



# FaithTides

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

October 2022

This PDF is a simple printable document of FaithTides online, which can be found at [faithtides.ca](http://faithtides.ca). Questions or comments can be sent to the editor at [faithtides@bc.anglican.ca](mailto:faithtides@bc.anglican.ca).

# Anglicanism and Anglianism

By Anna Greenwood-Lee



*Three symbols of bishop, mitre with cross, gloves and book, in front of the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul, Brno, South Moravia, Czech Republic*

At the end of September, our diocesan conference, *We Together*, was held in Nanaimo. In the opening address on the Friday night, I spoke about our diocese's colonial history and about a distinction, outlined in the 2019 book *The Promise of Anglicanism* by Robert Heaney and William Sacks, between *Anglicanism* and *Anglianism*. This distinction is important and stems from the fact that the Anglican church is rooted in the English experience of being the state church. However, as Anglicanism has spread all over the world, it has consistently been, and continues to be, contextualized.

People in so many places, who speak many different languages, have made and continue to make Anglicanism their own. Prayer books, liturgies and hymns have been written in countless languages. Here in Canada, we have the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and Sacred Circle, the self-

governing Canadian Indigenous church. Here in this diocese, there is a Kwak'wala hymnal that dates from 2003 and continues to be used to this day. Taking the rich gifts and wisdom of the Anglican tradition and contextualizing and recontextualizing them for a particular time and place, culture and language, is Anglicanism at its best and is what we are called to do, here in this place, as a diocese.

But what we must let go of and repent is what Heaney and Sacks call *Anglianism*.

Anglianism, as the authors identify, was the effort to use the Anglican Communion to spread the Anglo-Saxon race. They quote Armitage Robinson, Dean of Westminster, who in 1908 said that the purpose of the Anglican Communion is "to express and guide the spiritual aspirations and activities of the Anglo-Saxon race." Anglianism, dare I say, has been present in this diocese since the beginning. We were, after all, created in 1859 by Royal Letters Patent issued by Queen Victoria's Colonial Office. Anglianism is what led us to participate in residential schools and other colonial efforts at genocide.

While Anglicanism is a beautiful gift, it is "catholicity from below. . . (and) its promise is its ongoing openness to contestation in inter-contextual presence and fellowship." Anglicanism is beautiful and life-giving precisely in the myriad ways it is lived out and embodied across our vast communion because we are not afraid to contest our faith, our beliefs or our ways of being.

Conversely, Anglianism, like colonialism, relies on subjugation and domination, and should be rejected by any of us who are truly living into our baptismal covenant and our promise to respect the dignity of

every human being.

As we finish out 2022 and enter into whatever 2023 brings, it is clear that the future is not going to look like the past. The world is changing, the church is changing, God is calling us to new ways of being. Let us go faithfully into an unknown future taking with us all the gifts of Anglicanism. But let us also recognize and repent against Anglianism, knowing that our God is a God of all peoples, languages and nations, calling us to live in right relation with one another and with the Earth.

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## A pilgrimage close to home

By Wally Eamer



*Pilgrims at Esquimalt beach looking towards Albert Head, Saturday, Sept. 3. Photo by Wally Eamer.*

What happens when a vision of pilgrimage meets reality? Aches, laughter, sunburn, friendships and more — and above all, learning that brings connection and peace.

The usual pilgrimage is *to* a holy place, like Jerusalem or Santiago de Compostela. The vision was simple. Let people undertake a pilgrimage *through* a holy place: creation. Such a pilgrimage can be anywhere at any time, including Vancouver Island now. With eight billion people straining the other forms of life on Earth, let's use the pilgrimage through creation to reflect on how to allow all forms of life to flourish, including humans. This is the foundation of the Vancouver Island Anthropocene Pilgrimage.



*Painted rock near Mill Bay ferry, Thursday, Sept. 1. Photo by Wally Eamer.*

Planning for the Anthropocene Pilgrimage started in 2019 and the original plan was to begin walking in 2020. A group of us, including church members, members of Camino Canada and interested members of the public would walk for a week. Each evening, the parish of the town we stopped in would welcome the pilgrims with supper, a place to sleep in the church and social time. First Nations would teach us how their culture understood the duty of care of creation. The pilgrims and people of the community would learn from each other. COVID-19 arrived in early 2020, the world changed, and the vision evolved but would not die.

By 2022, the organizing group from the Anglican



church, Wild church, United church, and Camino Victoria planned an eight-day circular pilgrimage, starting at Christ Church Cathedral, through the Cowichan Valley and then back to Westshore. The route had to be on trails or lightly travelled roads with shoulders, not Highway 1 or busy secondary roads. The ideal day would be 17 to 20 kilometres. The pilgrimage “mule,” our truck, would carry tents, sleeping bags and other heavy equipment for the pilgrims. We would walk in the first week of September, the start of the Season of Creation, when the weather was stable and the wildfire danger rating lower.

Then, more reality: highly infectious variants of COVID-19 meant we should not have large numbers of pilgrims or pilgrims meeting new community groups or sleeping in the church halls. My wife and I got COVID-19 in May, and I was sick with another virus in June and July. We adapted, shortening the pilgrimage from eight to four days. People brought tents or stayed with friends. Sharleen Thompson, my wife, volunteered to cook supper and breakfast each day. Pilgrims who could not walk the full day helped Sharleen to prepare supper each afternoon. Instead of 25 to 100 pilgrims per day, we were happy with the registration of between 10 to 20 people per day.



*Margo Spence not making much progress on this horse, Wednesday, Aug. 30 near Kinsol Trestle. Photo by Wally Eamer.*

We left St John, Duncan, on Wednesday, Aug. 30 and finished on Saturday, Sept. 3 at St Mary of the Incarnation in Metchosin. Some pilgrims (the strong in spirit and worn of limb, and young children) arranged rides to limit the day walk to half or less of the full route.

Wednesday began with gathering for morning prayer at St John, Duncan, and then driving to the Cowichan Valley Trail. We walked the trail to the Kinsol Trestle over the Koksilah River, a visual highlight. Families with children joined us there, adding youthful curiosity and energy. The natural walking speed of the pilgrims varied, so we gradually formed small groups. As long as we all finished in time for supper, why force people to walk the same pace and route all day? It was hot, peaking at 34°C, and a quick wade or swim in Shawnigan Lake helped us get to Sylvan United Church near Mill Bay. A cold beer at a Mexican restaurant helped me too.

At the church, our tents spread across the yard, we recovered from the walk. We experienced again that preparing food and eating together is a powerful form of communion. That evening Ken Elliot of the Cowichan Nations spoke to us and members of the congregation about his spiritual journey, the teachings



he received from his grandmother and aunts about respect for other forms of life and his current work educating children and reintroducing Indigenous plants to our gardens and homes.

Thursday morning, Katherine Brittain, incumbent at Sylvan United Church, led us in a morning service on the first day of the Season of Creation. We walked from the church to the Mill Bay ferry terminal. Part of the walk was along the beach, looking over the ocean to Salt Spring Island, a useful reminder that creation here is as much ocean as land. We took the ferry across Tod Inlet to Brentwood Bay, and then walked to St Stephen, Central Saanich. Some of the pilgrims had to leave the pilgrimage for a funeral and other commitments, but almost all rejoined for the final day. Our small group of pilgrims had a wonderful, intimate supper at the picnic table outside the historic church. As it got dark, we walked through the old church, gathered and cleaned our dishes and then went to bed.



*Greg Powell, minister in the United Church of Canada, on Lochside Trail near Swan Lake, Saanich, Friday, Sept. 2. Photo by Wally Eamer.*

Friday morning, Lon Towstego, incumbent in the

Parish of Central Saanich, led us in a morning service. Because the route from St Stephen to Church of the Advent was 25 kilometres along busy roads, we carpooled to the Lochside Trail and followed regional trails the rest of the day. One pilgrim did the 18+ kilometres barefoot. We carpooled from Church of the Advent to our home in Metchosin for supper and a place to camp. Over 20 people shared food, insights and stories. Once again, one of the highlights of a pilgrimage was sharing with people attracted by similar ideals and challenges.

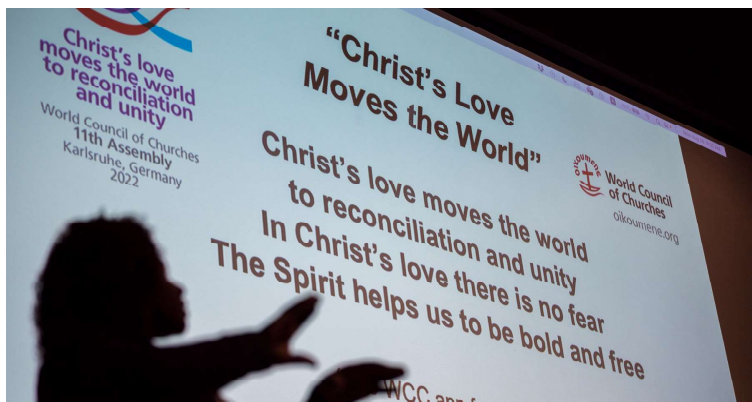
Our final day started with Ingrid Anderson, incumbent at Church of the Advent, leading us in prayer. From there, we walked through the old growth Douglas fir forest at Royal Roads University, along the beach between Esquimalt and Albert Head Lagoon Regional Park and then across Albert Head and through Witty's Lagoon Regional Park to St Mary of the Incarnation, where Matthew Humphrey of Wild church led our culminating service.

The world is a better place for having more than one flavour of ice cream, and more than one form of pilgrimage and one set of insights. The physical effort of walking and preparing meals helps free us from daily chores and preoccupations to reflect on major issues and meet people in deep, new ways. Consider pilgrimage as a spiritual practice and adventure, and that God supports and loves each person's insights and experiences.

If you are called to join or help organize a pilgrimage, let's talk by telephone at 250 888 6376 or email [weamer@bc.anglican.ca](mailto:weamer@bc.anglican.ca).

# Reflections from the World Council of Churches

By Brendon Nielson



*The 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held in Karlsruhe, Germany from Aug. 31 to Sept. 8, under the theme "Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity." Photo by Albin Hillert/WCC.*

I remember distinctly, in the final year of my undergraduate degree in religion and theology, being compelled and captivated by the prayer of Jesus in John 17: "That they may be one." (John 17:20–23) This prayer, which is just before the passion, is one that clearly conveys something close to Jesus' heart in his last days. It was during this period of my life that I first took an interest in the World Council of Churches (WCC), which is an entity that (since 1948) has intentionally pursued a visible manifestation of the oneness for which Jesus prayed. So, when I saw the call for applications to represent the WCC at the 11th Assembly, I was keen to put my name forward.

I joked, when I got to the WCC Assembly, that I had signed up for the biggest synod available... and that isn't too far from what it was like — with the joys and frustrations that entails. For the church nerds, however, when you find you are being addressed by the Bishop of Alexandria or the Metropolitan of Antioch, not to mention the Prior of the Taizé Community or the Archbishop of Canterbury, it feels like an historic gathering.



*The WCC delegation from the Anglican Church of Canada. Pictured (left to right) are Scott Sharman, national ecumenical officer, Diocese of Edmonton; Brendon Nielson, vision animator, Diocese of British Columbia; Murray Still, co-chair ACIP (Anglican Council of Indigenous People), Diocese of Rupert's Land; Cynthia Haines Turner, Diocese of Western Newfoundland; Bishop Riscylla Shaw, Diocese of Toronto. Photo courtesy of Brendon Nielson.*

On the floor, we heard passionate discussion on the major geopolitical issues around the world: the climate emergency; the war in Ukraine (there were members from both Ukrainian and Russian churches present); the ongoing injustice in Israel/Palestine; the ongoing effects of colonization and economic exploitation; and



many other important issues. As a body, we worked on statements and reached a consensus on what we could collectively say. I am proud of our Canadian Anglican delegation, who advocated to highlight the legacy of colonization and reconciliation. A statement was produced on this topic, along with statements on the other major topics addressed:

[Statement on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples](#)

[The Living Planet: Seeking a Just and Sustainable Global Community](#)

[The Things that Make for Peace: Moving the World to Reconciliation and Unity](#)

[War in Ukraine, Peace and Justice in the European Region](#)

[Seeking Justice and Peace for All in the Middle East](#)

These statements are great resources as we grapple with the vital issues we face as a global community. It is easy for us, and perhaps even part of our human condition, to limit our thinking to what is directly in our immediate realm of awareness. The WCC was a reminder to me, and I think to all present, that the world is smaller than we think, and we are interconnected in more ways than we realize.

I strive to appreciate the ordinary, so, for me, some of the more mundane encounters have lingered as highlights, and I would like to share a couple of those with you.



*Frederick. Photo by Brendon Nielson.*

One day, at lunch, I sat with Frederick, who is a minister to a “small” congregation of about 500 people in southern Cameroon. In asking about his context, Frederick explained a bit about the ongoing and currently high tensions

between the francophone and anglophone populations and political factions. My ignorance was on full display, as he talked about how people in his community are being taken, killed, and raped, and he is at risk if he preaches anything critical of those in power.

On the weekend, on one of the excursions that were organized, I met a young woman from Zambia who works in a non-profit organization with pregnant teens. She is a member of the Anglican Cathedral in Lusaka and hopes to become the first woman ordained in the Anglican



*Maya. Photo by Brendon Nielson.*



Church of Zambia. She was elected to the WCC central committee and has a bright future ahead of her.

Another day, at lunch, I got chatting with a minister from the Church of Denmark, a state church funded by the church tax. He explained that the clergy are, in many ways, civil servants, and while the church tax is a voluntary tax, it is still paid by the majority of the citizens. They are facing shrinking interest and worship numbers to be sure, but not the same kind of funding shortages that we are facing.

For me, these snapshots of different contexts and concerns highlighted the uniqueness of our work and situation here in Canada. But they also highlight a common thread: taking the faith traditions we have received and moving according to where we are and what we discern as the faithful way forward. It is this kind of contextualizing of faith, which attends to the particularities of place while being connected to the broader whole, that creates the beauty and frustration of the ecumenical movement. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served as a delegate and hope to continue to reflect and learn from that experience through my work in the synod office.

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# Small boys, golden doors and great cathedrals

By Herbert O'Driscoll



*St. Paul's Cathedral lit up at night. Photo by Diego Perez used under a CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license.*

When I was a small boy, I was a member of a Bible study group led by Mr. Turner, someone who was wise enough to know that while small boys get restless with study, they actually love stories. So, stories it was at Boys Brigade Bible class every Sunday evening, and we loved it. I have remained grateful to Mr. Turner ever since. Some of the stories are still deep in the memory banks of this now ancient retiree. Here are two of them. I think the reason I never forgot them is that there is a kind of magic about both. I'm not sure what it means to say that, but then, if we knew what magic was, it wouldn't be magic, would it?

“In the year 1675,” began Mr. Turner, “anyone in the Ludgate Hill area of London would have seen a group of men breaking large stones. It seems that one day

someone watching these men got curious and asked one of them what he was doing. The worker put down his big heavy hammer and gave a rather blunt reply. He said, 'Can't you see what I'm doing? I'm breaking stones.'" Probably the man included an expletive in that reply, but in 1937 small boys were not expected to know certain words, and anyway, it was Bible class.

"The visitor to the hill went on and asked another man who likewise was wielding a big heavy hammer. He asked exactly the same question, but this time the reply was a little more gracious. The man said, 'This is what I do to support my family, my wife and children.' Then the passerby approached the third man. Once again, he asked, 'What are you doing?' This time the questioner actually got a smile, a weary one but, nevertheless, a smile. Leaning on his mallet, the man looked all around the hill. Then he said, 'Well, I suppose you could say I'm helping Christopher Wren to build St Paul's Cathedral.'"

A simple story a child could understand. However, as you wise adult readers probably realized immediately, the story contains a message about something very important to the human experience. It's about having a sense of meaning about what we do, and the huge difference that sense of meaning can make when life becomes a bore and a slog and a burden, which it sometimes does.

Mr. Turner had promised us two stories, so we waited and were not disappointed. "Rabindranath Tagore," he began, then paused and waited for the wonder and romance and magic of that name to reverberate in our minds. "Rabindranath Tagore is an Indian writer, and he once wrote a wonderful story called The Golden Door." Again, he paused. Absolute silence.

"Once, there was a poor man who lived in a small hut on the side of a great forested valley. Flowing through the valley was a fast river. One morning when the poor man got up, his eye was caught by what looked like a golden door on the other side of the valley. Excited, he decided to make the journey down to the valley floor, search for a ford across the river, then climb up the side of the valley to the spot where he had seen the golden door.

"The journey took him most of the day. At last, toward sunset, weary but excited, he approached the place where he had seen the golden door. When he found nothing more than a deserted shack rather like his own, its door and single window hanging half broken, he was deeply disappointed. He turned away to begin the long journey home. But no sooner had he turned than he saw, far across the valley, exactly where his own hut stood, a golden door, bathed in the light of the setting sun."

Once again one of Mr. Turner's stories taught a small boy something he would remember for the rest of his life: that it was important to realize that some wonderful things in his life can easily be taken for granted, and some things that seem very ordinary can shine with a beauty you could treasure for your whole life, and it would never fade.

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# I look for God in the ordinary

By Patricia Stock



*Photo courtesy of Patricia Stock.*

## **pursue the role of deacon?**

My sense of call was not an easy feeling. Since I was a teenager, I felt different than other people of my age group in terms of my empathy for the poor, marginalized and lonely, as well as stray animals. I began picking up litter at school, much to the dismay of my parents who thought that this was a dreadful, demeaning task. God whispered to me throughout my life. I finally took the time to listen. The call became so intense that I was unable to say no. It is not so much about me but what God's purpose is for me and how he wants me to fulfill his son's ministry on earth.

My discernment proved to be, and still is, one of humility and humbleness. I am confident and strong in

my faith, and I am aware of my gifts from God. I am also very aware of my shortcomings. These two things together help me to help others build up the body of Christ. I hear the cry of the Earth and the sadness of the poor, the lonely and the forgotten. The entire process is bathed in prayer. I have a burning inside me that is known. The feeling grows each time I see someone suffering and ponder, what does faith mean to them? Or what does faith look like to someone poor, hungry or afflicted with addiction? I am called to show them what we are called to do: "Love one another."

**What made you decide to**

## **How do you see the role of deacon within the church?**

Ordained ministry is a lifetime call. There is a vertical call from God but there is also a horizontal call from the church and the diocese to the deacon. When both things come together, we are assured of God's calling and step out in faith to serve. God nourishes deacons to spread the gospel and have the strength and grace to bring the gospel to everyone else. Deacons pivot at the threshold, bringing the concerns of the world into the church, and looking out to the street to see what is happening beyond the walls. The role of the deacon is primarily out in the community.

## **What have been your posting highlights so far?**

I was placed for part of my postulancy in St Mary and St Stephen in Saanich, known as the Parish of Central Saanich, under the mentorship of Lon Towstego. This was a great learning experience and I cherish the time I spent there. I enjoyed preaching and building up my confidence to praise God by delivering his word in a homily. I collaborated with various folks in the community during the Christmas fair, created food hampers for school children, and visited local farms



and businesses to discuss the needs of the community.

One of my favourite days was when I assisted at morning prayer, and I used photographs of nature scenes (from around the island) to make cards. We discussed how the pictures reminded us of a Bible passage. The cards were then sent to soldiers overseas to cheer them and send them a little piece of home. I am now at my home church of St John, Duncan, under the mentorship of Brian Evans, and my favourite highlight so far has been the Paschal Triduum. I am excited that next Easter I will be ordained and it will be extra special.

### **What studies have you done and what route did you take for your studies?**

I studied sociology and anthropology at Vancouver Island University as well as Indigenous studies and creative writing. I took a few courses with the Centre for Christian Studies relating to diaconal formation. I have plans to study theological education online, and now that the pandemic is hopefully behind us, I will be attending night school for some of my courses relating to my call.

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

I find it difficult to answer this question as I see it challenging by definition. Anglicanism is like varieties of apples, all delicious but each to someone's individual tastes. A bit of something for everyone. As far as problems to solve go, just like any other denomination it is "bringing the church" to where the people are. The pandemic has allowed many churches to embrace online communications and learned how to do it well. We need to do as Jesus did and go out to the people.

### **Tell us something about your background.**

I was born in Calgary. My parents were both from the prairies and I am a second-generation settler of mixed European backgrounds. I have recently been very intrigued by ancestry after taking an intensive Indigenous allyship course. I am almost a 50/50 split between the east Midlands and Yorkshire areas of England, and Black Sea Germans from Crimea (before Germany existed) who were of mixed Ukrainian and German descent. I learned from the allyship training that many of us settlers have lost our roots, having had to assimilate into the country now known as Canada, and we have experienced our own "cultural disappearance."

Life was hard on these people and the phrase "cultural amnesia" has been coined to describe what many of them were experiencing. It has been extremely healthy for me to be honest about my background and what previous generations were faced with. We are a product of our genetics in many ways. I was raised in a Roman Catholic household, although in my teenage years my mother, who was a cradle Anglican, and I attended the local Anglican church together on a few occasions — we were quite rebellious.

### **Tell us something interesting or unusual about your life now.**

I worked for 37 years at Canada Post in various capacities, all of a service nature. I now work at a retail store. I love poetry and creative writing and I self-published two poetry books. I attended a workshop a few years ago called "Praying with your Pen." I enjoy journalling and spending time outdoors, where I receive the most beautiful words from God and string the words together into poems. I read the Bible

outdoors and connect with the sights and sounds of creation. “The lavender coloured mystery of the sky with swirls of vermillion takes my breath away, scattering the wispy clouds into a frenzy of colour into a purple plaid. Let the heavens rejoice, let the Earth be glad.”

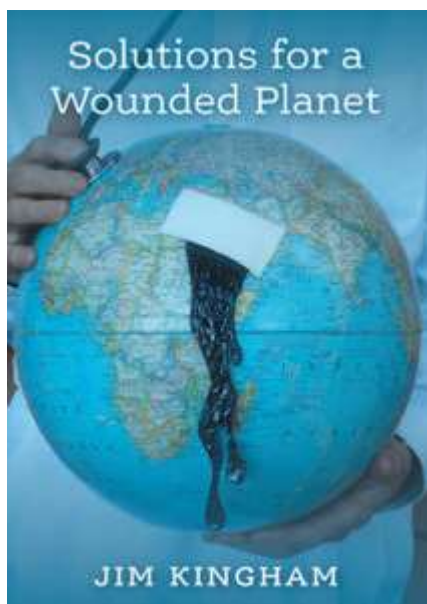
I look for God in the ordinary and theologically reflect on everything from movies to music — from this my life has become extraordinary. I look for joy in every corner and the peace and gentleness that all creation affords us. Peace.

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# Solutions over despair

By Naomi Racz

*Book Review: Solutions for a Wounded Planet by Jim Kingham. FriesenPress Editions, 2022.*



Sept. 1 to Oct. 4 is the Season of Creation, so Jim Kingham’s book *Solutions for a Wounded Planet* felt like a timely read. Kingham is a parishioner at Holy Trinity, North Saanich, and he has a wealth of experience in environmental

management, having been the Canadian chairman of the Great Lakes Water Quality Board, director general for all of Environment Canada’s programs in Ontario and vice-chairman of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Board. In his book, Kingham shares his knowledge and experience and offers solutions anyone concerned about environmental disasters and climate change can put into action.

The book is split into three parts. Part I provides an overview of the impact humans have had on our environmental commons: the air, water, land and species we all depend on for our survival. While some of this information will be familiar to readers — I hope it’s fairly common knowledge at this point that we are heating our planet by emitting greenhouse gases — it provides a useful context for the rest of the book.

One area of environmental degradation that I hadn’t previously considered as being on a par with climate change, but that Kingham includes, is light and noise pollution. But consider that [25 million migratory birds die in Canada each year](#) from fatal collisions with buildings, often because they are unnecessarily lit up at night. If we view other species as important to our survival, then it suddenly becomes a more pressing issue.

Part II examines various human activities necessary to our own survival — food, shelter, security, health, energy, transportation, consumer goods, and recreation — and looks at how these areas of human activity have changed over time from being relatively sustainable to being “wasteful by design.” For example, humans once directly harnessed the power of water and wind using mills to achieve efficiency in tasks like food production. Kingham poses the question: what might wind and water power look like now if we had

continued to develop these technologies, instead of going down the path of extracting and burning fossil fuels?

One area that Kingham addresses in this section and that is a personal bugbear of mine is consumer goods, or, as Kingham notes, items that were once referred to as “durables... because, well, they *were* durable — they lasted.” Now, however, “they are called consumer goods. They are consumed, they break down, they cannot be easily repaired, they quickly wear out and then are discarded.” Not only are products now designed with “planned obsolescence” or a short shelf life in mind, but new products and trends are continually being released to lure people into spending money on items they don’t really *need*. (I warned you this was a bugbear of mine.)

I’m not someone who cares about having the latest model of anything, but I still find it frustrating that it is often more expensive and time consuming to repair an item than it is to buy another one new. I remember (ten years ago) spending \$45 to have the zip on a pair of trousers repaired. The tailor advised me to just get a new pair, but I gritted my teeth and handed over the money because I couldn’t bear to throw away an otherwise perfectly good pair of trousers.

Then there are the items that simply can’t be repaired. Since getting my first smart phone in 2012, I’ve gone through three smart phones and I’m on to my fourth. One by one they simply died, they just... stopped working. They now sit languishing in the back of a cupboard. While a new phone every two and a half years may seem good by some standards, I can’t help but think surely “they” could make a phone that lasts, say, five years? After all, phones and other electronics are made using raw materials that are mined from the

earth, sometimes in places where there are limited environmental safeguards in place.

There have been positive steps to address this issue. This year, the EU has started the process of establishing a “right to repair” that would guarantee consumers the right to repair goods they buy. Let’s hope Canada catches up. Kingham’s proposed solution is even simpler: don’t consume so many things. One way that I’ve personally been trying to consume less this year is by taking part in the [Nothing New 2022 challenge](#). It’s been amazing to discover how much you can buy used and how often things I think I need, I end up being able to do without.

Part III of *Solutions for a Wounded Planet* then delivers what it says on the tin: solutions for healing our wounded planet. The solutions Kingham puts forward range from the personal level to the community level, and from the municipal level through the regional and provincial levels, all the way up to the national and international levels.

On a personal level, Kingham offers three steps to follow: (1) Don’t despair; (2) Think about the environment in everything you do; and (3) Act. It’s easy to feel a sense of despair when reading about the way in which our global commons has been mismanaged and degraded. It’s easy, too, to think that any action we take will be meaningless in the face of far-flung big polluters. But Kingham reassures readers that any and every action they take is meaningful. After all, personal actions are the ones we have the most control over.

Some readers may find some of Kingham’s suggestions challenging to digest. For example, throughout the book Kingham emphasizes that he thinks reducing the



global population is an important step towards healing our planet. While I can see that a smaller global population would equal less pressure on the planet's resources, I can't help but think that pursuing a smaller global population could lead down some troubling roads. [We can see this in China](#) where the one-child policy and a cultural preference for sons led to an increase in abortions of female fetuses; an increase in female babies being killed, abandoned or placed in orphanages; and a population now heavily skewed towards males.

Kingham doesn't propose a one-child policy but instead believes the emphasis should be on educating and empowering girls and women. Again, I am absolutely for educating and empowering girls and women. Yet I can't help but feel that this places the onus on segments of the global population who are already marginalized and are not responsible for the bulk of environmental degradation, since population growth is highest in poorer countries.

As Kingham goes through each level at which solutions can be implemented, he emphasizes that though there is less and less that the individual can do, there are still ways to effect change. For example, at the community level we can share resources. Even at the international level, individuals and communities still have a role to play by putting pressure on national governments to act together with other nations.

All in all, *Solutions for a Wounded Planet* left me feeling inspired to act, something that is all too rare when scrolling through gloomy newsfeeds. And more importantly, it left me brainstorming ways that I could take action. For example, by swapping smaller car journeys for journeys by bike or foot, by recommitting to not buying anything new (I've had a few minor lapses), and by writing to my representatives to express support for environmental initiatives. It's too easy to feel despair or helplessness, but as Kingham writes, "Whether you are aware of it or not, millions around the world... are on your side with this battle." So, let's not despair; let's act together!

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