



DIOCESAN POST

Celebrating the Diocese of British Columbia

A Section of the ANGLICAN JOURNAL

APRIL 2020

Walking in Solidarity



Solidarity Walk: On Feb. 12, Bishop Logan McMenamie led a group of clergy members and other supporters from Christ Church Cathedral to the BC Legislature on a peaceful walk to show support for the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs in the conflict over the planned Coastal Gaslink pipeline. Several other bishops and Archbishop Linda Nicholls had issued a joint statement on Feb. 11. Photos by Susan Down, Alvaro Moreno

Why did I go to court?

BY CHRISTOPHER PAGE

On Tuesday, February 11 this year, I received an email from a clergy colleague telling me that a man who knew me as a child wanted to connect. The email explained that this man was scheduled to be in court in Victoria a week later to give a victim impact statement relating to his experience five

decades ago as a victim of childhood sexual abuse.

The abuse took place in the parish where I lived as a child. I too was a victim of the actions of the paedophile who was scheduled for sentencing February 18. I have written publicly about my experience in the past, and a year ago was visited by a Victoria police

officer who conducted a long and intense interview as part of the official investigation.

Having spoken in my own way about my childhood experience, I have never felt compelled to press charges against the perpetrator. But I honour and deeply respect those victims who have come to a different conclusion in the same situation and have felt that part of their healing journey lay along the path of legal process.

As I listened to this man's

story, I knew I had to stand with him in court at the sentencing hearing. When he asked if I would accompany him, I had not a moment's hesitation. I wanted him and any other victims to know that my heart breaks to think that innocent children, so many years ago, were harmed in the Anglican Church, the faith I have served for the past 40 years. I am saddened that it has taken so long for public acknowledgment to be given to men who were hurt in our

community. I live with the aching question of what reconciliation might look like for these innocent victims who have felt ignored for so long.

I wanted to honour the courage and the healing journey of men who are willing to speak about their painful experiences. I wanted to express my conviction that they deserved better from our church. They should not have had to feel compelled for so

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Leading change

BY SUSAN DOWN

Community of Learning program on hold after first year

With sessions on teamwork, change management and finance coupled with others on communication, music and discipleship, the Community of Learning course outline sounds like a cross between an MBA and theology studies. Completed in January, the new diocesan leadership training course aimed at lay people was run at a time when dire predictions for the Anglican Church demand some new strategic thinking from all parish members, not

only clergy. But although the pilot program got positive responses from participants, the organizers are uncertain about its future in the diocese.

Inspired by the vision for change articulated by Bishop Logan early in his tenure, Wayne Stewart wanted to empower parish councilors and other volunteers throughout the diocese. Stewart, who divides his time between homes in Calgary and Victoria, was just

Continued on page 8



Alert Bay Induction: A crowd packed Christ Church in Alert Bay on Feb. 22 for the induction ceremony for William Hubbard. Photo by Brendon Nielson

Final wishes for shared lives



Bishop Logan Writes

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND
DR. LOGAN MCMENAMIE

I wanted to be a listening bishop. I was challenged at my consecration not to be a prince bishop or a CEO bishop, but to be a Si'em—a family chief. Not being a prince bishop was easy, because I constantly remember that I came from a working-class family in the lower Clyde in Scotland. Similarly, being a CEO bishop would have been difficult, since I have always known our faith to be about people, not profit. And so, I have tried to walk this journey as a listening bishop, guided by a leadership based in being kind and living well with differences. I have tried to first listen, and then to understand. I know that I have stumbled and even fallen at times, but this has been my focus during my episcopacy. When I have not been this bishop, please forgive me. When we have not agreed, I pray we will continue to live well with our differences.

Thank you for your support and encouragement during my time as your bishop. It has been a good experience living and working with you during the last six years. I have enjoyed the work at the parish and regional level. I have enjoyed the work with the staff in the synod office and in the councils and committees of the diocese. At all these levels, I have seen and witnessed your commitment as disciples of Jesus Christ.

I believe that our ministry and mission has been strong and effective. We together have proven that we are greater than the sum of our parts. We have been on a healing journey, and we have looked at the past, named the hurts, and together, we have looked at ways of listening and supporting each other.

In my years of being a listening bishop, I have heard the patterns of our shared lives, and as I prepare to “pass the hat” on to the 14th bishop, (Note: Bishop Logan will retire May 1) I hope you might hear some of my final thoughts and wishes for you:

We have created a shared vision and that vision is being lived out across the diocese in parishes. The vision was created by you as the diocese as you committed to being a renewed people with renewed hearts and spirits. Continue to live into

the vision. Allow our vision to transform your future.

Allow the liturgy we create to reflect those things which are important: being shaped by the land, watershed discipleship, and the environment in which we find ourselves, whether it is urban or rural, countryside or industrial.

If we want to engage youth, we need to leave our buildings and find ourselves where they hang out. We cannot compete with the world of entertainment; we must do what we do best and introduce them to Jesus Christ, enabling them to grow through a relationship with him. They are looking for a spirituality that will inform them how to live with the complexities of this world each day, not for something added on at the end of the week.

As you travel into the future that God has prepared for you, see beyond the obvious. Make space for the emerging; give time and money to that which is sprouting in our midst. Look for the Spirit at work in new and different ways in your life. Look and engage the Spirit working in and through civic communities where you live and work. Remember that the laity live out their ministry from Monday to Saturday in school, universities, factories, businesses and recreation centres. Empower each other to experience and see

Bishop's Calendar

April

- 4 Coffee and conversation - St. George, Cadboro Bay
- 5 Parish visit - St. John the Divine, Victoria
- 5 Guest preacher - Abbey Church, Victoria
- 11 Easter vigil - St. Barnabas, Victoria
- 12 Easter Sunday - Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria
- 15-16 Hosting Archbishop Linda Nicholls
- 16 Clergy Day with Archbishop Linda Nicholls - St. George, Cadboro Bay
- 19 Parish visit and confirmations - Parish of Central Saanich (St. Stephen)
- 21 Parish visit - Holy Trinity, North Saanich
- 23 Education for Ministry Graduation - St. Anne & St. Edmund, Parksville
- 23 Nimpkish Regional Meeting and Retirement Celebration - St. Peter, Campbell River
- 25 Messy Church - St. Mark, Qualicum
- 26 Parish visit - St. Columba, Tofino
- 29 Retirement party - The Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria
- 30 Last day as the 13th Bishop of the Diocese of British Columbia

God living and working in these communities. God is at work in our world.

Continue to learn and grow through the journey of reconciliation. Continue to work at healing the wounds of history and building a culture of peace. It is the Gospel, and I believe it is the revival for us as the church in our generation. Imbed reconciliation into everything you do. Teach people to live well together in their homes, in their parishes, in their neighbourhoods, and with themselves. Let us be known as a people of reconciliation, with God making an appeal through us.

Be a listening church. Be kind and live well together. Peace, +Logan. ■

*Jesus of Nazareth,
You met unlikely people in unlikely places
and joined yourself to them in friendship.
May we be like you in this way,
finding friends at cross-roads and bus-stops,
in queues and crises, in kindness and curiosity.
Because we, like you,
need the company of others.*

*“Day 6” by Pádraig Ó Tuama
From Daily Prayer with the Corrymeela Community*

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Submissions

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

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

New Submission Deadlines

January issue - November 25
February issue - December 25
March issue - January 25
April issue - February 25
May issue - March 25
June issue - April 25
September issue - July 25
October issue - August 25
November issue - September 25
December issue - October 25

All material is subject to editing.

Volume 54, No 4

Back to the garden

BY DAWNA WALL

Easter reflections on Earth's renewal

In the beginning, God called us to be gardeners; to plant, water, and safeguard all things that are good, as well as to prune, weed, and remove that which deprives God's garden of goodness and life. That sacred story of beginning we read in Genesis reminds us of all the paradox and juxtaposition there is in creation: light and darkness, order and chaos, good and evil. Early on, it became clear that engaging in this important work of creation and re-creation requires an understanding of these counterbalances. It is a knowledge that propels us out of the garden, into the wilderness, and, miraculously, back again. A curious resurrection.

Spending time in the wilderness has a strange way of expanding and honing your focus. In a weary desert place, we might denounce the God of life and create idols of things that destroy life. We might denounce the worth of one part of God's creation, or sabotage opportunities for the restoration and rejuvenation of another. We might even lose our memory of God's goodness. This kind of dementia exploits our capacity for doubt, fear and destruction.

What then can restore our memory and innate aptitude for wonder when we are face to face with death and destruction?

In *Letter to A Young Activist During Troubled Times*, Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés writes, "We all have a heritage and history of being gutted, and yet remember this especially...we have also, of necessity, perfected the knack

of resurrection." Perfecting the knack of resurrection can be unbearably complicated and painful but also empowering, innovative and enlivening.

Resurrection means that new life can come out of death in unbelievable ways. In Chernobyl where the largest nuclear accident in the world took place and where radiation levels are still so high that humans cannot live there, scientists discovered fungi that can convert radiation to energy, just as trees absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. What are ways we might, like the flora, convert that which destroys to that which creates? The continued daily crucifixion of our world is profound, but creation's propensity and desire to renew itself is beyond comprehension, begging us to join in the process, and to examine our own painful places and look for how God's love is at work there.

Leaping from death to resurrection is a confusing and complicated jump. It

requires a leap of faith from a devastating reality to one of restored balance and beauty, and it demands that we partner with each level and layer of creation, honouring the interconnected nature of all the earth's inhabitants – flying, creeping, crawling, greening, growing. What does it mean for us to say that resurrection is possible? Walter Brueggemann writes that we cannot and do not need to get our heads around that conundrum, but we do have to open ourselves to new ways of being in the world.

Most of us begin the journey back to the garden from a place mired in grief and shock. Entertaining the possibility of an unknown resurrection seems outlandish. Baptism (and our daily encounters with water) bear witness to this life, death and resurrection cycle as we, made up of mostly water, pull on galoshes and slosh our way through the valley of the shadow looking for the lychgate that might lead us home.

Having walked the

agonizing journey from Gethsemane to Golgotha to the tomb, we arrive back in a garden. Amazed and world weary, we are back at the beginning, surrounded by trees and plants. Together, we stand with a great cloud of witnesses, each of us bearing heavy, hard-won knowledge of good and evil.

Mary is there with us, her tears expressing bewildered sorrow and hints of hope. In that space and time, she hears Jesus calling her name, and bears witness to a new juxtaposition. In the garden there is rest, but also work to be done: raking, pruning, planting and tending and sharing the good news.

If mushrooms can evolve to a place where their existence transforms radiation from a death force to a force of life, how might we use our gifts to reflect resurrection and renew the face of the earth? ■

Dawna Wall is archdeacon of the Selkirk region and rector at St. Michael and All Angels.

RENEWED **HEARTS** RENEWED **SPIRITS** RENEWED **PEOPLE**



Anglican news in brief

COMPILED BY MATT GARDNER

Archdeaconry recommends merging of five Regina parishes

Bishop Rob Hardwick and the Qu'Appelle diocesan council have received recommendations from St. Cuthbert's Archdeaconry for the future of its seven parishes in Regina and one outside of the city.

The archdeaconry recommends the merging of five Regina parishes—All Saints, St. James, St. Luke, St. Matthew and St. Phillip—into one parish with a new name and common vision, starting in January 2021.

Under this plan, all five parishes would worship together at one main location still to be determined. Satellite locations may also be established for specific ministries.

A second recommendation is for a renewal team comprised of two representatives from each of the five parishes and up to five more people appointed by the bishop to serve as members-at-large. The team would develop an implementation plan and have general oversight over the process of merging into one parish.

The final recommendation is for a greater focus on communication and collaboration at all eight parishes in the archdeaconry. The formation of a covenanted Archdeaconry Group Ministry Council, including lay and clergy representatives from each parish, would be a key component of putting this plan into action.

The recommendations followed two years of

discussion, meetings and prayer for the future of St. Cuthbert's. Diocesan council finalized the recommendations on Jan. 25, communicated them to parish vestries and shared them with all parishioners Feb. 2. Parish annual general meetings in February were set to discuss the recommendations and provide feedback to the new renewal team.

—The Saskatchewan Anglican (Dioceses of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon and Qu'Appelle)

GTA church takes Easter story to the streets through visual arts

Anglicans in Richmond Hill are bringing the Easter story directly into their surrounding community this Holy Week with a range of creative events and activities.

Light on the Hill, Oak Ridges—also known as St. John the Baptist Community

Church—will host events throughout the week using drama, music, art, video and sound recordings to tell the story of Christ's death and resurrection.

The activities kick off on Palm Sunday, when church members will take part in a Parade of Triumph, singing, waving palm fronds and asking neighbours to join them. An actor playing Jesus will ride on a donkey at the back of the procession.

Adam Furfaro, executive director of Light on the Hill and a former theatre director, says the visual arts are an effective way to tell the story of Jesus, particularly to those who are not Christian and do not speak English as their first language. Reaching these communities is a priority for Light on the Hill, situated near Canada's largest Farsi-speaking Iranian community, about 18,000 Mandarin speakers and residents from countries such as

Russia and South Korea. Many members of the congregation are also artists, musicians and actors.

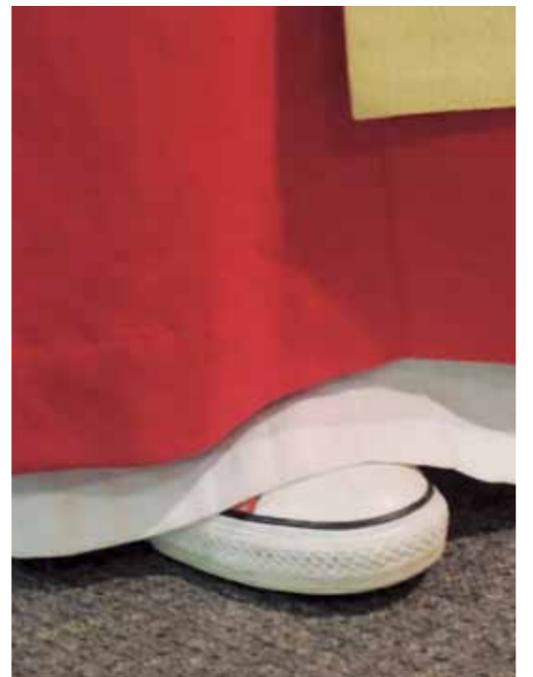
Daily evening prayer sessions for the community at large will take place through Holy Week. The church sanctuary will set up a "reflection table" encouraging people to share thoughts or images, while an audio loop plays songs, hymns and recorded monologues in remembrance of Jesus.

On Good Friday, the church will set up "stations of meditation", a tasting experience with Jerusalem-style food, and a "Cross Room" featuring images of Jesus and an opportunity for visitors to nail their sins, written on paper, to a large wooden cross. Easter celebrations will include a live portrayal of Mary's return from the empty tomb. ■

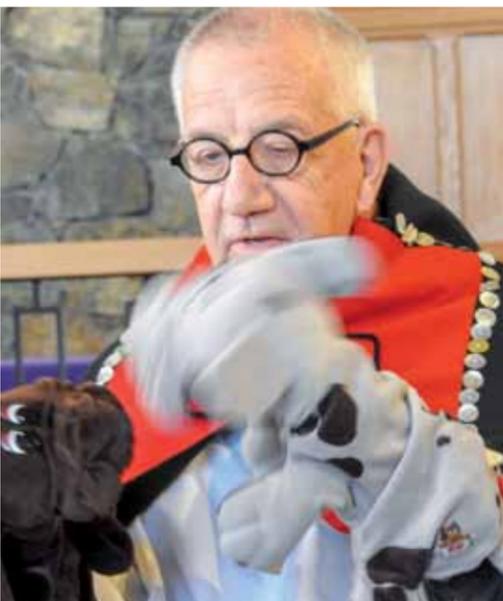
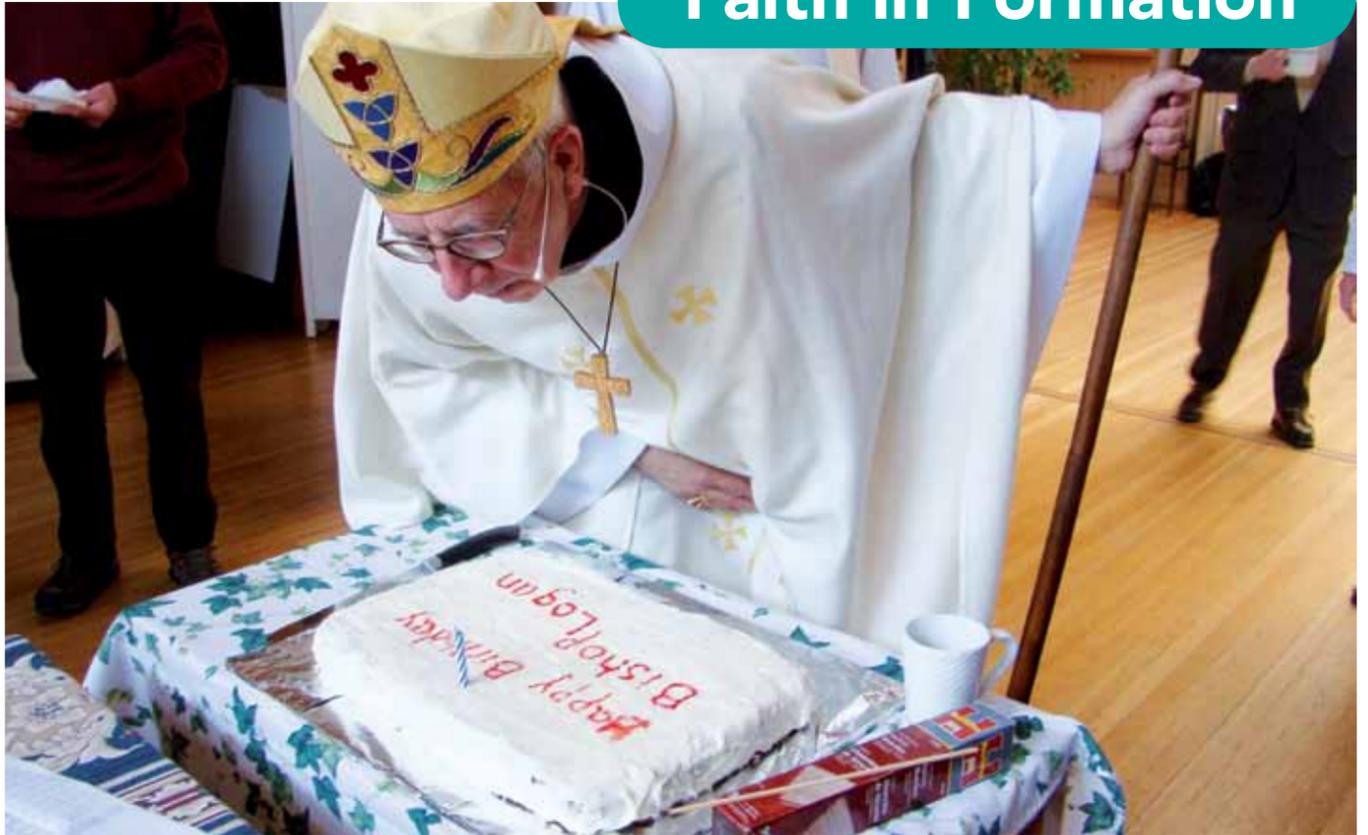
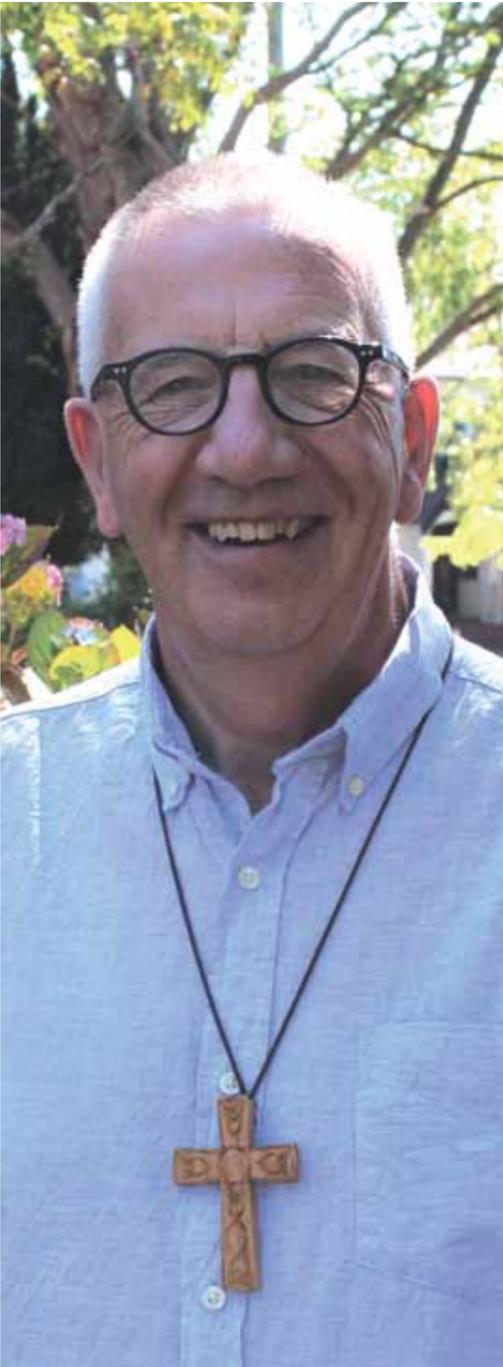
—The Anglican (Diocese of Toronto)

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

SUBMISSION DEADLINES ARE THE 25TH OF THE MONTH (TWO MONTHS IN ADVANCE OF EACH ISSUE)
NEXT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS APR 25TH (FOR THE JUNE ISSUE).

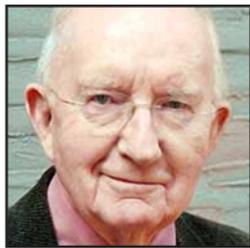


Faith in Formation



Whether he was marching in the Pride parade, visiting Gilford and other North Island communities, telling a joke or giving a puppet show, Bishop Logan will be remembered for truly connecting with people of the diocese. At home in soccer cleats, rain gear, a t-shirt or runners under his vestments, he will be missed for his joyful and caring approach.

Letting Go



Reflections

BY HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

We are in the hours after our Lord's crucifixion. The community of family and friends is devastated. As in any crisis, human nature shows itself in different ways. One courageous woman decides to act.

Her name is Mary of Magdala. She has led a chequered life. On the pages of the Gospel she appears alone. It seems that at some stage, Jesus made a great difference in her life. There is a hint that he may have helped her with some emotional or mental struggle.

Her response to immense loss and trauma is a measure of her resilience and courage. She experiences the horror of watching a Roman crucifixion. She could have left the hill, but she stayed unflinchingly. She follows those carrying the body and notes where it is placed.

The next morning, after what must have been a sleepless night, she returns alone to the rock face tomb. For a woman to walk alone in a darkened and as yet deserted city was itself courageous, even dangerous.

When she reaches the rock face she finds the low cave open and empty. Deeply distressed, she makes her way to the safe house where she knows that some of the community is staying. She beseechs them to come and see. Two disciples, Peter and John, return with her. Peter, practical to the last, examines the cave, notes certain details and begins to grapple with the seemingly impossible. John leaps to the conclusion that the impossible has indeed happened. They both leave.

Mary, now alone, hears a sound and sees a figure in the gathering dawn light. In spite of her vulnerability in this grim and solitary place, she walks towards the figure and implores him to tell her where a newly placed body has been taken.

At this point she hears her name spoken by a voice she had assumed silenced forever. She cries out the name by which she has known him and instinctively reaches to embrace him, only to hear a stern, almost curt "Do not hold on to me."

She has encountered a mystery. One whom she watched die has inexplicably moved beyond death. Only when she acknowledges that the future will now be utterly different from the past, will she be able to possess a new kind of intimacy with this person she has loved.

* * * * *

Much more than we realize, the rhythm of our lives moves from dying to new life. Each morning we rise from deep sleep

to consciousness. All through our lives we experience such rhythms: the craven fear before some experience we must face; the helplessness of clinical depression; the brittle lesser deaths of disappointments, of loss of a valued friendship, of the grip of panic, of the searing sense of failure.

When we speak of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are naming the mystery that is at the heart of Christian faith, a mystery that many western Christians find difficult to believe. We ask, "How did it happen?" "What really happened?" Such questions are not unreasonable nor are they in any way a betrayal of Christian faith. However they can never be answered satisfactorily. Search as we will, the mystery of the resurrection will never diminish. Even in the earliest days of the Christian faith, thinking was not merely in terms of a resuscitated body. In accounts of the risen Jesus, his presence is always mysteriously "other." He is present yet occupies a different realm of reality.

Even saying this is to seek

in vain for adequate language. Mary of Magdala is the first human being to realize that while she is in the presence of the risen Jesus she cannot have the relationship she once knew. Trying to grasp him is no longer possible. But an intellectual grasp is also impossible. In this we need to accept her insight.

There is one consequence of Jesus' resurrection that requires no struggling whatsoever with the mysterious. Not only did it transform a traumatized and shattered community into one of extraordinary energy and determination, but among the third of the planet's population that today professes Christian faith, there are millions of men and women who are prepared, like Mary of Magdala, to say "I have seen the Lord," meaning that they have had an experience of his presence in their lives. You may well be one.

Happy Easter.

Herbert O'Driscoll is a retired priest and a prolific author and hymn writer. ■

Why did I go to court?

Continued from cover

long to hide the truth they knew; they should not have had to wait decades for their pain to be seen.

I also hoped my presence might in some small way express to the justice system of our province, and particularly the police force in our city, that I deeply respect the care, compassion, and concern with which they have proceeded in this case. These cannot be easy stories to bear. It must be gruelling day after day to face people whose lives have in many cases been so ravaged by actions that occurred, often in a place where they

should have received respect and spiritual nourishment.

I experienced those qualities in the Victoria Police Department and the justice system that I most hope to find in the church. Throughout this process, officials with whom I have dealt appeared to me to be strong advocates for truth-telling, openness and transparency. They have demonstrated an ability to listen deeply and a willingness to respond with genuine concern. They have stood with victims and done everything in their power to help further the healing journey. In my experience, and in the stories I have heard from others, the police provided a safe, respectful environment for dark truths to be uncovered.

When I was interviewed by Sergeant Kristi Ross, I felt that she received my story with deep sensitivity. She acknowledged the confused reality an 11-year-old boy faces when confronted in the church with circumstances that contradict everything for which he believed that community stands. She was respectful, compassionate, open, and forthcoming.

I know that no community made up of flawed human beings is ever perfect. But I dare to hope for honesty, authenticity and a willingness to admit our failures and shortcomings. We are a community whose identity is rooted in our practice of gathering to *confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,*

by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. (BAS)

My heart breaks to think that innocent children, so many years ago, were harmed in the Anglican Church

We are united in our failure. Everything begins with our acknowledgment that we "fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We do not need to hide or pretend. We can stand with the broken, because we know that we are broken.

So, I stood in court with the victim. But in some strange, mysterious way, I also stood with the perpetrator. He too is a broken, flawed human being. I understand he acted out of his own pain. His life was twisted by the alienation and suffering of his own fractured psyche. He too lives in desperate need of the mercy of God. We are one in the tragic brokenness of our human condition. I cannot judge. I have no righteousness of my own to put up against anyone else's failures. I can only stand with my flawed brothers and sisters and cry, "God have mercy on me, a sinner." Along this path alone lies any hope of true reconciliation. ■

Christopher Page is the incumbent at St. Philip, Oak Bay.

Spring Retreat April 24-26, 2020
Lake Cowichan Research Centre, Mesachie Lake

All are welcome to join us for this gentle introduction to silence, chanting and lectio (sacred reading of scripture).

Facilitators: Heather & Christopher Page
Registration \$245.
Bursaries available.
Deadline April 3, 2020. Space limited.
Support generously provided by the Educational Trusts Board. Email sharonrichmond@gmail.com for information or to register.



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Heavenly inspiration



My Journey

BY JILL ANN SIEMENS, MUSIC DIRECTOR AT ST. PHILIP

A regular Q&A profile of people in the church

How did faith and music influence your early life?

I grew up in Vancouver in a Christian home and was raised in an evangelical church, where hymn singing was a huge part of Sunday services. We sang at least eight hymns at each of the 10 am and 7 pm services. There was nothing I would rather do than go to church and sing the hymns. I would run to church every week and save a front row pew for our entire family of eight. On top of this, my parents had a weekly hymn-sing every Friday night at their home. On family trips, my mother kept six children busy and occupied by engaging us in road trip sing-a-longs. I loved hymn singing so much that I taught myself to play the organ when I was 11 so I could apply to be the church organist and not miss one opportunity to be a part of any hymn singing event. This deep musical experience greatly impacted me as a child and sowed in my heart an openness towards God.

Describe your music education and teaching career.

I took piano lessons from the time I was 10, completing my Royal

Conservatory Grade 10. I chose Simpson Bible College in San Francisco which at that time had the reputation of having an excellent music program. I was already sort of a flower child, so San Francisco was a great fit. I received a music scholarship to study organ and piano and was a member of a ladies' trio and the Simpson Chorale. After a year I returned home to finish my music training in pedagogy and performance as well as my Suzuki piano training.

Returning from a short time in the South Pacific, I desired to move to Victoria, deciding that if I could find a job and a place to live within a weekend, that was a sign to make my move. I landed a job as companion to a 90-year-old man – Sir Edward Whittaker Izard – and moved into the beautiful waterfront estate. While walking up Fort Street that same weekend, I stumbled on Craigdarroch Castle, which at that time was home of the Victoria Conservatory of Music. Without hesitation I ventured up the stairs and asked to speak with the head of the piano department (Winnifred Wood). I played a concerto for her, and that day she hired me to join the newly-formed Suzuki piano program. I spent 28 years teaching there, all the while holding music director/organist posts at various parishes in the city (now St. Philip, Oak Bay).

Following the tragic death of my sister, and after taking in her three children, I took a leave of absence from teaching and prayed for God to open the door to something musically inspirational. I entered my song, "Sempre Vicino - A Child's Prayer for Peace", in the Tipperary International Song of Peace contest and won the prize.

While I was in Ireland for the ceremony, I heard the Celtic Tenors and realized that Canada didn't have its own tenor group, so I created the Canadian Tenors, who have gone on to become multi-platinum recording artists. That was followed by the creation of another group, Tenore. Last year, I launched The Great Canadian Hymn Sing, a coast to

coast celebration of the great hymns of our Christian faith. Moving from the west coast to the east coast, The Great Canadian Hymn Sing provides an opportunity for people to vote for their favorite hymns and then celebrate the winning songs in a Top 10 gala concert. Our inaugural concert for The Great Canadian Hymn Sing was in Victoria BC in September 2019.

What is the special role of the music director in a church?

The special role of music director in a church is to inspire worship in the congregation. Every aspect of the liturgy becomes deeper and more meaningful when hearts are open. Music has the power to do just that and can be evoked in many ways: the sweet pure voices of little children singing from their hearts, a repetitive chant that brings one into an open and meditative space, or a powerful hymn that tells a story of triumph over suffering. ■

St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church Grounds

Annual Plants and More Sale

Saturday, May 9, 10am-1pm

Featuring hanging baskets, dahlia tubers, tomato plants, bedding plants, perennials, heritage plants, rhubarb, shrubs, pots, garden accessories, vases, books, tools. Refreshments: Egg Mc-Michaels, donuts, muffins, coffee and more.



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Proceeds support the Woman's Guild and Children's Community charities

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Reconciliation and Beyond

Workshop on 94 Calls to Action

BY BRENDON NIELSON

In February, instead of having a regular meeting of diocesan council, the group was led through a version of the 94 Calls to Action workshop hosted by

Reconciliation & Beyond, the vision implementation team. We gathered at St. Mary in Saanichton on the territories of the WSÁNEĆ people. We were joined by a WSÁNEĆ elder ƆOSINIYE (Linda Elliot) who shared a prayer and song in SENĆOTEN (the language of the WSÁNEĆ) and shared some teachings with us about the territories. Her words were a wonderful combination of storytelling, calls to justice for many of the challenges the First Nations of these islands and

inlets face, and an invitation to learn and enjoy the gifts of the places we inhabit. Her presence was a gift to all who were there, and we are deeply grateful for her participation.

It was a perfect way to begin the day, and in many ways accomplished all the goals the organizers had for the workshop: to remember the past and tell the truth about our role in it, to recall our journey of truth-telling and reconciliation, check in on our current place in that journey, and to recommit ourselves to

continue our work as the called people of God here and now.

The group members discussed some of what we have learned over the last number of years about land acknowledgment, reconciliation as a spiritual practice, and the need to decolonize ourselves and our institutional life. On each of these topics, we wondered together how we might intentionally continue that work in how we organize and conduct ourselves as a church.

This workshop had the

intended effect; it was a sign that the work of reconciliation has truly become central to our life together as a diocese. It was an opportunity for us to experience a diocesan ministry ongoing for the last couple of years, instead of hearing a report about that ministry. Special thanks to Lon Towstego, Doug Bowen, Janice Varga, and Don Wilson, for their leadership in putting this workshop together. ■

Brendon Nielson is the vision animator for the diocese.

Leading change

Continued from cover

the person to get the project going. He was the CEO of the Calgary Foundation and later taught as executive in residence at the city's Mount Royal University. He organized a couple of conflict resolution sessions in 2018 before recruiting coordinator David Buckman, a parishioner at St John the Divine in Victoria, to launch the Community of Learning (CoL) program with a steering committee.

Interparish communication was one of the fundamental goals, and organizers pictured graduates strengthening the ties between churches. The class members were recruited through local clergy, which took much longer than organizers realized. Six evening sessions were planned, spread over a year.

Stewart presented the first two sessions on teamwork and leading and managing change; diocesan staffers delivered sessions on parish finances (Gail Gauthier) and communication (Catherine Pate); and staff from St John the Divine discussed music and prayer.

The final session on discipleship (Malcolm Read) wrapped up the program.

Under the guidelines, parishes took turns hosting and the group decided on what subjects the needed most. Sharing issues and information was a highlight. Trust was built over the year, said Buckman, adding that people were more willing to speak openly about their concerns and the various approaches to deal with issues. One comment was that it "made us feel part of a bigger church family." The sessions increased confidence in leadership ability, and they learned that secular

approaches are relevant to church work.

Despite the praise, the program is on hold for now. Organizers faced a reluctance for parishes to share learning programs with others. With an imminent change in diocesan leadership, it was decided to wait to ensure continued support.

In the secular world, projects such as the 2018 Canadian Values Conversations Initiative indicate people are ready to act on values as well as respond to economics. And the church is poised to address both in the training. "Wouldn't we be better leaders if we made

explicit connections with faith and how we act?" asks Marilyn Taylor, a warden at Christ Church Cathedral, and also a professor in the School of Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University, where she specializes in organizational culture change and values-based leadership. The CoL program sounds promising to her. "We have a unique opportunity to explore the leadership we practice in relation to our faith at a time of turbulence and complexity." ■

Susan Down is editor of the Diocesan Post.



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Photo: Chaplain Rev. Cathy Victor (R) spending time with one of Veteran Memorial Lodge's lovely residents.

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DIOCESAN POST WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR