



# CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## JANUARY 2024 - CHRONICLE

Steadfast and growing since 1870

Where we seek to glorify God, follow Jesus Christ, and serve all people through the power of the Holy Spirit, as a community of companions walking together in the Way of Christ's Love for all.

### New Year Reflections on Friendship and the Saint of Rievaulx

This January, I begin my seventh year at Christ Church (Jan 28), and I also celebrate the 10-year anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood (Jan 11). Since I was ordained on the Eve of the Feast Day of St. Aelred of Rievaulx (pronounced “Ale-red” of “Ree-voh”), I often reflect on this saint as I look back over the last year and look towards the future. Aelred is the author of the classic Christian text *Spiritual Friendship* and I’ve written about him in at least two previous Chronicle articles (May 2020, Jan 2023). As I was reviewing my January 2023 Chronicle article on St. Aelred, I noticed that the last 2 and a half sentences accidentally got cut off. For all of you who have been waiting in suspense all year for the dramatic conclusion of that article to be finally revealed, today is your lucky day! (:



In the final paragraph of last January’s article, I wrote, “My New Year’s resolution for this personally significant year [2023] is to marinate more in *metta* [compassionate goodwill] by offering these simple phrases more frequently to myself, my friends, and even to those people who frustrate me: ‘May you be happy. May you be safe. May you be at peace.’ Imagine saying that to someone who just cut you...”

Ironically, that’s where my article got *cut* off, right after the word “cut.” Although this half sentence still makes some sense, I certainly hope that none of you ever face the possibility of someone cutting you! Here’s how the article should have concluded: “Imagine saying that to someone who just cut you off in traffic! One of my wishes for 2023 is for us all to try offering these goodwill intentions more often so that we might contribute to a much-needed increase of peace on earth and goodwill to the entire human family. So, to you who are reading these words right now, may *you* be happy, may *you* be safe and may *you* be at peace; and *metta* force be with you this year!”

These words bear repeating not only because they were not printed at all last year, but also because they are just as pertinent in the year 2024 as they were in 2023. May you indeed be happy, safe, and at peace this year; and may you also marinate in *metta* by offering these words of blessing to everyone in your life, especially as we approach another consequential and inevitably divisive presidential election this November.

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## New Year Reflections on Friendship and the Saint of Rievaulx - *Continued from the previous page*

Along with Aelred's invitations to marinate more in *metta*, the medieval Cistercian saint also inspires me to make a few other resolutions for this year:

First, I hope to finally finish and perhaps publish my distillation of his book *Spiritual Friendship*, which I began working on back in 2021. In this way, I hope to share Aelred's timeless wisdom on friendship with a wider audience, including all of you.

Second, I hope to offer opportunities for Christ Church Eureka to experience Forest Therapy Walks along with plenty of Sacred Saunters this year. I have come to associate Aelred with Forest Therapy, partly because I completed my Forest Therapy Guide training in Aelred's old stomping grounds: Yorkshire. The day after my training, I rented a car and drove a couple hours through the Yorkshire countryside to visit the abbey ruins of Rievaulx, where Aelred served as abbot in the twelfth century. I think Aelred would have approved of Forest Therapy since he wrote that whenever we have trouble finding Jesus at traditional holy sites, we should look for him "in the fields and the woods."<sup>1</sup>

Finally, Aelred has invited me to re-frame aspects of our ministry as well as our plans for this year within the context of friendship. Aelred has helped me to understand and appreciate the spiritual significance of friendship to such an extent that I'm honestly inclined to modify our parish's three primary values from "worship, discipleship, and fellowship" to "worship, discipleship, and *friendship*." Although a priest's relationship to his or her congregants is unique, I refuse to accept the idea that a priest cannot be friends with his or her congregants. Obviously, there are important boundaries to be honored (as in all relationships), but it's been a joy to grow in friendship with you all over these last six years. Also, in preparing for the Betty Chinn Book Signing Event on February 10<sup>th</sup>, I realized that the element that I especially want to honor and celebrate is the *friendship* between Karen Price and Betty Chinn. And in May, when we host the editor of the forthcoming book *Thomas Merton in California*, I hope you all get to experience him as a bright spiritual friend, which is what he has been to me over the last 15 years.

C. S. Lewis contrasted lovers and friends when he wrote, "We picture lovers face to face but Friends side by side; their eyes look ahead."<sup>2</sup> Whenever we gather to glorify God and follow Jesus Christ, we are walking as companions, side by side with our eyes looking ahead and, in so doing, we are strengthening the bonds of friendship between us. I invite you to make the resolution this year to grow in friendship by coming to Holy Eucharist every Sunday (and if you're feeling sick, to watch online) and to also, perhaps, in the spirit of St. Aelred, *bring a friend!*



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<sup>1</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, "On Jesus at the Age of Twelve" in *Treatises & Pastoral Prayer* (Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1971), 22.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960), 98.



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# Rievaulx Abbey

*Photos by Daniel London*



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**Rievaulx Abbey** (*/ri:'voo/ ree-VOH*) was a Cistercian abbey in Rievaulx, near Helmsley, in the North York Moors National Park, North Yorkshire, England. It was one of the great abbeys in England until it was seized in 1538 under Henry VIII during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The wider site was awarded Scheduled Ancient Monument status in 1915 and the abbey was brought into the care of the then Ministry of Works in 1917. The ruins of its main buildings are today a tourist attraction, owned and maintained by English Heritage.

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# High Church or Low?

The Very Rev. K. Lesley McCloghrie, Associate Priest



This past Sunday, as I sat in the nave, waiting for the 10:30am service to begin, I found myself surrounded by a cacophony of noise. Conversations seemed to be going on in every pew, except in the one in which I sat. As more and more people entered the church, the noise grew louder, the volume only increasing as the beautiful organ prelude began. Sitting among this noise, there could be no space for quiet contemplation and prayer, no matter how hard I tried. I was struck, yet again, of the differences that exist within our Episcopal Church.

This past October, I visited the church that sponsored me for ordination, a church that identifies as and follows the Anglo-Catholic tradition. I had been invited to a reunion of all the living clergy sponsored for orders by that congregation, many of whom I knew well, and had not seen for a good number of years. We arrived in time for the Saturday Noonday Office, held in the church proper. As I entered, I was struck by the sense of reverence and awe that exists there. Despite being almost half full of clergy and congregation, the church was silent. As more people entered, revered the Sacrament and sat down, smiles were exchanged, but the silence continued, broken only by the quiet footsteps of the acolytes as they lit the office candles. The liturgy ended, and once again there was silence, except for the hum of conversation as worshippers paused to greet the clergy and wardens outside the main door. In the pews there was quiet, time to offer prayers of thanksgiving, to sit and absorb the beauty of the surroundings, to remember the many happy, and not so happy times, experienced as a member of that congregation.

Within our Episcopal Church, while we are all obliged to follow the rites of the Book of Common Prayer, there exists a wide range of custom, tradition, piety and what we used to know as churchmanship. The vocabulary we use to describe these differences involves such words as High Church, Low Church, Broad Church, Charismatic, Evangelical, and less politely, 'smells and bells', 'snake belly low', 'happy-clappy' and 'middle of the road'. This great variety means that you should be able to find a congregation which appeals to you, a faith community where you will feel comfortable and at home.

You may be wondering how this great variety, all within one denomination, came about, but to write about all of these would take many short newsletter articles. However, as many of you know, or may have guessed from the previous paragraphs, I identify as High Church, or to use another term Anglo Catholic, and I will attempt share a little about this branch of our church and how it came to be.

The roots of the Episcopal Church lie in the Church of England, a church that was founded during the Reformation, a movement that, at that time, was spreading throughout Europe. It is said that in England the Reformation was sparked by Henry VIII's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon, his first wife. With the aid of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and his cohorts, the English church broke away from Rome and the dominance of the papacy. Through the turbulent years that followed, years that saw Edward VI, Mary Tudor and subsequently Elizabeth I on the throne, the church changed and evolved, becoming more overtly Protestant under Edward, reverting to Rome under Mary, and finally becoming more settled as a Protestant church under Elizabeth I. During these years many changes took place, perhaps most notably the 1549 publishing of the first Book of Common Prayer with the liturgies printed in English, the vernacular instead of Latin. You may remember that under Henry VIII, all the monasteries were dissolved. This caused destruction of many beautiful buildings and artefacts, as well as the loss of the social support given by the monasteries to their local communities.

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## High Church or Low? - Continued from the previous page

The next great upheaval in the English church came with the rise of the Puritan movement. Oliver Cromwell, the Member of Parliament for Cambridge, was an adherent of the extreme Protestant Puritan party, and when Civil War broke out in 1642, both he and the later-executed Charles I, are said to have seen this war as much as a religious conflict as political. His political supporters and his army ravaged the established Church of England, seeking to completely destroy the institution. He was unsuccessful in this, but the damage caused by his soldiers as they desecrated and destroyed many of the beautiful medieval church buildings can still be seen today. Medieval stained-glass windows were shattered, stone statues beheaded, and churches generally vandalized. One example may be seen in the gothic Gloucester cathedral, where the ornate stone reredos situated behind the Lady Chapel altar was used by Cromwell's soldiers for their musket practice. It is a sad remnant of what must have been. Under the dominance of the Puritans, churches became bare, organs, liturgical vestments, surplices, rochets, mitres, hangings, candles, crosses, the sign of the cross and all ecclesiastical courts were forbidden. Services were austere, emphasizing only the reading of scripture and preaching.

With the 1660 return of Charles II from exile and the restoration of the monarchy, a type of armistice was declared between the High Church proponents of the Church of England and, those who came to be known as the Non-Conformists, the Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists. The Church of England became firmly established, and the other more protestant denominations well tolerated. A peaceful division evolved between 'Church' the established Church of England, and 'Chapel' the Non-Conformist Protestant denominations, a division that still existed in my youth.

During the eighteenth century there were various movements within the English Church causing ripple effects, some of note were the rise of Methodism under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley, and of course the breaking away of our Episcopal Church after the Revolutionary War. All bishops functioning in the Episcopal Church of the time were English. There was a need for an American as bishop, and so in 1784 Samuel Seabury was elected bishop for the Episcopal Church by the Diocese of Connecticut. After some difficulties with his consecration in England involving his refusal to swear an oath of allegiance to the Crown, he was ultimately consecrated as our first bishop by the bishops of the Episcopal Church of Scotland.

At this point you may be thinking, all this does not seem to have anything to do with Anglo-Catholicism, but I assure you it does. It was out of this background that the Oxford Movement, arose, and it was through this movement and its later effects, that much of what is commonplace in our church today, be it low or high, came into being. Stay tuned for next month's installment.

A Prayer for the Church - BCP page 816  
*Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church.  
Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace.  
Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error,  
direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it.  
Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want,  
provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior. Amen.*

*Lesley+*

## Shining Night



When my daughters and I got together in November to sing the three-part women's pieces we had sung in the past, and to choose one to sing on Christmas Eve, my daughter Linden had an idea. When she was a student at California Lutheran University and singing in the Concert Choir (as her sister and I did, when we attended), the composer Morten Lauridsen (in residence at USC) came to campus and the choirs sang his music. At the time, she was much impressed by a particular piece that she didn't have the opportunity to sing, but she later recalled its name. She was so enthusiastic about it, she looked for it and ordered it, thinking we might be able to sing it on Christmas Eve. That piece was "Sure On This Shining Night," with music by Lauridsen and words by James Agee. When it arrived less than two weeks later, we were able to begin singing it, at first separately, and later, when we were all together just before Christmas.

I have to confess that I fell in love with this particular piece. I have heard other versions of this poem set to music, and Lauridsen's is the most moving, evocative, version I have heard. Merry also knew it and was thrilled that we would be singing it. And when Christmas Eve arrived, we tried to do the music and words justice. That moment is one I will never forget.

Since then, I have been thinking about how apt the words of the poem are for the seasons of Christmas-Epiphany and the weeks after Epiphany. Although my copy says it is for "SSAA, Secular," I think it straddles the line between sacred and secular, and Episcopalians always appreciate that space. Here is James Agee's exquisite poem in its entirety:

Sure on this shining night  
Of starmade shadows round,  
Kindness must watch for me  
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north  
All is healed, all is health.  
High summer holds the earth.  
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night  
I weep for wonder  
Wand'ring far alone  
Of shadows on the stars.

Copyright © 1968 by The James Agee Trust

James Agee himself had a connection to The Episcopal Church, attending Saint Andrew's School for Mountain Boys near Sewanee, Tennessee, which was operated by the Order of the Holy Cross, an Episcopal monastic order. According to Wikipedia, "It was there that Agee's lifelong friendship with Episcopal priest Father James Harold Flye, a history teacher at St. Andrew's, and his wife Grace Eleanor Houghton began in 1919. As Agee's close friend and mentor, Flye corresponded with him on literary and other topics through life and became a confidant of Agee's soul-wrestling. He published the letters after Agee's death."

"Sure on this shining night of starmade shadows round, kindness must watch for me this side the ground..."

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## Shining Night - Continued from the previous page

At the beginning of John's prologue, we hear of how the Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth, and how "to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of [humanity], but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us..."

In the shining nights that began with Christmas Eve and which continue in this season of Epiphany and the Sundays after Epiphany, I encourage you to think of all the ways in which Kindness personified, the Word who became flesh, watches over you in all the days of your life. And how as baptized Christians we commit ourselves to being Christ's Body in the world, and continue those efforts to extend kindness in the world.

As Fred Rogers, Presbyterian pastor and children's educator once said, "At the center of the Universe is a loving heart that continues to beat and that wants the best for every person. Anything that we can do to help foster the intellect and spirit and emotional growth of our fellow human beings, that is our job. Those of us who have this particular vision must continue against all odds. Life is for service."

Merry Christmas and Happy Epiphany, my friends!

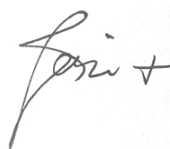
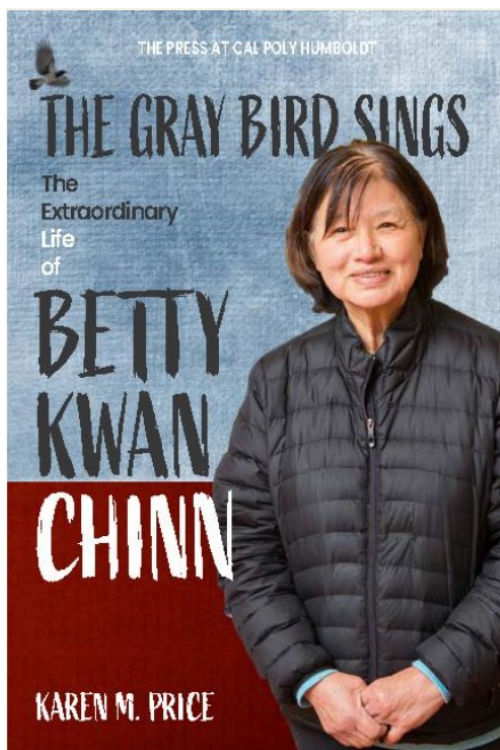


Photo by Perry Gray-Reneberg taken December 21—Winter Solstice

## Save the date | Saturday, February 10, 2024 The Gray Bird Sings: The Extraordinary Life of Betty Kwan Chinn



Plan to join us as Christ Episcopal Church celebrates the book launch of this biography written by Karen M. Price. More information will be forthcoming in the months ahead.

Price, Karen M. Ph.D.. *The Gray Bird Sings: The Extraordinary Life of Betty Kwan Chinn*. Humboldt State University Press, 2023. <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/monographs/21>.

### Description

"Touched by childhood tragedy, Betty Chinn brings hope to those who have fallen on hard times. Left homeless as a child in China, Chinn became mute. When she came to America, she found both her voice and her mission: aiding those without shelter on our own shores." - *Barack Obama, awarding Betty the Presidential Citizens Medal*

She's the humanitarian compared to Mother Teresa, hailed as the "Hong Kong Angel," and beloved by her community in Humboldt County. She miraculously survived the most vile brutalities to become a beacon for humanity and an inspiration for all. Meet Betty Kwan Chinn.



**2016 First Prize Winner of the Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition**

Friday, January 12, 2024, 7:00 pm  
Christ Church, Eureka  
(H and 15th Streets)

Christ Episcopal Church, Eureka  
presents

**Joshua Stafford,  
Concert Organist**

“Monumental talent coupled with electrifying facility.” -  
*(Lorenz Maycher, Artistic Director, East Texas Pipe Organ, Kilgore, TX)*

Hailed by his peers (at the Association of Anglican Musicians’ national conference) as “technically flawless yet exceptionally nuanced and spontaneous.”

Suggested Donation:  
\$20 per person

Reception following the concert

**FRESH PRODUCE SUNDAY  
JANUARY 21**



Fresh Produce Sunday is January 21 Baskets will be placed at the back of the nave to collect donations of fresh produce which will be blessed and then taken to St. Vincent de Paul’s dining facility on Monday morning. Thank you parishioners for remembering to help each month with your gifts of potatoes, carrots, apples, oranges, bananas, lettuce, onions, cabbage, kale, avocados, peaches, kiwis, and, and, and....





## From the Senior Warden Steven Preston



# Looking Ahead in a New Year!

As I look ahead to leaving the Vestry and stepping aside as Senior Warden, after our Annual Meeting on February 4th, my inclination might be to look back. But I will save that for my Annual Report. This is a time for me, and for all of us, to look ahead to a new year and new opportunities.

In Scripture we are told to lift up our eyes to fields that are ripe unto harvest. We are called to look outside and beyond ourselves and our comfortable places. As we move into a new year, let us look for opportunities for new and fresh ways to be Christ's presence in the community around us.

We help to feed the hungry with our monthly donations of money and food to Food for People and fresh produce for St. Vincent de Paul's dining room. With our monthly donation and seasonal gathering of clothing and school supplies we help the Betty Chinn Homeless Foundation to shelter and support those without shelter. Our monthly donation, material support, and fleece blankets for The Forgotten Initiative offer comfort and security for neglected or abused foster children and their foster families. The monthly donation we send to Sandy-in-Honduras, Inc., helps her to provide medical and other care for children who would otherwise suffer lifelong pain, disfigurement, and ostracism, whose families can barely afford food and shelter. Our Project (Re)Start bins have helped people in dire need, and are ready for future disasters.

Are you aware that we rent the Smullin House at below market rate to a non-profit organization for their office and intake center, enabling them to stretch their limited resources to serve their clients? Through our new Joy Mass Family Service we are providing children and their parents with a fun and engaging place to encounter Jesus and to worship God, and perhaps to begin to develop a lifetime of discipleship.

All of this, and more, is because someone, at sometime in the life of Christ Church, saw a need and led the parish to reach out and offer a hand in ministry. They looked up and outside and beyond their comfortable place.

So, let us lift our eyes at the start of this year, and see if there are other places around us where God may call us to step out in faith and provide a presence, a hand, a donation, a place for those who may feel alone, abused, or abandoned. Are there places where we can do simple things that change lives for good and bring God into their consciousness?

*Let us look up, and out, and beyond!*

**NOMINATIONS FOR VESTRY AND CONVENTION DELEGATES:** The Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 4, 2024, and begins with the Worship Service at 9:30 am (only one service). That means it's time for nominations for Vestry and Convention Delegates. We encourage you to think about whether God may be calling you to one of these crucial leadership roles in our church. There are three Vestry positions available for election for a three-year term. Vestry will now meet over a potluck dinner on the 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:30 pm.

**The Nominating Committee for Vestry is the "outgoing" Vestry members: Belinda Zander, Junior Warden Jim Hendry, and Senior Warden Steve Preston.** If you are interested in standing for election, or you are curious or want more information, **please contact one of them by January 19th.**

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## From the Senior Warden - Continued from the previous page

Candidates for Vestry are asked to submit a photograph and brief written answers to the following questions by January 19th: 1.) What attributes or talents will you bring to the Vestry? 2.) What ministries have you participated in within the last two years at Christ Church? 3.) Which leadership area do you believe you could help grow, expand and be an advocate for? (See page 12-13)

**NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF FIVE CONVENTION DELEGATES:** These are important positions that represent our parish in the decision-making Annual Convention of our Diocese. Any voting member of the parish may self-nominate by email to the church office for the five delegate positions (by Jan. 19); any runners-up will be elected as alternates. This year's Annual Convention will be online (no travel); and the full early registration fee for delegates and alternates can be reimbursed by the church if desired.

**DIOCESAN E-NEWS:** To keep up with the Bishop, the Diocese and our sibling churches, sign up for this weekly newsletter at <https://www.norcalepiscopal.org/#signup>.

**BELOVED COMMUNITY RESOURCE NEWSLETTER:** From the Commission for Intercultural Ministries, a very useful resource for the broader social justice activities of the Diocese and the National Church. Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/BCRnewsletter>.

*Within every challenge lies opportunity! The task is to find the opportunity and to fulfill it!*

Steve Preston, Senior Warden

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### Joy Mass Family Service

#### CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sundays | 9:30 AM

Chapel of Our Merciful Saviour  
15th & G Streets



**Please join us in a new  
Ministry adventure!**



### Centering Prayer

Tuesdays | 6:30 pm | In person and on Zoom

**Covid protocols are: Full vaccination is recommended, masks are OPTIONAL for those who are fully vaccinated, and masks are expected for those who are not fully vaccinated. Seating is distanced.**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82639812032>

## From the Junior Warden Jim Hendry



During the month of December, in addition to the numerous Advent and music services, members of the parish continued to be busy with the running of the Church. I am always impressed at the willingness of our members to continually give of their time, talent and treasures even when they are busy with their personal life.

The greening of the Church on the Saturday before the First Sunday of Advent brought out people ready to work. We found that some of our reusable trees are becoming aged and need help with their illumination. I hope you did notice how beautiful the sanctuary was during Advent and Christmas!

The chandeliers in the Heritage Room and Lewis Hall seen to continually have burnt out light bulbs. Paul Gossard recently replaced numerous of the burnt out bulbs and additional bulbs are on order to continue with replacement in both rooms.

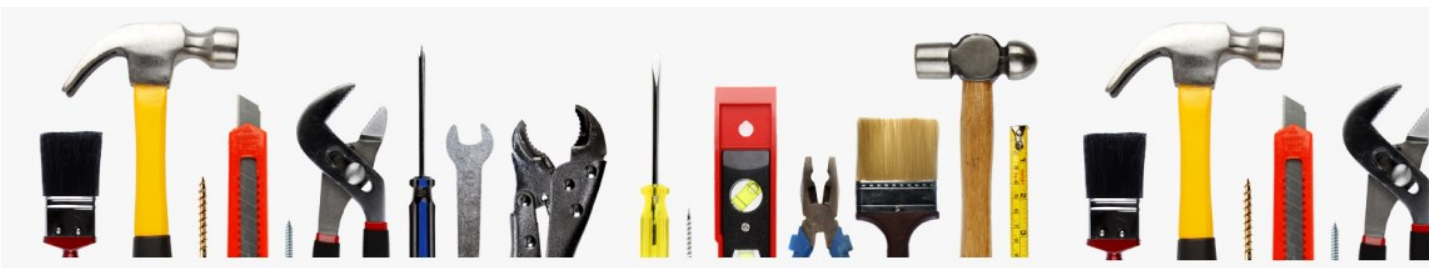
For those of you who have not heard, we have a new Sexton, Mike Robnett. We are happy that he is with us and look forward to his continuing to be with Christ Church.

The down spout that I reported broken in my December Chronicle Article has been fixed in time for the rains that have been coming our way. And, the light at the corner of the Church by the 15<sup>th</sup> Street entrance walkway has been replaced and is providing much needed light for that area.

This will be my last month on the Vestry and as Junior Warden. I will be preparing a final report for the annual meeting and look forward to seeing you there on February 4, 2024.

Happy New Year!

Jim Hendry  
Junior Warden





The Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, February 4. There will be ONE service that Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m.

It begins with the Rector’s Annual Report as the homily during the service, and continues in business session after the service ends. Other reports will be published and available prior to the Meeting. An important part of the Annual Meeting is electing three Vestry members, and Diocesan Convention Delegates and Alternates. Nominations (and self-nominations) will be solicited. **Nominations are due by Friday, January 19.** (The three retiring Vestry members are the Nominating Committee for the Vestry election.)



**Vestry Nominations:** It is time to consider if God may be calling you to the ministry of the Vestry. If you are regular in attendance at worship, 18 years of age or older, a member of record for the last six months, a communicant in good standing, and a steward of your time, talent, and treasure for the support of the parish, you have the requisite qualifications.

Vestry members are elected for a three-year term and attend monthly Vestry meetings, generally on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 pm, in addition to committee and other special meetings.

Consider what attributes or talents you would bring, what ministries you have participated in, and which leadership area you could help grow, expand, and be an advocate for.

If you have questions or think you may be interested in serving, please contact a member of the nominating committee:

STEVEN PRESTON, JIM HENDRY, BELINDA ZANDER

The completed Vestry Questionnaire is due into the church office by

**Friday, January 19.**

**\*\*See Vestry Questionnaire on the following page \*\***

### Interested in being a Delegate to the Diocesan Convention?

Any voting member of the parish may self-nominate by email to the church office by **January 19** for one of five delegate positions; runners-ups will be elected as alternates; this year's Annual Convention will be online (*no travel*); and the full early registration fee for delegates and alternates can be reimbursed by the church if desired. [See section 3.5 of the church constitution.]



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# VESTRY MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

Vestry members are servant leaders. The basic qualifications are:

You are regular in attendance at worship

You are 18 years of age or older

You are a member of record for at least six months

You are a communicant in good standing

You are a steward of your time, talent, and treasure for the support of the parish

Vestry members are elected for a three-year term and attend monthly Vestry meetings, generally on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 pm, in addition to committee and other special meetings.

Here are several questions to prayerfully consider:

1. What attributes or talents will you bring to the Vestry?

2. What ministries have you participated in within the last two years at Christ Church?

3. Which leadership area do you believe you could help grow, expand and be an advocate for?



# Christ Episcopal Church Green Team Tip of the Month



## We're Replacing Disposable Batteries with Rechargeables in our Sound System.

Paul Gossard tells us that the AA batteries we have been using to power our wireless mics are less than ideal. They are expensive, and, although they can be recycled, they are still a serious environmental problem.

We have used rechargeables in the past, but Paul notes that they were not robust enough to consistently deliver the voltage needed for the mics to work well. Now, on the advice of our contacts at Sweetwater Sound, we will be trying a new rechargeable battery system that is much more robust. It is designed specifically for demanding applications like powering wireless mics.

We're starting with a charger and eight rechargeable batteries. If the new system works as well as expected, we'll order additional batteries so that we have enough for all of our wireless mics.

For home use, the Sierra Club (<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/ask-mr-green/which-are-best-for-environment-rechargeable-or-long-life-batteries>) recommends rechargeable batteries for devices that require frequent battery replacement such as cameras, flashlights and electronic toys. However, in 2017 the Sierra Club also reported that rechargeable batteries do not lower the impact of battery usage and may even contribute more to ozone depletion unless they're charged at least 150 times—that is until they replace 150 disposable batteries.

Ethical Consumer (<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/energy/shopping-guide/batteries>) reports that both Energizer and Duracell rechargeable batteries can be charged 400 times—replacing 400 disposable batteries. While the cost to buy the rechargeable batteries is as much as 4 times that of the disposable batteries, the lifetime cost of the rechargeable batteries (buying batteries, charger and charging batteries) is as low as 5% of the cost to purchase 400 disposable batteries.



**Creation Care Fund:** Thanks to your generosity, the Creation Care Fund already has \$1950.00 dedicated to the needs assessment and other efforts towards making Christ Episcopal Church carbon neutral.

### **Christ Church Eureka Green Team Mission and Vision Statement**

*In fulfillment of Diocesan Resolution RI-2022, General Convention Resolution A087, and our church mission statement, the Christ Church Green Team promotes care for the earth and its resources as God's gifts for sustaining life. We strive to minimize the environmental footprint of the parish and its people by honoring the land and practicing mindful stewardship of our planet and its resources. As Christ Church Eureka, we seek to provide a carbon neutral presence by the year 2030.*



# Quilters+

The day: Wednesday, January 10

The time: 9:30 AM

The place: Lewis Hall

New Year = New Fleece Throws for foster children and youth in our area. You are invited to gather with us on Wednesday, January 10, between 9:30 and 11:30 am in Lewis Hall. Fleece and scissors are provided along with easy instructions – measure, cut, snip. Then poke the fringe strips through a small slit. Before long there's another cozy and colorful fleece throw, a comforting gift for a foster child!

We have plenty of fabric available for anyone who would like to make a fleece-backed tied prayer quilt to comfort those who are ill, recovering from surgery or shut-ins. Come and see what is available and begin a new prayer quilt.

Coffee and snacks and conversation, busy hands – a great way to spend a January morning. Check us out!

You can bring your own project to work on.  
Come and enjoy conversation, snacks, and working together.

Questions? Call Peg Gardner 443-9627 or Belinda Zander 442-4222.

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## Outreach – Thank You for Bringing Joy to a Family at Christmas!

There's a family who are ever so grateful for your sharing in making this past Christmas very special for them! The parents provided a list of needs and wishes for the four children. We felt the parents should be included, and we received some ideas for them also. So – mom, dad, 18 year old son, 17 year old daughter, 5 year old daughter, and 3 year old son had a wonderful Christmas thanks to so many at Christ Church who were very generous in shopping for just the right gifts, plus including gift cards for all.



Nativity scene on displayed in Heritage Room

Thanks to Janelle Harris of TFI (The Forgotten Initiative, serving foster youth in our area) who reached out to us and also arranged for delivering our gifts. And there was a special gift for Christ Church that was delivered by Paul and Janelle Harris when they came to the Christmas Eve service. The father, who is a welder, crafted a large metal Nativity scene for Christ Church in appreciation for our making Christmas 2023 so wonderful for his family.



# Vestry Page

## YOUR VESTRY

### **CLASS OF 2023:**

Jim Hendry  
*Junior Warden*

Steve Preston  
*Senior Warden*

Belinda Zander

### **CLASS OF 2024:**

Robin Cardona

Steve Cole

Elizabeth Harper-Lawson

### **CLASS OF 2025:**

Roni Carlson

Heidi Erickson

### **RECTOR:**

The Rev. Dr. Daniel London

### **ARCHDEACON:**

The Ven. Pam Gossard

### **CLERK:**

Peg Gardner

### **TREASURER:**

Bob Hines

### **ASSISTANT TREASURER:**

Thomas Swanger

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*Minutes of the most recent Vestry meetings, Outreach, and Financial Reports are always posted on the Lewis Hall bulletin board.*

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**DECEMBER 17TH MEETING:** At its regular meeting, after opening prayer by Fr. Daniel, he announced that Joan Stewart had resigned from the Vestry prior to the meeting, for personal reasons. Discussion of how to fill the vacant position was added to the agenda as the first item of new business.

The Financial Report through November was reviewed and received. The 2024 budget projections were reviewed, and after adding \$1,000 for periodic mold remediation in the main church, it was provisionally adopted, with final review and adoption at the January meeting. The Rector's Annual Housing Resolution for the IRS was adopted, and the Treasurer's authorization to move funds from savings to the General Operating Fund to maintain a positive cash flow was extended through December 31, 2024.

Elizabeth Harper-Lawson requested that the Green Team report be pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion. The Senior Warden requested that the November 19th Minutes be edited to say that the October 22nd minutes were amended to state that "staff compensation would be no less than the equivalent minimum wage", adding the word "minimum." This was agreed without pulling the minutes from the Consent Agenda.

Vestry approved the November 19th minutes as corrected, and the written reports from the Rector, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Outreach Committee, Facilities Team, Joy Mass Team, and Emergency Response Team were approved.

Fr. Daniel reviewed highlights from his written report, and reported on the plans for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Senior Warden Steve Preston asked for any questions from his written report, of which there were none. Likewise, there were no questions on Junior Warden Jim Hendry's report. He reported that having had no response to his letter to the City Councilmember who represents our Ward, about the condition of the city alley between our parking lots, he and Facilities Team Leader Heidi Erickson plan to raise the issue during the public comments time at a City Council meeting. Vestry members applauded this approach and his perseverance!

Archdeacon Pam Gossard was absent for a Diocesan event and there was no report from her.

Robin Cardona reported on recent Joy Mass services and plans for Christmastide. Steve Preston estimated that there may be less than \$300 remaining of the \$3,500 ECS grant.

The Green Team's written report was discussed and one point was clarified; there was discussion, but no resolution, on how much of the Creation Care Fund balance of \$1,950 could be used for the Needs Assessment, beyond the \$1,650 from the Stewardship Auction. There were no questions about the Emergency Response Team's report. The Ad Hoc Committee on a Diversity Statement had not met yet. Fr. Daniel and Steve Preston updated planning for the Diocesan "Fearless Faith" Revival on April 26-27, 2024.

*Continued on next page*



Junior Warden Jim Hendry reported that he has begun excavating the area between the Fish Memorial Wall and the office building. He reports that he may hire someone to do the remaining excavation. It was suggested that maybe the Facilities Team could organize a volunteer workday to complete this landscaping project.

Fr. Daniel and Belinda Zander reported on the committee that is planning the Betty Chinn Book Launch event on Saturday, February 10, 2024. Most copies of the book have been sold, and the church will order more. A dragon has been ordered (it's on Chinese New Year). There was discussion of commissioning a song for the event.

Vestry received a report from the Nominating Committee (Belinda Zander, Jim Hendry, and Steve Preston) on contacts they have made with candidates. Per the church constitution, Vestry authorized self-nominations for Convention Delegates. Vestry agreed to change its monthly meeting day and time to the fourth Tuesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:30 pm starting on January 23, 2024, meeting over a potluck dinner.

Vestry reviewed its constitutional options for filling the seat vacated by Joan Stewart: either appoint the runner-up from last year's election to the remainder of the term, or place the remainder of the term on the February 4, 2024 ballot. After discussion, it was agreed to fill the remaining term by appointment, and Fr. Daniel will ask the runner-up from last year's election if they will consent. If they consent, the appointment will be voted on at the beginning of the January meeting.

Fr. Daniel updated Vestry on the search for a Treasurer and the Personnel Committee's planning for a search for a new Music Coordinator/Organist when Merry Phillips retires. Vestry signups for the December 31st coffee hour were completed. Due to lack of time, the remaining items of New Business were postponed to the January meeting.

After another very full and productive meeting, and with no minutes to spare, Steve Cole offered a closing prayer, followed by dismissal by Fr. Daniel.

**The next Vestry meeting will be on Tuesday, January 23rd at 5:30 pm in Lewis Hall, over a potluck dinner.**

# Called to *Serve*

LAY MINISTRY by Marty Vega



“Music is God's gift to man, the only art of Heaven given to earth, the only art of earth we take to Heaven.”

— *Walter Savage Landor*

Why does a church need a choir? Song is prayer or an expression of joy. The meaning of the poetry in our hymns manifests sacredness of the human voice. When choir members join the gift of their voices in harmony, we are lifted and inspired. We can learn how to pray and celebrate through song as we did when we were children in Sunday School.

How it's done: There is a 1 ½ hour practice each week plus your own practice 3–4 hours between rehearsals. Our choir sings during the 10:30am service each week, plus special services such as Evensong. The choir takes 2 months off every summer.

Other Christ Church ministries welcome newcomers as well, please contact us for more information about:

Acolytes, Eucharistic Ministers	Anne Pierson	→707 448-2025
Altar Guild	Kathy Clague	→707 822 5860
Choir	David Powell	→davidbpowell@gmail.com
Coffee Hour 8am	Peg Gardner	→707 443-9627
Coffee Hour 10:30 am	Lynne Bean	→707 822-6086
Concerts at Christ Church	Elizabeth Harper-Lawson	→707 445-1726
Contribution Counters	Christ Church Office	→707 442-1797
Eucharistic Visitors	Elizabeth Harper-Lawson	→707 445-1726
Green Team	Steven Preston	→213 304-3715
Joy Mass Team	Vickie Patton	→707 443-1825
	Robin Cardona	→707 267-5825
Prayer Circle	Jannetje Vrieze	→jvdutchgirl@yahoo.com
Quilters +	Belinda Zander	→707 442-4222
Readers and Intercessors	Marty Vega	→707 443-9782
Technical Team	Christ Church Office	→707 442-1797
Ushers and Greeters	Sharon Kalberer	→707 630-3100
Welcome Bags	Belinda Zander	→707 442-4222



# January Birthday Wishes



Watch over your child, O Lord, as *their* days increase; bless and guide *them* wherever *they* may be. Strengthen *them* when *they* stand; comfort *them* when discouraged or sorrowful; raise *them* up if *they* fall; and in *their* heart may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of *their* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Joanne Loureiro	01/05	Kathleen Lake	01/11
Latanya Jacob	01/06	Karen Price	01/13
Madelon Moore	01/08	Evan Smithler	01/17
Shirley Davis	01/11	Robin Cardona	01/28



## Happy Anniversary



O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church. Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Jimmie & Celia Nord	01/04
Bill & Barbara Walser	01/11
Lyn Klay & Jim Hendry	01/18



Did we miss your special day? The staff apologizes for our time perception disorder with any omissions of birthdays and anniversaries. Send your special day information to: [christchurcheureka@gmail.com](mailto:christchurcheureka@gmail.com)  
We want to acknowledge and celebrate your special day next year!



## The January 2024 Cycle of Prayers

for our Diocese and the Anglican Communion

Please pray for the diocese, congregations, and clergy listed below on the Diocesan and Anglican cycles of prayer as well as those prayers requested by our Bishop, Dean and Diocesan Search & Transition Committees.

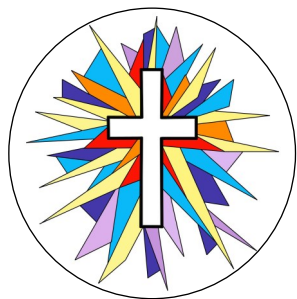
Every Sunday, the Diocesan Transition Committee requests that we pray for our bishop.

Look graciously on your Church and our bishop, The Rt. Rev. Megan Traquair, as she so graciously and ably serves as a caring, faithful pastor for your people, guiding and supporting us in our ministries during this time of Covid-19 and beyond.

Every Sunday in December, The Very Rev. K. Lesley McCloghrie, Dean of our Semper Virens Deanery, has asked us to pray for the people of St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Arcata.

**Intercessor:** We pray for the congregations of our Deanery this month for the people of St. Alban's, Arcata. Gracious Lord, reveal your love in their hearts during this Season of Epiphany. Bless the congregation's planning to develop disaster resiliency as they gather for their neighborhood dinners. Grant them an understanding of your love given as a blessing to all people, as they care for one another and their community; in Christ's name.

**People:** Lord, hear our prayer.



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**January 7**

**DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

All Saint's Episcopal Church, Redding  
The Rev. Aidan Rontani, Rector

**ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

The Scottish Episcopal Church  
The Most Rev. Mark Strange, Primus  
and Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness

**January 14**

**DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

All Saints' Memorial Episcopal Church, Sacramento  
The Rev. Jana Branson, Rector

**ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

Church of the Province of South East Asia  
The Most Rev. Melter Jiki Tais,  
Archbishop of South East Asia and Bishop of Sabah,  
Moderator of the Church of Pakistan

**January 21**

**DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

Belfry Episcopal & Lutheran Campus Ministry, Davis  
The Rev. Portia Hopkins, Pastor

**ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

The Church of South India (United)  
The Rt. Rev. K. Reuben Mark  
Deputy Moderator and Bishop in Karimnagar

**January 28**

**DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

Christ Episcopal Church, Eureka  
The Rev Dr. Daniel D. London, Rector  
The Very Rev. K. Lesley McCloghrie, Associate  
The Rev. Jeri Gray-Reneberg, Associate  
The Venerable Pam Gossard, Deacon  
The Rev. Anne Pierson, Deacon

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Napa  
The Rev. Robin Denney, Rector

**ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

The Anglican Church of Southern Africa  
The Most Rev. Dr. Thabo Makgoba,  
Primate and Archbishop of Cape Town

**February 4**

**DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

Christ the King, Quincy

**ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER**

The Anglican Church of South America  
The Rt. Rev. Nick James Quested Drayson,  
Bishop of Northern Argentina and Primate of the  
Anglican Church of South America

If you wish to offer prayers daily for the church in the world, our Anglican Cycle of Prayer has a daily list of diocese and clergy who would benefit from your prayer ministry. This list can be obtained via this website: <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/cycle-of-prayer/download-the-acp.aspx>. If you do not have a computer, I would be glad to make a copy of the 2023-2026 Anglican Cycle of Prayer for you. Deacon Anne.





# JANUARY 2024

Church Office • 625 15th Street • P.O. Box 861 • Eureka, California 95502-0861

Office Hours • Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday—9 am to 1 pm

Phone • (707) 442-1797 | Email • [christchurcheureka@gmail.com](mailto:christchurcheureka@gmail.com) | Website • [www.christchurch.org](http://www.christchurch.org)

SUN	M	T	W	Th	F	SAT
<p>First Sunday after the Epiphany 8 AM—Eucharist: Rite II 9:30 AM—Joy Mass Family Service 10:30 AM—Holy Eucharist: Rite II and livestream <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka">https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka</a> JUST ONE CAN SUNDAY</p> <p>7</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Chapel</p>  <p>2</p>	<p>Staff Meeting 10 AM Worship Committee 11 AM Lewis Hall</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 5:30 PM Heritage Room</p> <p>3</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>4</p>	<p>ORGAN CONCERT 7 PM</p> <p>See page 8</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Altar Guild 10 AM</p> <p>6</p>
<p>Second Sunday after the Epiphany 8 AM—Eucharist: Rite II 9:30 AM—Joy Mass Family Service 10:30 AM—Holy Eucharist: Rite II and livestream <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka">https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka</a> Green Team Meeting   12:30 PM</p> <p>14</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Chapel</p>  <p>16</p>	<p>Choir Rehearsal 5:30 PM Heritage Room</p> <p>Annual Reports DUE</p> <p>17</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>18</p>	<p>VESTRY Nominations Due</p> <p>19</p>	<p>Markin / Tschoepe Wedding 12 noon</p> <p>20</p>
<p>Third Sunday after the Epiphany 8 AM—Eucharist: Rite II 9:30 AM—Joy Mass Family Service 10:30 AM—Holy Eucharist: Rite II and livestream <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka">https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka</a> FRESH PRODUCE SUNDAY</p> <p>21</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>22</p>	<p>Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Chapel</p> <p>VESTRY MEETING 5:30 PM Lewis Hall</p> <p>23</p>	<p>Choir Rehearsal 5:30 PM Heritage Room</p> <p>24</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany 8 AM—Eucharist: Rite II 9:30 AM—Joy Mass Family Service 10:30 AM—Holy Eucharist: Rite II and livestream <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka">https://www.youtube.com/user/ChristChurchEureka</a></p> <p>28</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>29</p>	<p>Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Chapel</p> <p>30</p>	<p>Choir Rehearsal 5:30 PM Heritage Room</p> <p>31</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>		



# Anglican Journal of Theology in Aotearoa and Oceania

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*VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 2 | 2023*

Spring issue on Identity and Diversity

*Articles*

## The Sensual Gospel of St John the Evangelist: A Celtic and Anglican Reception History of the Fourth Gospel

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### **Abstract**

Within the Celtic Christian and Anglican reception history of the Gospel of John, there is a stream of interpretation that places unique emphasis on the human enfleshment of Jesus Christ. This emphasis invites readers of John's Gospel to experience the heartbeat of the divine pulsating within their own flesh, particularly through intentional engagement with the bodily senses. The scholarship of Australian Anglican and biblical scholar Dorothy A. Lee has helped illuminate this earth-affirming and flesh-affirming stream of Anglican Johannine thought, which can offer helpful and refreshing wisdom for Anglicans and indigenous communities today.

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**Keywords** Gospel of John, Celtic, Anglican, spirituality, senses, Incarnation

### **Sensing the Johannine Jesus on the Island of Iona**

On the island of Iona in the Scottish Hebrides, there is a well of St Brigid which is considered the last remaining well of its kind in all of Scotland. Located on the top of the island's highest hill called Dùn-I, it is a little pool of water cuddled beside a cliff, fed by a subterranean spring that flows from a deep opening within the rock. Pilgrims are invited to approach the pool and form their own fleshy makeshift chalice by cupping their hands together and submerging them under water. They are then invited to lift their cupped hands out of the pool and bring the water not



only up to their mouths to taste it, but also to their ears and eyes and nose so that the holy waters of St Brigid bless all their senses.

When I participated in this ritual under the guidance of Celtic spirituality teacher and author John Philip Newell, I recalled the invitations within John's Gospel to appreciate our five senses and to experience God's blessings through them.<sup>1</sup> Before cupping my hands together, I used them to stir the waters and then to notice my own reflection in the pool after the waters settled. I then rolled up my sleeves and brought up a hand-cupful of water to my ears, appreciating my sense of hearing as I listened to the wind and remembered Jesus's invitations to Nicodemus to reflect upon the wind's unpredictable movements.<sup>2</sup>

As I anointed my eyes with the well water, I appreciated the gift of vision, noticing the viridescent gleam of the grass, the textures of the crystal-granite rock, and the colourful beauty of my fellow pilgrims. I even began to appreciate the mud caked along the borders of Brigid's well, which has such a natural quality to it that one local resident referred to it jokingly as a "puddle." The mud reminded me of the ointment that Jesus made from his own saliva to anoint the eyes of the man born blind, who was able to see only after experiencing what it is like to *be* seen by Jesus.<sup>3</sup> I felt grateful for the experience of being known and seen by the pilgrimage guide and my fellow pilgrims, who like me were looking at much more than a mere puddle. We were basking in the glory of what has been called St Brigid's "Fount of Eternal Youth."

Although the well resides within the pasture lands of island sheep, I was assured that the water was safe for humans to drink. In fact, when we interrogated our leader with a strong dose of scepticism about the well's promise of "eternal youth," he told us wryly that he drinks from it at least once a year and that he's 97 years old. Smiling, I decided to fill my hand chalice and bring the water to my lips. As the naturally cool liquid refreshed my mouth and belly, I recalled the words that Jesus shared with the Samaritan woman at the well: "the water I offer you will become within you a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."<sup>4</sup> As I drank the water, I could not help but breathe in its earthy aroma through my nose, which I also anointed with the well's water. I then noticed how all the fragrances of the island – the sheep, the shores, the moors, and the hairy coo – filled my senses much like the way the fragrance of Mary's pure nard filled up the house in the twelfth chapter of John.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, I attended to my sense of touch by noticing how the water felt when I let my hands hover just centimetres above it and then slowly descend into its liquid body. After some more stirring and splashing, I brought my drenched hands to my chest to let the well bless my

<sup>1</sup> Although other human senses have been recognised, such as proprioception (a sense of space), the five senses of audition, taste, vision, olfaction, and touch have been traditionally upheld ever since Aristotle discussed them extensively in his *De Anima* 2.5–12. See Aristotle, *On the Soul*, translated by W.S. Hett (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 94–139. In this paper, I will primarily focus on the traditional five senses along with the "heart sense."

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word for wind (*ruach*) is the same word for "breath" and "spirit." This multivalent word shares resonances with the Māori word *mauri*, the breath of life, which is shared between two individuals when they gently press their foreheads and noses together in a greeting known as *Hongi*.

<sup>3</sup> John 9: 1–7

<sup>4</sup> John 4: 14

<sup>5</sup> John 12: 3

heart. While holding my hand to my heart, I noticed for the first time, as if St Brigid was waiting to reveal it to me, the heart-shaped contour of the pool. This heart-to-heart connection with the well helped me tap into the expansive power of the heart sense, through which I could begin to imagine and feel what the water felt. It was this sixth sense, the heart sense, that reminded me of the author of John's Gospel, the beloved disciple who reclined upon the bosom of Jesus,<sup>6</sup> where, according to the Celtic Christians, he listened to the heartbeat of his rabbi.

As I read the Fourth Gospel, I continually encounter its invitations to let the life-giving power of Christ wash over me and my senses the way the waters of St Brigid's Well did. I see how the Gospel invites us to value our own human flesh and to listen to the heartbeat of God pulsating within the earth and within ourselves. I have learned that by highlighting these sensual invitations in John, I stand within a stream of particularly Celtic and Anglican Johannine thought. In this paper, I will offer a highly selective and far-from-comprehensive reception history of John's Gospel among ancient Celtic Christians and modern Anglican scholars, attending particularly to the stream of thought that highlights the Fourth Gospel's invitations to appreciate our senses and to connect with the earth, the body, and the elements. This stream, which was shaped by the indigenous Celtic people's fruitful engagement with the Gospel of John, is one that can still offer helpful and refreshing wisdom for Anglicans and indigenous communities today.

### **A Brief Word on Authorship**

Throughout this paper, I will refer to St John the Apostle as the author of the Fourth Gospel, using John the Apostle and John the Gospel interchangeably. Biblical scholars question the traditional assertion that John the Apostle is the author of the Fourth Gospel because the Gospel attributed to him does not include several significant events in the ministry of Jesus to which he, according to the Synoptic tradition, was privy: the raising of Jairus's daughter,<sup>7</sup> the Transfiguration,<sup>8</sup> and Jesus's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.<sup>9</sup> Also, the Fourth Gospel does not include the calling of the sons of Zebedee who left their nets to follow Jesus, an event that we would expect to be included in a Gospel written by one of the sons.<sup>10</sup> The Gospel's author is designated within the text as the "Beloved Disciple" and many other candidates for the identity of this Beloved Disciple have been put forth: Matthias, the Rich Young Ruler, Paul, Benjamin, John the Elder, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, and the Samaritan Woman, to name a few.<sup>11</sup> Barring any new evidence, these arguments remain in the realm of conjecture. However, we do not need to resort to educated guesses when it comes to acknowledging the fact that we have a Gospel that has traditionally been attributed to John the Apostle and has, in fact, been referred to as "The Gospel of John" for most of church history. As an Episcopal priest within the Anglican tradition,

<sup>6</sup> John 13: 23

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 9: 18–26; Mark 5: 21–43; Luke 8: 40–56

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 17: 1–8; Mark 9: 2–8; Luke 9: 28–36

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 26: 36–46; Mark 14: 32–72; Luke 22: 43–44

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 4: 20–22

<sup>11</sup> See R. Alan Culpepper, *John, Son of Zebedee: The Life of a Legend* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 77–85.

I locate myself within the stream of Anglican Johannine thought that honours the classic work of Brooke Foss Westcott who argued “that the fourth Gospel was written by a Palestinian Jew, by an eyewitness, by *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, [and therefore most likely] by John the son of Zebedee.”<sup>12</sup> So instead of throwing our hands up and saying, “We can never know!” when it comes to the historical authorship and potentially redacted composition of John’s Gospel, I suggest we acknowledge and claim the text and traditions that we do indeed have available to us and try to glean from them some wisdom that might encourage us, refresh us, and help us to draw closer to the Word made flesh.

### **The Celtic Spiritual Father: Listening to the Heartbeat of the Divine**

Scholars have recognised significant links between Celtic spirituality and the spiritualities of tribal indigenous peoples around the world, especially regarding prayers and practices that help bind the people to the earth, the body, and the elements. Celtic spirituality author Esther de Waal writes,

Sharing Celtic litanies, creation celebrations, domestic prayers or protection blessings with Native American peoples in Oregon, with black South Africans in Johannesburg, or with ordinands’ wives in Tanzania ... has been an extraordinary personal experience, for their immediate reaction has been that this speaks to them of what they instinctively know, and they feel themselves totally at home, finding much that is already familiar in their own tradition.<sup>13</sup>

In my own experience of teaching Celtic Spirituality to seminary students, I was pleased and yet not entirely surprised to learn that a Navajo student felt particularly at home in praying the Lorica or Breastplate Prayer of St Patrick, which calls for a connection to the wind, the sea, the fire, and the rocks and for protection over the body.<sup>14</sup> In his book *The Conversion of the Māori*, historian Timothy Yates compares the Māori understanding of the Bible to the Celtic Christian understanding of the cross, which were both perceived as tools for protection of the body against evil spiritual forces.<sup>15</sup> Indigenous communities seem to resonate with prayers and practices that affirm and protect the body and its senses. The indigenous Celtic communities found such a strong resonance with the author of the flesh-affirming Gospel of John that they claimed the Evangelist to be the source of some of their most important practices, particularly their dating for

<sup>12</sup> Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes*, Vol 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), lii.

<sup>13</sup> Esther de Waal, “Celtic spirituality: a contribution to the worldwide Anglican Communion?” in *Anglicanism: A Global Communion*, edited by Andrew Wingate (New York: Church Publishing Inc, 2000), 52.

<sup>14</sup> “Patrick’s Breastplate,” in *Celtic Spirituality*, translated and introduced by Oliver Davies, (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 118. The student who resonated deeply with the prayer was the Rev’d Cathlena Plummer, daughter of the Rt Rev’d Steven Tsosie Plummer, former bishop of Navajoland and the first Navajo bishop of the Episcopal Church. Unsurprisingly, “St Patrick’s Breastplate” is included in *A New Zealand Prayer Book: He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa* (Auckland NZ: William Collins, 1989), 158–159.

<sup>15</sup> Timothy Yates, *The Conversion of the Māori: Years of Religious and Social Change, 1814–1842* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2013), 69–70. The Māori referred to the Bible as a gun (*pu*) to protect them from the evil spirit, *Hiro*.

the celebration of Easter as well as the style in which Celtic bodies cut their hair.<sup>16</sup> Both practices aroused conflict with the Roman church and subsequently led to the Synod of Whitby in 664 when King Oswiu of Northumbria had to decide which tradition he was going to endorse: the Roman or the Celtic tradition. To use Archbishop Don Tamihere's categories, this synod can be understood as a debate between the colonial (Roman) and the indigenous (Celtic) minds.<sup>17</sup> When Bishop Colman of Lindisfarne argued in favour of the Celtic practices, he appealed to the authority of St John, from whom both their dating of Easter and their style of tonsure had apparently derived. Bishop Colman explained,

The blessed evangelist John, the disciple whom the Lord specially loved, is said to have celebrated Easter this way ... I'm surprised that you are willing to call our efforts foolish, seeing that we follow the example of that apostle who was reckoned worthy to recline on the breast of the Lord; for all the world acknowledges his great wisdom.<sup>18</sup>

Although his opponent Bishop Wilfrid of York convinced King Oswiu to endorse the Roman way of dating Easter as well as the Roman tonsure, Colman's argument solidified the link between Celtic spirituality and Johannine spirituality. In his book *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, John Philip Newell sees both spiritualities as earth-affirming and flesh-affirming in contrast to Roman Catholic spiritualities that developed primarily out of the Synoptic Gospels, especially Matthew. Though the dichotomy that Newell sets up between Celtic / Johannine spirituality and Roman / Matthean spirituality might be over-simplified, he offers an informative contrast, especially when he writes,

In John's Gospel, the woman, Mary, takes a pound of costly perfume, anoints Jesus' feet and wipes them with her hair. 'The house,' says John, 'was filled with the fragrance of the perfume' (John 12: 3). In Matthew's version, on the other hand, an unnamed woman is described simply as coming to Jesus and pouring oil on his head as he sits at table (Matthew 26: 7). The fragrance of the perfume and the intimacy of the anointing and drying of Jesus' feet are entirely absent from the

<sup>16</sup> Unlike the Roman monastic tonsure which left a narrow fringe of hair around the back and brow of the head, the Celtic monastic tonsure left hair only on the backside of the head, a style that Celtic Christians claimed to have adopted from St John himself. Clinton Albertson, S.J. *Anglo-Saxon Saints and Heroes* (Bronx NY: Fordham University Press, 1967), 42 n. 17, as cited in R. Alan Culpepper, *John, the Son of Zebedee: The Life of a Legend*, 277.

<sup>17</sup> Archbishop Don Tamihere's sermon at the Pōwhiri and Eucharist for the Installation and welcoming of Dr Emily Colgan, the Manukura of The College of St John the Evangelist. Thursday, 10 August 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 1969, 3.25. According to the *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, Bishop Colman said, "Our fathers and predecessors, plainly inspired by the Holy Spirit as was Columba, ordained the celebration of Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon, if it was a Sunday, following the example of the Apostle and Evangelist John 'who leaned on the breast of the Lord at supper' and was called the friend of the Lord. He celebrated Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon and we, like his disciples Polycarp and others, celebrate it on his authority." *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, chap. 10, trans. Bertram Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop of Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), 21.

account. In John's Gospel there is a readiness to delight in the sensory and in the closeness of affection. Matthew is more cautious. John's spirituality accentuates ... the body [which] is regarded as good and intimacy becomes an expression of God's love.<sup>19</sup>

Since the Celtic Christians understood the author of John's Gospel to be their spiritual progenitor, we may imagine that John, in its affirmation of the flesh, played an important role in facilitating the growth and flourishing of Christianity among the indigenous Celtic communities.

In the ninth century, the brilliant pan-entheist Celtic theologian John Scotus Eriugena (815–877) wrote a homily on the Johannine prologue, which translator Christopher Bamford calls "The Heart of Celtic Christianity."<sup>20</sup> Inspired by the traditional understanding of the fourth evangelist as the eagle,<sup>21</sup> John Scotus begins his homily with a reference to the senses, saying, "The voice of the spiritual eagle resounds in the ears of the church. May our external *senses* grasp its ... sounds."<sup>22</sup> Echoing the Celtic appreciation of John, he describes the evangelist as the blessed theologian *to whom has been given*<sup>23</sup> the capacity to not only penetrate hidden mysteries but also to reveal them "to the human mind and the *senses*."<sup>24</sup> He then returns to that favourite Celtic image of John leaning on the bosom of the Lord, which he understands as a symbol for contemplative prayer. In this contemplation, Eriugena invites us to listen to the heartbeat of God pulsate within our own hearts, sensing that the divine is the ground and source of every beat and breath, throbbing in the heart of all creation. In this contemplation, we learn that God is our being; we are not God's being, but we participate in God's being through the grace of our existence; and it is through belief in the One who is divine by nature that we can participate in divinity and in the ultimate restoration of the earth, the cosmos, and all the celestial hierarchies.<sup>25</sup>

The Celtic Christian understanding of John invites us to connect especially with our heart sense and it is the ancient Celtic portrayals of the apostle himself that offer us guidance on how to get in touch with this powerful sense. The Lindisfarne Gospels as well as the coffin of St

<sup>19</sup> John Philip Newell, *Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality* (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1997), 101–102. Also, see Dominika A. Kurek-Chomycz, "The Fragrance of Her Perfume: The Significance of Sense Imagery in John's Account of the Anointing in Bethany," *Novum Testamentum* Vol 52, Fasc. 4 (2010), 334–354.

<sup>20</sup> John Scotus Eriugena, *The Voice of the Eagle: The Heart of Celtic Christianity: Homily on the Prologue to the Gospel of John*, translated by Christopher Bamford (Hudson NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1990).

<sup>21</sup> The symbols of the four evangelists are associated with the four living creatures described in Ezekiel 1: 5–10 and Revelation 4: 6–8. The man/angel represents St Matthew, the lion St Mark, the ox St Luke, and the eagle St John. Irenaeus, who was a student of Polycarp, who was believed to be a student of John the Apostle, was the first to correlate the four living creatures with the four evangelists; however, he connected St John with the lion and St Mark with the eagle (*Adversus Haereses* 3.11.8). Jerome's correlations became the most dominant (*Commentary on Matthew* Preface 3).

<sup>22</sup> John Scotus Eriugena, "Homily on the Prologue to *The Gospel of John*," in *Celtic Spirituality*, Oliver Davies (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 411.

<sup>23</sup> John Scotus explains that the Hebrew name John when translated into Greek means "to whom is given." Eriugena, *The Voice of the Eagle*, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Eriugena, *The Voice of the Eagle*, 22.

<sup>25</sup> For Eriugena, this final restoration, or *apokatastasis*, includes the restoration of fallen angels, even the devil himself. See John Scotus Eriugena, *Periphyseon on the Division of Nature* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011).

Cuthbert both portray St John holding his right hand on his heart.<sup>26</sup> It is by simply placing one's hand on one's heart that the heart sense can be accessed and activated. By doing so, we can practice receiving each heartbeat as a gift from the divine who infuses all of creation with the gratuitous gift of existence and who invites us to participate in the restoration of all things by abiding in this love.

The stream of Johannine thought shaped by ancient Celtic spirituality flows through expressions of medieval English spirituality as well as the writings of early Anglican reformers and poets.<sup>27</sup> Evangelical Anglicans and Anglo-Catholics alike were drawn to the Johannine image of the bosom of the incarnate Christ;<sup>28</sup> and this flesh-affirming stream persists in the work of several modern Anglican theologians and biblical scholars.

### John's Gospel as the Anglican's "Weakness"

Soon after deciding to write my dissertation on John, I met a Dominican friar and New Testament scholar who, upon learning that I was an Episcopal priest studying the Fourth Gospel, told me that "Anglicans have a weakness for the Gospel of John." He then proceeded to give me a list of recommended commentaries and articles on John, with the inclusion of the following charge: "As an Anglican you should own and consult the all-holy [Brooke Foss] Westcott; then [John Henry] Bernard, then the ineffable Sir Edwyn Hoskyns."<sup>29</sup> Although the scholarship of these late 19th- and early 20th-century Anglicans is mostly outdated and did not make an appearance in my dissertation, I decided to follow the Dominican's advice nonetheless, wondering why Anglicans were so drawn to this particular Gospel.

The early triumvirate of Anglican Johannine scholars to which I was first introduced all affirmed the absolute centrality of the Incarnation of Christ, expressed clearly in that foundational phrase: *the Word became flesh* (John 1: 14). Bishop Westcott, whose books filled

<sup>26</sup> Susan Cremin, "St. John and the bosom of the Lord in Patristic and Insular tradition," in *The Beauty of God's Presence in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Eighth International Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 2012*, ed. Janet Elaine Rutherford (Portland OR: Four Courts Press, 2014), 199, 204.

<sup>27</sup> This stream flows especially through the writings of medieval English authors such as the Venerable Bede, Aelfric of Eynsham, St Anselm of Canterbury, St Aelred of Rievaulx, William Langland, Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton, Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, and the author of *Guide for Anchoresses*; Anglican reformers such as John Cosin, John Trapp, Andrew Willet, Thomas Cranmer, and Richard Hooker; and Anglican poets John Donne and George Herbert. For a summary of the reception history of the figure of St John in Medieval Celtic Christianity, see Exequiel Monge Allen, "Metamorphosis of Eoin Bruinne: Constructing John the Apostle in Medieval Ireland" *Etudes Celtiques*, vol. 34 (2017): 207–223.

<sup>28</sup> Evangelical Charles Wesley, in his famous hymn, wrote, "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly" (*The Hymnal 1982: according to the use of the Episcopal Church* # 699) and Anglo-Catholic Edward Caswall wrote for the Feast of St John, "Upon the Saviour's loving breast invited to recline, 'twas thence he drew, in moments blest, rich stores of truth divine" (*Hymns, Ancient and Modern 1861* #51). Also, Anglo-Catholic John Keble, in his poem for the Feast Day of St John the Evangelist, wrote, "He upon Thy bosom lying thy true tokens learn'd by heart ... Much he asked in loving wonder, on thy bosom leaning, Lord! In that secret place of thunder, answer kind didst thou accord" (*The English Hymnal 1906* #33).

<sup>29</sup> Email from Benedict Viviano sent on December 30, 2012.

the shelves of most Anglican clergy in the late 19th and early 20th century,<sup>30</sup> insisted that every syllable in the Gospel of John was written to reinforce the truth of Christ's *enfleshment*.<sup>31</sup> Bernard highlighted the Gospel's frequent portrayal of Jesus as a true, flesh-and-blood human, which meant that he was sometimes tired, thirsty, sweaty, tear-stained and even emotionally troubled.<sup>32</sup> Hoskyns touched upon the "scandal" of sensuality within John, explaining that although the idea had flummoxed many spiritual people of ancient times, the divine Christ was not some ghostly and translucent apparition, but was indeed a physically visible, audible, and tangible human being.<sup>33</sup> Also, Hoskyns, with the middle name Clement, challenges the categories of his namesake saint, Clement of Alexandria, who contrasts John's *spiritual* Gospel with the Synoptic Gospels that focus on the sensible or bodily facts about Jesus.<sup>34</sup> Insisting that the spiritual can also be sensual, Hoskyns asserts that John's Gospel is indeed "a 'bodily' Gospel."<sup>35</sup>

Later Anglican scholars also succumbed to the power of John's Gospel. William Temple wrote his *Readings in St John's Gospel* before beginning his two-year stint as the Archbishop of Canterbury. In his commentary, he puts the Fourth Gospel in dialogue with his own personal experience of Christ in order to let the Holy Spirit speak to him through the narrative.<sup>36</sup> Although parts of the commentary may seem dated today, it remains a spiritual classic because, with this personal and meditative approach, he generally avoids getting caught up in the changing tides of biblical scholarship.<sup>37</sup> Like his predecessors, Temple affirms the central importance of the Incarnation, even claiming that the most crucial and critical phrase in all of Christianity is: "The

<sup>30</sup> Westcott's books were also on the shelves of Anglican clergy in Aotearoa New Zealand, a fact I can confirm after visiting the historic home of 19th century Anglican priest the Rev'd Vicesimus Lush (1817–1882), former vicar of Howick and later Archdeacon of Waikato. I was given permission to look through the books in his study and was not surprised to see several copies of books by Bishop Westcott.

<sup>31</sup> "The Word became flesh' is the central affirmation which underlies all [the evangelist] wrote." Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes*, Vol 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), xxxiii. Westcott was a part of another triumvirate of Anglican Johannine scholars, including Joseph Barber Lightfoot and Fenton John Anthony Hort, who all underscored the Incarnation in their scholarship. See Stephen Neil and N. T. Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1986* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 35. I intentionally use the phrase "every syllable" in reference to the following quote from Westcott: "Every syllable, as Origen said, has, I believe, its force and the words [of Scripture] are living words for us." A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, vol II (London: Macmillan, 1903), 75, as cited in Rowan Williams, *Anglican Identities* (Lanham MD: Cowley, 2003), 140.

<sup>32</sup> John Henry Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), 20.

<sup>33</sup> Sir Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), 52. Gerald West makes a similar point in the following book co-authored by Jenny Te Paa Daniel: *In the Beginning Was the Word: Group Biblical studies on the Gospel of John* (London: SPCK, 2009), 20.

<sup>34</sup> Several translators prefer to use "external" facts, but the Greek word used by Eusebius is *somatika*, which means "bodily": "John, last of all, conscious that the bodily facts had been set forth in the [Synoptic] Gospels, was urged on by his disciples, and divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel." Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History Books 6–10*, trans. J.E.L. Oulton (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1932) LCL 265, VI.xiv.7, 48–49.

<sup>35</sup> Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 17.

<sup>36</sup> William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel* (London: Macmillan, 1945), xiii.

<sup>37</sup> Rupert Hoare, "William Temple's *Readings in St. John's Gospel* and Social Ethics," in *Crucible: The Journal of Christian Social Ethics*, Jan–Mar 2003, Norwich: Hymns Ancient and Modern, 299, as cited by Stephen Spencer, *Archbishop of Canterbury: A Study in Servant Leadership* (London: SCM Press, 2022), 162.

Word became flesh.”<sup>38</sup> Because of the Incarnation, Temple said that Christianity is the most “materialistic” of all the great world religions. “Materialistic” not in the economic sense but in its affirmation and celebration of matter.<sup>39</sup> In the introduction to his *Readings*, Temple explains, “Based as it is on the Incarnation, [Christianity] regards matter as destined to be the vehicle and instrument of spirit, and spirit as fully actually so far as it controls and directs matter.”<sup>40</sup> Temple also challenges the idea that the Incarnation was a form of divine condescension, that the high and lofty God condescended to the low and disdainful condition of miserable human beings. “Incarnation,” he says, “is the only way in which divine truth can be expressed, not because of our infirmity because of its own nature. What is personal can be expressed only in a person.”<sup>41</sup> For Temple, John’s Prologue clearly teaches that God loves physical matter. God made it, God became it, and God wants us to experience God’s self through it. Temple also seemed to affirm and celebrate the goodness of matter in his own personal life because along with a weakness for John’s Gospel, he also had a weakness, according to his biographer, for strawberry ice cream.<sup>42</sup>

John A. T. Robinson (1919–1983) sadly followed in the footsteps of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns as well as Henry Scott Holland, Robert Henry Lightfoot, and even the Venerable Bede in the fact that he passed away before completing his work on John’s Gospel. However, his unfinished commentary reveals how faithfully he followed in the footsteps of the Anglican Johannine scholars who underscored the Incarnation. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, German scholar Ernst Käsemann and Dutch scholar Marinus de Jonge characterised the Johannine Jesus as “a detached god who seems to glide across the face of the earth” and as an aloof “stranger from heaven.”<sup>43</sup> Käsemann argues that the author of the Fourth Gospel exhibits Gnostic and Docetic tendencies, portraying Jesus as more of an ethereal spirit who only appears to be human. Robinson finds no convincing evidence for this argument, explaining that John had no interest at all in discarding or demeaning the flesh, but only in “allowing it to become diaphanous to spirit.”<sup>44</sup> Like Hoskyns, Robinson takes St Clement of Alexandria to task for creating a false dichotomy between the spiritual and the bodily. John’s primary theological concern, according to Robinson, is to shatter this dichotomy, which his Gnostic opponents seem to uphold. John insists that when the Word became flesh, the spiritual became bodily and sensual.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>38</sup> William Temple, *Nature, Man and God: Gifford Lectures*, Lecture XIX: “The Sacramental Universe” (London: Macmillan), p. 478 as cited in *Christ In All Things: William Temple and His Writings*, ed. Stephen Spencer (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2015), 130.

<sup>39</sup> William Temple, *Christ In All Things: William Temple and His Writings*, Lecture XIX, Gifford Lectures, ed. Stephen Spencer (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2015), 130. “[Christianity] is the most avowedly materialist of all the great religions.”

<sup>40</sup> Temple, *Readings in St. John’s Gospel*, xx–xxi.

<sup>41</sup> Temple, *Readings in St. John’s Gospel*, 231.

<sup>42</sup> Apparently, Temple’s passion for *Fragaria* contributed to his expanding waistline so much so that the dry cleaners mistook his wide liturgical vestment for a bell tent. Spencer, *Christ in All Things: William Temple and his Writings*, xiii.

<sup>43</sup> Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: According to John 17*, trans. Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), 75. Marinus de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God: Jesus Christ and the Christians in Johannine Perspective* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1971).

<sup>44</sup> John A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock, 1985), 345.

<sup>45</sup> Robinson, *The Priority of John*, 344.



Barnabas Lindars of St John's Cambridge echoes Robinson's rejection of Käsemann's claim, explaining that God's full revelation and purpose is only achieved "in the flesh-taking of the Word of God."<sup>46</sup> Anglican biblical scholar Richard Bauckham dedicates a collection of his essays on John's Gospel to "the memory of the great British Johannine scholars" and then provides a brief list, beginning with Brooke Foss Westcott, followed by Edwyn Clement Hoskyns and then later John Arthur Thomas Robinson and Barnabas Lindars.<sup>47</sup> Bauckham's list also includes Charles Harold Dodd (Congregationalist) and Charles Kingsley Barrett (Methodist). Although he surprisingly fails to mention William Temple, Bauckham remains within the stream of flesh-affirming Johannine Anglicans by pointing out that, in John, Jesus experiences human fatigue (4: 6), thirst (4: 6–7; 19: 28), affection (11: 5; 13: 23), anger (11: 33, 35, 38), anguish (12: 27), and anxiety (13: 21). Bauckham argues that John's portrayal of the human Jesus not only complements the Synoptics, but functions as "a key" to understanding them.<sup>48</sup> In an essay titled *Anglican Approaches to St John's Gospel*, Rowan Williams surveys the work of Westcott, Hoskyns, Temple, and Robinson, who each express in their own way what Williams calls "the tough paradox of Johannine faith," the paradox of a wholly other transcendent reality becoming accessible and tangible to us, in history, as a "fleshly human life."<sup>49</sup>

The Johannine affirmation that God became enfleshed in Christ clearly seized the attention, admiration, and awe of these Anglican authors. Of course, Anglicans are not the only readers of John who are drawn to the Gospel's proclamation of the Incarnation and who then underscore it in their scholarship. However, there is something unique about the spiritual magnetism between Anglicans and the Fourth Gospel. Anglicans tend to understand the Christian faith as primarily incarnational, even "stubbornly incarnational" as one of my clergy colleagues put it.<sup>50</sup> James Griffiss claims that belief in the incarnation is not only central to Anglican identity but also fundamental to the way Anglicans understand Scripture, the church, and the world.<sup>51</sup> Episcopal theologian William J. Wolf felt that it was "an incarnational piety" that has always dominated Anglicanism,<sup>52</sup> and Scott MacDougall upholds this affinity for the

<sup>46</sup> Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (London: Oliphants, 1972), 61–63, 78.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Bauckham, *The Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology*, 201.

<sup>49</sup> Rowan Williams, *Anglican Identities* (Lanham MD: Cowley, 2003), 124, 136.

<sup>50</sup> The Rev'd Christopher H. Martin

<sup>51</sup> James E. Griffiss, *Anglican Vision* (Lanham MD: Cowley, 2003), 28.

<sup>52</sup> Norwegian theologian and church historian Einar Molland (1908–1976) "attempted to describe Christian communions in terms of one special liturgical day. He associates Eastern Orthodoxy with Easter, Lutheranism with Good Friday and Anglicanism with Christmas. The doctrine of the Incarnation has dominated Anglicanism to a remarkable degree. The Puritans of New England were extraordinarily perceptive of how to be most 'un-Anglican' by outlawing the celebration of Christmas. The centrality of the Incarnation can be felt in Bishop Andrewes' sermons on the nativity, studied as a central theme in Hooker, Maurice, and Temple, and sung in the carol 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' by Phillips Brooks. Temple's title for his chief theological work, *Christus Veritas*, confirms this continuing trend as does the much more recent book, *The Human Face of God*, by Bishop [John] Robinson." William J. Wolf, *The Spirit of Anglicanism* (Wilton CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1979), 178. We see this Anglican emphasis on the Incarnation also in the sensual poetry of John Donne, George Herbert and Thomas Traherne.

Incarnation as a core characteristic of Anglican theology, which pervades and informs all other characteristics of the tradition.<sup>53</sup>

Perhaps Richard Schmidt put it best when he said it is the doctrine of the Incarnation that “vibrates most strongly in the Anglican soul.”<sup>54</sup> Certainly this embrace of the Incarnation has something to do with what my Dominican friend called a “weakness” among Anglicans when it comes to the Fourth Gospel. As I continued to follow this trend among Anglican Johannine scholars, a sense of pride and kinship with my Anglican ancestors began to grow within me as I found myself also succumbing to that same weakness.

### **An Anglican Johannine Scholar of Oceania**

It is the work of an Anglican Johannine scholar of Oceania, whose scholarship most clearly expresses the thematic stream we have been following throughout the ancient Celtic and modern Anglican spiritual traditions. I personally came to understand and appreciate the Fourth Gospel as sensual and flesh-affirming thanks to Anglican priest and professor, the Rev'd Canon Dorothy Lee, who teaches at the University of Melbourne. In 2010, she published an article titled “The Gospel of John and the Five Senses,” which functioned like magical mud made from Christ’s spittle, opening my eyes to see that to which I was formerly blind: the Fourth Gospel’s frequent emphasis and affirmation of the body and the senses.<sup>55</sup> I had previously experienced the Johannine Jesus as the “detached god” of Käsemann and as de Jonge’s “stranger to the world.”<sup>56</sup> However, thanks to Dorothy Lee, I began to see how much John’s flesh-and-blood Jesus loves the world and delights in earthly pleasures. After all, he inaugurates his ministry by miraculously bringing more wine to a wedding party in which the guests are already sufficiently drunk (2: 10); his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well is charged with nuptial and even erotic overtones (4: 1–42); he offends listeners with a description of the Bread of Life that is far too fleshy for their religious tastes (6: 60–61); he makes healing ointment out of dirt and saliva (9: 6); he receives an expensive and seemingly excessive foot anointing from a female friend (12: 1–8); and he himself strips down to almost nothing to wash his disciples’ feet (13: 1–11). This Johannine Jesus is no stranger to the world.

According to Lee, the five senses in John operate symbolically to point to deeper spiritual truths and enable us to grasp the “incarnational shape of salvation.”<sup>57</sup> Jesus himself said, “If you do not believe when I talk about earthly things, how can you believe if I talk to you about heavenly things?” (John 3: 12). One’s experience of God’s glory and one’s faith in Christ can be enhanced by attending wisely, mindfully, and with gratitude to some of the “earthly things” which the Gospel underscores, specifically the five bodily senses. In her book *Flesh and Glory*,

<sup>53</sup> Scott MacDougall, *The Shape of Anglican Theology: Faith Seeking Wisdom* (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 117–126.

<sup>54</sup> Richard Schmidt, *Glorious Companions: Five Centuries of Anglican Spirituality* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), xiv.

<sup>55</sup> Dorothy Lee, “The Gospel of John and the Five Senses” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>56</sup> Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: According to John 17, 75*. Marinus de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God*.

<sup>57</sup> Lee, “The Gospel of John and the Five Senses,” 127.

Lee highlights the fleshly and material realities that function as vehicles for experiencing divine glory and deepening one's faith.<sup>58</sup> Building upon her study of the symbolic narratives of the Fourth Gospel, Lee upholds the human flesh as a core symbol, if not *the* core symbol, in the Fourth Gospel.<sup>59</sup>

Unfortunately, Christianity has been used throughout church history to justify the denigration of the earth and the body. Author Thomas Ryan uses a Johannine metaphor when he says,

[The] biblical legacy is fine wine, but alas, Christianity has poured copious water into its wine and resisted the radical nature of its own good news where the body is concerned. On the one hand, it has the highest theological evaluation of the body among all the religions of the world [*thanks to the Gospel of John*], and on the other hand, it has given little attention to the body's role in the spiritual life in positive terms. High theology; low practice.<sup>60</sup>

In John's Gospel, I see high theology as well as invitations to spiritual practice as it offers several practical ways to deepen our love for these fleshly vehicles of God's glory. John invites us to listen to the wind, to enjoy the refreshing taste of cold water (or wine), to go outside and pick up a handful of dirt and observe all the tiniest details the human eye can see, to smell the fresh air in a forest, to massage our feet and wiggle our toes, to place our hand on our heart and to rest and abide in the God who gave us each a body and who became enfleshed in a body so that we may know that God's gift of creation is not just good, but in the words of Genesis, "very good."

### Conclusion: Celebrating the Gift of Enfleshment

This stream, which has underscored the importance of the Incarnation, has significant implications for Anglican spirituality. By affirming that creation can teach us about the Creator, "Anglican incarnationalism" has helped inspire British empiricism as well as American pragmatism.<sup>61</sup> This same affirmation has inspired the Anglican tradition's embrace of beauty and the arts, which are seen less as distractions and more as effective instruments for facilitating worship and devotion. Furthermore, incarnationalism motivates the pursuit of social justice as Anglicans not only perceive humans as made in God's image but also in affirming the human body as a vehicle for God's glory and the earth as the place for God's kingdom to come.<sup>62</sup> At their best, Anglican missions have been informed, inspired, and driven by an incarnationalism

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<sup>58</sup> Dorothy Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbolism, Gender, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (New York: Herder and Herder, 2002).

<sup>59</sup> Lee, *Flesh and Glory*, 36. The symbol of flesh is often overlooked. For example, Craig Koester does not acknowledge human flesh as a symbol in his otherwise excellent book *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Ryan, *Reclaiming the Body in Christian Spirituality* (Paulist Press: Mahwah NJ, 2004), xi.

<sup>61</sup> Scott MacDougall, *The Shape of Anglican Theology*, 104.

<sup>62</sup> MacDougall, *The Shape of Anglican Theology*, 120.

that acknowledges the inherent goodness in other cultures and offers the Gospel as a gift for the preservation, growth, and fulfilment of all human cultures.<sup>63</sup>

Along with inspiring faithful pursuit in the sciences, the arts, social justice, and missions, the incarnationalism expressed in John's Gospel and underscored throughout the Celtic and Anglican traditions invites us to appreciate, here and now, the gift of our bodies. This Celtic and Anglican reading of John's Gospel offers us a particularly powerful and biblically rooted set of practices to help us connect to the earth and our own human flesh, through which God chose to make his glory known.

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# THE SENSUAL GOSPEL

OF  
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A CELTIC, ENGLISH, AND ANGLICAN RECEPTION  
OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL



DANIEL DEFOREST LONDON  
COLLEGE OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST  
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