

# The Highway

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF KOOTENAY NEWSPAPER A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL <https://thehighway.anglicannews.ca/> OCTOBER 2025

## SEASON OF CREATION

Icon of St Francis of Assisi by Didseir of Kalamata, kind permission John and Michael Lavender



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# Around Kootenay Diocese with Bishop Lynne McNaughton Stagleap Provincial Park



**The Right Reverend Lynne McNaughton**  
is the tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Kootenay

Stagleap Provincial Park (Photo credit: Gordon Bone of St. Stephen's, New Denver)







By Andrew Stephens-Rennie

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

For three weeks in August, my family and I explored the French countryside by train and by bike. After several days in Paris, we left the big city for St. Malo's walled coastal streets in Northwestern Brittany. Arriving by train, we continued by bus through suburban roads towards the old city's fortified walls. The remainder of our journey into town was made on foot. Weaving our way through the crowds on narrow cobbled streets, it quickly became clear that the old city was not particularly hospitable to cars. There were those who tried to penetrate the walls, of course. As we explored the city and its streets, more than a few Range Rovers nosed through the crowds. From time to time the pedestrians did let cars through, but no one was in any hurry to do so. St. Malo's streets were designed in, and for another time. A time of pirates. A time without cars. With the exception of some as-yet-imagined James Bond car chase, these twelfth century streets will never experience twenty-first century speeds. Instead, these streets continue to move at the speed of relationship; of

meandering feet and wandering conversation; of open-air markets and cafes that spill into the streets. This stark contrast brought up for me vital questions about the gospel's speed, and its mode of transport. For a brief moment in North American history, from roughly the 1920s through today, the church has sought to spread its message at the speed of so-called progress. Mimicking the dominant assumptions of our economic, political, and social systems, we have assumed that success is to be measured by perpetual growth, what economists might term dynamic stabilization. And yet this approach (an approach that demands we do more, more effectively, with fewer resources) only leads to burnout. But what if we approached our current struggles in a different way? What if we started to play by a different rule book? What if we stopped trying to bring our cars into St. Malo, and started to walk the gospel road at the speed of meandering feet and wandering conversation? I know, I know, it all sounds a little old fashioned. And maybe it is. But here's something I know. The good news, if it is more than magical thinking, can only be meaningfully embodied in context. The gospel is not a program, a curriculum, or a marketing strategy (even as we might use these tools in service of Jesus' promise of liberation for all of Creation). To understand context requires time. To understand context requires relationship. In relationship we discover what others are seeking. In relationship we discover what we ourselves are seeking, too.

Column

# The Liberation of Creation

In relationship we begin to discover what good news might look like and sound like for these people (for a particular person, perhaps even for ourselves) in this particular time and place. What I'm saying is that our sharing of Jesus' liberating gospel isn't always fast paced. We can't always depend on the fastest, smoothest, shiniest thing to do the job for us. I love this, and I hate it at the same time. I love it, because it reminds me that we are channels of God's love in the world. I hate it, because it means I can't just leave the work to somebody else. This is our work, together, and it starts with a question. The question, in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's accent, sounds like this, "who is Jesus Christ for us today?" When Bonhoeffer asks this question, he is essentially asking: "Who are the crucified people of the world?" And "Who are we, as a Christian community, being called to serve?" And also, "How will we stand against the forces of violence and injustice that have led our society to dehumanize them?" Bonhoeffer began his career pursuing fast-paced academic success. His early theological work is abstract, distant, precise. And yet his life and ministry lead him to teach Sunday School at a Black Church in Harlem; to serve as youth pastor amongst disenfranchised youth in Berlin's poorest neighbourhood; to hear stories of the global church that decenter his own privileged experience. And so, when Bonhoeffer seeks to answer his own troubling questions, he does so having been transformed by God. Through unlikely friendships, God reveals a world far more complex than Bonhoeffer

had imagined (let alone experienced). Through relationship, his vision of who the Good News was for broadened immensely. That is to say, when he is forced to slow down, to dwell in relationship with others, to get off the treadmill, to step out of the Range Rover onto narrow cobbled streets. It's here—in the muck and filth of everyday life—that he is able to say that he has encountered God. Finally, at last, he has become a Christian. This transformation in Bonhoeffer feels like a St. Francis level epiphany. When God calls Francis, he first assumes the call is to repair brick and mortar. When God calls Bonhoeffer, he first assumes the call is to pick up his pen and write better theology. Both Francis and Bonhoeffer are wrong. All too often I'm wrong too. The call to participate with God in the renewal of all things may involve such things and many others. But first and foremost, the call is to look for God, to listen for God, to respond to God in relationship with our neighbours. "But who is my neighbour?" a teacher once asked Jesus. Without spoiling the ending of that particular episode, may I humbly suggest that you start with the neighbour next door. Be intentional. Cultivate relationship. Share in each others' joys. Share in each others' sorrows. Pray ceaselessly. Respond mercifully. Give graciously. Practice resurrection. As you do, may you discover your liberation bound up in theirs; theirs with yours; and the church's liberation bound up with the liberation of Creation, indeed the whole cosmos, these worlds that God so loves.

□

## The HighWay



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# Remembering Archbishop David Crawley

By +John E Privett

Most Reverend Archbishop John E. Privett was the 9th Bishop of Kootenay and 10th Metropolitan of BC & Yukon

It wasn't long after I became the Ninth Bishop of Kootenay that I had a conversation with Archbishop David who said to me, "You know John, if you die within 5 years of retirement everyone will remember you, but after that no one will!" My predecessor was not wrong about many things, but he was certainly mistaken in that particular remark! When the news of Archbishop David's death in August was conveyed to the diocese and beyond, there was an outpouring of sadness at his passing and also gratitude for his ministry in Kootenay and across the Canadian Church.

Archbishop Crawley will be remembered for many things. He was a gifted preacher and teacher, a pastor who cared deeply for the Church, a strong administrator, a visionary, and a wonderful raconteur. He valued the history of the Church and particularly the people whom he knew personally who had given great leadership over the years. In his retirement he generously gave of his time and knowledge to create a 20 minute YouTube video about the history and architecture of St. Michael's Cathedral in Kelowna. It is well worth watching and it captures something of Archbishop David's love of and knowledge of the

Cathedral and its history. You can find it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICtuYtTUCjo>

I was the grateful recipient of some of the Archbishop's lasting legacy in the Diocese. Along with the Venerable Dirk Pidcock and the Venerable Chris Ross, he pioneered the development of the Locally Trained Priest and Deacon Programs as well as the evolution of the Licensed Lay Ministry Program. Recognizing both the needs of many of our smaller congregations and those with latent vocations that did not have the opportunity to attend seminary, he undertook the identification, training and support of people who would serve their local congregations. Many of those ministries continue today.

Archbishop Crawley's reputation was known across the country and that



The Most Rev. David Crawley passed on Sunday, August 17, 2025

was an important part of his ability to recruit clergy to serve our Diocese. As Archbishop he took a strong role in the leadership of the Province and responded to several significant challenges. He served on the IRS (Indian Residential School Settlement) team and was part of the negotiations with the federal government. He was a strong advocate and support for Bishop Jim Cruikshank as the Diocese of Cariboo was brought to a close and The Parishes of the Central Interior (Now the Territory of the People) was created. When the need arose, Archbishop David served the Anglican Church of Canada as the acting Primate.

Archbishop Crawley could be an intimidating figure. His presence and voice would often fill a room. He could also speak his mind and I know of

several occasions when he took it upon himself to give me unsolicited advice on some aspect of episcopal ministry. I learned to welcome his comments, because I knew that they arose from a deep care for the ministry of bishops and from his love for the people they were elected to serve.

There is so much more to say, but the limitations of print mean this must come to a close. In so doing, I want to acknowledge Joan Bubbs, Hope, Sarah and Rachel. Their grief is deeply personal, and we offer our gratitude to them for the many sacrifices they have made so that David could serve us all through his ministry. For the life, witness and ministry of Archbishop David Crawley, thanks be to God. May he now rest in the peace and love of Christ. □



LOCALLY-TRAINED PRIEST MINISTRY: (Left to right) Ann Wood, Marcella Mugford, Archbishop David Crawley, Maxine Maclean, and Mary Johnson.



THREE BISHOPS: The Rt. Rev. Rustin Kimsey, Bishop of Eastern Oregon (retired); The Rt. Rev. David Crawley (retired); and The Most Rev. John Privett at the reception after the Funeral Liturgy of Thanksgiving for the Life and Ministry of Dirk Tensen Rinehart Pidcock 1939-2014 – St. Mark's, Kaslo, Oct 3, 2014.



By David Burrows

# Season of Creation

The Reverend David Burrows is the Incumbent for the Parish of Kokanee: St Saviour's, Nelson, and St Marks, Kaslo.

As Summer 2025 drew to a close and we entered the warning Season of Creation, I found myself pondering the catastrophe that is global heating. In recent years I've become increasingly concerned by this planetary crisis, as witnessed in this year's wildfire season on the Atlantic Coast, changes in the growing seasons, and the extreme, sometimes fatal, weather events now affecting us all.

In my own family I also recognized movement toward a new season. In August I returned home to visit my parents in Ontario, as I do every summer. But this time, instead of rest, reconnection and recreation, my task was to assist them with major adjustments in their lives.

I spent my time helping them prepare to close down aspects of their modest farm. I fixed fences, repaired household items with my brother-in-law, rubbed down the donkeys and tagged sheep for sale at the market. My parents' life-chapter as farmers is rapidly drawing to a close, and this loss brings with it anxiety, uncertainty and grief.

My parents have not only been shepherds of sheep, but also shepherds of souls. Their journey has taken them from the British Isles to the high Arctic, and from the Atlantic Provinces to central Canada. Always their travels have encompassed compassion and justice for others and their vocation in the church.

Ever since they retired in their mid-seventies (and now into their nineties), they have been blessed by the companionship of a small flock of sheep, goats and three donkeys, all of whom they have tended with care.

Now, as the Season of Creation draws to a close in early October I am meditating especially on my parents' journey. In my prayers I recall deep and



The Rev. David Burrows celebrating The Season of Creation

searching conversations with them, and my appreciation of how they have navigated life, especially during this, the last season of their earthly existence.

Dialogue with my parents has reminded me that to be attuned to creation is to be in harmony with Presence, Companionship, Partnership. Having a healthy, nay, holy relationship with creation, hugely benefits humanity as well as the animal and plant kingdom.

In October we bless animals, celebrate the harvest, and offer prayers of thanksgiving and remembrance. We take stock, both individually and jointly; we pray, we gather together in family and in committed communities, as we enter the season of Autumn, acknowledging our Creator as manifested through our encounters with His creation.

This year, as we celebrate the blessing of the animals, let's consider the blessing that all creation brings to our lives. In what ways does the entire natural world bless us?

For those with the good fortune to have animals in our care: in what ways

are we a blessing to them? How do we support and sustain the entire created order? Do we take enough time to honour the creeping, crawling, flying, swimming, walking, running beings that dwell among us?

This island home we inhabit has been altered and in places destroyed by our human footprint. Our arrogance and self-centredness have caused immeasurable suffering for other creatures and plants. We hold an unrealistic presumption that our planet can provide us a never-ending bounty, and that we ourselves do not need to change in any way. We assume that all creation exists to serve humanity and not the Creator — and for this we need to repent.

As I reflect upon my parents' shift into a new season of their lives, I find myself examining my own wandering pilgrimage. Have I been awake through this Season of Creation? Have I honoured flora and fauna? Have I heeded the lessons they seek to plant in my heart? Has this translated into action on my part to protect and nurture our created world?

I realize that too often I fall into anthropocentricity, and I need to be brought back continually to a proper vision of my place in the cosmos. I am reminded of Marc Gellman's *Does God have a Big Toe?* which tells us poignantly that we are charged to work as partners with the Holy One and with His created order.

Witnessing my parents' journey, I see now that I am not above creation. I am called to be a partner and coequal in sharing the earth's resources with all life around me.

*May we shift from master to minister;  
From steward to servant.*

*May we be  
Friend to animals large and small  
Forever thankful for their presence and  
impact on us,  
in this,  
God's beautiful bountiful earth.*

□

Alongside our wild and wonderful guests, The Rev'd David Burrows, Kokanee Anglican Parish, will preside.

We welcome special (human) guests.  
Distance Bullock  
Community Liaison of COINS

Mayor Janice Morrison  
City of Nelson



leaping things, crawling ones, creatures wild and tame all are beloved

show honour to creatures large and small at a special service

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**  
**Saturday, Oct. 4 at 2:00 pm**

St. Saviour's Pro-Cathedral  
701 Ward St. Nelson

Bring your pets for this special celebration.



All finned, feathered, clawed, hoofed, scaled, and furry friends are welcome!

Pet treats graciously provided by  
**Cottonwood Falls Animal Clinic**  
**Nelson Community Food Centre**

All donations go to the Nelson Mobile SPCA





History



By Dan Prysunka

This historical account is based on articles from “Our Heritage,” circa 1946. The article was entitled, “The Old Church Comes to Canada,” written by the Rev. Canon A.R. Kelly, M.A.

This is the first of a series of articles on our history as Anglicans in Canada, starting with Nova Scotia.

Canada’s Anglican history began with the settlement of Maryland. The Church of England was placed under a governor who vigorously supported the Church of England. Francis Nicholas was generous and authorized many churches to be built. The first Acting Bishop Rev. Henry Bray, DD was appointed in 1696. From Bray’s appointment there followed results of the most far-reaching importance to the Church in Canada.

The first Anglican services in Nova Scotia were in 1710. This came about because the inhabitants of the Massachusetts Bay Colony took measures to counteract French influence in the region of the Bay of Fundy by establishing English settlements. Accordingly in 1710 an expedition left Boston to

# Part 1: The History of the Anglican Church in Canada



St. Paul’s, Halifax, Nova Scotia: photo attribution wikipedia

subdue the French stronghold town of Port Royal, established in 1605. In three years, the New Englanders were in permanent possession of this town, renamed Annapolis Royal in honour of the Queen of England. Now recognized as having one of the longest histories in North America, preceding Plymouth, Jamestown, and Quebec. Colonel Nicholson was appointed Governor and recorded that a service was held at Annapolis in 1710. The Church of England in Canada spread to Prince Edward Island in 1774, and to Cape Breton in 1785.

By the middle of the 18th century, the same inhabitants of Boston Massachusetts Bay Colony again felt uneasy as they did in 1710 at Annapolis Royal. Again Louisburg, a French fortress in Cape Breton, which guarded the entrance to the Gulf of St Lawrence, was being re-armed by the French forces. The Governor of Massachusetts urged the Imperial authorities to form an English settlement upon the Atlantic coastline of Nova Scotia. Chebucto Bay, with its triple harbour was approved as the site of the settlement, known today as Halifax. Halifax beckoned English families, and Germans fleeing persecution. It is estimated that half of the population of Nova Scotia are French and Swiss protestants and settlers from

New England. The new Governor, the Honourable Edward Cornwallis, a twin brother of the Archbishop of Canterbury, arrived in Halifax along with a missionary Reverend William Tutty. St Paul’s Anglican Church was immediately built. The first service was held in 1749. This marked the first permanent settlement in what is now Canada. St Paul’s is still in use today.

The population of Nova Scotia grew prior to the American Revolution due to an influx of New Englanders into Nova Scotia. But in the Spring of 1776, ten thousand Boston British Loyalists fled and arrived in Halifax. Thus marked the beginning of the great migration of British American Loyalists to this country, and of the era of the Church of England in Canada’s expansion. Of three million exiles, thirty thousand went to Nova Scotia, and ten thousand to Ontario, to suffer great hardship in the Church and in Canada.

In the next article, we will take a look at how Quebec, Labrador and Ontario would be shaped into the Anglican family.

Staff Writer

## Bishop Lynne Initiates Diocesan Communications Task Force

The Right Rev. Lynne McNaughton appoints a Diocesan Communications Task Force for approval by the Diocesan Council. The task group will relate to the Bishop, and to the Diocesan Council, which might include the Administration and Finance committees.

Bishop Lynne directed the Task Group to determine how they might effectively report to the diocesan Staff Team, and who would be the staff liaison. The Task Force would draw an Internal and External communications strategy as well as an implementation plan.

- This would include:
1. A Code of Conduct for internal communications.
  2. The plan would bring all communications under one umbrella:
    - The Anglican HighWay, both paper and electronic
    - Diocesan Website
    - Email
    - Kootenay Contact
    - Facebook
    - Other social media?
  3. The work would be in line with the Diocesan Missions/Vision/Values
- These have been named as goals/needs for this work.
- Developing our sense of self as diocesan communities
  - Having something to say about events in the broader world
  - Timely Communications
- Members of the Task Force:
- The Rev David Burrows (Chair)
  - John Lavender, Editor of The HighWay
  - Kate Dalton, Diocesan Administrator
  - Charlotte Hardy, Youth Rep.
  - Kailee Lins (consultant)



Kallee Lins generously offered her time in a consulting capacity to assist the Task Force. Kallee is the Executive Director of the West Kootenay Arts Council, and comes with much expertise with communications, strategic planning, as well as a passion for lay ministry within the church.



Columns



By Norene Morrow

Norene Morrow is the music director at St George Anglican Church in West Kelowna.

With All Soul’s Day coming up next month and a special requiem service being held at the Cathedral, I have decided to dedicate this month’s column to discussing requiems and particularly, Mozart’s Requiem.

A requiem mass is specifically a mass for the dead. The term, “Requiem” is Latin for “rest” and it is the first word in the opening phrase of the service; “*requiem aeternam dona eis Domine*” (Rest eternal grant to them, God). Since All Soul’s is a time when we remember the faithful departed, it is not uncommon for a requiem service to be held on that day, and music plays an important role. Over the centuries, it has evolved from simple chants to full blown major works written by some of the world’s finest composers. Themes of death, grief, remembrance, and hope create a profound and universal appeal that has afforded composers the opportunity to create large-scale works for both liturgical and concert settings.

In composing a Requiem, there are several approaches that composers have taken. Some have chosen to emphasize the dramatic nature of the words,

The Mystery and Myth of Mozart’s Requiem



Mozart (image by pixabay Openclipart)

focusing on feelings of loss, anger, and fear of the final judgement, as is the case in Verdi’s Requiem. Others emphasize comfort, solace, and a spiritual release for the deceased. The requiems of Fauré and Rutter are exquisite examples of this. And then there is Brahms’ German Requiem. He went a completely different route to create a profound, deeply personal statement. He didn’t use the traditional Latin texts, but drew from the Lutheran German Bible. He didn’t want to present a ritual but rather, to speak directly to his listeners about grief and hope.

As for Mozart, the interesting thing is that he never completed it, yet it has become one of the most beloved requiems of all time. This is partly due to the mystery and myth perpetuated by Mozart’s wife, Constanze, following his

death and by Peter Shaffer’s fictional account in his play and 1984 film, “Amadeus,” which focuses on composer Antonio Salieri’s intense jealousy toward Mozart. Ultimately, Salieri appears at Mozart’s door dressed wearing a black cloak and death mask, requesting Mozart to write a requiem. A very ill and terrified Mozart believes him to be his father’s ghost so he agrees. History tells us that a mysterious person did, indeed, visit Mozart, but it was likely Count Franz von Walsegg, who commissioned him to write the requiem for the anniversary of his wife’s death. Walsegg had a reputation for commissioning works that he would then pass off as his own. Knowing this, the very ill and destitute, 35 year-old Mozart agreed to write it anyway, due to his desperate financial situation. As his health declined he

became obsessed with finishing the work. It is also said that he had bouts of delirium and believed that he had been poisoned and was writing for his own funeral. When Mozart’s end grew near he summoned his student Franz Xaver Süssmayr to take notes, laying out the framework of the unfinished sections as best he could. Almost prophetically, Mozart drew his last breath at the end of bar 8 in the Lacrymosa section with the words, “judicandus homo reus” (the guilty man goes to be judged”). Following his death, Constanze, also a musician and later a shrewd business woman, asked Süssmayr to finish the work so that Walsegg would pay her. She then premiered the work in public before Walsegg could claim it as his own.

To this day Mozart’s Requiem continues to be popular. Choirs around the world sing it and many films feature it in their soundtracks. It is a struggle between moods of mourning and those of fear and sometimes outright terror. Because Mozart was actually dying as he wrote it, listeners can’t help but respond to the sense of sorrow and the human frailty that this wonderful music evokes. If you are in Kelowna on Sunday, November 2 and would like to experience this magnificent work please join us at St. Michael and All Angels Cathedral at 7:00 pm, where a gathered choir of singers from the area will present several movements of it throughout the service.



By Kristy Arndt

Kristy Arndt is a member of the Spiritual Development Committee

October is a beautiful month; the air becomes crisper, the sun drops lower, we give thanks for bountiful harvests and we celebrate St. Francis of Assisi, a person who deeply honoured creation and the Creator. A wonderful aspect of Christian spirituality is that it is so broad. For those of us moved deeply by our awe of creation, we can deepen our spiritual understanding through nature. Our inspiration can begin with the beauty of nature: the amazing details of a maple leaf, a nautilus shell, or the hummingbird.



Breathing in the Spirit

In the creation story in Genesis 1:2 we are told that it is the *ruach elohim* that hovers over the waters and calls to the deep to begin the process of creating the world. *Ruach* is defined in Hebrew as spirit, breath or wind (a creative, life-giving force). That same wind of God, *ruach elohim*, blows across the oceans and through the trees today; it fills our own lungs and animates our bodies and spirits as we move through the moments of our days.

Natural Theology is a branch of Christian theology that believes that by using rational thought and observations of the natural world, we can learn about God. It is championed by theologians such as St. Thomas Aquinas. It is a theology that finds a harmony between nature and science and understands the power of nature to help reveal aspects of the Creator. Aquinas understood God

as imminently present in the natural world. By being in nature, we can draw closer to God. Today this can be a touchstone for people who may struggle with the ways we understand God revealed through divine revelation in scripture to find an easier connection in seeing God revealed to us through the natural world; the hand of the Creator revealed in what has been created.

I find it a deeply restorative spiritual practice to rest in the stillness of the presence of the Holy One revealed in the intricacy and wonder of creation. What follows is a simple exercise of meditation focused on the word *ruach* (pronounced roo-akh, with a soft guttural k sound at the back of your throat)). This is a meditation that you can do at any time. I encourage you to try to step outside of the busyness of your day, to take a few moments to be

restored and settled within the presence of God and of nature.

Begin by finding a space outside, or by an open window, where you can feel the breeze. I like to lay down on the ground or sit near a tree so that I can hear the sound of the wind dancing through the leaves. Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. As you breathe in focus on the first syllable of the word *ruach* the “roo” and as you slowly exhale, focus on the second syllable “akh”. Continue to focus on this mantra as you gently breathe in and out. May each breath inspire you to feel the presence of God in your day, as close as your own breath. Let your thoughts drift, to the wind/spirit/breath blowing around you. When you have finished, you may want to offer a short prayer of gratitude.





**By Andrea Brennan**

The Reverend Canon  
Andrea L. Brennan, Incumbent  
Fernie Shared Ministry & Dean  
of the East Kootenay Region

I live in a beautiful corner of creation. Forty-five minutes from the Alberta border, and about the same amount of time to the Montana border. I live, surrounded by mountains.

Fernie is in the southeast corner of the Diocese of Kootenay and can feel worlds away from the hustle and bustle of a big city like Kelowna. In Fernie we have a post office, two grocery stores, a half dozen churches and twice as many bars/restaurants.

There is a beautiful trail system which connects one end of Fernie with another. We have several sections that are part of the Trans Canada Trail. There are many hikes and walks I do regularly. From my back door I can walk to the Elk River in ten minutes and walk a trails system that covers many kilometers.

In July I was approved to have a bilateral prophylactic mastectomy, a surgery which was to prevent my chance of developing breast cancer. The day before the surgery I hiked to Fairy Creek Falls. It is considered a moderate hike, there are switchbacks and a total gained elevation of 115 meters (377.3 feet). The distance is 4.6 meters (2.86 miles) return.

I've hiked it a half dozen times since I moved here, and the Fernie Trails Alliance has done an incredible job of improving and maintaining the trails to Fairy Creek Falls. I hiked it the day before with a parishioner, primarily in silence. I felt I had something to prove to myself. If I could hike this well, arriving unwinded, then my fitness level had improved significantly since my arrival in BC.

We meandered our hike, which is how I like to walk. Not at a brisk pace, not at a dawdle... somewhere in between. Giving time to stop and observe the majestic trees, hear the roar of the waterfall, and inhale the sweet scent of creation. It was a quieter day when we hiked, seeing only a dozen or so hikers on the trail. And I arrived at the base of the falls, unwinded and grateful.

I came home with a sense of accomplishment and the desire to set a new goal – to hike the trail to Fairy Creek Falls one month after my surgery.

The surgery went well. My recovery was going well. Then I got a call from the surgeon that the initial pathology

report indicated that cancer had been found in the left breast. Needless to say this was a shock. My first reaction was that the cancer was encapsulated and nothing further would be needed.

I was incorrect in that assumption.

The next three weeks were a blur of tests, trips to Cranbrook for procedures and all the while trying to figure out what I was going to do next.

I am a side sleeper and having a bilateral mastectomy means you're dealing with drains on each side necessitating sleeping on your back. I don't sleep well on my back. Thus I spent many hours in the middle of the night, the "dark night of the soul" as it were, trying to figure out what I was going to do.

I prayed, I raged, I sang, I wept, I listened to music. I danced, I cursed, I wrote, I read and I cried. And still I continued to heal.

I returned to work on Friday the 22nd of August. Worship on the 24th was good, although I had to share with my congregation that I did have cancer. My strength was returning, but I did not feel strong enough to hike Fairy Creek Falls.

So I set a goal of hiking it before the 1st of September.

On Friday the 29th of August I drove to the Trailhead and the parking lot was a nightmare. Not being a person who is particularly fond of crowds, I decided I would try the next day.

I arrived Saturday morning at 9:30 and found space in the parking lot. Armed with my sunhat, water bottle and the holy spirit, I started the hike. The switchbacks at the beginning of the hike were challenging, and I did them unwinded.

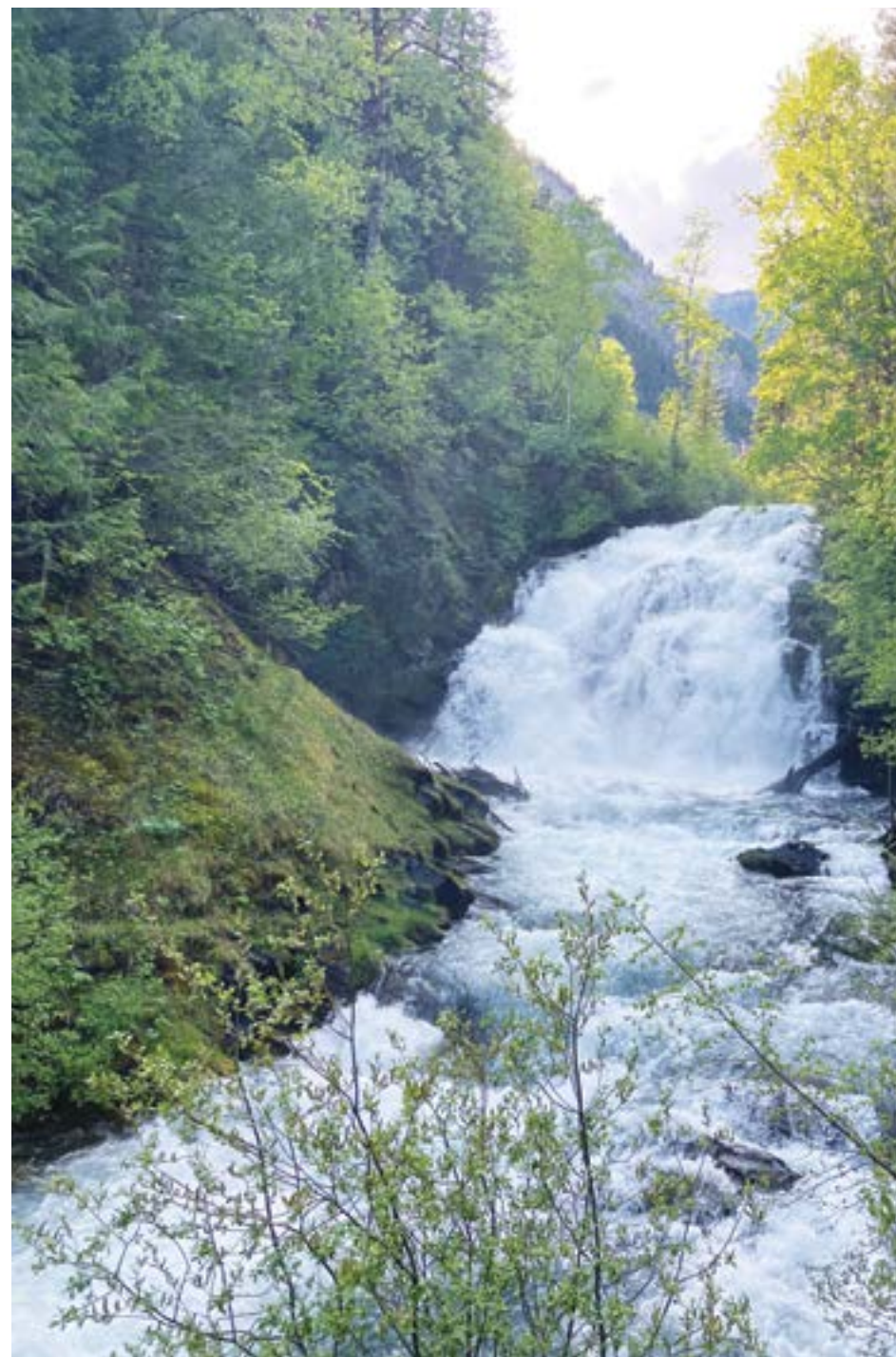
One foot in front of the other, I continued uphill, and when I finally came to a flat section I looked up and around. A canopy of trees, such beautiful green trees! I found a large tree, placed my hand gently on it, then reached out and hugged the tree. I wept, tears of joy, disappointment, gratitude and fear.

Composing myself, I returned to the trail and continued the hike. Five more times I saw trees and stepped off the trail to hug them, each time weeping tears of joy, disappointment, gratitude and fear. A couple of times I was passed by fellow hikers who simply hiked past me and for which I was grateful.

About 20 minutes into the hike, I could hear the roar of the falls and see the water of Fairy Creek. Magnificent!

Ten minutes more and the trail arced away from the creek and I could no longer hear the falls. I continued hiking, stopping when I saw a clearing to look out at the water, see the trees and hear the wind in their canopy.

My mind was clear, my heart was full and my goal was in sight. It took me roughly 45 minutes to reach the base of the falls. There is a side path that



*Fairy Creek Falls, Fernie, British Columbia*

will take you right up to the falls, but it's usually slippery and I'm not confident in my ability to traverse that close.

I closed my eyes when I saw the falls, saying a prayer of thanks to the Creator for bringing me to this breathtaking place. I felt safe. I felt loved. I felt well. In that moment, I recorded a short video remarking that "I DID IT" and cried a few more tears; of hope, of fear and of surrender.

I sat on a bench near the falls for a few minutes, until other hikers arrived, then I began the descent back to the trailhead.

In a moment of distraction I missed the fork and ended up going ten minutes in the wrong direction before I realised my mistake and corrected it. All in all, the return hike was just over an hour.

I returned to my truck feeling tired, yet refreshed. I had achieved a goal I had set before me. Before my surgery. Before my cancer diagnosis.

Fairy Creek Falls has always held a special place in my heart as a hike I could not do. Then as my fitness improved, it was a hike I could not do well. And now, it is a hike I CAN do. It

has shown me that I am capable. That God remains with me.

I surrender myself to the fight that is before me. Trusting in the medical team I have. The oncology team I am yet to meet and the treatment that will take some time, and will return me to wholeness and wellness. I surrender to the belief that I have any kind of control over my life. That I can work my way through the fear.

I am so grateful that I live in Canada and we have the health-care system we do. I am so grateful to live in the beautiful province of British Columbia. I am so grateful to live in ministry in the Diocese of Kootenay. And I am especially grateful to the people of Fernie Shared Ministry.

I will continue to do what I can for as long as I can. One day at a time. One foot in front of the other. Knowing that I am God's Beloved Child. Just as you are.

Giving thanks to God from whom all blessings flow, let the Church say, AMEN!