our faith of openness and inclusion in the midst of marked divisiveness (social and political)? How can we be the liberal Anglican expression of Jesus Christ in a world such as this?

What would your ideal posting look like?

Here I am, back where I started, with a whole quiver full of experiences and a desire to serve. I believe that’s an ideal post.

What is the most unusual sermon you have ever heard?

On a Rogation Sunday at the centenary of the Newman Farm in Dinton, Alberta, I began a sermon out in the farmyard. But the birds, eyeing the seeds to be blessed, were so cacophonous that I gave up and we all sat for a few minutes, listening to their negotiations. It turned out to be wonderful.

Growing a brighter future, today

By Faith Tides

Say Yes! to Kids 2022

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) is stepping up its commitment to young people across Canada with an even more ambitious plan to fund ministry and outreach to children, youth, and young adults this year.

The AFC Board has approved a campaign plan for *Say Yes! to Kids 2022*, setting a \$500,000 goal and introducing an innovative partnership model of fundraising. “Our hope is that this campaign will be both empowering and energizing,” says Scott Brubacher, executive director, “enabling our churches to harness the power of peer-to-peer fundraising to grow sustainable revenue streams for youth programs, while connecting them with other churches across Canada, as well as diocesan and national ministries, that are growing a brighter future for young people, today.”

Brubacher says that the 2021 campaign and Request for Proposals (RFPs) — where 79 projects received a total of \$470,000 in funding — was a valuable learning experience for AFC. “Grant recipients demonstrated a stunning combination of compassion and creative thinking. They also showed us the depth of relationships

that exist between churches and their communities.” Brubacher says *Say Yes! to Kids* will help to provide the resources needed to strengthen these connections and partnerships so the church can “continue to be a catalyst for re-engaging with children and families in a time of pandemic recovery.”

Peter Wall, AFC’s gift consultant, is excited about this campaign’s potential to attract leadership gifts. “There was, and is, a real appetite among donors to support a community-based movement for youth. We believe a national campaign that is strong in its numbers and coordinated in its approach can connect money to mission in a truly transformational way.”

Michelle Hauser, AFC’s development and communications consultant says, “Any Anglican parish in Canada with a vision for outreach to young people is eligible to apply to form a fundraising team and campaign alongside like-minded parishes nationwide from April 1 to June 30.” Hauser says teams will be able to set their own fundraising goals, and they will receive support with communications, case development, and training from AFC throughout the campaign. “Teams will also benefit from an AFC-led leadership giving campaign that will boost their efforts, including matching gifts.”

To learn more about *Say Yes! to Kids* visit the [AFC website](#)¹ and download AFC’s campaign [FAQs sheet](#)². If you have questions, reach out to Michelle Hauser at mhauser@anglicanfoundation.org³.

1. See <http://anglicanfoundation.org/say-yes-to-kids>.
2. See <https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Say-Yes-to-Kids-FAQs-for-web-1.pdf>.

Changes to regional archdeaonries

By Faith Tides

Recent initiatives to streamline the governance of the diocese have included reducing the size of diocesan council and the frequency with which it and the finance committee meet each year. The role of regional dean has also been eliminated, in recognition of the fact that there was significant overlap with the regional archdeacons’ duties.

Selkirk region’s archdeacon, Dawna Wall, will be moving on to a new ministry opportunity south of the border, and the bishop and archdeacons have decided to reconfigure the regions of the diocese.

From March 1 there will be four regions instead of five: Mid-North Islands (Elizabeth Northcott); Cowichan Mid-Vancouver Island (Clara Plamondon); Greater Victoria (Alastair McCollum); and Western, Peninsula & Gulf Islands (Lon Towstego).

For the full list of churches and parishes falling under each region, see the [diocesan website](#).⁴ Contact information for your archdeacon can also be found on the [diocesan website](#)⁵.

-
3. See <mailto:mhauser@anglicanfoundation.org>.
 4. See <https://bc.anglican.ca/news/new-regional-boundaries-set>.
 5. See <https://bc.anglican.ca/pages/archdeacons>.