



RENEWED HEARTS, RENEWED SPIRITS, RENEWED PEOPLE

March 2023

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The neighbours that God has given us



Holy Spirit Dove stained-glass window. Image courtesy of Janet Best.

By Anna Greenwood-Lee

March is the month when the diocese asks that all parishes complete their annual Parish Information Return (PIR). The data collected in this form helps us know who is serving as wardens and treasurers, and who is coming to the May synod as delegates. It also paints a picture of trends in attendance and other such demographics. A noticeable statistic in the past year — and a worrying one — is that quite a number of parishes have reported that they've held more funerals than baptisms.

The Capital Daily [recently published an article](#) pointing out that the Greater Victoria region has the lowest birthrate in the country and the biggest gap between births and deaths of any municipality in Canada. Between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, 4,222 people died in the Greater Victoria region while only 2,888 were born. The article also mentions that because of

migration, the population of the region is in fact growing, but that most of this settlement is by those in the 65+ category. There are 30,000 more seniors in the Victoria area than there were 10 years ago. At the same time, the population in the 45–54 age group has declined by eight per cent.

I am sure that I'm not telling you anything you have not already noticed. But I ask you to keep this in mind when you find yourself in church asking, "Where are all the young people?" or "What should we do to get more people in the Sunday school?" While we do still need to keep the needs of the young people, families and children in our midst in mind, I must say that as bishop, it frustrates me that we also, at the same time, don't celebrate and treasure all the seniors among us.

The Bible is full of exhortations to welcome the widows, the poor, the blind and the lame. Yet too often we assume that the mark of success for a church is how many *young families* it can attract. They are indeed valuable members of the community, but they are not more so than seniors, singles, the bereaved and those who have retired to this part of the world and are looking for community, connections and faith.

This March, we continue our Lenten journey, and as we submit our Parish Annual Returns, let us look at the people in our communities and in our pews, and let us give thanks for who is with us — the neighbours that God has given us.

The medicine of truth



Stained-glass window of St Paul at Saint Paul Catholic Church (Westerville, Ohio) by Nheyob. Used under a CC BY-SA 3.0 license.

By Herbert O'Driscoll

It is fascinating to see how many of the therapies of our time have much in common, though their language seems to differ. For instance, it is commonplace to say that what we are thinking is very much connected with — and very much affects — our general health. This insight is actually a very old one and is expressed in different forms, some linked to Eastern traditions, some from the classical world and some from Christian spirituality.

We are all only too aware that many of the realities we live in are replete with ugliness, darkness, fear, anxiety and other shadows of the mind. We are also very much aware that we do not deal with them adequately by trying to anaesthetize ourselves against them — something which our contemporary culture is only too ready to help us with. If we are wise, we try to

emphasize, as much as possible, those elements of life that at best encourage and strengthen us, or give us a sense of beauty or goodness, or indeed even make us smile.

This short simple reflection came to mind because I have just read a letter written a long time ago to a community in what was then — twenty-two centuries ago — a small fishing village at the eastern end of one of the great highways that crossed the Roman Empire — the Via Egnatia. The villagers were among the very first Christians, and they were visited by a brilliant and dynamic leader of the still very new spiritual movement, Paul of Tarsus.

In the course of that letter, Paul wrote what may have been from his own thinking or from one of the many Greek poets and philosophers of the time:

Whatsoever things are true,

Whatsoever things are honest,

whatsoever things are just,

whatsoever things are pure,

whatsoever things are lovely,

whatsoever things are of good report;

if there be any virtue,

and if there be any praise,

Think on these things.

After twenty-two centuries, it's still a very good idea, don't you think?

Anytime is a good time to be inspired



Cebu Sunrise by Lip Jin Lee. Used under a CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license.

By Wally Eamer

Any day, any age is a good time to be inspired. A young doctor, after completing two of five years of surgeon residency training, felt a call to serve among people living in the slums of Manila in the Philippines. The medical school had warned him that, if he stayed, he might never graduate. Still, the young doctor went. He was deeply moved by the people there and served a decade among them before moving on to Africa. Accordingly, the surgeon program dropped him. So what is the theme of this story you ask? More than one life, as I will tell you, was changed as a result of this young man.

This doctor inspired another person who was some 40 years older than him. After half a century of working in

resource companies, this individual — let's call him "N" — was asking himself, "How might I serve?" "N" joined fellow churchgoers in brigades that flew from North America to Latin America. With guidance from local religious organizations, they helped build schools, water systems, churches and more. At the same time, medical and dental workers gave free care to some of the many poor. Typically, brigades go for a week with one day of travel, five days of working and bonding, and then one day spent returning home.

Several times when I flew north from Central America, there were one or more brigades on the plane. It always felt like there was electricity in the air. The members had huge energy, big smiles, great stories and exciting future plans. They always received more than they could give, "N" told me. After a few experiences with the brigades, he wanted to do more, but he did not know what, where or when, he said. And then it happened.

Three weeks after returning home from a brigade, a missionary called. Would "N" replace a volunteer leaving a poor Central American village? It had very high unemployment, intermittent drinking water and dirt roads deeply rutted by the monsoon rains. As well, the village's public school only went to Grade 8, and the teachers and students were often absent. Even though "N" didn't speak much Spanish, the missionary was bilingual and dropped by a couple of times a week.

St Francis of Assisi for inspiration once said, "Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words." While "N" himself was no motivational speaker in any language, could he, he asked himself, take his decades of experience of growth and success and preach with action? He had time, some money and a call to help others. "N" committed himself.

There was great poverty in the village “N” was assigned to. The villagers aspired to little more than food and shelter, God willing. To them, survival was an achievement in itself. “N” could empathize. He had grown up during the Great Depression and he knew what being poor was like. Consequently, he developed a powerful aspiration for a better life and an entrepreneurial spirit to help him succeed. “N” went from working in manual labour to managerial positions, and then to starting and running his own successful business. He would use this same driving spirit to help the villagers, he vowed.

“N” lived in the village several times a year for over 20 years. During his first month there, he listened and watched to understand the people and their culture, and gradually he learned. “N” even bought vacant land beside the village store and over a decade, built a compound with space for him and others to live and work in. He planted drought resistant fruit trees and offered the fruit and seeds. Over the years, “N” helped countless people start businesses, families pay school fees, and injured and sick people get medical services.

Yet to help change the extreme poverty of the village, the key lessons seemed paradoxical. Some people in the village did change, and “N” perhaps changed more than anyone else. To witness against poverty and suffering, one must live with corruption and the desire for tranquility that helped create the poverty. “N” had to act consistently to the best of his ability and to accept the limitations of starting a new language at age 70. In ministry, love must be unconditional just as God loves us.

Here is a true story told by “N” with a warm smile, not bitterness. The church in the village was growing and needed a new building. The officials asked “N” to fund

the design and construction of it. He did — three times. At the first time, construction money went to the national church. Some of it went for emergencies around the country and the remainder was spent on part of the building’s physical foundation. At the second time, the construction manager purchased materials, but only walls and a roof got built. The rest of the materials disappeared, and the new church was still unusable. The church asked “N” a third time to fund the church. He agreed again, on condition that he himself bought the materials and was made general contractor. The last piece of essential work — the floor — got finished by noon on a Saturday with a big wedding scheduled at 7 p.m. The floor contractor did a beautiful job and told me he had worked in Alberta for two years. What a small world!

My coda to the story — the priest asked me to serve as deacon with him at the big wedding. “N,” my wife and I walked to the new church. Suddenly, with some 200 other guests inside, the electricity to the whole village was cut off. The government, it seemed, hadn’t paid the private provider for several months. With truck headlights aimed through the windows and me holding a flashlight so the priest could read the liturgy, the wedding proceeded without a hitch. The families were joyous and the groom nervous. The bride, looking lovely in a long dress, kept her composure and even gave me a wry, sympathetic smile when she heard my terrible accent in the hymns! Walking home afterwards, we felt peace and contentment.

Nowadays, “N” no longer travels long distances, and he has sold his compound in the village. The church continues to thrive, and the people “N” once knew as children and adolescents are now adults. Some keep in touch with him through the internet.

God gives us freedom, and we, so much less than perfect, must give freedom to others. The goal of ministry is not disciplined perfection; it is the warmth of unconditional love that changes everyone.

Parenthood and Faith



Kieran Wilson and Baby Mathilda. Image courtesy of the author.

By Kieran Wilson

There is an old Thomistic adage that grace does not destroy nature but rather perfects it. This means in part that God uses the ordinary stuff of human existence—our bodies, our intellect and will, our hopes and aspirations—to fulfill his creative and redemptive purposes, perfecting our natural aptitudes, appetites, and potential and, in so doing, elevating us to share in his divine life. This is why it is especially fitting that God should have chosen to redeem human beings by being born as one, by living a human life, by dying a human death, and by exalting human nature to the right hand of the Most High.

The wonderful thing about the incarnation is its irrepressible ordinarieness. As we recalled at Christmas, the birth of the God-Man in time and space is, the miraculous circumstances of his conception excepted, rather like any other birth, the sort of thing that has happened again and again from the beginning of creation—and that is exactly the point of it! And yet it is this birth, this coming of God in human flesh, that transfigures all of human history before and after it: creature and Creator are forever joined, never to be sundered; human nature, wondrously created, is more wondrously restored and glorified; human generation and human life are raised above simple biology and are given a new spiritual vocation as the means by which human beings are incorporated into the life of the Most Holy Trinity.

What on earth, you may wonder, has any of this to do with this article's theme, parenthood and faith? In the months since the birth of my daughter, Mathilda, I have been reflecting with amazement upon the ways in which God uses the ordinary things of life to effect his loving purposes in the world. The birth of a child, and especially of a first child, is something utterly ordinary—it's being going on since the dawn of time, after all—and yet completely transformative. I have come increasingly to realise that the significance of a child's birth is not exhausted by its biological or even by its emotional dimensions, and I intend what follows to be an articulation of some of the inchoate theological themes that have swirled around in my (admittedly rather tired) head since becoming a father.

A child is in every sense a new creation, a fresh work of the living God, and, through baptism, an heir of eternal life. In bringing Mathilda to birth, God initiated a new spiritual life, what we might call a “natural” spiritual life, which was given its distinctive Christ-likeness at

her baptism on the Fourth Sunday of Advent last year. My own emotional response to my daughter's baptism caught me off guard: I was confronted with the same heady mixture of awe, love, and trepidation that overcame me at Mathilda's birth. Here, again, was new life, brought to birth by water and the Spirit into the incarnate life of Jesus Christ. And here, again, I had to take responsibility, along with my wife and Mathilda's godparents, for nurturing that life. The enormity of this commitment has not yet fully sunk in. What a tremendous task God has given me and my wife: that we should assume responsibility not only for *our own* daughter—a task daunting enough—but for *God's own* daughter as well!

Such a stupendous duty cannot be borne but by the transformation of our own spiritual lives as parents. A wise priest once said to me that marriage is asceticism, and this is especially true of one of the chief ends of marriage, the bearing and rearing of children (see the *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 564). That is to say that marriage and family life are a form of spiritual training, the right use of which draws us nearer to God. The first fruit of the ascetical discipline of parenthood is, to my mind, the virtue of death to self. Life in community always forces us to confront ourselves in relation to the other—other personalities, other wills, other aspirations besides and often in conflict with our own—and this is especially true of the relationship between parent and child. There is no negotiating with a crying baby, no compromise that can be struck between the child's need to eat and the parent's desperate yearning to sleep. The shriek of the infant is, to the parent, S. Paul's maxim "Ye are not your own" writ very large indeed. In those moments, there can only be the surrender of the parent's will, the mortifying of the parent's own desires for the sake of

the good of another who is so utterly dependent as to be unable even to express thanks. The newborn teaches the new parent as perhaps nothing else can the virtue of death to self, the setting aside of one's special plans and pleasures for the good of neighbour and the glory of God.

Yet the challenges of parenthood are far outweighed by the hope and excitement that comes with the extraordinary newness of the life enfolding before one's eyes. New milestones are reached at breakneck speed, only to be succeeded in a parent's hopes by yet more milestones to come. The first flash of intention and recognition in Mathilda's eyes, her first smile, her first laugh are not only delightful in themselves but are pregnant with promise for the whole life of possibility and discovery that lies ahead of her.

Of course, the spiritual life has its own milestones, and I am excited, as one who did not receive a Christian upbringing, to share these milestones with my daughter. I am excited, as Mathilda learns to speak, to help her articulate her first verbal prayers to God; I am excited, as she learns to read, to introduce her to the glorious mysteries of Sacred Scripture and to begin fulfilling the promise I made at her baptism to teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Decalogue, and the Catechism; I am excited for her to open her own Prayer Book for the first time and to discover little by little the genius of its pattern of prayerful living; I am excited to live the rhythm of the Christian life with her, the daily and weekly cycles of divine office and Eucharist, of feast and fast, of the solemn *crescendi* and the reflective *diminuendi* of the liturgical calendar. I look forward to her little voice echoing my "Amen" and belting out with that guileless self-assurance that only a child can muster the responses at Mass or some beloved hymn. In short, my dearest hope for my

daughter is that she will discover the same joy in following Christ that I myself, by God's grace, have found.

As with everything in parenthood—and, indeed, in life—hopes for the future are mingled with anxieties. One of my chief anxieties concerns the apparently terminal decline of the Anglican Church in this place, a decline only hastened by the pandemic. What right have I to raise my child to love and reverence a pattern of spiritual life—sights, sounds, people, places, holy things and holy words—that may soon “go the way of all flesh?” How can I bring up my daughter to cherish a tradition that, in all likelihood, will be extinct in this diocese and perhaps in this country within her lifetime? And, for that matter, how shall I bolster my own morale in the face of dire portents of future calamity? The well-meant comment “It is so nice to see a baby in church” cannot but be demoralising for the young parent who hopes that Canadian Anglicanism will outlive the usually grey heads that express this sentiment. Infancy and childhood are but stages of life that the Church, by dint of her catholicity, ought always to include; that the presence of children should be worthy of special comment in our churches is hardly a sign of rude ecclesiastical health. My family is fortunate to be part of the parish community of S. Barnabas, Victoria, which, for its part, does include many young families; yet one parish, or indeed four or five, does not a diocese or a national church make. I wonder, then, is it right that my daughter should be taught to love a world that is passing away?

In writing these words, I am conscious that the question I have posed is in fact the great conundrum of created existence. *All* things—not just the Anglican Church of Canada!—are passing away, hastening as soon as they are brought forth to return again to their

mother dust. Given this harsh reality, why should anything come to be at all, and, for that matter, why should human beings *will* that anything should come to be? Why right have we to bring forth life in the midst of death? It is a question for which the logic of the created order, considered on its own, can afford no good answer. That new life—any new life—should spring forth at all is testament to the trust of that created order in the revivifying power of God, to whose providence alone the destiny of all things belongs. Only trust in this providence is sufficient to justify the bringing forth of new life in a dying world.

This hard, half-learned trust forces me to acknowledge that the future of the Church and my daughter's place within it is not mine even to *discern*, far less to *decide*. And, indeed, this inability to know and control is the greatest challenge of parenthood, at least the greatest that I have encountered so far. We bring our children into a world of weal and woe, not knowing what shall be their portion of each and not able, despite the our most fervent efforts and most ardent yearnings, to do very much about it. To bring a child into the world necessarily involves risk—risk of pain, sorrow, loss. We are, after all, limited, mortal, contingent beings, coming to be and passing away according to *God's* good pleasure, not our own. My daughter's future and, for that matter, your future and mine belong to God alone. I cannot tell if the years ahead will bring packed pews or shuttered churches, glorious descants or silent organs, health or sickness, happiness or grief. What I *can* tell is that whatever the future holds for my daughter for apparent good or ill is embraced by the loving providence of a loving God, whose almighty Word and Wisdom “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things” (*cf.* Wis. 8.1).

This, it seems to me, is the essence of Christian hope,

which I am discovering to be an essential virtue of parenthood. Christian hope is not a vain, vague optimism, but rather a trust that God can and will use all things, even our suffering, for his glory and our good; for there is no suffering, from the least inconvenience to the profoundest anguish, that has not been hallowed by the bloody sweat of the God-Man. It was only after meditating upon Christ's Passion, after all, that Mother Julian of Norwich was able to perceive that "all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well" amid the suffering of the world (*Revelations of Divine Love*, chap. 27).

But my hope for my daughter is more than a mere sense that, when sadness does touch her life as inevitably it will, it is for some "greater good" inscrutable to us but discernable to the secret counsels of God, true though this is. The fullness of my hope for her was expressed by the Church in the liturgy of her baptism, namely that "being baptized into the death of Christ, she may also be made partaker of his resurrection" (*BCP*, p. 529). My prayer for Mathilda is that the ordinary things of life, its joys, sorrows, opportunities, and duties, all hallowed by the divinely human life of Jesus Christ, will draw her nearer to him unto life eternal, "which things," the Church assures us, "Christ, for his part, will most surely perform" (*BCP*, p. 525). The only balm for my fatherly worries is the assurance that it is the good will and pleasure of Jesus Christ to bring to fruition the good work he began in Mathilda at her baptism. My daughter's welfare in this world and the next, which I will but am unable of myself to achieve, is also willed by God who *is* able to achieve it. All that remains for me and for her is to get out of his way and let him do the work of salvation that he, in his love, is only too eager to do.

Draw closer: A diocesan women's retreat this April



By Selinde Krayenhoff

Almost 30 years ago, I became a Christian. My journey of faith was the result of an intense year of exploration through a course offered by the Roman Catholic Church called the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA). The program ended just before Easter and I was baptized at the Easter Vigil. When I showed up for church the following morning, the priest was surprised. "You didn't need to come again!" he exclaimed. Well, I just couldn't get enough. I loved the ritual. I loved the eucharist. I loved the mystery. I loved the learning. But there was no follow-up after I was baptized. The course ended. I was "done" — I was a Christian.

I became a Sunday-go-to-church Christian. But I was hungry for more. So I went to my priest and asked, "I want to keep learning, what can I do? How does one

pray? I don't understand the Trinity. What would you suggest I read?" It soon became clear that my questions weren't welcome. And there wasn't anything much going on at that church; no ongoing Bible study or instruction.

I talked to people about my dilemma, about my yearning for more. Someone told me about *cursillo* (which is Spanish for "little course" in Christian studies). So I did the *cursillo* and then served on a team for the next six years with a group of five women who had done the *cursillo* as well. We met every week for 18 years to share our lives and our faith journey. All but one were older than me, and they supported me through my parenting years and in my role as a businesswoman and community leader. They were my guideposts.

And then one day, I read about a course in the church's Sunday bulletin called *Heart to Heart Communication*. My ears tingled and my heart pounded. Fantastic! I signed up and that launched a 15-year journey into learning Nonviolent Communication (NVC), a process that helped me live out my commitment to integrity and compassion in very real and practical ways. I loved NVC so much that I ended up teaching it to others, especially to other parents.

Every time I felt like I needed to expand and deepen my relationship with God and neighbour, something would catch my attention, in a conversation or in a reading, and I would be given an idea for the next step on my journey. I would identify a need or a longing, and bingo — I would be given a lead, an answer.

One year, I had hardly voiced my desire to learn more about prayer, when I saw an advertisement for an evening exploring different types of prayer.

Christopher Page, then the rector at St Philip, Oak Bay, was the presenter. When he started talking about "centering prayer," my skin tingled and my heart started pounding. Weeks later, I attended an introductory session to learn more, and this form of prayer continues as my daily practice.

God has responded to my yearnings in such concrete, mysterious and wonderful ways for the last three decades. Scripture tells us that when we knock, the door will be opened. I have found this to be true. And so with this in mind, I will be leading the Diocesan Spring Women's retreat this April, to give participants a taste of the many different disciplines and perspectives I've come across in my journey. It is my hope that the retreat will be inspiring, supportive and encouraging to those who attend. Elaina Hyde-Mills, an honorary assistant at St Barnabas, Victoria, will join us as the spiritual director for the weekend. Elaina is a board certified hospital chaplain who is experienced in spiritual care and companionship. As well, she is an associate of the Anglican Order of the Holy Cross.

Draw closer: A weekend journey (from April 21–23) into a more intimate walk with the Divine. Discover different ways to open your heart and experience God's presence in your life more fully. To register, please download the registration form by clicking [here](#).

Bill Tarter as a canon at Christ Church Cathedral

By Faith Tides

On Sunday, March 5, Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee will install Bill Tarter as a canon of the chapter of Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria. The service begins at 4 p.m. and all are welcome to attend.

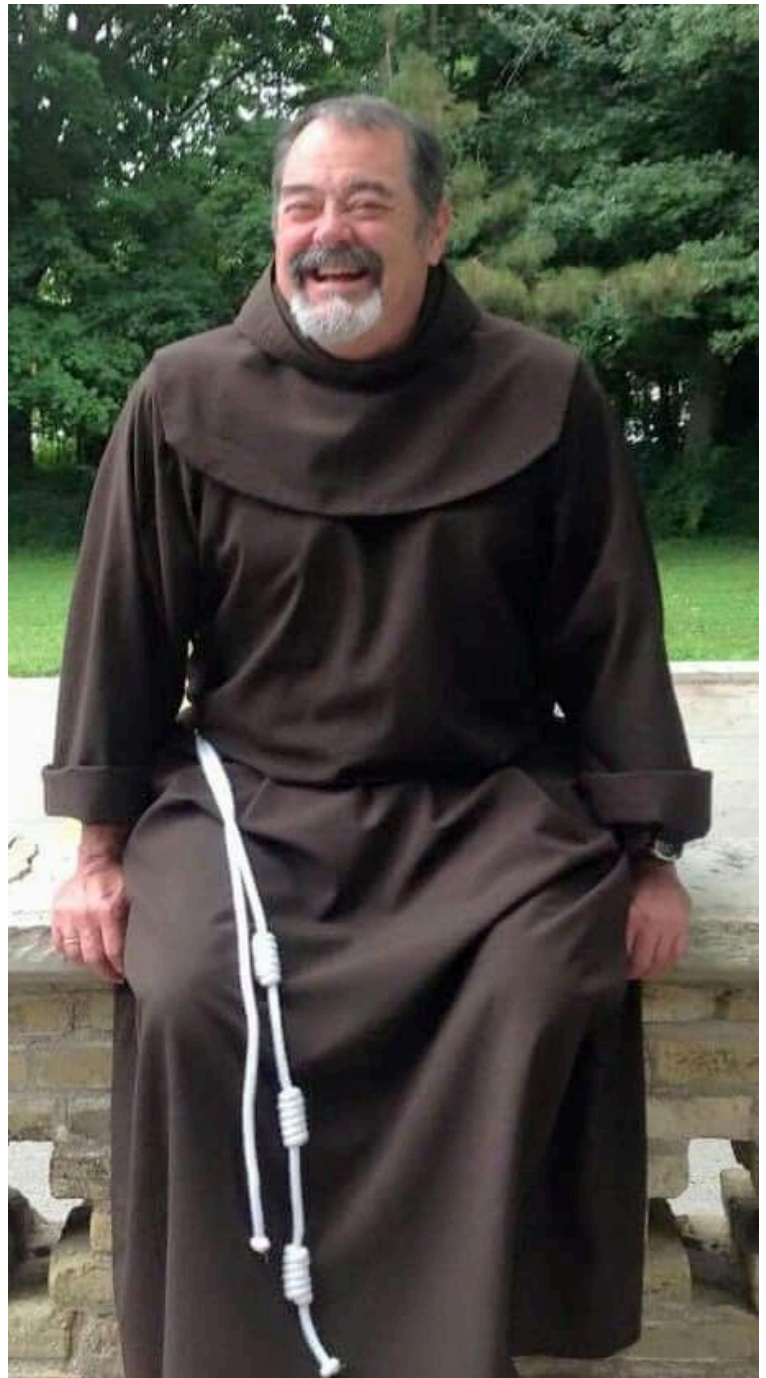


Image courtesy of Bill Tartar.

Bill is originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico. In 1983, he was ordained as a Franciscan priest. After leaving the order, he worked in education in Houston and in the Seattle area. In 2015, he moved to Victoria

with his husband, Darcy.

Bill serves as an honorary priest at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria. As well, he is a member of the Community of Francis and Clare, an Anglican Franciscan community.

Allen Doerksen as incumbent of St Philip, Oak Bay

By Faith Tides

Faith Tides congratulates Allen Doerksen, as incumbent of St Philip, Oak Bay, beginning on March 15, 2023.

Allen attended Simon Fraser University where he studied philosophy, humanities, history and linguistics. He then went on to Regent College to earn his masters of biblical studies and masters of theology. Afterwards, at the Vancouver School of Theology, he was awarded diplomas in Anglican studies and in transitional ministry. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2002.



Allen Doerksen. Image courtesy of St Thomas, Chilliwack.

Allen has served as an incumbent in multiple parishes in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Chilliwack and most recently, at St Matthew in Abbotsford and St Thomas in Chilliwack. He has a particular interest in the development of spiritual communities within the Anglican tradition and is a respected teacher of biblical and theological subjects.

His wife, Denise Doerksen, was appointed incumbent of Holy Trinity, North Saanich last month.

“Go to a place I will show you”

By Peter J. Parker

What would it be like if your rector retired after over 30 years as your priest and pastor? Ask the people of St Philip, Victoria.

After a dedicated ministry of over 30 years at St Philip's, Christopher Page, has retired. One might expect to hear words of reaction like trauma, shock, grief, panic, anxiety and the like. As the interim priest in charge, I can attest that only two of those really apply — grief and anxiety.



Christopher Page

Naturally there is grief when any pastor leaves for whatever reason. As one who has lived through

retirement, I know that a departing rector also goes through some significant sadness. Some clergy experience “leaving grief” many times over — six times for me — and Christopher, I’ve no doubt, is going through that phase right now. The same can be said of the parishioners of St Philip’s. We would be kidding ourselves if we said that there was no mutual regret at the church or in the Page household.

Nonetheless, that grief can’t be described as traumatic. There is something far more important at work here than the influence of or the attachment to any incumbent. I have found at St. Philip’s a deep desire to worship, to walk in the path of Christ, and to put the gospel in action. Our parishioners care for each other and they care for what happens in the wider world. The announcement by Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee of the appointment of Allen Doerksen as St Philip’s new rector, beginning in March, has injected a new sense of hope into the community.

To explain, St Philip’s is not just recovering from the closing of a long and positive pastorate. Like other congregations, we are recovering from the aftermath of the pandemic. For a time, St Philip’s had to adapt to being an online “Zoom congregation” as many others did. Then as our reopening began, the main Sunday service morphed into a live-stream one — a veritable cornucopia of technology with the entire service put on screen via a carefully prepared PowerPoint presentation (we averaged about 90 slides per Sunday), and the use of laptops, cameras, microphones and sound equipment for our praise band.

Currently, Eli Diefeld, our part-time youth minister, gathers a group of teens for special events, as well as for Sunday morning services. At the same time, our Sunday school leader, Shannon Carmichael, expects to

teach some half dozen children, as families once cut off by COVID-19 begin to worship in person once again. These are encouraging signs, but the future is not clear. Certainly, the numbers tell us that the interruption of the pandemic has had a drastic effect on church attendance.

Besides grief, there is anxiety as to what is to come. After Bishop Anna preached at St Philip's in July, a number of parishioners began studying the book she quoted from, *Facing Decline, Finding Hope*, written by Jeffery Jones (for those interested, we have study sheets to accompany the book, which can be obtained in electronic form, free of charge, by writing to admin@stphilipvictoria.ca). Jones addresses the anxieties we all face in our churches, challenging us to let go of some of those worries, including the future of one's parish, maintaining building infrastructures, declining attendance and donation levels, unsteady finances, and so forth, and ask instead — where is God at work in the community? How can we better align ourselves with the teachings of Jesus?

As St Philip's awaits its new rector, our congregation wrestles, like any other, with the anxiety of moving forward. One thinks of the call to Abram, "Go to a place I will show you" — but without a mission statement or Google Maps. With this in mind, St Philip's is still a place listening to what God is telling us and looking for the reign of Christ: a kingdom of justice and compassion proclaimed by word and example.

The Anglican Foundation of Canada in action

By Faith Tides

"Aboriginal Neighbours and the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) are very grateful to AFC for the grants provided to support FPCC's Mentor-Apprentice Indigenous language learning teams over the past eight years. In 2022-23, AFC's grant is supporting two second-year teams: one near Victoria, working with the SENĆOŦEN language, and one in Nanaimo, working with the Hul'q'umi'num' language. Aboriginal Neighbours' Revitalizing Indigenous Living Languages project is also supported by parish and individual fundraising, and a three-year grant from the United Church of Canada Healing Fund."



Land, Law, Religion and Reconciliation: A Colloquium (May 4 to 6)

By Brendon Neilson

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) works to foster Anglican presence by providing abundant resources for innovative ministry and diverse infrastructure projects and theological formation throughout the Canadian church.

In the past 12 years, the AFC has funded 62 projects in the Diocese of British Columbia to the sum of \$368,530, with amounts going towards diverse infrastructures, community ministries, leadership and education, indigenous ministries, and sacred music and liturgical arts. Most recently, a donation of more than \$257,000 has been received going towards the newly established Council of the North Retired Clergy Fund. Learn more at:

<https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/afc-celebrating-more-than-257-000-in-support-of-northern-clergy-housing-fund>.

Your generosity and support are needed. Donations can be made at <https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/donate/>.


Applications for grants can be made to the AFC at <https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/apply/>.

In collaboration with the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society (CSRS) at the University of Victoria (UVIC), the diocese is pleased to continue our collaborative effort of bringing experts to discuss important issues of faith and public life at the intersection of academic and church discourses.

Land, Law, Religion and Reconciliation: A Colloquium will be a dedicated conversation about the issues facing faith communities who hold land and are confronting changing religious and social contexts in Canada. The parts of this two day conversation that will be highlighted are: historical contexts, the shifting role of religion, the legal issues at play both public (e.g. taxes) and private (e.g. donor intention), and the future possibilities for navigating these issues as faith organizations.

HOLD THE DATE! MAY 4-6, 2023

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



LAND, LAW, RELIGION AND RECONCILIATION: A COLLOQUIUM

The property of religious communities carries with it responsibility and possibility. Land and buildings once considered essential to communal life look different in the light of a housing crisis, an aging population, calls for justice for Indigenous peoples, and a pandemic. Join us to explore the changing landscape of religious property in Canada.

Featuring:

- *Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator of the United Church of Canada
- *Kathy Chan, UVic Law Professor and Acting Director of the CSRS
- *David Seljak, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Waterloo

University of Victoria | Centre for Studies in Religion & Society

THE JOHN ALBERT HALL LECTURE SERIES

uvic.ca/csrs/events

The workshop will focus primarily, though not exclusively, on the assets of “mainstream” Christian churches in Canada whose congregations are declining significantly. Our starting point is that, in a rapidly changing social and religious context, faith communities and institutions face new questions about their use of property. The church assets that are the legacy of Canada’s colonial past carry with them possibility and responsibility. Lands and buildings that religious communities once considered essential to communal life look different in the light of a housing crisis, an ageing population, calls for justice for Indigenous peoples, and three years of COVID-19. Innovation and adaptation seem essential for religious institutions to continue to contribute to our society.

As a diocese, we hold a significant number of properties, and attending to the land (and buildings) account for a significant part of our time and work

together. We know that as our context continues to shift, we must be faithful in how we understand and make decisions with the gifts we have inherited including our lands and buildings. This event will help inform us as we discern our way forward.

The colloquium will open on Thursday evening with a lecture by David Seljak that Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee will respond to. The purpose of this session is to provide an overview of the current “spiritual landscape” in Canada, of the various “existential challenges” facing the church (and other religious institutions), and of the relationship between those existential challenges and the use and regulation of religious property.

Friday will highlight some of the various obligations that are present in thinking about land owned by religious communities, and what resources are available to navigate them. Carmen Lansdowne will give a keynote address in the late morning session.

Saturday morning will feature a round table discussion on what possible avenues are available for religious communities to take considering the complexities of the issues presented in the two days previous. Jason McKinney will introduce some options from within the Christian tradition for thinking differently about land, and a discussion will follow with a panel made up of conference speakers.

I ask you to hold May 4 to 6 in your calendars and to keep an eye for registration details in the weeks to come.

Dates:

Thursday, May 4, from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Friday, May 5, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 6, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Locations:

Thursday and Friday: UVic Student Union Building,
Upper Lounge

Saturday: TBA

Participants:

Carmen Lansdowne is a member of the Heiltsuk First Nation and is the moderator of the United Church of Canada. She holds a PhD from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. Prior to being elected as moderator, Carmen served as the executive director at First United Church Community Ministry Society in the downtown eastside of Vancouver where she oversaw the development and planning of a \$65 million dollar redevelopment of their property which will include 103 non-market rental properties.

David Seljak is professor of Religious Studies and chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Waterloo. David has published extensively on topics of religion in Canada and will open our colloquium with a contextualizing lecture on the subjects of religion, land, law and reconciliation.

Kathy Chan is associate professor of law at UVIC and

current interim director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society. She is an expert on law and religion and co-chairs this year's John Albert Hall Lectures. She will help guide the conversation around the legal obligations arising from land and religion.

Stanely Martin of Fasken law firm is one of Canada's foremost legal experts on law and religion and has been involved in more than 20 years in some of the most significant legal cases related to religion and property.

Jason Mckinney is a priest in the diocese of Toronto and incumbent at Epiphany and St Mark, Parkdale. Jason has his PhD in philosophy from the University of Toronto and has been an organizer in the Parkdale neighbourhood where he helped bring the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust into being.

Refugee Program Update

By Brendon Neilson

Since the diocese announced our plans to not renew our SAH (Settlement Agreement Holder) status with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), staff have been engaged in conversation about potential ways forward with both partners in the settlement sector on Vancouver Island, as well as our

sibling dioceses in the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon.

Locally, it was affirmed that without additional support from IRCC, it would not be possible for the agencies with the most expertise in this area to undertake the work of being a SAH. This was affirming for us in that others are seeing the same barriers that we are in relation to IRCC's management of this program. This is difficult news as it puts our region at risk of being underserved for private sponsorship. However, we will continue to pursue possibilities for how other groups may take on some of the work we had done in the past.

The conversation within the ecclesiastical province has been very fruitful. Through the provincial house of bishops and provincial council, we have collectively shared the cost and hired a provincial refugee coordinator in our synod office. Jibril Mohamed has been working with our program as a contractor for over a year (and as a volunteer prior to that) and is pleased to take on this expanded role. In addition to coordinator responsibilities, Jibril will also work remotely for the other two SAHs in our province within the Diocese of New Westminster and the Diocese of Kootenay. Please join me in welcoming Jibril to this new role. He can be reached at

jmohamed@bc.anglican.ca.

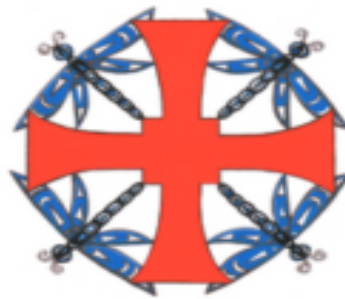
Through these conversations as well, a provincial refugee sponsorship working group has been established to discern and recommend a structure to see the future of refugee sponsorship in the Ecclesiastical Province. I ask that you keep this group in your prayers as they undertake this important work starting this month.

Groups across the diocese continue to welcome refugees to our communities and we are hopeful that a new way to continue this vital work will emerge through these conversations.

Nominations for the Order of the Diocese of BC

By Faith Tides

**The Order of the
Diocese of British
Columbia**



Recognizing extraordinary voluntary
commitment and service.
Investiture Service: October 21, 2023
Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria
Nominate an extraordinary lay leader
from your parish!

**Do you know someone deserving of the Order of the
Diocese of BC?**

On Oct. 21, 2023, Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee will invest the next group of worthy people into the Order of the Diocese of British Columbia.

The nomination process thrives on the active participation of each parish submitting the name of one of their number to become a Member of the Order and jointly with other parishes the name of someone to become an Officer of the Order.

Who can be nominated?

For Member – A lay person of the diocese who has provided extraordinary service to their parish and/or community

For Officer – A lay person or retired cleric who has provided extraordinary service to the diocese, the province, the Anglican Church of Canada, or the nation

Honorary Officers and Members – These are awards given to people who are NOT members of our diocese. They are British Columbians who may not be of our denomination, or even faith, but nonetheless have demonstrated the same sort of exemplary service to their community, province or country. Whilst these are very limited in number and are within the gift of the bishop, the advisory council is always open to suggestions. If you think you may know of such a person, please contact the secretary of the Order to discuss.

Who can nominate?

Member of the Order – Each parish may nominate a person.

Officer of the Order – Five members of the diocese (a mix of lay and ordained) from five different parishes may nominate a person.

Timing for the 2023 Investiture

Nominations opened January 2023

Nominations close April 30, 2023

Confirmation of Award by June 30, 2023

Investiture Service Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria.

For details of the who, what, when, why and how can be found on the diocesan website under **Resources, Order of the Diocese of British Columbia**: <https://bc.anglican.ca/resources/order-of-the-diocese-of-british-columbia>

Advertise your
parish events on
<i>Faith Tides</i>

By Naomi Racz

Did you know you can advertise your diocesan or parish event for free on the Faith Tides website? Send your ad to faithtides@bc.anglican.ca (see below for file and size specifications).

If you need support creating your ad, send the text to faithtides@bc.anglican.ca and we will work with a designer to create your ad. Please note, this option comes with a small fee of \$20.

File specifications:

Format: GIF, JPG, PNG

Max size: 150KB

Ad sizes (at 72 dpi):

240×400

See how the different sizes look on your browser [here](#).
