

# The Highway

A supplement of the Anglican Journal for the Anglican Diocese of Kootenay



*Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, The Most Reverend Lynne McNaughton and others gathered for the lighting of Paschal Candles.*

## The Primate Visits Kootenay

**By Very Rev David Tiessen**

Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, was present with us in the Diocese of Kootenay for Holy Week and Easter 2024. The Primate started Holy Week at All Saints, Vernon for Palm-Passion Sunday. During the week she joined the Tuesday Coffee and Conversation Group at the Cathedral for a wide-ranging conversation that touched on the work of the Primate as the voice of the Council of General Synod across the Anglican Church of Canada and as representative of our church to the worldwide Anglican communion and beyond in ecumenical relations. The Primate spoke of the wisdom for the whole church that is offered by the Indigenous Anglican Church in “Sacred Circle: The Covenant and Our Way of Life,” and addressed the history of and current situation in Gaza and Israel-Palestine.

On Wednesday, the clergy of the diocese gathered both in-person at the Cathedral and by Zoom for a session on clergy

well-being, and then enjoyed a luncheon with the Primate. For the Paschal Triduum, the Primate together with Archbishop Lynne McNaughton preached and presided at St Michael and All Angels Cathedral for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The Primate participated in an ecumenical Prayer Walk for Gaza that included members of the Central Okanagan United Church, Christ Lutheran Church, and St Michael’s Cathedral along with various members of the wider community and communities of faith. It concluded with the Great Vigil of Easter at St Andrew’s, Okanagan Mission (Kelowna). Two young adults (one from St Andrew’s and one from St Michael’s) were baptized and confirmed there.

The week concluded with a joyous celebration of the Day of Resurrection on Easter Sunday at the Cathedral. It was a joy to have our Primate leading in worship, reflection, and conversation throughout the week, and we continue to keep Her Grace in our prayers in all her work for the good of the whole Church. ■

MAY 2024

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# The Highway

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*We acknowledge that the land on which we gather in the Diocese of Kootenay is the traditional unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) Peoples, the Ktunaxa and Kinbasket Peoples, the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Peoples, and the Sinixt (Arrow Lakes) Peoples. We seek a new relationship with the first peoples here; one based on honour and respect, and we thank them for their hospitality. We pray that we may live more deeply into the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.*



# Primate's visit to Kootenay Diocese



*Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, The Most Reverend Lynne McNaughton, Dean of the Cathedral The Venerable David Tiessen, and crucifers at the Cathedral of St Michael & All Angels, Kelowna, Easter Sunday.*



*Archbishop Linda Nicholls along with Ian Dixon, Camp Director, planted a tree at Okanagan Anglican Camp.*



*Archbishop Linda Nicholls participated in an ecumenical Prayer Walk for Gaza that included members of the Central Okanagan United Church, Christ Lutheran Church, and St Michael's Cathedral along with various members of the wider community and communities of faith.*



*Archbishop Linda Nicholls concluded with the Great Vigil of Easter at St Andrew's, Okanagan Mission (Kelowna), at which two young adults (one from St Andrew's and one from St Michael's) were baptized and confirmed.*



**By The Most Reverend  
LYNNE MCNAUGHTON**

Dr Lynne McNaughton is the Bishop of the Diocese of Kootenay and Metropolitan Archbishop for the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and the Yukon

# Message: Approaching Synod

**T**his year's theme for Synod celebrates our call as Church to gather to encourage one another. That is the strength of belonging to a "community of communities": a Diocese. We are stronger together. We can support each other and engage in more of God's mission together than we could do separately. The Hebrews passage which is our Scripture text for Synod has the intriguing language "to provoke one another to love and good deeds." To Provoke! It is our hope as we gather for this Synod, with delegates from each parish around the Diocese, we will hear stories from each other that will inspire new thinking about our local mission; with examples of local response to the needs of our neighbours that spark our imaginations for a new mission that fits our context. We will hear presentations from different regions in the Diocese on how people are living out love and good deeds in the name of Christ.

"Provoke" means to incite or stimulate. One of the most encouraging and moving things I experience as Bishop is when people from across the Diocese meet, often online, and discover the commonalities of their challenges and joys as Anglican communities: in

book studies, wardens' meetings, courses, and committees. This meeting automatically energizes people. We're not alone in our challenges. We learn from each other. We are part of something bigger. People wave at each other on Zoom and say, "It was great to meet you." What I see when people return to the large "Zoom room" from their small group discussions is that their conversations have renewed people's hope. That is my prayer for this upcoming Synod.

As we approach Synod, please pray for your parish delegates, for the Synod Planning Committee, and the Synod Office Staff. Please plan to provide opportunities to hear back from your delegates after Synod.

Blessings

Yours in Christ,

# Anglican Diocese of Kootenay SYNOD | May 23 - 26

*Let us consider how to provoke one another to love  
and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together...  
but encouraging one another, and all the more as  
you see the Day approaching.  
Hebrews 10: 24-25*

GATHER

*together*

ENCOURAGE

*one another*

PROVOKE

*to love*

# Support & Encouragement

**By Andrew Stephens-Rennie**

Canon Andrew Stephens-Rennie is Director of Missional Renewal for the Diocese of Kootenay

**I**n the early 2000s, all across North America, a new conversation about church was brewing. Younger people from a variety of denominational streams were waking up to the reality that the church as it had been in the 1980s and 1990s was no longer connecting with Gen Xers or younger.

Youth pastors and younger leaders had this overwhelming sense that if the church was going to connect with their contemporaries, something had to change. The vernacular that had worked for those in earlier generations still worked in many ways for those people. It worked for some, but it was not the spoken language of Xers let alone the coming Millennials.

What started as independent experiments in ministry across the continent grew in the early part of this century, becoming a movement that—while short lived—changed the face of the church in many places. It certainly changed me.

In living rooms and cafes, in reclaimed sanctuaries and parking lots, the Emerging Church movement took what was old and made it new again. They did all of this on a shoestring budget. No centralized funding model. Little—if any—denominational support. These churches grew up adjacent to a number of denominations, but rarely at their centre. In fact, very few denominations – especially in Canada – knew what to do with these emerging congregations growing up on their fringes.

They were Christian, absolutely they were, but for the cadre of denominational leaders who had invested so much in the management guru church-growth models of the 80s and 90s, these plucky little churches were more punk rock than bubble gum pop. This was an era of DIY experimentation, of communities coming together, organizing together, co-creating together, an experience of church that spoke out of and spoke to their particular cultural context.

It was a movement that claimed that people shouldn't have to culturally commute to engage in Christian community. Christian faith and its practice was not simply a global monolith. It also had to read the local context. Listen to the local context. Speak the language of the local context. Church was not a refuge from the world, but a place where God and

world intentionally came together to meet and experience transformation.

As the movement grew up, it gained an unlikely champion – an Episcopal lay woman from the American South. Phyllis Tickle, an educator, author, and editor caught wind of this movement. Chronicling its growth and impact, she famously noted that every five hundred years the Church holds a giant rummage sale, and that we are living through one of those now.

Every 500 years, the church goes through massive change. We're living through one of those massive changes now. The world is changing around us and we, too, are being transformed. We are being transformed as individuals and as a church. Whether we like it or not, we are in the midst of a period of time where all that the church has collected in main rooms and dusty corners is being put out on tables and auctioned off. What we're trying to figure out these days is what of the church's gifts—structures, postures, proclamation—still serve its participation in God's mission today.

Perhaps there are some of the church's gifts that served us for a time, but do not serve us now. Perhaps there are others we discover in a forgotten corner of the attic, covered in dust, but that make sense to recover and reclaim. Perhaps there are new treasures to be found and that serve us as we seek to serve God and the world God loves.

As a church, we are repeatedly called together (in the words of Hebrews 10) to "Gather Together, Encourage One Another, and to Provoke each other To Love." Part of that work, especially in times like ours, is to pay attention to the great emergence that God is inviting us into. Can we stay awake to the changes around us, so that we might go out and respond with God's love to those who we might meet?

Perhaps some of us are called to stay put in our current congregations to deepen ministry in these ways.

Perhaps some of us are called to bear witness to the transformation God is leading us through.

Perhaps some of us are called to midwife new movements within the church, movements we don't yet understand, for a future we can't yet imagine.

These ways of faithfully embodying the gospel can coincide. They can support and encourage one another. They are all a part of a mixed ecology that has space for traditional forms as well as newer and emerging forms of church. And, if God is still at work in the world today, we can expect that God continues to create and to make all things new.



# Mission of Love



**By David Tiessen**

The Very Reverend David Tiessen is the Dean of the Cathedral Church of St Michael and All Angels, Kelowna, Diocese of Kootenay

**R**ecently, a Friday (12:15) Eucharist at the Cathedral drew us into the life of Bishop Edward King (1825-1910). Before becoming Bishop of Lincoln, King taught pastoral theology at Oxford University, and before that was chaplain and then principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, which maintained at its core a primary focus on spiritual formation and daily prayer. That focus was central to the way King conducted himself as a priest and pastor, as he sought to live by his teaching that “without the gift of love, you will never be a preacher,” and that “if you are to preach, you must make up your minds that you are sent, and sent by God.”

Those words stand out because they ground pastoral work – but really, the work of the whole church – in the dual command to “love God and love your neighbour as yourself.” The well-being you might desire for yourself is connected to the well-being of another, and ultimately connected to God as Love. This points us – both clergy and laity – toward a ‘mission of love’ that must be present if the church is to be animated as a genuine worshipping community: a people of faith.

In keeping with that, King maintained a focus on personal connection and held a pragmatic respect for the distinct life of the congregations he served. In “For All The Saints,” it is noted that though King embraced the Anglo-catholic movement, “he had little interest in ritual and always conformed to the customs of the parish he was visiting – whatever they might be, ‘low’ or ‘high’ (FAS

104).” It is also noted that though a theologian, he did not produce any sustained treatise on a particular topic or topics.

To produce such a substantial work was an expectation and a means of measuring the significance of the work of someone in church and academic leadership. Yet it seems that King’s focus on the personal and the pastoral led him more to the occasional and the personal — King wrote letters. King was much loved as one who lived what he preached and taught – he was faithful in prayer, and he sought to get to know his parishioners and students in their regular lives. And so his written legacy reflects the many letters he received and answered.

I often find that the various Commemoration Days of the liturgical calendar offer rich fodder for reflection – and often yield wisdom for our own times from the life of a relatively obscure other. In encountering the work of this 19th century Bishop, it strikes me that his legacy remains deeply relevant to our own time. Our time has become the time of the blog, the post, the share, the tweet. It is driven by the occasional and the personal experience – the fragments of life are at the front of our consciousness. And those fragments, those occasions, are often shared and shaped from within the bubble of an online platform’s algorithm, guiding what we encounter and how we perceive and interact with the world. On the one hand they are both personal and connected; on the other they also operate from a distance that fuels a sense of being disconnected, and so also leave space for the frustration and anger that has risen to the fore in our culture.

How then do we speak into this in our time, as church, with the same sense of the ‘mission of love’ that King lived? What is our own sense of pragmatic pastoral connection in our own time and place? How can this time of mission as people of faith be lived together, with flexibility, but with a deep groundedness at the heart of our faith?

The theme of our upcoming Synod is drawn from Hebrews 10:24-25: “And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

I love the invitation to consider these things. They will not be the same for our different congregations across the diocese – and accordingly we have named some provisional statements on values, vision, and mission that can serve as a guide and touchpoint for working these things out. But such considerations will best be worked out by meeting together, and by encouraging one another, and indeed by provoking one another to “love and good deeds.”

Today, at Cuddesdon College, there is a newly designed “Edward King Chapel.” It is built in an elliptical shape that places worshipers face-to-face in prayer. It is noted on the chapel’s website that the design is intended be both poetic – evoking a “buoyant, tethered boat” – and technically sophisticated as a way of fostering a hopeful religious and spiritual life for church and world (see: [www.rcc.ac.uk/about-us/edward-king-chapel](http://www.rcc.ac.uk/about-us/edward-king-chapel)).

Such a design seems very much to carry the spirit of Edward King – and in many ways it seems to me that King’s model of not seeking the grand treatise or the universal model, but rather maintaining a flexible, practical approach to carrying the core practices of the faith will go a long way for our own time too. We are sent by God. And we are sent with Love.





# Making Sense of Scripture Readings



**H**ave you ever read or listened to a scripture passage that was difficult to understand? I certainly have, but over the years I have developed a process for making sense of it. Last fall, however, I stumbled across a section in my Book of Alternative Services that permits readers to make edits! The BAS has been in print since 1985, so how come I didn't discover this

until now? Before outlining these edits, allow me to point out two barriers that I think make the comprehension of some texts so difficult.

The first barrier occurs when the reading is an excerpted portion of scripture that does not give the context or does not have an immediately identifiable speaker. It might begin, "And then" or "He said." What just happened? Who is "he"? The second barrier has to do with the syntax of sentences. Those are the overly long ones with so many commas that the main thought is lost by the time one gets to the period. My process for overcoming the first barrier is to figure out the context by reading what has been said in the lead-up to the passage or by reading a commentary on it. Next, I tackle those long sentences. They usually start with a clear direction but added clauses take us away from the main point before coming back to it. In this case, I figure out the bare-bones meaning of the sentence. The meaning is usually apparent if one reads the beginning and ending phrases, only. Now, I can read the whole sentence, clauses and all, in such a way that stays on track with the main thought. These techniques are all well and good for my own comprehension, but the problem is, "How do I impart the meaning to the congregation?" That is where the BAS comes in. Here are its main points.

Since all the readings are excerpted portions, the literal text may have to be adapted in order to pre-

serve sense and maintain the continuity of the text.

- At the beginning of a reading, nouns should be substituted for pronouns ("Jesus said" for "he said")
- Phrases may be used instead of subordinate conjunctions ("At that time" for "then" or "when")
- Co-ordinate conjunctions may be omitted ("for," "and," "but").

Some phrases in the text

may have to be omitted, and others included in order to begin or link certain passages sensibly.

- The proper sentence may also be adapted by the addition of an introduction as appropriate, e.g., "Jesus said . . ."

Any reading may be lengthened at discretion, e.g., to set a passage in context or because a following passage will be displaced by a festival on the next Sunday.

Check out "Concerning the Lectionary for Sundays and Holy Days" on page 266 of your BAS for further details. These slight alterations in a reading can make all the difference between total confusion and enlightenment.

Post script: One can take a similar approach when preparing a reading as a dramatic presentation by removing "the tags." I have done this many times with the Passion Narrative, in particular, where separate readers speak for each character. In this case, I remove tags such as "Jesus said" or "So and so spoke in an angry voice." This allows the whole presentation to flow more smoothly and tags are no longer needed because we see the character who is speaking and hear the tone of their voice. ■

## By Norene Morrow

The current music director at St. George Anglican Church in West Kelowna.

# Cultivate Your Call

## Servant's Heart

### From the Desk of a Deacon

**I**n May 1, 2024, I celebrated my 20th anniversary of ordination to the Diaconate. It seems important to share some autobiographical details in the hopes that others might find insight into their vocational journey.

As I look back on my vocational journey, I realize that it began with my baptism, and it was thanks to the family that God gave me — that close circle that nurtured me and loved me — and that extended community of the church within whose company I've spent all my life's journey.

Like Jesus, our sense of calling — discerning the meaning of our own lives — begins with who we are, where we are, and when we are.

Think back to the experiences of learning and work that have shaped who and what you are. Childhood experiences, youth and young adulthood have all shaped the contours of our lives. Discernment is listening to God in all of life. For example, my summer work over five years as a hospital admitting clerk helped me to feel comfortable in hospitals. Looking back on the connections I made with people when on emergency shifts and general admitting I felt God's presence. Taking patients to the floors after admitting them and settling them into their rooms was about service. Little did I know then what these experiences were preparing me for. My work as a teacher-librarian was also about service. Helping students and colleagues find information and reading material.



**By Heather Karabelas**

The Rev Heather Karabelas is Deacon at St Mary's East Kelowna

Many more life experiences led me to discerning a call to the Diaconate. For some time that call was tucked away in my heart until circumstances in my life, through God's grace, revealed the time was right.

Yet not only events, routines, our life history, and experiences, mentors, and friends, prepare us for what

God intends for us, but also what one is called to create from within.

Through prayer, listening to God and through

a relationship with God in and through Jesus. One's spiritual core will not take root unless one is planted in God's presence. We need to be in the tenderness of God. We need to be fed, watered, and tended by the generous Life Force that is at the heart of all things. Only then can we leaf out, to become what we have been given to be. Discernment is a gift that we have all been given. Through prayer, may our eyes be opened so we can see the gift and look to people and practices that will encourage us to pursue our call, whatever that call may be. For me, it was the Diaconate. Wait, watch, and listen. God supports us in our search and is at the same time present in us.

***Take time to feel God's  
Holy Presence.  
Take time to  
cultivate your call.***

# Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

## (1881-1955) Controversial Visionary and Mystic

**By Catherine Ripley**

Member of the Spiritual Development  
Committee



*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*  
(image Wikipedia)

In his book *Everything Ablaze, Meditating on the Mystical Vision of Teilhard de Chardin* (Paulist Press, 2017), David Richo writes “Mysticism is a way of knowing spiritual realities by experience. Mystical experience is nondual: God, we, and all things as one infinite reality.” And certainly, throughout his life, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was non-dual, bringing together his paleontological expertise about life circa 56 to 33 million years ago with his theological thinking as a Jesuit priest to create a controversial theory of evolution, among others. The Church did not permit his books to be published in his lifetime, a great disappointment for Teilhard. Fortunately, this edict was relaxed after he died in 1955 so today we are able to study, ponder, pray on and frankly, be mystified by his challenging visionary work, which remains controversial today in both religious and scientific academia.

As we move closer to the Day of Pentecost, that amazing day as described by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles where all became one in understanding and spirit, diving deeper into Teilhard’s vision of evolution seems timely. Why? Because he so deeply felt the “oneness” of everything held together by the Cosmic Christ, “his heart a fire: capable of penetrating everywhere, and gradually spreading everywhere....” (The Divine Milieu, Harper & Row, 1960)

In a nutshell, Teilhard believed that since its inception the Earth has been and is evolving toward “the Omega Point.” Theologically, for Teilhard, the Omega Point is Christ. “Christ,” Teilhard writes, “is the end point of the evolution, even the natural evolution, of all beings;

and therefore evolution is holy.” (Hymn of the Universe, Harper & Row, 1961)

First came the evolution of the galaxies, then the geosphere, then the biosphere, and now underway is the evolution of the “noosphere” (from the Greek word “noos” meaning “mind”). Each phase of evolution not only brings greater complexity, but greater connectedness. As if echoing Jesus’s prayer that “they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you” (John 17: 21), Teilhard also wrote about the cultural convergence of societies into a single society and saw this happening through urbanization, technology, and modern communications. Indeed, as Richo writes, “Teilhard envisioned a human community of love as the foundation, origin, driver, and destiny of evolution. We join consciously into the process of evolution when we show universal love.”

So, how might we express “universal love” to the world, our faith community, our families? And what might the impact of that universal love be? Teilhard leaves us with an inspiring and fiery vision of just that: “The day will come when, after harnessing space, the winds, the tides, and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, we shall have discovered fire.” (Toward the Future, 1974, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)

# A Hatful of Change



## By Kevin Arndt

The Rev Kevin Arndt is the Incumbent of Christchurch, Cranbrook

**T**he story is told about a woman who was walking on a stormy beach with her husband when a great wave fell onto the shore and swept him out to sea.

The woman cried out, “O God, O God, please, please give me back my husband!” Sure enough, moments later, another giant wave crashed and swept across the beach, and there, soaked and thrashing about at her feet, was her dear old husband, wet but no worse for wear.

The woman raised her eyes up towards heaven, her arms lifted high, and with a loud voice cried out to God, “He had a hat, you know!”

I guess that’s gratitude for you.

Change is hard. Whether it’s change that we’ve prayed for, or cried out for in a moment of desperation, change is still hard. Perhaps it’s human nature, but I think it’s often easier to spot what is missing when transformation and change comes around, than it is to be grateful for the new, unfamiliar path the universe has opened before us – even when it’s a path that’s desperately needed. Understandably, sometimes, we just want our hat back.

As we draw nearer to Diocesan Synod, I find my thoughts drifting to the many familiar patterns and recognizable structures I knew as a young

priest in the Anglican Church of Canada. There is much we have had to leave behind, as we’ve collectively answered God’s call to be the Church in this time and place, and to pursue new directions, a “new life.” What parts or patterns of the Church do you miss today? And what were you glad to leave behind?!

Kootenay is not the same Diocese as we were when Synod was last constituted in-person, in 2018. The Church has changed. The world has changed. We have all changed. The truth is, we lose things in transformation. But we gain things too. “Unless a grain of wheat drops into the ground and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (Jn 12:24). This is our calling as Christ’s Easter people.

Resurrection means we might not get our hat back. We might not get back our dream, or our hope, or the comfortable, familiar ways we long for. In fact, our new, resurrection life might not look like anything we’ve ever seen before! But a new life will come, and it will be good, and God will be there, through and through. Like most truths in scripture, this is so easy to say, and so hard to live out, every day.

We can, I believe, take some comfort in the fact that even Jesus’ first followers did not recognize him after the resurrection. When Mary met Jesus on Easter morning, she thought he was the gardener! For me, there’s a simple lesson in her story: don’t let the Christ you are looking for, blind you to the Christ that stands right before you. It takes time and Easter eyes to recognize God is still with us, as ever, but in a new and resurrected form.

One last hat story. There’s a saying that is attributed to Pablo Picasso; it’s probably apocryphal, but I love it, nonetheless. “Tradition is NOT wearing your grandfather’s hat. Tradition is begetting a baby.” My hope for us, as we gather in-person at Diocesan Synod this year, is that we will not mourn too much our lost hats, but will instead come together with all the enthusiasm, openness, excitement, and joy we know is present in the Spirit of making babies!

Shalom, my friends.





# Witness and Dialogue:

## Essential Elements in Christian Ministry

### Part 4 Synthesis

Jesus calls us to carry his good news to the farthest comers of the world, making disciples, “among all nations.” In every age, his people have responded to this commission by sending messengers to previously uneducated peoples, with the intent of founding new communities of Christian believers in every part of the inhabited earth. This movement began on Pentecost morning, and the book of the Acts of the Apostles tells us of the expansion of the early church from a pitiable remnant hiding in an upper room. Beginning in Jerusalem, “day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

Then Philip, Peter and others took the message to the countryside and the towns of Judea, like Gaza and Joppa. Very soon, there were also believers in Damascus. Paul, who set out to arrest these people, soon became the most ardent of the messengers, not only to the Jewish diaspora, but to anyone else who would listen as well. At the same time, the first martyrs, like Stephen and James, showed the depth of their faith and prayed for the forgiveness of their tormentors. The pattern was set, and over the next centuries the message spread to India and Ethiopia as well as most of Europe.

There were occasional, serious disappointments. Internal division was the principal factor in such major setbacks as the utter collapse of the North African church, and the drastic reduction in numbers in Palestine and western Asia after the invasion of the Crusades, while Anatolia gradually slipped away as Turkish settlements spread throughout the peninsula. At times, the messengers may have burdened the news with their own cultural accretions and independent denominations often sought to distil the essence for local consumption. Of late: secular sophistication has sapped the church of much of its following and influence in the lands of wealth and technology, but there are everywhere Signs of a persistent remnant, imbued with fresh commitment and awareness. In any case, Christian communities now exist in every



**By Rev Dr Stuart E Brown**  
Retired priest, formerly Principal of  
Kootenay School of Ministry

region of the globe. Virtually without exception they owe their origins to the perseverance of foreign missionaries and their continued development to the zeal of indigenous leaders.

Most Christians live in constant dialogue with people of other faiths. In their daily lives, they are also in a state of permanent witness. Whatever they say or do is observed by their neighbours as an indication of Christian behaviour and attitudes, or as an aspect of witness. At the same time, insofar as their action is taken as witness by someone from outside the church, it is also part of dialogue. Aggressive and

insensitive proclamation is certainly an unpromising form of dialogue, because it is likely to offend the prospective interlocutor. But by the same token, such an inconsiderate approach is also an inappropriate method of witness, because it will usually alienate those it is meant to attract. An honest, open lifestyle marked by a profound respect for every child of God and manifestly guided by faith in the redemptive grace of Jesus Christ provides both the foundation of a vigorous witness and the framework of a constructive dialogue. In our modern societies with their cultural diversity, Christian witness has to include an honest esteem for each and every person and an absolute respect for the sensitivities and concerns of all others. Thus, a dialogical attitude is part of responsible witness. At the same time, meaningful dialogue must have at its root an earnest religious conviction that serves as the primary motivation for a person's comportment in worship and in social interaction. So it becomes impossible to sever witness from dialogue, because each of these attitudes or activities is an integral part of the other, for better or worse. Our witness and dialogue will both be impersonal and importunate, or they may alike be imbued with the Spirit and tempered by our love for others.

Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14)

# Witness and Dialogue:

## Essential Elements in Christian Ministry

### Part 5 Scholarship

**F**inally, we must ask what kind of a relationship is possible between this dialogical witness and academic study. Can believers be fair and accurate observers, of their own faith groups or of their neighbours of other faiths?

Can individuals engage in practical intercommunal activities validly claim to analyze these or similar efforts with any degree of scientific integrity?

Experience strongly endorses an affirmative reply to these questions.

To be sure, any research about social phenomena like politics or religion necessarily involves a different approach from entomology or botany, but even in these purportedly pure sciences there are occasional temptations to bias especially when commercial interests or academic reputations are at risk.

We can even argue that rigorous scholarship is a logical concomitant to the honest witness and candid dialogue we have been describing. Christians, and Jews, understand that false testimony is a serious deviation from their standards of behaviour, and therefore of dialogue, and other believers have similar moral constraints. In many cases, committed believers from different communities can understand one another's frames of reference more fully than people with pretensions of impartiality, which are often tinged with secularist prejudice of varying intensity. Cooperative research is indeed the most promising avenue to the resolution of many questions of pragmatic importance to citizens of religiously plural states, and the absence of generally accepted data is one of most serious obstacles to sound social planning in several states of Nigeria and some other territories.

While witness and shahddah have become terms with deep religious significance, they have



**By Rev Dr Stuart E Brown**

Retired priest, formerly Principal of Kootenay School of Ministry

also maintained their more general connotations of certification or validation. Sincere seekers for truth will respect each other's faith even as they work together to resolve questions of mutual interest. Of course, there will be temptations to slant or distort findings. But the very Idea of collaboration sets strong incentives to work together honestly, in response to one's basic moral imperatives as well as one's finer impulses to contribute usefully. It will also be easier

for genuine people of faith to enter joint projects because they will not be tempted to distrust their partners in the absolute fashion of those polemicists who uncharitably insist that all the members of the other group are simply untrustworthy.

All scholarship claims to be honest, and people of faith would seem to have the strongest reasons for doing their research well. Honest work well done is excellent witness, and participation in a multifaith team promises rich rewards in mutual stimulation, in access to a broader audience and in applicability to the public interest. Best of all, this cooperation represents the most engaging and absorbing form. of dialogue.

At the same time, our dialogue and witness will be accessible to study and evaluation that will recognize our successes and propose remedies for our failures. Serious scholarship, respectful witness and open dialogue contribute each to the others in a positive and productive quest for true community.

Give instruction to the wise, and they will become wiser still; teach the righteous and they will gain in learning. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. (Pr 9:9f)



# Singing Through These Changing Times

**Norene Morrow** has spent much of her life involved in the music of the church, including over thirty years as a music director in parishes from small congregations to cathedrals.

Be prepared to go on a journey that explores how congregational singing can be exciting and more welcoming, to look into what it means to have a music ministry mindset, to understand why we like some hymns and not others, to learn how music is chosen, led, and taught in order to make worship more inclusive... and so much more. Most importantly, **COME TO SING!**



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*A Poem by  
Elizabeth Truant*



*Out of the dust You created me  
So shall my body praise You  
Working in unity with my Creator  
I will go beyond myself  
To praise You and serve Humanity  
Working side by side with companions  
Seeking to bring life and hope  
To the needy, lonely and desolate  
Being stretched beyond my comfort zone  
Will in eternity be my desire and prayer.*

Elizabeth Truant is a member of St Andrew's, Trail



# Around About the Diocese

## Lighting the Paschal Candle

Holy Trinity, Grand Forks



*Members of Holy Trinity, Grand Forks, Photograph by Juno Shenstone.*