

# The Highway

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



*Mural of Jesus Christ, Louisville, West End, Ky USA <https://www.flickr.com/photos/talesofaromeet/6867087845> - DL Duncan*

## ADVENT

*“Watch for the coming of the Son of Man “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory.”*

**Luke 21: 25-27**

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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.*



## 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

# Risk Hope!

**A**dvent is the season of naming our hopes.

The poets and prophets of Advent proclaim hope.

What a daring thing to do! To name our hopes, to not succumb to being numb in the face of relentless war, remorseless brutality, unscalable accumulations of desperation: poverty, displacement, trauma.

Insurmountable systems of greed. Irreversible damage to Earth. Flash floods, fire, fear.

How can we name our hopes!?

In the face of what we see in our world.

Wouldn't that just be naïve?

In *Ladder to the Light: an Indigenous Elder's meditations on Hope and Courage*, Bishop Steven Charleston says:

*Hope arises when we embrace a sacred reality. That vision is not a dream, but a goal. What we project into our future through faith is not just the wishful thinking of dreamers out of touch with reality; it is the blueprint for a future our faith sees clearly before us. Hope is not a wish, but an inten-*

*tion. Most of us do not see ourselves as heroic agents of change, but if we have enough hope in what we see, then we find the strength to make change happen. When our hope is linked to the hope of others, we become even stronger.*

I will not abandon my belief in the coming dawn just because I dwell in the midnight hour.

*One of the greatest dangers we face is getting used to the darkness.*

*Hope is a decision.*

*Hope changes history”<sup>1</sup>*

Advent visions stir our imaginations so we do not become resigned to what currently is. Prophetic poetry rouses us so we don't get used to the darkness! We are called to hold onto God's goal of restoration for the whole earth. God's transformation. God's realm where all live in fullness of life. Advent hope focuses on God.



When I studied Jeremiah with Dr. Walter Brueggemann in Georgia, he began every class with prayer. I learned a lot about prayer from his prayers. He had steeped himself so long in the prophets of Hebrew scripture and Christian scripture, that his language for prayer was vehement and honest, electrifying and challenging. He spoke to and focused on God, like Moses face to face, toe to toe, with the Holy One. Not pious and polite, but demanding. Not demure, but bold.

In one of his startling invocations, Brueggemann prays,

“We gather ourselves together to subsume our hopes under your rich names.”<sup>2</sup>

*This is a great image for Advent! All the rich names of God we hear in our Advent scriptures are where we can risk our hope:*

Mercy, Compassion, Way of Peace, Refiner’s Fire, Faithful, Gracious, Liberator, Love.

Pay attention to the names of God in all the familiar readings and hymns of this season. Keep a list of the ones that speak

to you, these qualities of the Holy One we worship and long for. Expand your names for God! (hymn #395 in Common Praise, *Bring Many Names*)

*Our hope rests In the Holiness of this living, loving God. In this God of Advent is the vision that stirs us and claims our lives.*

*In the face of all that is overwhelming, it is God breaking into our numbness that gives us the possibility of actual Newness.*

1 From Ladder to the Light: an Indigenous Elder’s meditations on Hope and Courage. Steven Charleston, Broadleaf Books, 2021 (pp. 64.-68)

2 From “Reform our deformed lives”, written originally for Columbia Theological Seminary. Excerpted from Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: Prayers of Walter Brueggemann (pp. 115–116), Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002. ■

For more Advent Resources go to:  
<https://www.kootenayanglican.ca/news/advent-2024>

# A Holy Night



## By Andrew Stephens-Rennie

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

**C**an you imagine a world with stars brightly shining—a world ready to embrace our dear Saviour’s birth?

- Can you imagine a world that lays in sin and error pining—awaiting Christ’s appearance—that our soul might feel its worth?
- Can you imagine a world experiencing a thrill of hope—a weary world rejoicing—as yonder breaks a new and glorious morn?
- Can you imagine such a world? Can you see its possibility? Can you see beyond what some might consider to be “practical” or “realistic,” to glimpse a world that is imaginable and true?

In last month’s column, I explored the biblical call and the church’s deep need: a wild and prophetic imagination that will help us break free from our addiction to certainty and control.

Each year at Christmas we face this temptation: to turn the story of Advent and Christmas on its head, removing the reality of anxiety

and displacement, oppression and fear. Like the temptation to tell our congregation’s story without the muck and filth of real life, we oversimplify and edit, seeking to create comfort without the mess.

And yet, Jesus is almost exclusively found in the midst of the mess.

All of which is why it comes as some consolation to me that this Christmas has no chance of being perfect. It comes as some consolation to me that this world, like the one into which Jesus was born, finds itself in sin and error pining. This world, like the one into which Jesus was born, is weary.

I am weary. Perhaps you are too.

And if you are weary, that’s okay, because Jesus will be found here again this year, in the midst of this year’s particular mess. This world, much like the one into which Jesus was born, the Holy Night of which we sing, finds itself weary, experiencing trial and slavery, oppression, and weakness.

While our neighbours may use words other than “sin” and “error” to describe the mess we’re in, many would tell us (were we brave enough to ask) that all is not right with the world. If we asked with care; if we deeply listened; we might hear them tell of the world

## A HOLY NIGHT CONTINUED

after which they long, a world that (so far) they can only imagine.

- “Can you imagine a world,” they might ask: Where hierarchy is flattened; where conflicts cease; where all people journey together, on level ground; where all have enough; where all know they are enough?
- “Can you imagine a world,” you might hear them say: Where the homeless, the refugee, or the person displaced comes home to a cozy apartment filled with friends and a fridge full of delicious food; where the lonely come home to the companionship of friends with whom to give and receive love?
- “Can you imagine a world,” they might share: Where the victims of cultural genocide come home to a community recovering the ancient ways, embracing them, learning to speak anew; where bombed-out villages come home to a ceasefire and access to much-needed supplies; where sexual and gender minorities come home to a chosen family invested in their protection, in their right to life free from harm?

Whatever conversations we find ourselves in, and whichever words we use, I pray that we will be able to respond:

“I too can imagine such a world. It’s a world of which I dream and after which I long.”

For this is the kind of world to which the prophets bear witness. This is the kind of world to which Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection point. It’s the kind of world Jesus calls us to imagine, to dream, to scheme about, and yes, to embody.

Advent, with John the Baptist’s fire and brimstone preaching, with Mary’s punk rock anthem, with the apocalyptic revealing of the world as it is (even as we watch and wait for the world as it ought to be), points us on this way.

And so may we, this Advent, unleash the dreamers and unleash the dreams, choosing always for God’s kingdom, choosing always for hope, choosing always to work with others towards a world in which all chains are broken; a world in which all oppressions cease. ■

# Spirituality of Time and Place



## By Suzanne Phillips

Suzanne Phillips is a member of the Spiritual Development Committee

I recently attended a fabric art workshop at Sorrento Retreat and Conference Centre. It was a beautiful time of year to be there, fall with its vibrant colours, textures, shapes, flowers, landscape, trees and leaves. This peaceful and quiet setting was perfect for our gathering of fabric artists over several days.

The workshop sessions were not spiritual in content, but they did take on a spiritual dimension for me because of the people who were there and how they interacted with one another by sharing ideas and encouragement. Through our instructor's teaching we worked with fabric dyes which she brought with her for each of us to mix into colours of our choice. These resulting dye colours seemed to reflect the beauty of Sorrento and the season. Then we dyed cotton and other natural fabrics that we brought with us. This whole workshop took on a sense of participation in creation and prayer.

This experience was heightened by being at

Sorrento Centre and its obvious connection with the beauty of creation. There are several places in the centre that invite prayer and contemplation. For example, the names of two of its buildings remind me that this is a spiritual place. "Spes Bona" means "Good Hope" and "Caritas" means "love of and for fellow people." Sorrento Centre puts these meanings into action in a variety of ways including providing meals for those in need in town. St Francis Outdoor Chapel at the centre has a large cross which hangs high over a stone altar. Shuswap Lake in the distance can be seen from this place of prayer. In addition to the chapel there is an outdoor walking labyrinth which invites us to active meditation. There is also a "Kekuli," an outdoor covered amphitheatre with a stage and fire circle for theatre arts presentations, concerts, lectures, dances and parties. All of these are a reflection of creation and its beauty.

The art that we created there seemed to be heightened by the place itself. For me Sorrento Centre is a "thin place" where I sense the presence of God both in my quiet times and in the community of which I have become a part. It has become a sacred place away from home where I can share in creation in two different ways.

# Parish Development for Kokanee



## Staff Writer

From September 22-24, a team from Kokanee Parish joined with teams from across the Ecclesiastical province of BC and Yukon for the inaugural Provincial School for Parish Development in Kamloops.

Andrew Stephens-Rennie, our Director of Missional Renewal, was one of the facilitators.



# The Story of Handel's "Messiah"



**By Norene Morrow**

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

**F**or Christians and classical music lovers, the Advent/Christmas season would not be complete without listening to a recording or attending a concert of Handel's "Messiah." It's probably fair to say that most people in the Western world can hum the first few bars of the "Hallelujah Chorus." "Messiah" has become part of our culture, but few of us know its origins or the scope of its legacy. Did you know that Handel wrote the oratorio in twenty-four days or that it saved a hospital and caused a king to "get to his feet?"

It all started with George Frederic Handel (1685-1759). Who was born in Germany but became a British subject in 1727. He loved to write Italian operas, which were extremely popular with English audiences, and they brought him success for many years.

As time passed, however, musical fashions changed. People got tired of Italian opera. They wanted entertainment in their native language. It took

Handel some time to catch onto this trend; however, financial distress and depression soon led him to accept an invitation to present a series of concerts in aid of charities for children in Dublin, Ireland, in the summer of 1741. It also gave him the much-needed inspiration to compose a work in English.

After a dozen successful concerts, the official premiere of "Messiah" was given on April 13, 1742. It created such a sensation that hundreds of eager listeners were turned away from the performance.

While this was a momentous event, what cemented "Messiah's" popularity was its connection with London's Foundling Hospital, an institution for abandoned children. In 1749, after hearing of their financial difficulties, Handel offered to give a benefit performance of the oratorio. His interest in this project was so great that he became a benefactor and hospital governor for the last ten years of his life. Since then, annual performances of "Messiah" have been given, providing a vital source of income for the hospital.

If you don't know much about the work, here is a brief overview: "Messiah" is a choral work called an oratorio. It is similar to an opera in that it tells a story presented by solo singers,

## THE STORY OF HANDEL'S "MESSIAH" CONTINUED

a choir, and an orchestra, but without costumes, props, and sets. Oratorios are sacred in subject matter and are performed in churches or concert halls. "Messiah" focuses on the life of Jesus. It is divided into three sections, drawing on biblical texts. Part I describes the prophecies and the birth of Jesus. This section is often performed separately and mainly heard during Advent. Part II is the story of the passion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. It contains the poignant contralto aria "He Was Despised" and ends with the famous, "Hallelujah Chorus." Part III depicts the promise of redemption through Christ's victory over death, opening with the moving soprano aria, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

Have you ever been to a performance where the audience stood when the "Hallelujah Chorus" was sung?

This came about because King George II rose to his feet when he first heard it. Royal protocol demanded that whenever the monarch stood everyone in his presence had to do the same. Thus, the entire audience stood, initiating a tradition that has lasted well over two centuries.

No one knows why King George stood, but popular explanations include everything from his highness being moved by the music to his gout acting up, causing him to stand to relieve the discomfort at the precise moment the chorus began. One thing is certain, however, "Messiah" is here to stay. The music is glorious and spiritually uplifting. It transcends time and can be enjoyed during Advent, Easter, or at any time of the year.



# Watching and Waiting



**H**APPY NEW YEAR! — A little premature? For some it is, but not for others. Different peoples celebrate new year at different times. Our society, which is governed by calendars that marches to the tyrannous beat of time, celebrates the New Year in a mad rush of parties and drink at the end of December. The ancient Celts celebrated New Year on November 1. Chinese New Year is in the spring

So, as a member of another minority culture, I wish you all a Happy New Year. This year, it begins on December 1. We begin another cycle of time, living in the rhythms of that calendar. We look forward to our future, look back to our beginnings, and celebrate our present life in the middle of past and future.

Which minority culture celebrates New Year this Sunday? The Church. We're no longer a majority in Canada. For some people, that's bad news. For me, it's not so much something to mourn as it is a reality which drives us back to our roots. Christian faith grew up in a hostile environment. Today's environment may not be hostile; it is more accurate to say that it is apathetic to the Church and the gracious good news of God's love. In some ways, apathy is worse ... but that's another column.

Our year begins with Advent. It comes from the Latin word "adventus" which means "coming" or "arrival." We begin our year in the life of the Church waiting for the one who has already come. For four weeks, we live in anticipation and hope.

One of the prominent images for this season is "light." We mark the passage of Advent by lighting candles on an Advent wreath.

The first time I saw this custom, it was explained to me that each of the four candles in the Advent wreath stood for something; these were candles

## By Yme Woensdregt

Yme Woensdregt was a priest who ministered for many years in the Diocese of Kootenay

of love ... hope ... peace ... joy. Others told me that each of the candles stood for different participants in the Christmas story: the shepherds ... the wise men ... Joseph ... and finally, Mary. Then on Christmas Eve, in the great climax, we would light the big white candle in the middle,

the Christ candle.

But that's not the real point of the candles in the wreath. The central symbolism of Advent is the growing light as more candles are lit.

We begin in darkness, a powerful image for evil and ignorance. The world is a mess. Pain and suffering and violence abound on all sides. The world is not as God intended it to be. Darkness is all around us, and within us. The minority culture of the church also feels the tug of the majority culture; what some have called the "sellabration of Christmas."

But that's not our hope. We long for a world of justice, peace, and compassion. With God, we yearn for a life marked by wholeness and celebration.

In Advent, we begin the new year in symbolic darkness. No candles are burning. We confess the injustice and pain and violence which are so large a part of the life of the world as we know it today.

Then, in an act of daring and profound hope, we light a single candle as a witness to renewing our commitment to walk in the way of the Light of the World. On subsequent Sundays, we light more candles. The light grows. It's no longer just one little candle burning in the darkness. Now there are two ... and three ... and four ... and more.

On Christmas Eve, we light the Christ candle. Then we light our own small candles, and bear the light into the world. We entrust ourselves to the warm embrace of God's love as we seek to embody God's loving purposes in the world.

Happy New Year!

# At Home with the Shenstone's



*Shenstone foundation 2009.*



*The Shenstone's house May 2024*

## By John Lavender

John Lavender is the editor of The HighWay.

As Christina Lake is en route back home, I decided to visit Simon and Juno Shenstone on my return trip from Synod in Kelowna this year. I was interested in seeing the home they had built out of stone into the side of a mountain.

Back in February, 2009, their home had burned down to the ground and the community rallied around to help them.

Simon and Juno had sent a letter to the diocese thanking everyone for their support. The letter to

the diocese was published on the front page of The HighWay, along with pictures of their progress. The following is an excerpt from their letter:

“Last spring we cleaned up the remains of the old house and prepared the ground for a new structure. During the summer, with some help, we laid 70 feet of rock wall about 30 inches wide and 3-1/2 feet high, which is the beginning of the back wall of the new house. The house will be a circle of rock wall 40 feet in diameter, set back into the side of the mountain where we live. The rear of the house will be in the mountainside with only the front half appearing



## AT HOME WITH THE SHENSTONE'S CONTINUED

out of the ground with big windows and a gothic-arched door. The roof will be part of the mountainside, a continuation of the forest floor over the top of the house. It should be warm in the winter and cool in the summer.”

Having previously only seen a photograph of a very rough foundation, when I visited their new house, I was amazed by the transformation.

I had likened Simon and Juno's ministry in the Boundary Parish to a rock: a sure foundation, following what Bob Purdy had written in an article published in the Grand Forks Gazette and The Highway (2016).

Writing about Simon's retirement, Purdy said, "Shenstone was very involved in the community and was a great person to work with. He was very much the pastor for the town of Grand Forks. Everyone knew him. He attended many public events which included most of the Remembrance Day ceremonies. He took a lot of Legion funerals and other funerals and weddings. He was involved in the ministerial with other clergy and with the Anglican Diocese of the Kootenay. He was also a chaplain for three years with the B.C. Anglican Youth Movement.”

Simon and Juno have been interested in traditional Indigenous culture since they were young and they even met on a Chippewa reservation in northern Minnesota.

In some ways, their rock dwelling today is reminiscent of a First Nations pit house, but with all the comforts of modern living, and not quite as austere as the beehive cells that Bishop Lynne wrote about in the November edition.

Even though Simon has retired as Incumbent for Holy Trinity, Grand Forks, Juno and Simon continue to minister in the area.

I asked them how they saw their ministry fitting

in with "Truth and Reconciliation" and the Anglican Church.

Their answer was that presently, Juno is helping to facilitate an Indigenous women's group at Holy Trinity Church, which meets once a week, though anybody is welcome to come. The women attending find it a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere to meet in. Juno also helps with drumming and sacred rock circles at church service events that have an indigenous aspect to them.

Simon has been asked on several occasions to lead funeral services for the indigenous community in Grand Forks at Holy Trinity: services that, though they use the Anglican BAS prayer book, incorporate a lot of traditional aspects to them, including native spirituality.

Juno and Simon also help with the Indigenous Day of Prayer, incorporating prayer, sacred circles, and drumming.



*Shenstone foundation 2009: and the Shenstone's house May 2024*



# PWRDF Membership Approves New Name

## SUBMITTED

On Tuesday, October 15, 2024 the membership of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund approved a new name for the 65-year-old organization, "Alongside Hope" and its French equivalent, "Auprès de l'espoir." Members were presented with the new name at a Special Meeting of Members on September 20, 2024, and in accordance with the organization's corporate bylaws, they met again yesterday to approve the names.

The issue of changing PWRDF's name to one that is easier to say and less confusing has been ever-present for many years. In 2022, the PWRDF Board approved a budget and the creation of a Task Team to identify a new name for PWRDF that would honour its history as the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for international development and humanitarian response, but would also carry it into the future.

In 1958, a mining disaster in Springhill, N.S. compelled Anglicans across the country to donate money to support the affected families. One year later, The Primate's World Relief Fund was established at General Synod, to create an agency that would respond to emergencies on behalf of Anglicans in Canada. In 1969, the D was added for Development. In the last fiscal year, PWRDF worked with more than 70 partners in 32 countries, and was recently named to the 2024 Charity Intelligence Top 100 Charities List. The voting membership comprises Board members, Diocesan Representatives and PWRDF's Youth Council.

The Task Team was made up of 12 key volunteers from across the country, including members of the Board, Youth Council and PWRDF staffers. Cyan Solutions, a marketing and creative agency in Ottawa, led conversations with the Task Team, other volunteers and staff to inspire reflections and gain valuable insights.

In all of these discussions, one clear and hopeful theme emerged: partnership.

- PWRDF partners with local organizations who



carry out the work of food security, gender equality, community health, climate action and human rights.

- We partner with membership organizations that allow us to be part of a larger network.
- We partner with our generous donors and funding agencies including Global Affairs Canada.
- We partner with the Anglican Church of Canada, Anglican dioceses, spiritual ministries and ecclesiastical provinces, through their bishops and their PWRDF Representatives.
- We partner with parish representatives, clergy and countless volunteers in the pews across the country who connect Canadians with the work of our partners, our neighbours.

This theme of partnership and accompaniment is woven throughout the Bible. The Task Team was drawn to the story of the road to Emmaus. Days after Jesus died, the disciples were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus, still grieving their loss. As Luke writes, the resurrected Jesus came alongside them, but they did not know it was him. Jesus travelled with them and then accepted their hospitality to dine with them. In the breaking of bread, their eyes were opened and they recognized him. When we walk alongside one another, Jesus accompanies us. We are strengthened and comforted and recognize Jesus when we share in his feast. As we walk alongside each of our partners, supporting, listening and sharing with one another, we embrace and embody the hope of a better world.

Thus was born Alongside Hope. With the guidance of the Board and the Task Team, taglines were developed in English and French to reflect the legacy of PWRDF.



# Advent Activities 2024

Created by Gisele McKnight Communications Officer Anglican Diocese of Fredericton



## CREATION

- Invite someone to discover part of God's beautiful Earth with you
- Donate supplies to an animal shelter
  - Pick up litter
- Take a shelter dog for a walk
- Discover God's beauty by walking a new trail
- Support a cause that supports the Earth



## FRIENDSHIP

- Call and check on a friend or family member
- Listen to someone's story

## CENTRING

- Use a centring prayer to hear God's voice
- Listen for God's voice in music
- Set aside time and place to hear the Holy Spirit's voice



## SHARING

- Give a treat to a community helper
- Take a shut-in to lunch
- Bake or buy cookies or muffins and share them with co-workers, friends, or people in need
- Drop off a veggie tray to a nurse's station at the hospital, the police station, fire station or EMT depot
- Donate what you can to a food bank or community pantry

## GRATITUDE

- Write a note of gratitude to God
- Reflect and record how much joy the Advent season has brought you

## KINDNESS

- Let someone go ahead of you in line
- Smile at everyone today

## SECRET ACTS

- Pray for every neighbour on your street
- Hide a happy note for someone to find
- Do a secret act of kindness

## READ & WATCH

- Read Luke 1:39-45
- Read Luke 2:1-20
- Read Luke 3:1-6
- Read Luke 3:7-18
- Read Luke 21:25-36
- Watch a film version of the Gospels, like *The Chosen*
- Study the life of Jesus written by scholars



## CHILDREN

- Read to a child
- Adopt a local school and supply them with snacks and other necessities

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Fight for a cause Jesus would support
- Read the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. Then act.



# Notice Board



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World of Gifts



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