

# *St. Francis-in-the-Wood Anglican Church*

## *Spring Newsletter 2014*



**The Meditation Garden at St. Francis-in-the-Wood Church**

St. Francis-in-the-Wood Church is blessed with two very musical ministers. Janice began her sermon a few Sundays ago by bursting into song and rocking to a whole verse from a Temptations song as an illustration for her topic. And Angus has an extensive collection of music compiled over the years from his love of Blues and Jazz. He is also inclined to sing in the pulpit. So with that influence, please don't be surprised if I think of a familiar Joni Mitchell song as I write this piece about the garden at St. Francis. Yes, Woodstock, 1969, "And we got to get ourselves back to the garden." She was referring to the dream of returning to the Garden of Eden and I think she speaks for all of us, somehow, because "getting back to the garden" is a longing for a reconnection with God. As Adam and Eve walked and talked in innocent fellowship with God in the Garden, so too was Joni Mitchell calling us to that innocence once again. Monasteries were built around a garden called the Cloisters, often with a fountain in the middle. It was their quiet centre of contemplative life where the monks walked and read and prayed, attempting to reconnect with God as a close companion. It was with great joy that I discovered the garden created in front of St. Francis-in-the-Wood waiting in quiet beauty for passage, encounter or meditation. In this Spring Newsletter we will read about how Janice found a renewal of hope in a Monastery garden in Ireland, as well as a Lenten Meditation by Angus. Enjoy.

Laura  
stfrancisnews@gmail.com



“They come and find, the tired travellers,  
Green herbs and ample bread,  
Quiet  
And love and humbleness,  
Christ’s peace on every head.”  
*From the Monastery of Monte Cassino*

## **BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY**

### **Lenten Meditation**

We began our journey though Lent this year with the story in Matthew’s Gospel of Jesus being tested in the wilderness, and heard his famous retort to the devil’s tempting suggestion that he turn stones into bread to satisfy his earthly hunger. “One cannot live by bread alone,” Jesus said, “but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” This is an invitation and an encouragement to us to taste the heavenly bread that satisfies our spiritual hunger rather than be occupied primarily with our bodily needs and appetites.

What is this heavenly bread for the journey? What is the word that comes from the mouth of God? According to John’s Gospel, the answer is the same in both cases: Jesus himself. Jesus is identified with the Word that was with God in the beginning, and in fact the Word was God. Jesus is the living bread that came down from heaven to give his life for the life of the world. We enter into the deep symbolism of this in the Eucharist when we take the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ so that we together might be his body in the world and live his risen life. This in itself is pointing us to, and inviting us into, a deeper realization of our lives being bound up in his life.

I am convinced that as we go deeper into this story about Jesus we actually find our own story, for his story in some way is the story of all of us. His death reflects our own mortality and the inevitability of our own death, and his resurrection invites us to experience something beyond this, something that we might call eternal life. God in Christ is offering us the Living Bread of his Word made flesh to nourish us that we may live in him, and he in us. Amen.

Angus Stuart

## CIRCLE OF BELONGING



On Transfiguration Sunday, Angus asked us to share a time when we had experienced a transformation in our own lives. I told of the time in 2000, when my worship life was dead. I loved God deeply, but I could not find God in my church. The liturgy was stagnant, I stopped going every week, and I longed for a more meaningful connection to God. Something was going on within me, which I later discovered was a call to the ordained ministry. But at the time life was angst-filled and without direction.

I went on a pilgrimage to Ireland, and during those two weeks my soul was restored. Being surrounded by natural beauty dotted with hundreds of high crosses and church ruins, a light shone on my soul. Celtic Spirituality, which evolved into Celtic Christianity, opened a new way for me to experience God – a way I had lived as a teenager at summer camp, surrounded by the beauty of creation.

Worshipping in a 7<sup>th</sup> century church shell, on a cliff overlooking a lake, with a simple, extemporaneous liturgy and wine and bread brought out of a backpack, drew me back into the presence of God. The experience was repeated daily at worship - in another church shell on the beach on Inis Mor, hearing the surf and call of the birds while the priest led us in a poetic liturgy organically punctuated by our surroundings. Or sitting in drizzling rain for well over an hour, leaning against the stone walls of another church ruin, praying with 15 other people. Spending a day in silence walking through a 7<sup>th</sup> century monastic community, stopping to write down my thoughts, singing, praying, and touching rocks, water, tree trunks, stone crosses. Being surrounded by the beauty of God's creation, I felt the glory of God as a creature fully alive. (Iraeneus).  
Janice

### Glendalough Healing



Spirits of ages past beckon through the mist.  
Saints lived here, seeking perfect union with our Beautiful God.  
Walking through this Celtic garden,  
creation imparts stillness, reflection, self-examination.  
Listening to the sounds of creation and our own soul's longing,  
God is omnipresent.  
Tree branches reflect Celtic designs.  
Healing at the well and water's edge.  
The rain cleanses the soul, and washes away stored up sadness,  
loss and unnecessary burdens.  
A sacred meal of bread and wine  
among the stone vestiges of worshippers past.  
Unwanted babes blessed and redeemed  
by a God who looks in disbelief at institutions gone astray.  
The place of resurrection, a life to begin anew.  
Connected to the eternal God,  
Glendalough, Eden of Ireland,  
Advent of the new church and passionate faith.

Janice Lowell, Glendalough, 2000.

## ANGELS AMONG US

### The Nursery is in Use Again

I used to cringe at the idea of bringing a very young child to church. First of all, getting to church on Sunday mornings with a small child in tow is not always easy. By the time we arrive, I have food in my hair, we've forgotten a bottle, Eleanor has dropped her blanket in a puddle, and in the 30 minutes driving from EastVan, the inside of our car is covered in a plethora of food and toys. Second, it's a church. The last thing any parent wants is for their child to be a nuisance to others. Yet, she'll cry, she'll drop things on the floor, and she will "talk" too loud. And *everyone* will hear every little coo she makes, no matter how quiet it is, because it's church -- it's *designed* for noise to carry!

But, we think that we are doing something *really* important for our daughter by bringing her to church on Sundays. We are fulfilling a promise that we made a year ago at her baptism — to raise her in the church, with a church family.

This is why the "nursery" in the balcony of the church has been such a blessing for us. It provides an opportunity to keep Eleanor entertained without one of us needing to miss out on worshipping with others and it allows us to involve her in parts of the service. Eleanor sits behind us playing with toys and looking through Christian books, on a soft-padded floor, while we take a moment to talk with God. Although, she may not understand the sermon, she loves to "share peace" and take part in communion. More importantly, she is learning to be a part of the church community and will gradually learn to worship on Sundays with us. She is learning that worship is what we do as a community of faith, that everyone is welcome, and that *her* worship matters.

Of course, we still wince with every noise she makes and we still need to take her out of church when she becomes particularly noisy. But, we would like to thank the Church of St. Francis for providing the "nursery" in the balcony, patience and understanding, and an opportunity for our *family* to connect with God in a church setting every week. The child-friendly balcony is just one of the many wonderful blessings that we have experienced since finding a family at St. Francis in the Wood. Thank you from the Corrow family.

Sherrysse



### Messy Church

**Who?** Young families, and grandparents with their grandchildren

**Why?** To learn about God

**What?** Fun activities, brief worship service, Bible story, and a meal

**Where?** St. Francis-in-the-Wood Church

**When?** 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month, 4 to 6 PM

Volunteer helpers needed. Please contact [RevJaniceLowell@gmail.com](mailto:RevJaniceLowell@gmail.com)



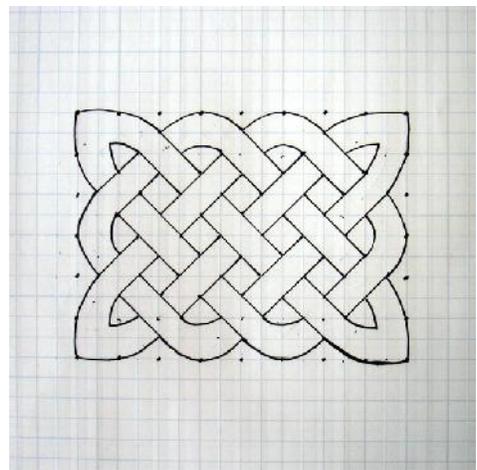
## Ask a Teen

Calling all teenagers! Do you have gently used clothing in your closet that you may have grown out of or would like to give to a young person aged 16 to 22 living at Covenant House? Over 1,500 street-involved youth arrive at Covenant House Vancouver each year, homeless, lost and afraid. ([www.covenanthousebc.org](http://www.covenanthousebc.org)) Your donated clothing items will be much appreciated. Please drop them off at St. Francis Church or have your mom give them to Mary Ann Sweeny. Thanks so much.

## Retreats

A Celtic Spirituality Workshop was held February 15, 10 am – 4 pm. Ten participants journeyed with Rev. Janice Lowell on a pilgrimage through Celtic Spirituality, learning about life in a 7<sup>th</sup> century Religious Community; exploring the High Crosses; colouring Celtic designs; and learning how to draw Celtic knots. The knots were a bit much for some people, who chose to return to colouring! We enjoyed Shepherds Pie and Irish Whiskey Cream Pie for lunch. We concluded with a Celtic Eucharist.

Colouring is a very therapeutic exercise, and I encourage you to allow yourselves to return to this practice from childhood. If you would like some Celtic designs to colour, please see me.



## Living Your Great Story

Linda Leier and I will lead a Lenten Retreat, March 28-30 at Rosemary Heights Retreat & Conference Centre in Surrey. Linda is a Jungian psychologist and will teach us about Jung's different archetypes. Through a variety of exercises and media, we will discover our own archetype by identifying where we find our passion and purpose. We will then explore these archetypes in Biblical characters. Janice

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On Ash Wednesday we heard the words addressed to each one of us personally: "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." What is born of the flesh is flesh, says Jesus in John's Gospel, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. These words find a curious echo in those of the second century Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius who said: "Everything that comes from the earth returns to the earth, and what is heaven-born flies to its native seat." No wonder Jesus said you must be born from above to see or enter the kingdom of God. Angus

## **NOTICE BOARD**

### **Walk For Water**

Starting from St Monica's on Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, the route is around Gleneagles golf course, via St George's Ave & Marine Drive back to St Monica's. For those who can make the hill, there's an additional leg down to Sewell's Lookout & back to St Monica's for refreshments. Registration at 9:30 AM, walk begins at 10 AM. See [www.helpavillageeffort.org](http://www.helpavillageeffort.org) for more information.

### **Knit a Prayer**

Our prayer shawl ministry continues to bless its recipients. I had a phone call from a woman who had received a prayer shawl to send to her sister in Montreal. Her sister has special needs and lives in a group home. She was so thrilled to receive the prayer shawl, and was moved to tears that it was hand-knitted for her. She requested that "another pink one" be sent for her friend who is struggling with cancer.

If you know of anyone else who might benefit from being wrapped in God's love, please see me about getting a shawl. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at noon, in the lounge. I have a book of patterns designed for novice to expert.

### **Reel Reflections**

This continues to be a popular and intriguing means of discovery spiritual and religious themes in movies. In February, we viewed "God on Trial," a movie about inmates at Auschwitz who put God on trial for breaking covenant.

In March, we will be watching "Babette's Feast," best foreign film 1987. It takes place in Denmark (yes, there are subtitles) and presents the stark contrast between the sensibilities of austerity and abundance.

In April, we will watch "Luther," a recent film starring Joseph Fiennes in the title role. This is an interesting lens of the Church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and what led Luther to seek the changes in the practice of Christianity.

In May, we will view the "The Apostle," starring Robert Duvall. This is intriguing movie about a man who exemplifies the paradox of a pastor whose fanaticism is somehow balanced with his love for God's children.

June will be our final movie until September, and we will watch Maggie Smith, Kristen Scott Thomas, Rowan Atkins and Patrick Swayze in "Keeping Mum." You won't want to miss Maggie Smith in her role as the housekeeper for the vicar's (Rowan Atkins) family in a small English village. Be prepared for some dark humour!

### **Care Team**

Kelly Kennedy is our new Coordinator for the Care Team. We could always use a few more people to phone and/or visit parishioners who are in need of some special care. If you are interested in being a companion or know of someone in need of a companion, please contact Kelly at [kikikennedy5@gmail.com](mailto:kikikennedy5@gmail.com).

### **Driving Ministry**

This is part of our Care Team Ministry. Arleen Stiver co-ordinates drivers for our parishioners who are no longer able to drive to church. If you know of anyone who needs a ride, please get in touch with Arleen at 604-922-2620.



Two Irish elves and their helpers had fun making coffee for a full church on Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

As with all the volunteers, their time and talents are freely given. If you would like to be part of this team, please speak to Angus or Janice. They would love to hear from you.

## **GOD'S MISSION – OUR GIFTS**

### **Taking a different look at our budget expenditure for 2014**

“Do not expect a perfect church, but find in church the means of coming very near to Me. Grasp the truth and find Me – the true Bread of Life. The real life is all that matter, the outward church is the husk; but the husk was necessary to present the life-grain.”

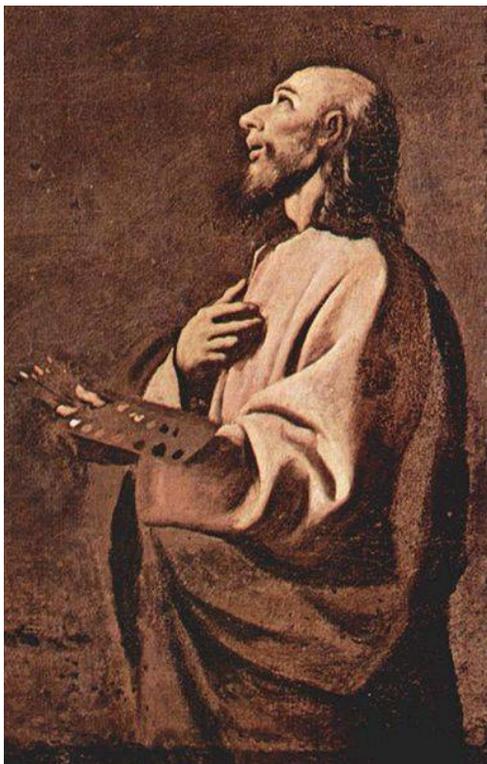
God Calling: Edited by AJ Russell

Marilyn McBeath shows us in the following chart how our stewardship contributions and church expenses are spread across many differing church and community ministries.

- 25% WORSHIP**    Music \* Weekly worship \* Sunday School \* Messy Church \* Special worship & Memorial Services \* Preparation & Prayer \* Sacristans, Flower Arrangers, Greeters & Chalice Administrators
- 23% SHARE**      Diocesan Assessment contributions \* Social Concerns & other donations \* Legacy Fund donations \* Opening our facilities to the community
- 18% GROW**        Worshiping together \* Youth & Family Ministry \* Study Groups \* Workshops & Retreats \* Preparation & Prayer \* Stewardship & Membership \* Reaching out to our community \* Communications (Newsletter & Website)
- 17% CONNECT**    Weddings & Funerals \* Community Events \* Supporting those in need \* Youth & Children \* Hospitality (Coffee Hour, Strawberry Tea, Salmon Barbeque, etc.) \* Preparation \* Membership \* Communications \* Opening our facilities to the community
- 17% SERVE**        Pastoral Care visits \* Care Ministry \* Youth, Children & Family Ministry \* Weddings & Funerals \* Prayer Support & preparation \* Prayer Shawl Ministry \* Addiction recovery community groups \* Meditation Garden & grounds

## THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR

Welcome to our St. Francis family “refrigerator door” where church members can post a photo of cute grandchildren, a graduating child, a wedding, a vacation, retreat or mission trip you are/were on, a new pet,... you get the idea! Thanks to new members Jeff, Sherryse and Eleanor Corrow for sharing a family portrait and to Janice for sending a pic of David Phillips’ Walk for Water event (David is in the back in a white ball cap.) The “refrigerator door” is an ongoing feature and will fill the back page (I hope) so please send your photos to me at [stfrancisnews@gmail.com](mailto:stfrancisnews@gmail.com) for the June 1<sup>st</sup> summer edition. Laura



Francisco de Zurbaran, 1635 - 1640 crop from St. Luke as a Painter before Christ on the Cross (believed to be a self-portrait)

## 2014 HOLY WEEK & EASTER AT ST. FRANCIS

### Palm Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>:

8 am - **Book of Common Prayer** (includes blessing of palms)

10 am - **Liturgy of the Palms** on Caulfeild Green, and a dramatic presentation of the Passion Gospel according to St. Matthew

7 pm - **Service** at West Vancouver Baptist Church

**Ecumenical “Crosswalk” series** at 9:30 am daily:

Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>: West Vancouver Presbyterian

Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>: St. David’s United

Wed., April 16<sup>th</sup>: St. Francis-in-the-Wood

Thurs., April 17<sup>th</sup>: St. Anthony’s Roman Catholic

**Maunder Thursday:** 7 pm “In The Upper Room”

**Good Friday:** 12 noon Good Friday Liturgy at **St. Francis**

**Easter Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>:**

6 am – Sunrise Service on Caulfeild Rocks (followed by breakfast)

9 am – Holy Eucharist (traditional)

11 am – Holy Eucharist (contemporary) – with baptisms

Saturday following Easter, April 26<sup>th</sup>:

11 am – Newcomers Welcome Brunch

4 pm – Easter Messy Church

We adore you, most Holy Lord Jesus Christ,  
Here and in all your churches throughout all the world;  
And we bless you because  
by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

*St. Francis of Assisi*