



chit Winter 2024 chat

CONTENT

- * JOYFUL CONCERT (Pg2)
- * A CHRISTMAS OF TREES (Pg3)
- * IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Pg4)
- * ALECIA AND STEPHANIE (Pg7)

ST. FRANCIS-IN-THE-WOOD CHURCH

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The joyful Christmas concert

Kathleen Glynn-Morris

I was so proud of our faith community. Everyone who could, pitched in to make this sellout concert one of the highlights of our year.

The church looked stunning, even as we walked up the path in the twinkling white lights, up the bough draped railing and into a wonderland of Christmas: ivy, fir, lit Christmas tree, lighted candles, there was a feeling of 'it is coming, yes, Christmas in all its glory is really coming'. The Sanctuary Guild did indeed *Deck the Halls*.

I loved that the repertoire was inclusive for this community event. One didn't have to be a Christian. You could be any faith or no faith at all. It was as about participating in the sheer joy of the Christmas season.

Karen Lee Morlang, our hugely talented Music Director has the most the wondrous brain. I thought her "Pop Up" event in the Hall was brilliant, and really got everyone excited and in the mood.

Karen brought *Joy to the World* by bringing in well known and loved performers: Steve Maddock (vocals & theatre), Nick Apivor (percussion), stellar and gifted 14 year old Valery Lou (violin & piano), and our own, special renaissance man, Michael Berton (bassoon & voice). Fleshing out the talent was the local Coast Mountain Men's Chorus as well as our Choir of St. Francis-in-the-Wood. With tapers lit in the windows *It was Beginning to Look a lot Like Christmas*. What a special mood ensued. With *Christmas*



Full choir Dec 1st.

Time is Here (Charlie Brown), and Elvis' *Blue Christmas* there was an unsaid acknowledgement that Christmas time is not always easy. Unrealistic expectations for ourselves and others are tough. We crave a *Night of Silence* in the peace of a *Silent Night*. However, as winter deepens and the light of summer becomes the darkness of winter the *Silver Bells ~ Ding Dong(ing) Merrily on High* create a energy enthused *Jingle Bell(s) Rock(ing)*. We imagined ourselves in a *White Christmas* while *The Star Of Advent* soared above. Belting out *Let it Snow, Let it Snow,*

Let it Snow! we were on a high. This is what the season is about. Our joys, our dreams and hopes, peace and our communities but most of all: The light. The light of love. The concert filled our hearts.

While we do need to come up with a better plan for seating in the Nave, and some who came early to get a good seat were disappointed and channelled to the Pop Up creating a rush to get good seating after, there were multiple calls for more than one concert performance. Perhaps an afternoon one?

Our parish has outstanding and dedicated leadership that is taking us all to a new level. I thank you, on behalf of us all, for the wisdom, the incredible amount of time, and commitment that you volunteered to find and bring us Karen and then Alex. You were all hugely successful. The inspiring vision and work of God thru Jesus continues.



Bassoonist Mike Berton.



Theresa Odishaw with Steve Maddock.



Vionist Valerie Lou.

A Christmas of trees

The St. Francis 2023 Christmas will be noted for its Christmas trees. The church displayed its first artificial tree, an elegant 12-foot fir that was donated, tastefully decorated with babies-breath under the direction Theresa Odishaw. Our Head Sacristan Theresa and her Sanctuary Guild were also responsible for the very beautiful decorations, flowers and greens that surrounded the chancel and in the sanctuary windows. Thank you, Theresa and the Guild. Once again our in-house carpenter, Jack Newman, stepped up to create one of a kind candle holders for all twelve window sills.

Penny Mitchell's proposal to Parish Council came to fruition with two Christmas trees in an outreach throughout the local and broader community.

A St. Francis tree was displayed among the Forest of Miracles for the Annual Celebration of Lights at Dundarave Beach. Marilyn McBeath and Amy Chan joined Penny to light and adorn the tree with decorations that included Anne Baird's beautiful postcards.

A second tree, the 14-foot-high Caulfeild Cove community tree was installed on the Green. Terry Joyce, David Phillips and the Caulfeild Fire Department decorated the tree under Penny's direction. Terry, our Caulfeild Cove resident parishioner, sent invitations to the neighbours to a tree decorating, mix and mingle afternoon around the tree. Mulled wine, hot chocolate, mince pies and shortbread were served. Karen and the choir led a hearty carol signing session while children further decorated and collected their candy cane.

Because both initiatives were fundraisers for the North Shore Look Out Society and the Homeless Shelter, Owen Hynes from the North Shore Housing Centre explained the good work at the shelter. Rev Alex welcomed everyone and expressed our appreciation to all volunteers and contributors, with a special thank you to the driving force behind these two memorable Christmas events, Penny Mitchell.



St. Francis tree at Dundarave.



Tree on Green gathering.



Beautiful St. Francis at Christmas.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Sharon and Gene Quan

Theresa Odishaw

Sharon and Gene joined our community in 1976 and over the years have given their time, talent and gifts to many areas at St. Francis-in-the-wood. While they echo each other in their commitment to St. Francis, they each have brought their own considerable talents to bare.

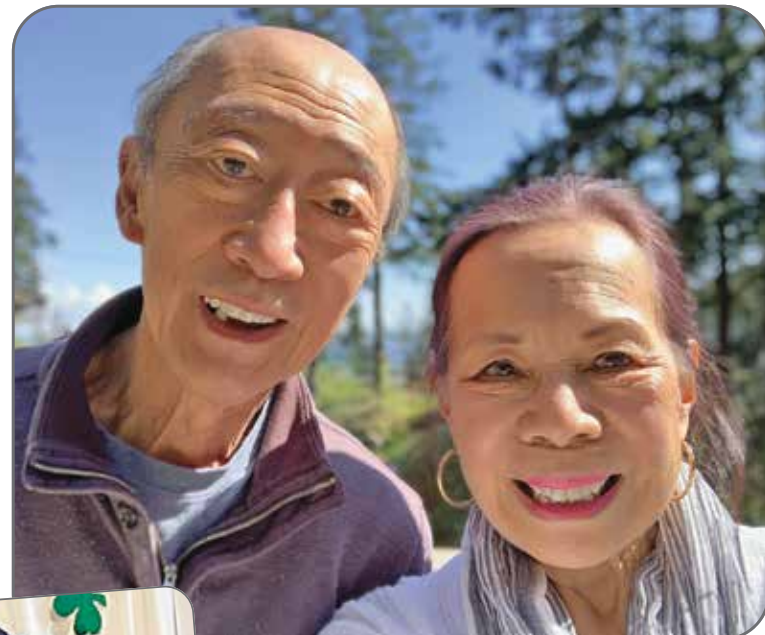
Sharon, a gifted teacher, began at St. Francis teaching Sunday School. With two small children of their own, this was a perfect fit and she continued that work for six or seven years. Sharon spent over 15 years with the Sanctuary Guild with work on the vessels and flowers. She is multi-talented and was active in organizing themed (Spanish and Moroccan) dinner parties, many amazing Strawberry Teas, even the Salmon BBQ one year and then also children's Christmas markets and summer camps. She even choreographed talent shows!

She later shared her beautiful Soprano voice with the choir and she remains a committed member even today. Her music is very important to her and she says, "I worship through music..."

In her time with the Sanctuary guide she was engaged in the making and embroidery of the St. Francis banner that was designed by another St. Francis member, Anne Baird. The banner stands in the church. I would encourage you to take a closer look to appreciate the exquisite workmanship that went into its making. Both Sharon and Gene have been readers and Chalice Administrators (served the wine at Communion).

An especially intuitive, genuinely caring and recognized leader in our community, Gene brought his talents to other areas, and amongst those many areas of volunteering, he first worked in the area of facilities. He was very involved in, what was then, the very controversial pre-school proposal. Despite considerable opposition from locals, the hard work of Gene and a small group from St. Francis, an agreement was ultimately gained and the school has been an important part of the community since.

As a former banker, Gene understood keenly the need to ensure a good base of donations to support St. Francis, both now and in the future. He touted the benefits of PAD (preauthorized debit) in a very strong ad campaign to promote donating by credit card. Thanks to Gene's thoughtful initiative, 78% of today's donations are PAD. Gene is a wonderful conversationalist with much history tucked away in his memories of St. Francis and



Gene and Sharon on a beautiful West Van day.



Sharon's Spanish dance in Irish green for a Celtic Celebration.

says that "community" is most important to him.

Chris Stringer adds his experience with Gene, "When I joined the church in 2011, I was struck by Gene's warmth and easy interactions with others before and after services and during the coffee hour. He seemed to know everyone. He bore an air of instinctive leadership that drew people around him. I was new and needed help with all the work that lay ahead in turning the gymnasium into Caulfeild Cove Hall, with painting, setting up all the drapes etc. And we needed volunteers for the events that followed. Gene went through the parish list with me and was able to provide his own insight on almost every parishioner.

Gene Quan, with his bearing, genuineness and warm approachability is still a leader in St. Francis."

Sharon and Gene each share their deep faith and commitment to family and the years have not dimmed their commitment to St. Francis. Quiet, unassuming, yet fiercely faithful to St. Francis and its community, Sharon and Gene are much loved and respected. We are truly blessed by this special couple in our faith home of St. Francis-in-the-wood.

Charities benefit from dedication of volunteers

The Nifty Thrifty fund-raiser sale takes four productive fund-raising hours on a Saturday.

What is not noticed is Nifty Thrifty volunteers spend countless hours over several days before and after that day to help make it the success that it is. Donated items are sorted to determine their saleability. They estimate a price and tag each item, then store them all away for the sale day. Items that are not suitable for sale here are delivered to either the Salvation Army or a recycling location.

There are as many as fifteen volunteer work days before each sale. On the final few days the stored items are carried out of storage to be unpacked and set up for display. On the Monday after the sale the unsold items are carefully re-packed and stored until the next sale.

Up to fourteen volunteers are involved with the Saturday sale day when there could be twenty to thirty eager shoppers outside Caulfeild Cove Hall thirty minutes before the doors open.

"The November Nifty Thrifty broke all records with sales of \$3,816 worth of donated items" says Elizabeth. This was \$1200 over the previous best which was in March of 2022.

Cheques were sent to Foundry North Shore for \$500, Hollyburn Services Society for \$500, St. James Music Academy for \$500, Vancouver Sun Adopt-a-School Program for \$1000 and Canuck Place Children's Hospice for \$500 in memory of Suzanne Veuger. The Seafarers received \$140 for warm socks.

Congratulations and a huge thank you go to our extraordinarily committed volunteers.



Karen, Elizabeth at the jewellery table.



Volunteers take a break from work to share Adrienne's birthday cake.



November 4th, Nifty Thrifty.

Musically Speaking

Karen Lee-Morlang

Happy New Year! Musically-speaking at St. Francis-in-the-Wood, we moved through a beautiful, contemplative Advent season and then brightened our spirits cheerfully with a spectacular Christmas season!

Looking forward, we'd like to invite you to join us for "A Celtic Celebration" on Saturday, March 9, 2024. It will be a very fun event, filled with lively performances, many audience sing-alongs and amazing toe-tapping music! Featured performers include Bruce Henczel (percussion/strings), Caroline Olsen (viola/fiddle), the Coast Mountain Men's Chorus, myself on piano/vocals and wonderful local guest artists.

An exciting update: we will be adding a matinee showing in order to make "A Celtic Celebration" more accessible for seniors, youth and families. The 2:30pm concert will be a shorter 55-60 minute performance without intermission, and the 7:30pm evening showing will be a longer two-hour presentation with more music and a short break in between. We're grateful for additional support and sponsorship from The

Westerleigh PARC for "A Celtic Celebration" matinee show this year. We hope to see some of their residents in the audience singing, clapping along and enjoying the show with us!

Keep your eyes and ears out for more news on our next afternoon OperaTea in the spring, and an all-Canadian-Content folk and popular music concert in late June. In the meantime, after a tremendously successful first year, the Coast Mountain Men's Chorus is looking to expand by recruiting a few new singers. If you're a guy and love to sing, please consider joining us. We meet on Thursday afternoons at 4pm, sing for about two hours, then trade stories over a beverage or two afterward. In addition to singing, our camaraderie is the best part! For more information about the group and to see if we would be a strong match, please leave your contact information at the church, or email <choirstfrancisinthewood@gmail.com>.

It is going to be an inspiring and invigorating new year of music, and I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.

Halloween howled again in 2023

This popular annual event with our old friends of Wednesdays at Ernie's band (without Mary unfortunately) was a sell-out blast for everyone. The dance floor emptied long enough to squeeze in an intermission. A special thank you to Mike Volker (aka 'Ken') who rushed home to pick up and donate two cases of beer when we ran out. There were some amazingly creative costumes and our rectory tenants won the 'best costume award' as Guardians of the Galaxy. The event netted well over \$2000 for the church once again.



The Gambler & Deputy Sarah selling bar tickets.



Ken & Barbie (aka: Mike & Jan).



Sherriff Adrienne with her convicts, Chris & Brian.



The Murphies, Peter & Megan.

Alecia and Stephanie's new appointments

Congratulations go to our beloved St. Francis curate of 2 years from 2019 to 2021, Alecia Greenfield, who was appointed by Bishop John Stephens to the rectorship of St Anselm's Church at UBC beginning on January 1st. Since leaving St. Francis in May of 2021 Alecia has been at the struggling Holy Cross Japanese Canadian Anglican Church in East Vancouver.

Alecia's induction ceremony will take place on February 13th at 7pm. Prior to the induction, at 5pm, St. Anselm's has invited attendees to a pancake supper to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.

As there is no reception following, if you wish to spend some time to visit with Alecia please plan to come for supper at 5 pm.

Please contact Theresa Odishaw who will be coordinating car-pooling for the drive over to UBC at 604-315-1313 or email her at theresaodishawSF@shaw.ca, if you would like to celebrate this wonderful event in Alecia's young life as an Anglican minister. Please let Theresa know if you are willing to drive others or if you need a ride. Our planning would provide for folks to be there for the 5 pm supper. Thank you.



Alecia in the gardens in 2019.

Rev Alecia Greenfield delivering her sermon, 2020.



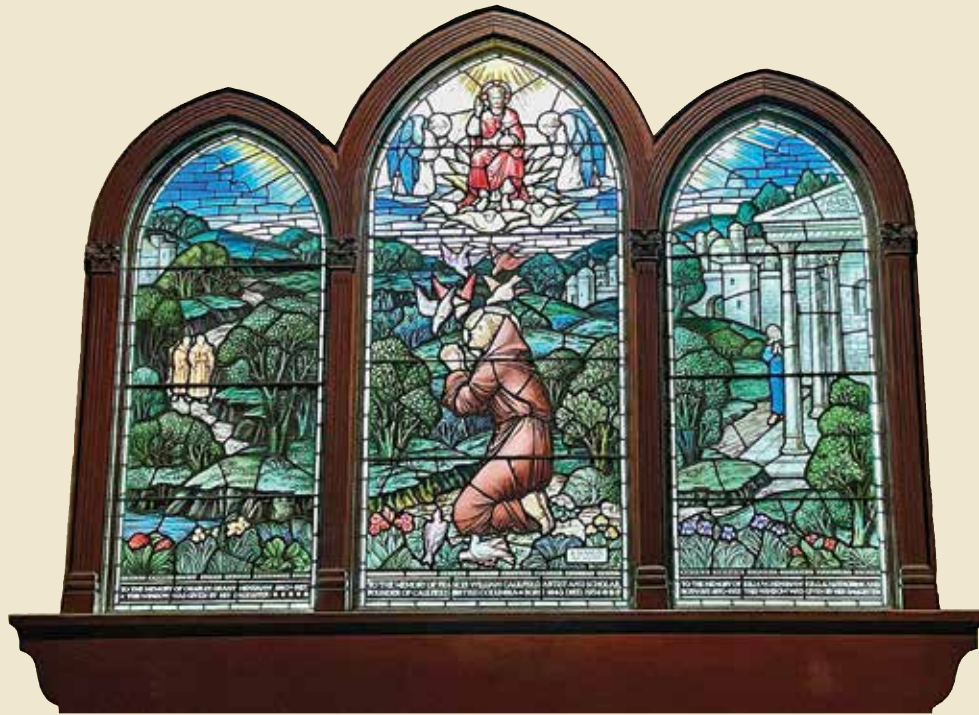
Ready for her party.



'Eyes only for Emma' (opera singing daughter)

We are also delighted to inform you that Stephanie Shepard will be beginning her full-time appointment as Rector of Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Westminster on March 1st. Since leaving us in July last year Stephanie has been helping the Diocese by providing temporary leadership at Holy Trinity church in Vancouver.

Stephanie's induction will be held on Wednesday, March 6th at 7pm. Because of the New Westminster location and the amount of interest that has already been expressed by many of you Theresa Odishaw has kindly offered to organize a minibus to transport a group of up to 20 from St. Francis church to the induction ceremony in New Westminster. There will be a nominal fee to cover the costs of the bus rental. Please contact Theresa at 604-315-1313 or email: theresaodishawSF@shaw.ca.



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon,

Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is darkness, light.

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console:

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive –

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

St. Francis of Assisi

