

RENEWED HEARTS, RENEWED SPIRITS, RENEWED PEOPLE

May 2023

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New relationships with our land and neighbours



Late 19th and early 20th century advertisements promoting emigration to Western Canada. Library and Archives Canada.

By Anna Greenwood-Lee

The Diocese of Islands and Inlets has title to 46 church properties. How these properties came to be part of our diocese are stories we must learn and reflect upon. I am grateful to Jesse Robertson who is working with our archivist, Chance Dixon, on a project to document the history of some of our property holdings. We know that many of them came to us as donations from settlers.

We are grateful for the generosity of those settlers. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the ways in which settlers came to have titles to lands in this part of God's creation was extremely violent and colonial.

The colony of Vancouver Island was established by

Britain in 1849. It was then leased to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) for 10 years for the nominal annual fee of seven shillings. The HBC then began selling parcels of the colony to settlers by acre, with a minimum purchase of 20 acres.

Parallel to these land sales, James Douglas, in his role as governor, was also busy at work negotiating and imposing what were dubiously titled treaties. Lest there was any doubt about the harmful nature of these agreements, the text below formed the basis of each of them:

"The condition of our understanding of this sale is this, that our village sites and enclosed fields are to be kept for our own use, for the use of our children, and for those who may follow after us; and the land shall be properly surveyed hereafter. It is understood, however, that the land itself, with these small exceptions, becomes the entire property of the White people for ever; it is also understood that we are at liberty to hunt over the unoccupied lands and to carry on our fisheries as formerly."

Most of our properties are on Douglas Treaty lands as the pacts covered what is now Victoria and Saanich, and also the west shore (what is now the Nanaimo area and the region around what we now call Port Hardy).

Within a short time however, the treaties were ignored. Village sites and fields were pre-empted. In 1860, Douglas introduced a Land Registry Act that allowed settlers — but not First Nations — to appropriate up to 160 acres of crown land on Vancouver Island by simply making improvements such as clearing fields or building a cabin. Many of our diocesan properties were gifted to us by such settlers. Our history as a diocese

cannot be separated from the colonial past of this land.

In early May, the diocese, as part of the John Albert Hall lecture series, is hosting a three-day event entitled *Land, Law, Religion and Reconciliation* at the University of Victoria. I hope that as many people across the diocese as possible will join us for part of or the entire event. Besides attending in person, participants will also be able to watch some of the keynote sessions online on Zoom.

We are at a point in history when we need both to examine and learn the colonial history of our land and to faithfully discern what we might do next. Ageing church buildings and declining attendance mean that the idea of redeveloping our properties is increasingly on our minds. We cannot consider such projects without the very real work of truth telling and reconciliation. We know that there are no easy answers to how to best steward the land for future generations.

We cannot undo the past, and yet we must faithfully discern what God is calling us into in the future. Also, we can no longer pretend that the history of this place is of virtuous and heroic settlers who had "tamed a wilderness." We must instead recognize and repent for the tremendous violence and desecration that are a part of both our past and our present. The words of Jeremiah echo across time and space, reminding us that God does see, and that God is calling us to new ways of being in relationship with the land and with our neighbours:

How long must the land cry out in mourning, the grasses of the field wither and bake in the sun? The birds and wild animals have simply vanished, all because of the wicked living here — Because they say, "God does not see what will become of us."

(Jeremiah 12:4)

Lovely as a tree



Cherry Tree by Dr. Wendy Longo. Used under a CC BY-ND 2.0 license.

By Herbert O'Driscoll

The study window looks out on our front garden. Our kitchen window looks out on our back garden. Each one gives us a view of a particular tree. These two trees are really part of the family — never intruding, just always there, always mute and for the most part still. We think of them as two old friends, not just of ours, but quite possibly in the mystery of things, friends of one another. The one in the back garden is a hemlock, thickly branched, wide at the base and tapering as your gaze follows it upward. In its inner reaches — and it is difficult to see deeply into it because of its thick covering — it seems to remain still even in the wind, rather as the ocean depths are calm even when the surface is heaving.

Come through the house and look out at our other tree. It is a cherry. It stands with wide open branches that hide nothing in her limbs. Where the hemlock looks strong, solid and unchanging, the cherry is open, changing as it will with the seasons. Right now, winter sees the cherry gaunt, naked and vulnerable. But only this morning, I noticed one of her branches seemed to be stretching out to touch the window in my study, almost as if expressing a wish for a little attention, or perhaps making a promise that if I remain aware of this fragile wandering branch, I will someday see it explode into white trembling loveliness.

The great hemlock seems almost contemptuous of its fellow tree. In the face of this mercurial change — this vulnerability, this rhythm from dark nakedness to brilliant clothing, this tremulous journey from death to resurrection — the hemlock instead offers permanence, stolidity and consistency.

And yet, if it can be said that one discovers in oneself feelings for trees, I confess that while I respect and admire the hemlock, I love the cherry. I suspect it is because the tide of life that ebbs and flows in her beauty has the glory and the fragility of my own vulnerable humanity.

Seeking sanctuary — my home, their homes, our homes



By Adela Torchia

In the church, we are used to thinking of sanctuary as the holiest part of our church buildings. It is where the congregation gathers to worship and the clergy preside over liturgies. But many millions of desperate migrants around the world seek a simpler form of sanctuary — a place of basic refuge, safety and protection. Some, for example, had to face difficult situations, like that of the Belarus–European Union border crisis:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ 2021%E2%80%932022_Belarus%E2%80%93European_Un

Others are right here in Canada, where the Roxham Road "casual" border crossing to and from the United States was recently closed: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roxham_Road. The immensity of human suffering involved in many of these situations is beyond the capacity of mere words to describe.

There's also a widespread idea of our homes — no matter how humble — being our primary sanctuaries. I especially felt this after a common type of surgery with an outcome that could not be predicted in advance — would I wake up with news of serious illness or impending death, or would the explorations and parts removed find nothing worrisome? They found nothing troubling, and returning home two days later, I felt like my home, my work and my life were the most awesome gifts imaginable. Spending the first night home on the recliner chair, surrounded by old furniture in my old mobile home, in front of an old friend's painting of what later turned out to be Lady Wisdom (Holy Spirit), I felt like the Queen of Sheba — fortunate beyond words.

Most migrants on the move around the world want nothing more than a tiny share of the home and health securities, freedoms and education and work opportunities that we Canadians enjoy. Even to have a fraction of what we have, in those areas, is almost beyond their hopes and dreams. A 2022 movie called *The Swimmers* (based on a true story) shows us both hope and despair, both human treachery and compassion — and that ultimate triumph of the human spirit that we all long for and pray will prevail. But the number of overcrowded sinking migrant boats continues to grow.

But home as sanctuary also has a bittersweet pragmatic side. Even a safe and generous country like Canada has a huge problem in providing affordable housing for its own citizens, especially for younger generations. And this too constrains our capacity to house migrants. As a slightly humorous and incisive Tweet by Vancouver journalist Michelle Cyca puts it:

my parents bought their house in 1976 for \$58,000. in

2022 dollars, that would be \$279,160.

their 2022 assessment valued the house at \$2.09 million.

i don't think getting married at 34 instead of 24 is the reason my generation can't buy homes. thanks for coming to my ted talk.

Given this sad domestic situation, how then can we respond to those from afar seeking sanctuary on our shores?

Well, right here in Victoria, BC, we are confronted with some worrisome historic trends. Some of those who have been well-housed for generations and own single homes on large lots, resist increased housing densification — mostly with the presumably noble argument of "preserving our heritage." As many have pointed out, this defense can be seen as a thinly veiled protection of one's own sense of entitlement. Higher density housing is also infinitely more ecologically sound, since it means that each person's "land footprint" (how much land is housing how many people) is much smaller. And multiple housing units of various kinds, from townhouses to condos to rental apartments, etc., are also far more efficient in things like heat consumption. As well, denser populations create more amenities — from grocery stores to bakeries to hairdressers and other businesses, because of all the potential customers in the neighbourhood. This, in turn, means less driving, so less carbon emissions. As well, there will be more public transport since there are more people available to make it viable.

And by building higher-density truly affordable housing, not only will many more working families have homes, but there should be more land leftover for green spaces, parks and other shared recreational facilities. Plus, our fellow animal creatures could still have their homes in those green spaces with humans kindly not using up too much land per person. With the overall ecological benefits that could come from higher density housing, all of us who care about future generations could breathe easier, knowing that they will enjoy a healthier environment than where the world is currently headed at literally breakneck speed.

Seeking sanctuary cannot be confined to a myopically selfish protection of the privileges of the past. Instead, we're encouraged to open our hearts and minds to a vision for a better planetary home for all the Creator's living beings, including the Earth itself.

From St Paul, Minnesota to Vancouver Island



By Denise Doerksen

I am thrilled to find myself on Vancouver Island in the Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets writing this article. If I think of my journey as a mountain hike, then this is the summit I have been climbing uphill to get to for quite some time. The view is literally stunning from here. As I look out on a new vista, I trust that the trail with all of its switchbacks — called my life so far — has made me into a heartier and healthier person, mother, partner, friend and priest.

St Paul, Minnesota is my place of origin. I was baptized, catechized and confirmed in the Roman Catholic faith, and it was all very rich and meaningful for me. This was so noticeable to the nuns of the parish I grew up in that they asked me to become one as well. Well, that didn't happen. I had other dreams in mind, like becoming an artist. So off I went to study art in college only to set it aside for a long season because being colour-blind didn't go over very well with my professors. This led me to switch colleges and try my hand at another passion: languages, particularly New Testament Greek. This in turn led me to see I was called to ministry. The path to Anglicanism was a slow and steady one that wound its way through getting married and having a family.

I have thoroughly enjoyed living and ministering in places where I could also study the language of the culture I was immersed in: Spanish in Brooklyn, New York; Greek in Cyprus; and Arabic in Palestine. Now that I am in North Saanich, I hope to learn some of the language of the First Nations of this island and its inlets. The mutual and enriching exchange I have experienced cross-culturally has been — and I hope will continue to be — a vital part of my life.

Another path I have travelled down is one of becoming a spiritual director (better described as a spiritual companion). I received training through the Haden Institute of North Carolina, with a Canadian component hosted by the Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls, Ontario. I am a fan of continuing education and stumbled upon this institute when I was looking for another way to grow spiritually and professionally. This has become a very key part of my ministry over the past several years. I wish I had done it much sooner.

The artistic path I began to travel as a young adult broke off in two solid ways. In fact, one path proved to be very redemptive for me. In a different search for another continuing education course, I looked for a workshop that could instruct me in the art of iconography. I found the Prosopon School of Iconology based out of New York and saw that they offered one in Northeast Minneapolis. I chose this one as a way to also visit family. I was very uncertain that I could write (that is paint) an icon given my experience at college. I shared this with one of the coordinators who listened intently while I spoke. He told me he had been an art professor at that very same college after my time there, and furthermore that he was colour-blind as well! Ok! I decided I was in the right place for the right workshop to become the artist I imagined as a young adult. Dimitri, the master iconographer instructing me, looked at my icon and encouraged me to continue writing them. So I have! I have written several icons since then and will continue to do so.

The other path I have taken with my artistic bent is into the world of textile arts. I love to weave, spin and knit with natural fibres, creating wall tapestries, garments, accessories and home decor. I am passionate about designing and experimenting with new or second-hand natural fibres and/or upcycled fabrics. With intense creative vigour and a passion for sustainable fashion and art, I created one thing after another until it became apparent that I needed to start

a business. Now I am selling pieces in two gift galleries, and I will do an exhibit in Abbotsford in July 2023.

There is more to say, but I need to pick up my knitting needles now. The sun set an hour ago. The way to relax is to wind some more yarn into the Fair Isle sweater I am knitting for my husband, Allen. This is the next best thing to kayaking, but I haven't put my kayak into the bay yet. That will come! Woohoo!

Landscape fibre art at St Philip by-the-Sea, Lantzville



Lenten Seascape (detail) by Coreen Zerr.

By Coreen Zerr

I started creating landscape fibre art pieces in the early 1990s and have become known for teaching this technique on Vancouver Island and extensively across Canada.

In the fall of 2004, my name was given by a fellow Quilters' Guild member to Kevin Arndt, the rector of St Philip by-the-Sea, Lantzville. The church had been recently constructed and the leadership team were thinking of ways to decorate the blank walls and warm up the worship space. They decided to explore commissioning a series of fabric/fibre art wall hangings, as a contemporary twist on the ancient practice of hanging sacred tapestries.

I met the rector and the churchwardens to show my portfolio and to discuss the parameters of this project. Kevin had the idea of uniting contextual theology and ecclesiastical art in a series of quilts. They would be based on the colours of the liturgical season and reflect the local landscape, seascape and wildlife.

We decided five quilts would be made for the church, each with a local landscape theme. These quilts were the first commissioned work that I had done, and they would be the largest I had ever attempted in landscape form. Each quilt was also to include a white dove — a symbol of the Holy Spirit — playfully winging its way around above the scenes depicted.

Four of the quilts would reflect the colours and seasonal themes of the church year: gold and white for Christmas and Easter, green for Pentecost, purple for Lent, and blue for Advent. The fifth quilt would be a large permanent triptych depicting the beauty of Vancouver Island all year round. The four seasonal quilts were 7 feet (about 2.1 metres) wide by approximately 4 to 5 feet (about 1.2 metres to 1.5 metres) high, and the triptych approximately 10 feet (about 3 metres) wide.

I agreed to work with a small church team to design the first quilt. We decided upon the Christmas and Easter theme because these liturgical seasons can be quite short. I met with Kevin and eight others, and we discussed endless possibilities on how to incorporate the two scenes in one, along with some specific symbols and details they wished to be included. I did not anticipate the difficulty in accomplishing this task — creating art by committee was a definite challenge!

The left-hand side of the quilt would depict Christmas in winter, with a bright guiding star shining down over three local deer, symbolizing the Holy Family or the Magi (whichever you prefer!). The right-hand side would consist of a brilliant sunrise, representing the resurrection of Christ and the empty tomb. Blending and fading the vibrant Easter sunrise into the dark Christmas sky — in only a few inches — was quite a creative task and it turned out wonderfully! This quilt was named "The Light and Life of the World."

With the completion and hanging of this first quilt, the parishioners were thrilled with the results. Having learned how a fibre artist works, they agreed to dissolve the small group (thank God!), and to leave the designing to me, and the symbols and subtle theological messages to the rector.

My long experience with strip landscape and thread painting techniques lent to my skills in making these quilts. It was also exciting to develop new methods to get the look I was after, although I had never attempted a landscape of this size before! Perspective and construction proved to be the largest challenges. I achieved perspective by taking a photo on my digital camera of what was on my design wall and downloading it onto my computer to get a bird's eye view.

Kevin and I quickly developed a close friendship and a

wonderful creative partnership. I would frequently email him, and he would give me a yay or nay on any elements I wanted to include in the designs. The follow-up emails would result in many amusing conversations! There were some exciting ideas I was developing, but when I presented them to Kevin, he would gently explain why in fact they would not be appropriate! We agreed that he would stick to symbolism and theology, and that I would bring it to life in colour, texture, fibre and talent!

Since it is the longest liturgical season, we decided several passages from the Bible would be depicted in the quilt for the green season of Pentecost. This involved creating many different scenes: seeds of grain, a rainbow after the flood, grapes and vines, and a fisherman's boat and net. The centre scene was a narrow path through the rainforest, illuminated by Christ's light. This quilt was named "Wisdom along the Way."

The purple Lenten quilt was to depict a searching — an almost turbulent time of tension and foreboding — so I did this one with dark colours, crashing water, and jagged rocks and trees. In keeping with the theme, I chose to do an image of three crosses in silhouette seen from a distance. This quilt, named "Lenten Seascape," seems to connect with people whenever it is shown. It later won the Viewers' Choice 2007 award at the Canadian Quilters Association's national juried show.

The theme of Advent, a time of quiet anticipation and waiting to see what is developing beneath the surface, prompted me to create an undersea scene (also because blue is the colour). Vancouver Island is known for some of the best diving in the world, and I was fortunate to know an underwater photographer who shared some great inspirational photos with me. I used these images

for the piece, which was completed by 2008. The three orcas at play are a reference to the Holy Trinity. That which is visible above the waterline is calm and quiet. But unseen below is new life, abundant growth and great diversity. The name of this quilt is "Mary's Womb."

While working on these four seasonal quilts, I also completed a 10-foot (about 3 metres) triptych named "The Seventh Day of Creation." It was inspired by natural life on Vancouver Island — our own Garden of Eden as I like to call it — and has many different plant and animal species depicted. The dogwood was in honour of the dogwood tree that lived in front of St Philip's previous church building in downtown Lantzville. As well, it refers to a legend that the material used to construct Jesus' cross was from a dogwood tree.

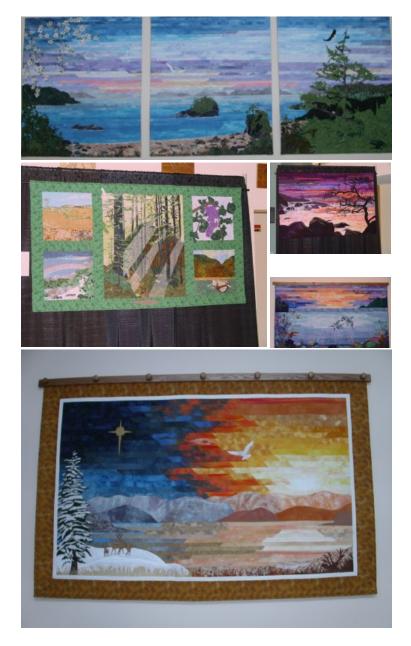
When all the commissioned works were finished, Kevin and the parishioners of St Philip's organized a spectacular gala art show where all the quilts were beautifully displayed. Wine and treats were served, and everyone came dressed in their finest. After some very funny speeches, the quilts were formally consecrated and dedicated by James Cowan, Bishop of British Columbia.

Since that time, I have successfully completed many landscape fibre art commissions. Kevin and I paired up again in 2012 for another underwater scene. This was commissioned to hang in the Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre (Wilkinson Jail), where Kevin served as chaplain. When that piece was completed and hung, we had an art show and a sale of my other works in the chapel of the jail! My latest commissioned work is an even larger piece spanning 14 feet (about 4.3 metres) by 7 feet (about 2.1 metres) for

the City of Lacombe, Alberta.

I invite you to view my work on my website:

www.coreenzerr.com



Jacqueline Stober coming to Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria

By Faith Tides



she was interested in becoming a missionary.

"I have always been interested in how God calls people to service and in following their journey as they discern the voice of God calling them to service in the church, both lay and ordained ministry," Jacqueline says. "I am committed to helping the church to be more inclusive in its selection of clergy. Being one of very few Black priests, I think I may be particularly helpful to those from ethnic minority backgrounds, but I would be privileged to work with anyone who came to me."

Outside her work as a priest, Jacqueline enjoys singing, sewing and wine making.

Faith Tides is pleased to share the news that Jacqueline Stober has been appointed to be Senior Associate of Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria, beginning in July.

Jacqueline comes from the Diocese of Derby in the UK. Even at the young age of nine, she had already recognized her calling to ministry, and as a teenager,

A coronation eve gala celebration (May 5)

By Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria



In the presence of Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

What: Handel's "The Coronation Anthems" with the

Cathedral Choirs and Orchestra **When:** Friday, May 5, 2023, 7.30pm

Where: Christ Church Cathedral, Quadra at Rockland

On Saturday, May 6, King Charles the Third will be crowned at Westminster Abbey in London. Mere hours before (given the time zones), the people of Victoria will have an opportunity to celebrate the occasion in person, with a gala concert presentation of Handel's "Coronation Anthems," among other musical selections.

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, will be in attendance, as will members of the Victoria branch of the Monarchist League of Canada, led by their chair, Lieutenant Commander Gene Fedderly, RCN (Ret'd).

The musical forces arrayed for the occasion will include the Christ Church Cathedral Choir and Young Choristers, and an orchestra that includes members of the Victoria Symphony. The Cathedral's Director of Music, Donald Hunt, will conduct. Assistant Director of Music Mark McDonald will perform one of Handel's virtuosic organ concertos.



George Frideric Handel's four "Coronation Anthems" were originally commissioned for the coronation of George II in 1727 and have figured in every coronation service since. They have also become a popular favourite of the concert repertoire. "The music is all based on texts from the Book of Psalms," says Donald Hunt, "the combination of our bright, clear, young voices on the top line, supported by the swelling strains of the full choir and orchestra create a magnificent effect."

Also on the program will be Sir Charles Hubert

Hastings Parry's stirring anthem "I Was Glad," composed for the coronation of Edward VII in 1902.

Tickets on sale now: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/ handel-the-coronation-anthems-tickets-596356657817

General Admission: \$25

Students: \$10

Supporters: \$100 (Quantities limited; includes

premium seating, post-concert reception, and \$60 tax

receipt)

Mark McDonald, Assistant Director of Music

mmcdonald@christchurchcathedral.bc.ca

Phone: (514) 653-6061

Welcome to Paula Blundell

By Faith Tides



ABOUT

Christ Church Cathedral, located on the traditional lands of the Lekwungen peoples, is the episcopal seat of the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia, which includes Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. The cathedral has a large parish community and contributes to the cultural, social and spiritual life of Vancouver Island's residents and visitors. The Gothic cathedral, one of Canada's largest churches, was designed in 1896.

www.christchurchcathedral.bc.ca

CONTACTS

Donald Hunt, Director of Music

dhunt@christchurchcathedral.bc.ca

Phone: (778) 584-0727

As the new HR administrator and executive assistant to Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee, Paula Blundell works with the clergy to fill vacancies, does staff onboarding and offboarding and ensures clergy training and licensing is kept up to date. As executive assistant, Paula handles Bishop Anna's schedule, writes correspondence and supports the bishop in many other projects as requested. Paula's gifts include asking all the right questions, seeing the bigger picture while attending to all the little details, and supporting others in gaining clarity, alignment and action on the path to where they want to be.

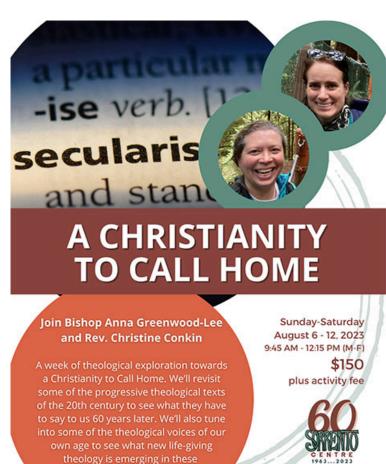
Before joining the diocese, Paula led a 15+ year entrepreneurial career as an expert professional home organizer (in both Calgary, Alberta and Guelph, Ontario) and held previous job titles of executive assistant and event coordinator in the non-profit sector. She earned a business degree from Memorial University in her hometown of St. John's, Newfoundland.

Paula values the diversity of life, the curiosities of being human, ritual and ceremony, creative expression, and the healing qualities of relationship. She enjoys hiking, gathering with friends over food, painting large-scale art canvases, deepening her spiritual connectedness and planning sun-drenched travel adventures.

A Christianity to Call Home (August 6

-12)

By Christine Conkin



For more information about *A Christianity to Call Home* and other summer programs at the Sorrento Centre, please visit:

https://sorrentocentre.ca/events/a-christianity-to-call-

sorrentocentre.ca 1-866-694-2409 https://sorrentocentre.ca/summer-programs-2023/

This May — Land, Law, Religion and Reconciliation: A Colloquium

By Brendon Neilson

Click <u>here</u> to view and download information and schedule.

