

DIOCESAN EPOST

Celebrating the Diocese of British Columbia

A Section of the ANGLICAN JOURNAL

MARCH 2021

Shifting trends in clergy transitions

BY SUSAN DOWN

For the parish whose minister has retired or moved away, finding a replacement isn't as easy as posting a "help wanted" ad on Kijiji. While the search goes on for the right person, a parish will often rely on an interim-priest-in-charge for up to a year. How has the pandemic affected the church's flow of human resources?

Comings and goings in the pulpit are a feature of diocesan life everywhere, said Barry Foster, executive archdeacon for the Diocese of British Columbia. But he also believes we're experiencing a perfect storm of factors right now. "First off, COVID-19 is inhibiting movement. Financial capacity constrains a parish's ability to advertise for full-time ministers," he said, pointing out that only



Feeding the hungry: Holy Trinity in Sooke continues to offer the Friday free lunch program, Vital Vittles, as a takeout service during COVID-19 restrictions, replacing the community dining hall events. Pictured (from left to right) are Stella Black, chef Mike Shuttleworth and Elizabeth Johnson. Photo by Sharla Emmanuel

a few people are willing to relocate for part-time work.

Two other things are affecting the flow of new people into the diocese, he said. The cost of living and availability of housing on the Island can be challenging. "There's a general perception that it's an expensive part of the country," he said. The presence of a new bishop may improve things as

she starts to attract people from her own network, he said.

Half of the 46 worship communities in the diocese have one full-time minister, or in larger Victoria parishes such as St. John the Divine or Christ Church Cathedral, additional clergy on staff. The rest are managed in other creative ways. Here's

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Reaching out

If you tried to join the February 7 livestreamed service from Christ Church Cathedral, you weren't alone. In fact, so many tuned in to hear Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee preach for the first time in the diocese that the website crashed temporarily (and was quickly resolved). It was the Anglican version of a website hiccup that happens more often during a frenzy of ticket-buying for rock concerts. Bishop Anna said a clergy member called her one of several

"plague bishops" who had been consecrated during the unusual COVID-19 year. In her homily, she referred to the day's reading from Isaiah, a reassurance that in troubled times, God can renew us. "Like the ancients, we are experiencing how it feels to see the trajectory of history spin out of our control," she said, adding that we must have faith that vaccines will arrive and things will get better.

The recorded service is available on the cathedral website.

Photos by Susan Down.



Lent: time for renewal



FROM THE BISHOP'S CHAIR

THE RIGHT REVEREND
ANNA GREENWOOD-LEE

Lent comes from the French *lentement*, which means slowly. In Lent 2020, when COVID-19 was still new, I saw a social media post about how, “this is the Lentiest Lent I’ve ever Lented.” Little did we know!

As we mark a full year of COVID-19, a year in which far too many have died, the words of the Ash Wednesday liturgy are all too real: “remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

We often think of Lent as a time for restrictions and ask one another, “What are you giving up for Lent?” However, at

its core, Lent is a time for expansion and growth. Most of us have, by necessity, given up so much this past year, and so this year, of all years, I hope that instead of giving something up, you have taken something on. Lent is a time for adopting or going deeper into those practices that enhance our connections with others and with God. Lent is a time for self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, generosity and hospitality.

Straight-talking Benedictine nun Joan Chittister says in her book, *The Liturgical Year*, that Lent is a continual cry across the centuries that life is transient, and that change is urgent. She says, “We don’t have enough time to waste on nothingness. We need to repent our dillydallying on the road to God. We need to regret the time we’ve spent playing with dangerous distractions and empty diversions along the way. . . We need to get back in touch with our souls.”

Every Wednesday in Lent, as part of discerning the Renew portion of our diocesan vision, I will be offering a two-minute sermon. I hope these sermons are helpful as a way for us all to take care of ourselves and one another as we continue the long and arduous journey that is COVID-19. You will find these sermons on our Facebook page and Twitter feed as

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Bishop’s Calendar

March

- 4 John Albert Hall Lecture
- 4-6 Association of Episcopal Deacons Conference
- 6 Election of Metropolitan of Ecclesiastical Province of BC and the Yukon
- 11 John Albert Hall Lecture
- 15 School for Parish Development Trainer Meeting
- 17 Guest Presenter, Wonderful Wednesdays Lecture Series, St George Cadboro Bay
- 18 Finance Committee
- 25 Diocesan Council

In addition, over the month of March, the bishop will be attending a weekly Zoom-seminar led by author and consultant Susan Beaumont entitled “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going: Leading in a Liminal Season.”

Please check www.bc.anglican.ca/bishop/schedule for an up-to-date listing.

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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.

Some costs associated with the production of the Anglican Journal and the Diocesan Post are offset by parish contributions to the diocese. In return, parishioners receive a copy of the Anglican Journal, including the Diocesan Post at no cost. Other subscriptions: \$20/10 issues or \$2/issue. The Anglican Journal and Diocesan Post do not share subscription lists with outside organizations or businesses.

Volume 55, No 3

Hello/Goodbye

A new editor begins at the Post

Goodbye from Susan Down

During almost three years at the helm of the *Diocesan Post*, I have come to appreciate the stories of community service and individual commitment I heard along the way. Working in prisons and hospitals, helping those struggling with addiction, welcoming refugee families, or offering fellowship to others in person or online, Anglicans really demonstrate the “love thy neighbour” credo. A reward for the faithful is the glorious liturgy; one of my favourite memories was taking photos from the cathedral gallery during the Christmas season (pre-COVID-19) when more than 800 people were gathered. Now that I am running a busy arts council (with two galleries mounting about

30 art shows a year), and I have some fiction writing projects that demand some attention, I am stepping away from the role. Thanks to everyone who endured my nudging and arm-twisting to get your stories told. It has been an honour. And now, over to you, Naomi.

Hello from Naomi Racz

I am originally from Manchester, U.K., and went to university in Scotland and Cornwall, where I studied philosophy and earned a master’s degree in writing, nature and place. It was during my master’s degree that my love of editing was first kindled: I edited an edition of the university’s magazine *Peninsula*. After university, I spent five years in Amsterdam, where my then-boyfriend, now-husband was doing a PhD. I really enjoyed my time in the Netherlands, exploring Amsterdam by foot and Europe by train and bike.

After my husband finished his PhD, we were considering where to go next, and decided to apply for permanent

residency in Canada. Canada appealed to us for many reasons, not least of which was its stunningly beautiful nature.

Our application was successful, and we spent our first two years in Canada in Toronto, where our daughter was born. During that time I also founded the literary magazine *Stonecrop Review* and took editing courses at Ryerson, confirming my love of playing around with words. Though we loved the city, when the opportunity presented itself to move to Vancouver Island, we decided to take it. After six months in Victoria, we finally (hopefully, I’m just about done with packing!) settled on the village of Cumberland.

As I type this, the boxes are still half unpacked, but I am excited to be setting out on this new adventure: taking on the mantle of *Diocesan Post* editor. I am looking forward to getting to know my new home and the Diocese of British Columbia and its members; and, when COVID-19 restrictions permit, meeting many of you in person. ■

Lent: time for renewal

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well as on the diocesan website at www.bc.anglican.ca.

My pre-consecration retreat in January, which I shared with the recently installed, new bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster, John Stephens, was very ably led by retired bishop, Barbara Andrews, who reminded John and me that

“Self-care is never selfish; it’s simply good stewardship of the only gift we have.” We need, in Lent, to renew ourselves so that we can be prepared to join in the work of renewal that God is already doing in the world. Soon it will be Easter and we will go to the garden, to the tomb, only to be told that Christ is not here, and that he has risen and gone on ahead of us out into the world (Matthew 28:6). As people of God, we are always doing our best to

catch up to Christ and to join in the work of renewal, rebirth and resurrection that God has already begun. In Lent, we renew ourselves so that we can be prepared for that work.

Eventually, this Lentiest Lent, this pandemic, these restrictions, the grim death counts, will end. We will be able to gather, to sing, to rejoice. We will be resurrected. Between now and then, let us allow ourselves to be renewed. ■

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John Albert Hall and his legacy

A generous benefactor, a long tradition, a continuing evolution

BY IAN ALEXANDER

As promised, this is a continuation of last month's article about the John Albert Hall Lectures, a joint initiative of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society (CSRS) at the University of Victoria and the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia. The lectures have existed in their present form since 1996, although the genesis of the project goes back much further than that.

In the 1930s, John Albert Hall, a leading citizen of Victoria in those days, made a bequest to establish a permanent trust to support an ongoing series of lectures on "the relationship between religion and contemporary thought." Hall was a pioneer and a soldier, a chemist, a businessman and a philanthropist. Born in Manchester in 1869, he immigrated to Canada in the last decade of the 19th century. He was the first commanding officer of the 88th Victoria Fusiliers, and served overseas in the First World War.

For some decades, Hall's gift was used to provide a stipend for the position of "canon lecturer" at Christ Church Cathedral. In the mid-1990s, the present arrangement with the university was put in place, around the same time as the CSRS was being established there. The centre was intended from the outset as a place where issues of religion, faith and spirituality could be engaged with scholarly rigour. It was initially championed by the farsighted Roman Catholic bishop Remi de Roo, in a spirit of ecumenical collaboration with his colleagues Bill Howie (one-time skipper-pastor of the United Church's seagoing mission on the West Coast) and Anglican bishop Ron Shepherd.

A memorandum of understanding between the diocese and the centre was signed in 1996, and for some years thereafter, the format of the John Albert Hall lectureship involved a single distinguished visiting academic giving a series of several public talks, which were subsequently published in book form. Later, the Hall endowment was used to support the centre's regular ongoing program of public lectures by resident and visiting fellows and associates.

Beginning in 2016, efforts were made to reinvigorate the involvement of the diocese in the series, and to restore its prestige and profile. Since then, highlights have included:

- A visit by the former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States, Katharine Jefferts Schori: the first woman elected primate of a province of the Anglican Communion.
- A series of four lectures by prominent historians to mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.
- Well publicized and well attended appearances around the diocese by public figures of the stature of Pulitzer Prize-winning American journalist Christopher Hedges and eminent British church historian Diarmaid MacCulloch.
- Presentations about gender, race, politics, the environment and interfaith relations.
- Interviews with senior Canadian faith leaders such as Lois Wilson, Remi de Roo and Herbert O'Driscoll.

The impact of the John Albert Hall Lectures in our diocese, and much further afield, has been extraordinary. In-person attendance at the lectures (and now the livestreams) has ranged as high as 1000, and many more have watched the subsequent recordings.

The far-sighted vision and generous gift of John Albert Hall has enabled all this activity to take place, in ways that have evolved in response to changing circumstances. Thanks largely to income from the capital we hold in trust on behalf of his estate, our diocese contributes \$25,000 each year to this work. The annual transfer is topped up with money from



John Albert Hall (Canadian Scottish Regimental Museum)

another of the diocesan educational trusts, the C.H.G. Mann Fund. There are also separate Hall and Mann endowments held by the university, which support other activities of the centre.

The John Albert Hall Lectures are a unique collaboration between church and university, and among multiple denominations, faiths and perspectives. As we explore new topics and speakers, and find new ways to deliver content, this long-running and very worthwhile endeavour will continue to change and grow under renewed leadership in the future. ■

Ian Alexander is a member of the Educational Trusts Board. He is currently wrapping up a six-year term as co-chair for the diocese of the John Albert Hall Lectures committee.

BOOK REVIEWS

Church plots thicken

BY BOB QUICKE AND GARY DAVIES

Pioneer Churches of Vancouver Island and the Salish Sea: An Explorer's Guide by Liz Bryan. Victoria, Heritage House Publishing, 2020.

No Better Land: The 1860 Diaries of the Anglican Colonial Bishop George Hills by Roberta L. Bagshaw. Victoria, Sono Nis Press, 1996.

Ever since February 2017, when I became office administrator for the congregation at St. Stephen in Saanichton, I have been aware of the unique impact that our heritage building has had in the Mount Newton Valley. But until I started reading this tome, I didn't realize just how unusual it is within the province.

Divided into five geographical sections, *Pioneer Churches* is more than just a pretty picture book. In this work (which took several years to compile) photographer and author Liz Bryan provides an insight into the planting and growth of Christian worship across the Island.

Starting with Christ Church Cathedral, on through to Christ Church in Alert Bay, Bryan relates stories about the people and the early structures they erected for worship services. Some churches, such as Church of Our Lord in Victoria, sprang up due to clergy disagreements, while others, such as the Butter Church near Duncan, fell into disuse. St. Mary was built when some members no longer wanted to walk across the Mount Newton Valley for worship. The thinking was that since the railway had made Saanichton a vibrant hub, it deserved its own church space.

This book is meant to serve as a tour guide, so driving (or walking) directions with addresses and contact information are provided for almost all the buildings. Indeed, this is a solid resource for anyone interested in church history or West Coast architecture. It is also handy if you just want an excuse to

explore (post-COVID-19) some interesting portions of the island. And you might just come to appreciate a unique bell-cot or two.

With many of the buildings profiled having sprung from the Anglican tradition, the members of the diocese should be rightly proud that we have been given the gift of stewardship of a vital part of Christian history and witness on the Island. While some of the structures profiled in this book no longer host regular worship, and other congregations are into their second or third iteration, the St. Stephen building is still in active service on the same site it has occupied since 1862, the oldest place of worship on its original site in continuous use in the province.

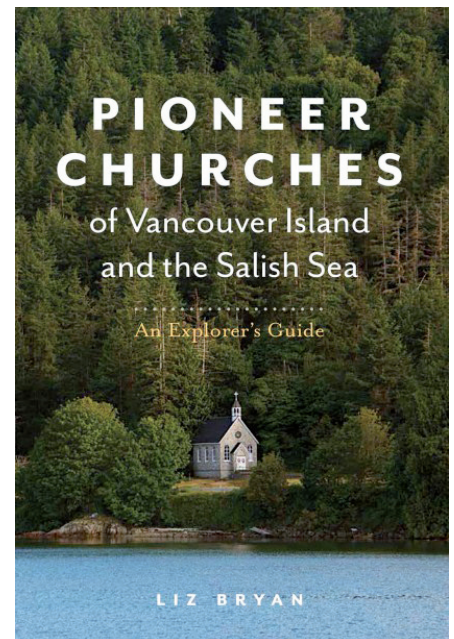
Bob Quicke is a member of the Parish of Central Saanich, sings with the choir of St. Mary (pre-COVID-19) under the direction of his wife, Cathy.

Of particular interest in Liz Bryan's book, *Pioneer Churches of Vancouver Island and the Salish Sea: An Explorer's Guide*, is the work of B.C.'s first Anglican bishop, George Hills, who played a key role in the development of several Anglican churches on Vancouver Island. Roberta Bagshaw's *No Better Land*, listed in the suggested reading section of Bryan's work, was published 25 years ago, but is not out of date; after all, the diary has not changed! This book includes a detailed description of Hills's ministry on Vancouver Island and what we now call the Lower Mainland, as well as the diary of Hills's first year in B.C.

George Hills was ordained in Westminster Abbey in 1859 and then set sail for Vancouver Island, travelling across the Atlantic to the Isthmus of Panama, then likely by train to the Pacific (no canal until the early 20th century), arriving in Victoria by boat on the feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1860, a journey of 8750 miles lasting 50 days. Imagine his courage and commitment!

The work Hills accomplished in his first year on Vancouver Island and the mainland is remarkable, given the conditions he faced. Bagshaw's introduction to the diary lays out the circumstances Hills faced on his arrival, including a gold rush in full swing and small numbers of clergy, churches and schools.

Although he travelled widely and conducted services in many locations, not



always churches, many of the references to church services refer to Christ Church, later to become the cathedral. He conducted his first service there just two days after his 50-day voyage. During Holy Week in 1860, services were held daily, culminating on Easter Day when Christ Church was full with "sixty communicants, the largest number known."

Hills travelled by boat, horse, canoe or on foot and sometimes camped out. Not all indoor accommodations were the best. Here is his entry for June 25: "My bed consisted of blankets laid upon a mattress on the floor. Within arms' length was a box filled with a cat and kittens, so I was safe from rats coming to my face."

B.C.'s first bishop served for 32 years, resigning in 1892 at the age of 76 to return to England, where he died three years later. B.C.'s 14th bishop, Anna Greenwood-Lee, has taken office 161 years after Hills's arrival, at a much different time in the history of our church and diocese. It will be interesting to see how she will deal with a different set of challenges and what lasting impact she will have. Perhaps she will feel the same encouragement expressed by Hills in his August 8, 1860 diary entry: "The promise of the apostle: 'Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'" ■

Gary Davies is chair of the communications committee for the parish council at St. Andrew in Sidney.

Acting together for change

BY MATTHEW COOK AND CHET PHILLIPS

“If people don’t think they have the power to solve their problems, they won’t even think about how to solve them.” - Saul Alinsky

The word power has come to be regarded with suspicion in our era, associated by many with only one kind of power: domination. Rightly so then, many of us reject the notion of wielding power as we reject participation in oppression. Yet Saul Alinsky, a Jewish community organizer who began his organizing work in the 1930’s following the Great Depression, understood very well that failure to build more lateral, collaborative power, and then wield that power for justice, would only lead to further oppression of the most vulnerable.

Building upon his experiences organizing the meatpacking industry of Chicago, Alinsky founded the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and went on to develop the art and science of broad-based organizing, building alliances among civil society organizations, as a means of bringing the needs of all people to the attention of those in power. Through uniting churches, unions, business organizations, and non-profits, people with a vested interest in the common good of their communities, he built a base that made those in power listen.

Greater Victoria Acting Together (GVAT), an affiliate of IAF, carries on the work of building broad alliances with the power to make positive change. Today GVAT is a coalition of 32 diverse organizations representing more than 100,000 people in Greater Victoria.

The Anglican Diocese of British Columbia was an early supporter. Motivated by the needs of our city, long before the spectre of COVID-19 came to haunt our every move, Anglicans were dreaming of ways to turn things around in Victoria. Worthy of mention specifically are Peggy Wilmot and Patty Lane, two parishioners of St. John the Divine who put their heads together to dream of how the Anglican church could play a leading role in strengthening civic relationships and addressing the thorniest problems our society faces. From their organizing efforts, reaching out to their communities, they gathered the support of churches, unions, synagogues, frontline service organizations, conservation groups, and student societies, and GVAT was born.

For GVAT, real organizing starts with listening to the people in its member organizations, and then discerning where there are common concerns to be addressed politically (in a strictly non-partisan sense). Supported by a generous financial donation from the diocese, GVAT works to take on the toughest questions of our day: the need for affordable housing, lack of access to quality mental health and addictions care, and the looming threat of climate change. These three areas of common cause each have their own Action and Research Team (ART), shared study and campaign development groups composed of interested individuals from member organizations.

On housing, GVAT has partnered with The Existence Project (www.theexistenceproject.ca), an organization that breaks down stigma and connects unhoused and housed community members through storytelling. The partnership has been hosting free neighborhood workshops with storytellers speaking from their direct experience of homelessness. GVAT will then equip the group with the tools for effective local organizing

to counterbalance the more polarizing voices in the community and build support for supportive and truly affordable housing.

Initiatives like this one and others related to alternative crisis response teams, protecting old growth forests, and nurturing authentic allyship with Indigenous people, spring from pooling the collective imaginations of GVAT’s members. “You can’t build what you can’t imagine” is a frequent refrain heard in GVAT circles.

Yet solving big problems like the housing crisis will require more than dreams. We will need real power, the power we have when many of us find common cause and act together.

At the root of our own Sunday morning gatherings, the Greek work for “church,” *ekklesia*, translates roughly as “the assembly that speaks out.” We at GVAT are looking to build the collective power to heal the rifts in our communities, to speak out and write a new story in common. In this we may become political, but as Pope Francis has said: “Politics is the highest form of charity.” Charity here, derived from the word *agape*, refers to the highest form of love, the kind we are called by Christ to carry into the world.

Matthew Cook is GVAT co-chair and Chet Phillips is GVAT’s lead organizer.

Over the last few years, the Engaging God’s World vision implementation team has been discussing how to cultivate partnerships to tackle economic, climate, and social justice. The diocese was an early supporter of GVAT through the Vision Fund, and its collaborative approach and compelling campaigns align with many of our causes. The synod office is arranging group membership in GVAT allowing parishes in Greater Victoria to attend meetings and learn more about the organization. Please have a look at GVAT’s website (gvat.ca) and contact Brendon, vision animator at the synod office for more information. ■

Shifting trends

Continued from cover

the breakdown:

- 1 – lay leader in shared ministry (Port McNeill)
- 1 – monastic community (Emmaus)
- 2 – shared with United church ministers (Gabriola and Port Hardy)
- 2 – two churches sharing one minister (Central Saanich and Two Saints)
- 5 – priests and curates (more than one full-time equivalent position)
- 7 – interim clergy
- 11 – part-time priests
- 18 – full-time priests

In other regions of the province, officials are seeing shifts in the types of ministries. Douglas Fenton, executive archdeacon for the Diocese of New Westminster, agreed there is a move to more shared ministry and part-time clergy over the past several years. “I would not characterize this negatively but rather in a way in which parishes can join together and cooperate in proclaiming the gospel,”

he said. “In many ways it expands the reach of any one parish while sharing the cost of ordained leadership.” The pandemic has provided the impetus for some collaboration between parishes, he added.

In Ontario, dioceses are grappling with the same issues.

Mary Conliffe, Diocese of Toronto, said there are usually 15 – 20 vacancies, a number that remains steady.

“One trend I guess we could lay at the feet of COVID-19 has been a reduction in the number of transitions generally,” she said. “This is mostly out of a very commendable desire on the part of the cleric not to “abandon ship” in a crisis. In some cases we have priests who are delaying retirement in order to wait out the pandemic and see the congregation through this difficult time with stability in leadership.”

Wayne Varley, archdeacon for ministry and programs for the Diocese of Ontario, said the number of interim and part-time ministries remains relatively constant but they last longer. He suggests the reasons could be affordability, development of shared ministries and declining church membership in many places.

“We try to be nimble in response to what is happening throughout the diocese,” said Varley, who fills not only the diocesan role but also serves as interim priest-in-charge of the Parish of Lakes and Locks. “The good news is that we are not being adversely impacted too much by the COVID-19 pandemic, in part due to the federal wage subsidy, and are discovering creative ways to connect for worship, pastoral ministry and administration.”

Back in our diocese, Foster said vacancies are an opportunity for “fruitful conversations.” “I think we are learning that to have a vital ministry without a full-time person we must learn to adapt and realize that clergy is not the only factor.” Historically the congregation looked after things like pastoral care, he said.

A minister’s job description could look quite different in the future, he said. “Ministers will likely be more bi-vocational, combining work in another career with ministerial duties. They need to have a dual career or have a partner with a job.” ■

Susan Down is the editor of the Diocesan Post.



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Surviving on Salt Spring

BY WALTER STEWART

Those of us in the Gulf Islands face fewer challenges with Covid than many city dwellers. Social distancing is more easily achieved. At the same time, our median age is significantly higher than the provincial mean, so many of us are part of a higher-risk group. Life in many respects has felt more safe since summer ended and the very large number of visitors, many from more risky environments, have left us to ourselves. We are fortunate on Salt Spring to have easy access to medical services with our wonderful Lady Minto Hospital. Our friends on other islands face greater challenges.

Since the middle of March the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island has continued to worship on-line. We are grateful to Gyllian, our priest; David, our director of music; Dale our parish administrator; choir members; intercessors; and Ron Dyck, a choir member and Zoom and You Tube savant. Using Zoom Gyllian records herself welcoming, saying the collects, reading the Gospel, preaching a homily, and blessing and dismissing us. She forwards the multiple files to Ron. David records himself playing preludes and postludes in an empty church. With one or two (if they are in the same bubble) choir members at time David records each singing his or her parts to hymns and anthems. David then merges all the files into one – et voila, we have a socially distanced choir that sounds very fine. All the music files then go to Ron. A different intercessor each week records the prayers of the people from home and the file goes to Ron. Ron then brings all the files together, renders the video and transfers it to You Tube. Dale then goes through the You Tube file to correct any errors produced by You Tube's automatic closed captioning. Dale then prepares a web bulletin for each Sunday. After a great many hours of work on the part of all the above, we have a beautifully produced worship service of about 35 minutes with fabulous photographs of our beloved island

as back drop to hymns and anthems, which goes live each week on the parish website. We are reaching people well beyond our regular attendees.

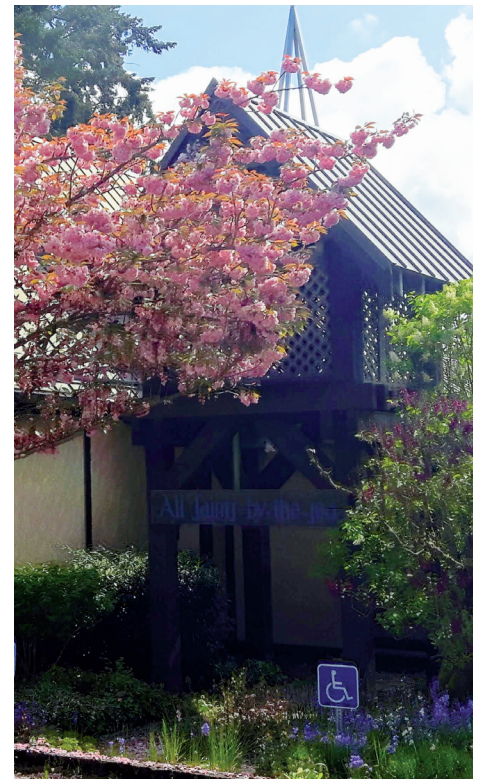
When live socially distanced services were permitted, the e-Service continued because we were only able to seat somewhere between 15 and 25 depending on the bubble mix of attendees as opposed to the 70 to 80 we would have on a "normal" Sunday.

Parishioners are staying in touch by telephone and email. We have started hosting Zoom coffee/tea sessions once a month on Sunday morning to great success. The wardens and the incumbent and Parish Council have been meeting on Zoom regularly as has our Mission and Outreach committee. We had several successful study groups meet on Zoom, and more are scheduled for Lent.

COVID certainly has presented the parish with financial challenges. We are deeply grateful to Gail Gauthier in the synod office and the finance staff for navigating the Canada Emergency Response Benefit Program application process for us. We know how much work that has been for them. The assistance has been very important. Financial challenges remain, however, which we will be addressing over the coming months. Our goal is to preserve capacity to leap back into action as soon as circumstances permit and to pursue more and more e-access offerings in the interim. We have no illusions that we are going back to normal. Many have spoken about COVID as an accelerator of change or an accelerator of trends that were becoming apparent but, hitherto, moving slowly. We know that we will be changed by this experience and our plans to address financial and other challenges must reflect these changes, limitations, and new opportunities.

All in all, we give thanks for each other and thanks to our creator for keeping us together in these difficult times. We are tremendously aware of our good fortune as others have been challenged so much more than we. ■

Walter Stewart is the people's warden for the Parish of Salt Spring Island.



February blossoms enhance All Saints by-the-Sea in the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island. Photo by Walter Stewart

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Reflections

BY HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

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

September 9th, 1941 saw me boarding the 6.15 pm train for Midleton College, all of 15 miles distant; saying farewell to my parents, being welcomed by the housemaster at the entrance to the platform and my name ticked off on his list. Many years later I relived this wrenching experience as I sat in a theatre with grandchildren and watched Harry Potter and Ron and Hermione getting the train for Hogwarts Academy of Magic!

One abiding moment of memory: summer term 1943. I am in fifth form. Our classroom is near one of the school entrances. For some unknown reason, the school donkey, used by the grounds staff of the school to haul a cart hither and yon, decides to enter the hallway through an outside door, then to amble along the corridor to the partly open door of our classroom. With our Latin master, Mr. Cox, we are busy translating a chapter of Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars. Suddenly the door creaks open and the donkey puts his head in. There is of course instant and delighted pandemonium. This is a cast iron excuse to interrupt Julius Caesar – or anyone else – to celebrate a moment's freedom from study.

With great commotion, the donkey is turned around and led outside. Class settles down again. Books are reopened, all eyes on Mr. Cox. But he does not immediately return to the 1st century BCE. Instead he

looks at all of us reflectively and then, with great satisfaction, quietly says a verse of scripture that earns him a line or two in the history of the school. Indicating the door by which the donkey entered, Mr. Cox quotes his chosen scripture, presenting it with a touch of sarcasm. "You boys will of course be aware of the text in St. John's gospel, chapter one, verse six." With exaggerated patience he waits for one of us to identify the text. None does or can. Very deliberately, Mr. Cox continues: "Chapter one, verse six of St. John's Gospel says the following. It states that our Lord came unto his own and his own received him not. I cannot help thinking that this text could be applied to the visitation we have just received." For a moment there was silence, then Mr. Cox gave a wide grin and the class exploded with clapping.

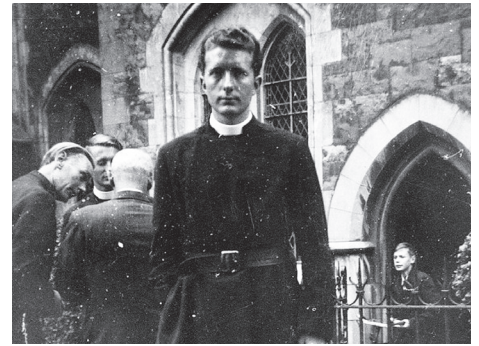
There is a sequel to this wonderful moment, one that is a tribute to the fine mind of Richard Cox. A few days later he was with us again for Latin class. This time, before calling us to open our copies of Caesar's Gallic War, he said he wanted us to listen to something, something he had remembered later in the evening after the entry and exit of the school donkey. He then opened his copy of the New Testament and read.

We listened as Mr. Cox read the short passage of Jesus choosing a donkey, the humblest of beasts, to ride into Jerusalem. When he had finished he paused and said, "I want you now to take out your English poetry books and look in the index for a poem by G.K. Chesterton. The title of the poem is The Donkey. Desktops were obediently opened and closed in our usual noisy fashion. Mr. Cox waited for silence and then read:

*When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.*

*With monstrous head and sickening cry,
And ears like errant wings;
The devil's walking parody
On all four footed things.*

*The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;*



Memories: Author Herb O'Driscoll on the day of his ordination at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin in 1952, and on pilgrimage at Glendalough in Ireland many years later.

*Starve, scourge, deride me, I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.*

*Fools, for I also had my hour,
One far fierce hour and sweet.
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.*

I remember Richard Cox very clearly, perhaps because I liked him and I found Latin interesting. In appearance he was a slight figure, physically stooped and slightly lame. He could be the butt of schoolboy jokes, sometimes cruel and hurtful, but when he read aloud he did so with a quiet and, at least for me, memorable authority. I also remember noticing as he read, that he did not have to look at the page. He looked at us as he gave us Chesterton's famous and deeply moving lines.

There was silence when the reading ended. Mr. Cox made no further comment. He returned the book and said, "Now, I think we were beginning chapter three of Caesar's Gallic War." But at least some of us knew that Caesar and his wars were not the real lesson of that day. ■

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

Leading in a time of transition



My Journey

BY JEANNINE FRIESEN

Jeannine Friesen is Interim Priest in Charge at St. George, Victoria

I was born in Saskatoon, but I spent most of my youth in the southeastern area of Ontario. We lived predominantly in small towns and in rural areas when I was growing up. Early religious influences include a parish priest who was open to the questions and searching that I was doing as a teenager. He encouraged me to ask questions about my faith.

I began to discern a calling to ordained ministry when I was only 15 years old. At the time, women were just beginning to be ordained in the Anglican Church of Canada and there were no ordained women in my home diocese. It never

occurred to me that seeking ordination might be something that was not open to me. While my diocesan bishop at the time indicated he could not endorse me on as a postulant in the diocese, by the time I had finished my BA from Queen's University in Kingston, ON and was planning to apply for an MDiv program, a new bishop was elected, and he had already ordained women in another diocese. I became a postulant and was subsequently ordained both deacon and priest by him. I earned an MDiv from Trinity College in the University of Toronto.

After many years of moving, first as a military spouse and then as a chaplain, I am enjoying settling into our home in Victoria and establishing myself as Honorary Assistant and parishioner at Christ Church Cathedral. I have been married to a wonderful man, Canon Doug Friesen, for the past 32 years. We are planning to travel extensively once we are able to do such things again. We have two children in their 20s who are studying at the University of Toronto and continue to bring us a lot of joy. I look forward to seeing where God might call me at this stage of my life.

What are your posting highlights?

I worked as interim priest in parishes in Medicine Hat and Cold Lake, Alberta, and here in View Royal. From 2009-19 I was a Canadian Armed Forces chaplain.

I worked predominantly with the Royal Canadian Navy here in Esquimalt. I sailed with HMCS Protecteur, Ottawa, and Calgary on exercises and missions. Following the engine room fire on HMCS Protecteur in 2014, she was towed back into Pearl Harbor, and I flew to Honolulu to meet the ship and support the embarked chaplain and the crew. It was an intense and challenging time.

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

I think the biggest challenge is to find ways to make our mission relevant to the needs of the world beyond our church doors. The need is great. I believe the Body of Christ has an important role to play in bringing hope and healing to our world. Serving as a military chaplain, I worked in a community of people of many religious backgrounds (including some with "no religious expression" and others who identified as "spiritual but not religious"). I learned that people who might not attend church were open to talking to me about what was happening in their lives and seeking support.

I've been connected with the Diocese of BC for almost 30 years and throughout that time I have heard of the creative ministries that were happening in the St. George parish. I am delighted to have an opportunity to work with this animated community and journey with them during this period of transition. ■

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Diocesan Council Zooms along



Fly on the Wall

BY CATHERINE PATE

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

Diocesan council (DC) continues to meet via Zoom conferencing. At its January meeting reports were made about the Refugee Sponsorship Program, Christ Church Cathedral School Educational Society and Transforming Futures. The council also approved the 2021 budget (see charts on this page).

Refugee Sponsorship Program

Staff members, Tony Davis and Kimme Russell provided a program update to council, highlighting the number of people the program is currently serving and their expectations for the demands on the program over the next three years.

The program has grown significantly over the years. Prior to 2015 there were four active parishes and approximately 25 refugees sponsored each year. By the end of 2016, 29 parishes were involved. Since 2016 there have been 820 submissions and 465 people have arrived. There

are currently 360 people waiting to be approved for resettlement to Canada and 400 people waiting to submit applications. The costs of supporting the program have similarly increased over the years, while diocesan resources are shrinking. Over the coming months, DC will assess options for sustaining the program.

Cathedral School

Stuart Hall, head of Christ Church Cathedral School, shared with the DC some exciting to expand the physical plant by purchasing and installing four prefabricated, two-storey “learning pavilion” structures on the grounds of cathedral precinct, to accommodate a growing school population. Diocesan council approved the plan, in principle, making way for the school to take the next steps in its redevelopment efforts.

Transforming Futures

Walter Stewart, volunteer co-chair of Transforming Futures (TF), reported that in spite of the pandemic, several parishes across the diocese continue to work on their TF case development, integrating what they have been learning over this last year into their future plans. The TF team will be working with Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee over the coming months to develop next steps for the initiative as we look forward to post-pandemic life.

Finances

The budget deficit will be funded from diocesan reserves from disestablished parishes, as well as a surplus from the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020. The final figures for 2020 will be reported in spring 2021. ■

Catherine Pate is director of communications for the diocese.

Budget

Forecasting anything amid the uncertainty of a pandemic can be a difficult task. In January, diocesan council passed a \$1.8 million budget for 2021 with a \$131,162 deficit.

Many parishes’ traditional sources of revenue such as hall rentals were lost in 2020. Officials say revenue from individuals has held up well, a reflection that churchgoers, when faced with a crisis or a market meltdown, generally maintain their donations. And 75 per cent of revenue to the diocese comes from the parishes. On the plus side, the federal wage subsidy has had a levelling influence. The diocese also set up a \$200,000 emergency fund in April 2020, offering grants of \$10,000.

The diocese also has a financial apportionment that it passes on to the national church.

For a quick fiscal snapshot, here are some budget variances (\$15,000 or greater) compared to the 5-year synod plan 2021 projections.

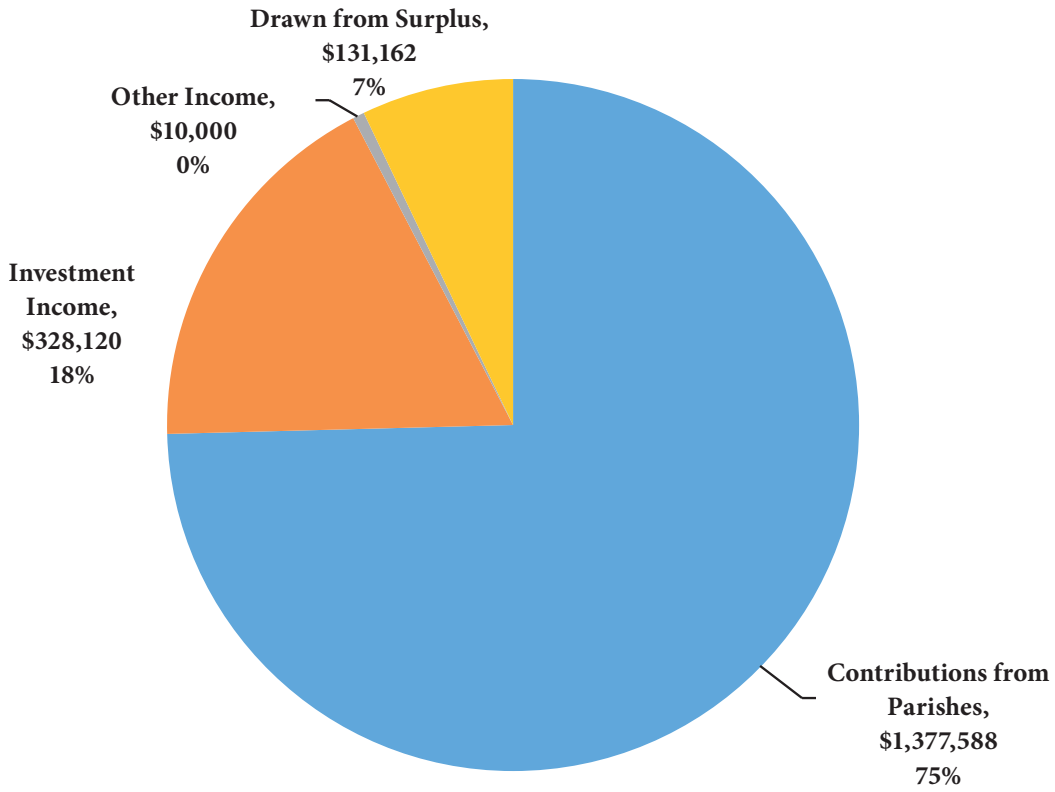
Revenue

Assessment income:
\$55,000 lower
Asset management projects
\$20,000 lower
Transforming Futures:
\$500,000 lower
Donations and bequests:
\$15,000 lower
Rental income: \$52,000 higher
(new lease with St Paul Housing)

Expenses

National assessment: \$155,000 lower
Bishop’s office: \$24,000 higher (moving expenses/ consecration – onetime costs)
Cathedral support: \$25,000 higher (new item since 2020)
Asset management:
\$71,000 lower
Admin staff costs: \$54,000 higher

2021 Budgeted Income



2021 Budgeted Expenses

