



DIOCESAN POST

Celebrating the Diocese of British Columbia

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Transforming Futures

First Nations and new fundraising initiatives were main themes at 98th Synod

BY SUSAN DOWN

Decision-making and storytelling. Bishop Logan McMenamie wanted the 98th Synod to be remembered for those activities long after it was held Sept. 28-30. In his eloquent charge to delegates, he asked members for a positive outlook. "Let it be said that we adjourned the courts of despair and shone light in the dark corridors of pessimism," he said.

The drama at the Synod centred around the Transforming Futures plan – to raise \$7 million in seven years to support church activities and sustain the type of initiatives that the Vision teams had created. This was the turnaround fundraising plan that Synod organizers felt had to be endorsed by the group, capping a visioning and renewal process that

began years ago. After delegates balked at supporting fundraising at the 2016 Synod, the concept was tabled, to be put off until the future. "Synods are important, but this one is especially so, because this will set the direction of the diocese for years to come. The motion is about transforming futures. Those aren't just words," said Robert Gill, appointed Synod chancellor at the event.

Let it be said that we adjourned the courts of despair and shone light in the dark corridors of pessimism

That decision-making time had arrived at the 2018 Synod. While some fear and concern was evident in the questions raised among the 165 delegates, by the final day, even original dissenters were satisfied, one calling the event a "love fest." In the end, the motion was passed unanimously.

The necessary business at any conference can include both housekeeping measures,



Faith in Action

Orange Shirt Day: Parishioners of St. Mark, Qualicum Beach with Rev. Michael Deck wearing a stole created for the occasion. Rev. Deck was filling in for the new rector, the Venerable Elizabeth Northcott, while she attended Synod.

motions that shake the status quo, and everything in between. The delegates voted on motions from curtailing purchases of single-use plastics and advocating for alternatives, to establishing the new Order of B.C. awards program.

But before the decisions came the storytelling. Naturally, the Synod was punctuated by song and prayer; and clergy's metaphors ranged from baking biscuits to

dancing the hokey-pokey (you put your whole self in).

One of the stated goals of the Synod was to demonstrate that reconciliation and a new relationship with First Nations is a priority. This mutual support was tangible, starting with the choice of venue for the event – the gymnasium of the Songhees Wellness Centre, built in 2014 as a resource for the Songhees First Nation, located near Esquimalt. To

welcome delegates, Songhees First Nation dancers and drummers performed, including a wailing song of lament for children lost to residential schools. Motions related to First Nations included issues on how to acknowledge their traditional territories and how to support First Nations' decisions on the types of acceptable industries located on their lands.

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Truth and Listening

Delegates hear views from First Nations panel

BY SUSAN DOWN

A Year of Truth-telling, Healing and Reconciliation. That was the title of an extraordinary panel discussion on Synod Sunday, moderated by the Rev. Canon Dr. Martin Brokenleg (OSBCn). Seeing tangible signs that healing and reconciliation happening within the life of the diocese was one of the goals of the Synod. Those signs included several motions that were passed to support First Nations' environmental decisions and

appropriately acknowledge their territories. Booking the Songhees Wellness Centre as the venue and wearing orange shirts were other indications. But it was the act of listening to the panel that was most valuable.

Panellists including Chief Michael Recalma (Qualicum), Norman Garry Sam (Songhees), Chief Robert Joseph (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Ambassador) and Jessica Sault (Tseshah First Nation). They were asked what they wanted

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Chief Robert Joseph addresses the crowd after Bishop Logan McMenamie presented him with the Order of the Diocese of B.C.

Adapting in a Secular World

BY BRENDON NEILSON

Vision animator for the diocese, Neilson was a co-presenter with Canon Ian Alexander at Synod, introducing the three pillars of the diocesan vision. This is an excerpt from his remarks.

Step by step, we have moved from an understanding of being controlled and influenced from the outside to being almost entirely within ourselves. A secular world is one wherein many do not believe in God and, if people do, they admit that it is one option among others for how people

understand the world. We live in an age where transcendence is harder to grasp, and very often distinctions between immanence and transcendence are harder to describe.

Here in B.C., we are further along the secularization curve. With the highest number of people who identify as having no religion in Canada, we Anglicans are outnumbered by people who claim no religious affiliation by a ratio of about 1 to 9. Now, using the numbers in that way is not entirely fair, but it does reveal a certain way of looking at things.

Over 44 per cent of people identify as having no religion; that number climbs to 55 per cent for people aged 18-34 years. Over half of our neighbours don't participate in any kind of spiritual practice, such as prayer or meditation, on their own.

The news is not all bleak. A new survey by the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria is looking at the unique religious context of B.C., Washington and Oregon. It shows that 59 per cent of respondents answered that religious or spiritual beliefs are important or very important. And,

20 per cent of people indicated they want to become more involved with a religious group in the future, with another 26 per cent neither agreeing nor disagreeing. That means almost half our neighbours are not opposed to hearing about what our parishes and communities are doing and how they might experience the divine with us.

As Anglicans, we want to honour our tradition and be open to responding to the world as we find it. The vision is how we in the diocese are shaping our response to our context. That means affirming

the depth of our tradition and adapting to the future.



Synod Faces: (left) The Rev. Brenda Nestegaard Paul from Trinity Anglican Lutheran Church in Port Alberni and the Venerable Elizabeth Northcott of St. Mark, Qualicum Beach.

Photo by Susan Down

Awards

At Synod, Bishop Logan presented special awards to the following people:

Chief Robert Joseph

Chief Robert Joseph was inducted into the Order of the Diocese of British Columbia at Synod since he was not able to attend the Oct. 20 inaugural ceremony. A hereditary chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation, Chief Robert Joseph spent 11 years in residential school, overcoming his own trauma to help develop a reconciliation road map for the country. He is currently the Ambassador for Reconciliation

Canada and an honorary witness for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Chief Joseph has received numerous honorary doctorates as well as the Order of BC, and he is an officer of the Order of Canada. "Reconciliation is a spiritual imperative to Christians living out your lives," he said. "It is a core value."

Canon Imelda Secker The Rev. Canon Susanne House

Another award, represented by a silver dragonfly pin, was presented for the first time, recognizing the faithful service of two employees who will retire this year: the Rev. Canon Susanne House and Canon Imelda Secker.

Secker has been the administrative assistant for the



Photo by Susan Down

Connie Isherwood

Bishop's office for almost 20 years. Rev. House, senior associate priest at Christ Church Cathedral, has been clerical secretary to Synod during two lengthy terms for a total

of 20 years. "Being that long-term memory was the thing I was able to bring to the position," she said. "I loved every minute of it." She will be retiring from the Cathedral as well at the end of the year.

Connie Isherwood

After serving as chancellor of the Synod for 31 years, Constance Isherwood officially retired at Synod, Sept. 30, and received the title of Chancellor Emeritus. "But I'm not retiring as a lawyer; that will keep me busy," said the petite 98-year-old, the oldest practising lawyer in the province. She graduated at the top of her law school class in 1951 and continues the Victoria law practice (Holmes and Isherwood) that she started with husband Foster Isherwood

(who died in 2011).

Appointed chancellor by Bishop Ronald Shepherd in 1987, Isherwood has witnessed a period of great change within the diocese and the Anglican Church. She and the Synod have faced challenging events such as litigation involving residential schools, the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and issues such as the ordination of women and recognizing same-sex marriage. As chancellor, she was able to use her legal background on many occasions.

Victoria lawyer and former Synod Vice-chancellor Robert Gill was appointed as the new chancellor.

– Susan Down



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Editor: Susan Down **Proofreader:** Phyllis Thompson
Ad Manager: Angela Rush thediocesanpost.ads@gmail.com

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Editorial E-mail: thepost@bc.anglican.ca **Online:** bc.anglican.ca/the-diocesan-post
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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.

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 52, No 9

Transforming Futures: St. Michael's, Chemainus

Chemainus is a former mill town whose residents rallied after a downturn in the forestry industry threatened its existence. They transformed the town into a tourist attraction known for its murals and professional theatre. St. Michael's Church wardens, Hilary Findlay and David Johnston, and the rector, the Rev. Michael Wimmer, spoke at Synod about their church's transformation. Here are some excerpts from their presentation.

St. Michael's has travelled a similar road to that of Chemainus: financial difficulties, major dissension among parishioners which led to many leaving the parish, and three priests in about five years. We were in trouble. Then came what felt like the final blow: the Diocesan Ministry Resource Review Team (DMRT) made the recommendation that we be disestablished.

So, in the spirit of Chemainus, our parishioners decided to fight to retain our church and parish. We were energized. We were angry. Everyone pulled together and set to work; we developed a five-year plan. Within two years we were reassessed as being in transition; in another two years we were declared healthy.

It was important to increase our footprint in the community. We decided to take advantage of our central location in town to become a tourist destination by opening the church for viewing, producing brochures on the history of the church in six languages and printing greeting cards and bookmarks for sale. Michael has been appointed the Legion Chaplain, officiates at the Cenotaph ceremony, and St. Michael's hosts the annual Legion Church Parade. We have increased our presence on Thetis Island.

We wanted to tap into the arts community. St. Michael's Presents was created as a classical music society to promote young, local musicians. Their series runs from October to June with

performances in the church. We provide hospitality after each show. In recent years, we also hosted the Chemainus Valley Cultural Arts Society performances in our hall.

-Hilary Findlay

When my wife and I first moved down to the Island many years ago now, St. Michael's was the first parish we visited. We were not well received. In fact, at coffee in the hall after the service, no one approached us, so we went elsewhere and didn't come back.

We decided to check out St. Michael's again six or seven years ago and walked into a church that looked very similar to the one we had left in the diocese of Kootenay, which helped us feel at home right away. The lady in the pew ahead of us turned around and greeted us; soon I found myself in the choir and started to get involved. The service was well conducted, and the sermon was competent. Within a week we received a visit from the rector. Personal contact seems to have been a constant since and is one of the main reasons the parish continues to grow at a steady pace. There is a sense of community and warmth in the parish which seems to have enveloped us.

-David Johnston

For the last three years we have been actively pursuing a goal for the parish: the development of attainable housing (on church property). At Synod 2016 when a capital campaign was being considered, had the decision been in favour of the proposal, it was proposed that a couple of parishes might be selected as pilot projects. We were very keen to be included because we felt the time had come to move forward.

We had already been in discussion with the asset manager about proceeding to such a development and feel it is essential that we use the land wisely. To leave it largely undeveloped, especially as it is prime land in Chemainus, would be poor stewardship.



Photo by Susan Down

The Little Church That Did: St. Michael and All Angels rector, the Rev. Michael Wimmer (centre), with delegates Hilary Findlay and David Johnston, told the story of their Chemainus church's revitalization.

In 2016, St. Michael's celebrated 150 years of Anglican worship in Chemainus and the 125th anniversary of the completion and consecration of the Church. We are convinced that we should leave things in

at least as good a condition as when we came into the picture, preferably even better than when we entered this stage of the story of God's work among us and in Chemainus. We believe so strongly that this is something

God wants us to do, that we are wholeheartedly embracing the vision of Transforming Futures. Much in the life of the parish has already been transformed and the process continues.

-Rev. Michael Wimmer

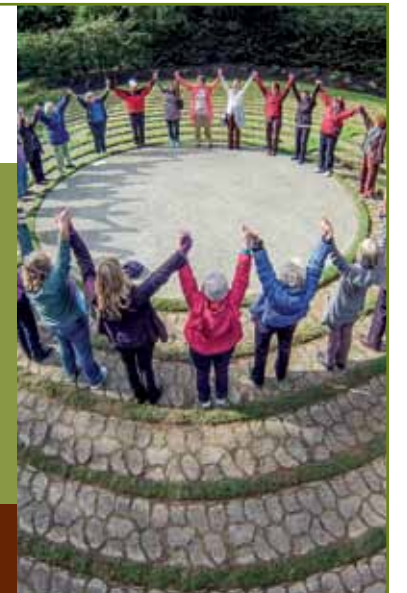


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Synod 2018



Elections at the 2018 Synod

Clerical Secretary – Paul Schumacher	For Diocesan Council
Lay Secretary – Judy Trueman	Elected at Regional Gatherings and
Treasurer – Michael Murgatroyd	Ratified at Synod
For Diocesan Court	Cowichan/Malaspina Region
Mary-Jane Leewis-Kirk	Clergy – Heather Cutten
	Lay – Ed Norman
For Provincial Synod	Haro Region
Clerical – Lon Towstego and Alastair McCollum	Clergy – Juli Mallett
Lay – Joan Hoffman, Barbara Henshall, Wayne Hatt	Youth – Ashley Blair
For General Synod	Nimkish Region
Clergy – Clara Plamondon, Lon Towstego and Alastair McCollum	Clergy – Anthony Divinagracia
Lay – Catherine Pate, Ian Alexander and Michael Wolff	Lay – Denise Ropp
Youth – Annalise Wall	Youth – Claire Knowles and Amber Santorelli
For Diocesan Council	Selkirk Region
Elected at Synod	Clergy – Aneeta Saroop
Clergy – Dawna Wall and Clara Plamondon	Lay – Lynn Schumacher
Lay – Penny Holt, Don Wilson, Joan Hoffman and Michael Wolff	Youth – Annalise Wall
Youth – Aleesha Barkemeier and Ashley Blair	Tolmie Region
	Clergy – Patrick Sibley
	Lay – Jeanette Muzio

Canons Appointed

At the Synod, Bishop Logan appointed the following people to be lay canons of the diocese in recognition of their outstanding volunteer work:

Brenda Dhane, Michael Coleman, Joseph Forsyth, Julie Poskitt, Doreen Davidson, Alex Nelson

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Interwoven Stories: Conversations at Diocesan Synod

BY ANNALISE WALL

Whether it was having a quick discussion with a delegate I wouldn't ordinarily encounter, chatting with a friend and fellow parishioner in the lunch line, or listening to a question raised on a controversial motion, the 98th Diocesan Synod was filled with conversation for me. The conversations on Indigenous reconciliation were especially poignant; on Sunday presenters looked from the podium into a sea of orange shirts worn by people eager to contribute and participate in the ongoing work of reconciliation.

At my table sat members of the newly formed Diocesan Youth Council – Ashley Blair, Aleesha Barkemeier, Claire Knowles, Elizabeth Walker and Amber Santorelli – along with clergy – the Rev. Craig Hiebert and the Rev. Aneeta Saroop. Over the course of Synod, our conversations ranged from diocesan-related themes to Harry Potter houses, and to the knitting of a prayer shawl, which kept my hands focused and my mind on task. During a knitting session with Christine Eschman, a warden from my parish, St. Michael and All Angels, I was struck by how all the conversations at Synod, casual and formal, were knitting together hopeful threads, creating hope for the diocese's future, and the vision we share for it.

This was especially apparent

in the worship services organized throughout Synod. Each service was designed and led by a different group, such as the Emerging Futures team and the Emmaus Community. The Diocesan Youth Council led a noonhour Eucharist on Saturday, in which we strove to blend the traditional lyricism that attracts many youth to church with some hints of different liturgy. For example, our dramatic dialogue in response to the Gospel, "Along for the Ride," centered on the different ways disciples and others (Peter, Mary Magdalene and the Syrophoenician woman) would describe Jesus.



Annalise Wall

Photo by Susan Down

Through all these different services and conversations, the 98th Synod was a prayerful and intriguing discussion, with previously unheard voices raised and overwhelmingly supported by the diocese.

Annalise Wall was a youth delegate for the Selkirk region. At the conference, she was elected youth representative to General Synod.

Truth and Listening

Continued from cover

to see happen next if they could wave a magic wand. "We would have the freedom to worship our Creator in our own ways," said Sam. "The first step is putting on the t-shirts," said Sault to the room full of delegates clad in orange. After that, she said, "Are you going to help us rebuild our language?"

Joseph said, "Learn more about indigenous people and listen deeply." Despite his traumatic early experiences, Joseph said he has always had strong ties to the church. "After residential school I tried to make sense of it all and ask why. And the men who really influenced me

were the people that the church sent up to be missionaries. They became important touchstones for my pathway."

All agreed that love and mutual respect between peoples is what's needed to move forward. "You could give me all my land back and create wealth beyond measure, it wouldn't matter if the rest of society saw us as dregs," said Joseph. "What I value most in my life is to have some dignity, supported by the idea that I'm valuable." He added that First Nations will continue to be "mired in trauma" unless they have a dialogue "that creates deeper meaning that transforms relationships."



Synod faces: (facing page top) Kingcome Inlet Elder Alex Nelson welcomes the crowd, (this page l to r from top) Catherine Pate (diocese communications), Norman Garry Sam (Songhees First Nation), Christ Church Cathedral Dean Ansley Tucker, refugee program coordinator Rebecca Siebert, diocesan office staff, youth delegates, Michael Wolff (Cathedral warden), Chief Robert Joseph and the Rev. Canon Dr. Martin Brokenleg listen to Jessica Sault make a point on the First Nations panel. (photos: Catherine Allen Whale and Susan Down)

The Art of Creation

BY SUSAN DOWN

While Anglicans were celebrating the season of creation in September, members of St. Matthias Church in Victoria honoured both creativity and the divine intertwined in its new Chapel Gallery, which opened Sept. 21.

Run by volunteer curator Nicky Rendell, the Chapel Gallery was inspired by her own experience as an artist. In 2017, curator Cornelia van Voorst offered to exhibit Rendell's work in the Stairwell Gallery at St. Philip, Oak Bay. Rendell's show

dealt with difficult subject matter – the refugee crisis – but the setting was a healing influence. “My work gained sanctuary in the sacred space. It was symbiotic magic,” said Rendell, whose work was next exhibited at St. Matthias Church.

A \$3,000 grant from the Vision Fund and another \$1,000 from donations allowed the church to get serious about creating art space, renovating its chapel room and adding track lighting to give it a dual purpose: art gallery and sacred space.

In her remarks at the packed opening reception, The Rev. Meaghan Crosby-Shearer, rector at St. Matthias, began by quoting a famous writer. “Dostoevsky once wrote ‘the world will be saved by beauty,’” she said. “As we will see, beauty can be lovely and it can be terrible, and in both loveliness and pain, art, be it

visual or poetic, can move us towards transformation.”

The first show was Sea-Forms: The Nature of Creation, featuring works by Cobble Hill artist Jill Ehlert, whose inspiration comes from intertidal ecosystems. Her mixed-media creations reflect the patterns and subtle colours of the seaweed and sea life she encounters on trips to Tofino. To create her effects, she burns holes and applies inks and acrylic washes to fragments of Japanese washi paper, then layers them against pristine white backgrounds. The results are graceful art pieces that are meditations on the natural world.

Faith and art can be a powerful combination, says Rendell. “Art is a catalyst for discussion,” she said. “It is a great opportunity to reach the community.” Rendell wants to encourage schools and seniors’



Photo by Susan Down

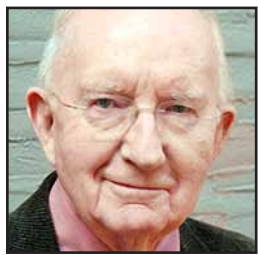
Chapel Gallery Opening: Featured artist Jill Ehlert (left) with gallery curator Nicky Rendell and St. Matthias rector, the Rev. Meaghan Crosby-Shearer.

homes to organize visits to the space, and she would like to see future exhibits by indigenous people, refugee groups and local emerging artists.

Rev. Crosby-Shearer agreed with the art outreach potential for a church whose setting is amid three diverse neighbourhoods – Rockland, Fairfield and Gonzales. “It’s a

community committed to exploring where our faith intersects with the wider issues of inclusion, environmental justice, reconciliation and the arts,” she said. “Our prayer is that the Chapel Gallery will be a place of contemplation and change, a sacred space where we can continue to be transformed for our work in this beautiful world.”

The Song and the Singers



Reflections

BY HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

One afternoon in early September 1993 I was walking with a group of pilgrims around the ruins of Capernaum, once the fishing village at the north end of the Lake of Galilee where Jesus lodged. It was not the first time I had been there, nor would it be the last; but because of an incident that took place that morning in the ruins and on the hillside above them, it would be the most memorable.

A few years before our visit, a large modern sanctuary was built in the ruins of Capernaum. Many

feel it sits uneasily and intrusively among the foundations of the village, but there it stands. On this particular morning we were walking slowly near this building, conscious of how it looms over the remains of the village. As I recall, there were a number of other groups moving around the area, listening to their guides informing them about the history of the village and its place in scripture.

Suddenly we became aware of voices lifted in very beautiful melody. So striking and captivating was the sound, and so rich the harmony, that gradually all other voices became silent. Many of the groups began to look around for the source; some began to move towards it.

By chance it came from a spot quite near us, and when the group came into view we could see that it was composed of about 15 men in United Nations uniforms. They were Fijians, part of a police contingent enjoying a few days’

leave in the Holy Land. This we learned from our guide who made enquiries after the singing was over. However, most interesting was the choice of music these men had made. They had decided to express their praise and thanks by singing the wonderfully tuneful gospel hymns of their tradition at all the sites. The quality with which they sang was nothing short of mesmerizing.

A most interesting incident took place just before noon that same morning. Our group was standing near the Church of the Beatitudes built on the crest of the hillside above the Lake. Once again there were various groups around with their guides, once again we heard the Fijian voices breaking into song. Looking around, we saw that they had chosen the shelter of a large tree a considerable distance from the open church door.

They had sung no more than part of a hymn when a small

elderly nun appeared from the church porch. She paused, looked around to see where the sound of singing was coming from, then set out towards the group as quickly as she could walk. For some reason I recall how the headpiece of her robes billowed behind her in the slight breeze on the hilltop. Before she even reached the group, she began to wave her hand in brusque dismissal.

There was not the slightest element of welcome or the slightest effort to engage them in anything approaching an understanding way; most certainly there was no appreciation for the magnificence of their singing. Within the church it was time for the noon Mass, and nothing, not even a most genuine expression of deep faith, could be allowed to impinge on that institutional observance.

The wonderful singing ceased abruptly, and the group moved from their location. The elderly sister stood some

distance from them as if to make sure of their departure. No word of greeting was exchanged, no word of gratitude for their gift of praise offered so magnificently and so genuinely.

As a priest of the Church I found myself cringing at the encounter. Ever since, I have recalled it as an example of the mistrust – even rejection – that the institutional church can sometimes show to genuine folk religion. However, what remains for me, and always will, is the singing.

Herbert O'Driscoll, retired priest, is an author (books, hymns, radio scripts) as well as a conference leader in several provinces of the Anglican Communion. A Canon of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., he is preparing two manuscripts for possible publication, and he contributes to the Post and other diocesan papers.

NOTE: SUBMISSION DEADLINES ARE THE 25TH OF THE MONTH (TWO MONTHS IN ADVANCE OF EACH ISSUE) NEXT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 25TH (FOR THE JANUARY ISSUE).

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"The Art of Living Well"

Transforming Futures

Continued from cover

Leading up to the crucial financial vote, Canon Ian Alexander and Brendon Neilson, diocese vision animator, gave an overview of the Vision Fund, a \$1.5 million initiative launched in 2015. In three years, the fund has delivered 70 grants to 30 of the 45 parishes in the diocese. Over the next two days, delegates heard from a range of presenters on stories from the value of a “longhouse” tent at a local jail to the amazing success of the refugee program, and new ways of “being church.” Church leaders from Port Alberni and Chemainus spoke of their simple strategies for reviving their parishes.

Christ Church Cathedral

Dean, the Very Rev. Ansley Tucker, aced the challenging task of pitching the idea to the group. Each church’s contribution (of 40 per cent of the funds raised) will go to a common fund to provide the infrastructure and support that any organization needs to get the job done, she said. The plan will allow each church to start fundraising when it chooses during the next five years, and amount is different for each parish since the contribution is based on a percentage (115 per cent) of that church’s average donations.

A Five-Year Plan

The hard numbers, presented by the treasurer, Michael Murgatroyd, gave a picture of

what would happen with and without the joint parish-diocese fundraising initiative, and supported the goal of reversing the historic trend of annual diocese deficits. Murgatroyd pointed out that the status quo is not an option, and the consequences of not approving the fundraising would mean a cumulative five-year shortfall of about \$1 million. In fact, close to half of the parishes run a deficit. Peter Daniel, Diocese asset manager, said that in addition to maintaining churches, the capital plan’s goals include finding spaces for educational programs and community activities as well as developing rental housing.

The story of the impossible

becomes possible, said Bishop Logan in his final charge to the delegates, adding that our refrain will now be not “yes, we can,” but “yes, we did.” As he said, “You have chosen to live a new story.”

Following the intensive weekend of discussion and debate, the reviews were positive. Dave Conway, a parish councillor from St. Philip, Oak Bay, was a delegate who stood at the microphone several times to express his concerns about the major fundraising plans. “I had concerns that it was a one-size-fits-all model, but it sounds like there is still room for each parish to find its best way forward,” he said following the close of Synod. “This was a love fest. There was

a wonderful show of unity.” He was impressed with the gestures of reconciliation and recognized the valuable work done at the diocese level, citing the refugee group and the UVic chaplain. “That work has to be supported,” he said.

There was a spirit of willingness this year, said the Rev. Canon Susanne House, the Synod’s retiring clerical secretary. “We had to make decisions about the future based on faith in people, in God, in the diocese to move forward,” she said. “The delegates had faith in the leadership and faith that the people of the islands and inlets will embrace these motions.”

DIOCESAN POST WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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All Accounted For



My Journey

BY REV. GAIL RODGER

My Journey is a new series that offers insight into the lives of new clergy in the diocese.

On Saturday Sept. 22, at St. Andrew, Sidney, Gail Rodger was ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacon (transitional). Presiding were Bishop Logan McMenamie and The Ven. Canon Penelope Kingham.

The new deacon is doing her curacy at Holy Trinity Church in North Saanich. She grew up in Brandon, Manitoba, daughter of a high school teacher father and a bookkeeper mother. She has lived on Vancouver Island for about 25 years and she and her husband Don have two daughters.

What is your employment background?

I had always planned on being a working mother. Once the children started school, I started college. I took a single accounting course one evening a week; after receiving my diploma, I got my accounting designation (CGA) through correspondence courses. I worked in public practice doing personal and corporate tax. The nature of accounting is to know people intimately through their finances. I sat with people as they mourned the loss of a business, the loss of everything including their home. I empathized as they railed against the unfairness they felt, and listened as they explained

how their divorce, or the death of a loved one, had put them behind in all their filing deadlines. I listened and, after they had left my office, got to work to help them in a practical sense.

Why did you choose Sept. 22 as your ordination day?

It was as close as I could get to St. Matthew's Day (which is Sept. 21). He was a tax collector, then a disciple; he is the patron saint of accountants. I was a tax collector of sorts.

What made you decide on the priesthood?

My call to formal ministry began in the autumn of 2009. At the time, I was dissatisfied with my career. I had a restlessness of spirit that would not go away. I began discussing options with my husband of changing the direction of my life. The spring of 2010 involved a lot of prayer. I took a brief trip to Mexico to build houses and then became more involved at church by teaching Sunday school. I signed up for distance theology courses at Thorneloe University.

I had two main concerns. I needed to ensure this was not a mid-life crisis in reaction to a dissatisfying job. Second, I needed to ensure it was not only a longing for a deeper relationship with Christ. I changed accounting jobs from taxation to business. I tried to grow deeper in Christ through a more disciplined prayer life and a larger commitment of time for church work. After two years, it was clear that simply more volunteering was not the commitment God was asking of me. I spoke to my priest about ordination and met with a parish committee. In the autumn of 2014 I began as a lay minister,

assisting in leading worship to broaden my experience.

What route did you take for your religious studies?

I continued to work as a bookkeeper/accountant while attending Vancouver School of Theology (VST). At the same time, I increased my lay work with my home parish of St. Andrew, Sidney. I expect to complete my Master of Divinity degree by spring 2019.

What are the similarities between your two vocations?

Both careers – accounting and the ministry – are about relationships. In accounting the focus is on the task: by doing that task well, you are helping the person. Even if it is short term, a relationship is established. In ministry, worship, praise, service, journeying together through life has much less to do with any one task, and instead is about listening, sharing and caring for one another continuously. My administrative skills will never totally go away; I am sure they will come in handy.

What was the most unusual sermon you have ever heard?

One of the most interesting sermons I even heard was about Star Trek – and I know I am aging myself here. In the first version of Star Trek there was always an 'away team' with the commanders and a few unnamed extras. The team would explore the new planet; in the process one of the unnamed characters would be hurt or killed by the aliens. The federation always had these unnamed characters in red shirts. A challenge was issued: to identify the 'red shirts' in our lives, the people we simply don't see. They may be the overlooked like the waitress or store clerk,

Faith in Formation

There are several ways individuals may find themselves serving on Diocesan Council. Each region of the diocese elects a clergy and a lay representative. Additional members are elected from the floor of Synod. Others may be appointed, either by the bishop or by Council itself. There is provision for one or more youth representatives (aged 16 to 25 according to the Canons). Diocesan officers are ex officio members, while synod office staff attend with voice, but no vote.

Personnel Updates

Inductions

Lincoln McKoen has been inducted as incumbent at St. Peter, Campbell River, as of October 4, 2018.

John Steele has been inducted as incumbent at St. John the Baptist, South Cowichan, as of October 13, 2018.

Clara Plamondon has been inducted as incumbent at St. Paul, Nanaimo as of Oct. 24, 2018.

Diocesan Council Meetings 2018

- Christ Church Cathedral Nov 22 Thursday
- St. John the Divine, Victoria Dec 20 Thursday

Bishop's Calendar - November

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 13 Educational Trusts Board Meeting | 22 Diocesan Council Meeting |
| 15 Finance Committee Meeting | |

the marginalized or homeless, or those we take for granted like family or any one of the people we view as 'disposable' rather than seeing them, listening to them or knowing them. If we are to act like Jesus, we must begin with valuing and loving others. **What do you see as the greatest challenge in the Anglican Church?**

To challenge the perception that the church is a stodgy antiquated institution filled with rules when really it is a community of love and caring

for others and the world. The challenge is to demonstrate in practical ways what love looks like in the community and in relation to others.

The Last Word

The highlight of my spiritual development is found not so much in a list of events, but in the steadiness of faith. The regular practice of worship and the work within the community all lead to a willingness to be open to new directions and ideas while rooted in a maturing faith.

EfM Returns to Victoria

Education for Ministry is a program of theological education by extension for lay people. There are four years of study, but participants commit for one year at a time, meeting in small groups with a trained mentor. EfM offers an opportunity to discover how to respond to the call of Christian service.

Starts Tuesday nights in January, 2019 at St. Peter Lakehill, part of the Two Saints Ministry. The mentors are the Rev. Canon Dolly Beaumont (artanddolly@shaw.ca) and Ann Barry (annbarry@shaw.ca). Please contact either of the mentors or Boyd Shaw, (boydshaw@shaw.ca) diocesan coordinator for the EfM program for registration details. **Deadline for registration is December 15, 2018.**



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