



# *Signs of Life and Love*

Easter 2023

**Dear St. Stephen's friends, Greetings this Easter Season to you all.**

God reminds us of the profound lesson of Easter with every turn of the season. Here in the Northern hemisphere we are on the verge of spring, a time when everything that has been quiet and sleeping during winter is about to come alive again, to renew itself in the eternal rhythm of God's world. Our spirits lift at the first green leaves and the shoots of the first flowers. Our spirits fill with joy at the Easter message: "Christ is risen indeed." Alleluia!

Jesus's death and resurrection are a model for our parish life as well. We are going through a difficult and challenging time, but the seeds of hope are starting to grow. We are coming together as a community as people step up to new roles. We cannot stay stagnant, frozen in the ground. We have new ideas germinating.

New initiatives include a local **Storybook Creation project**; Ken has ideas for a **congregational choir**; we have welcomed the first of many **guest musicians** at our Sunday 10 a.m. worship service; we have **revitalized our connection with the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF)**. Looking forward, we are developing a communications strategy

for online input and output to support worship, education and pastoral connection. Amongst other standing committees, a **Transition Team will meet shortly** to help us connect with the Diocese of Kootenay **A Path Forward** process.

We **continue to welcome 2-3 newcomers or visitors each week to our 10 a.m. service.** This past Sunday saw 37 worshippers praying and singing together. Roger and Ken continue to provide pulpit-supply service and Ken coordinates music many Sundays. The bills are paid and commitments are honoured.

We are finding ways to move forward, to be a faithful and thankful church family, while not discarding the things that are important to us. Once again, **our profound thanks go to everyone who has stepped up to be part of our parish family leadership team.** We have been blessed with the renewed dedication and desire to see St. Stephen's thriving.

Creation itself must go through continuous cycles of loss and renewal. Our liturgical year takes us through death and resurrection. Such processes are akin to our life now at St. Stephen's. Once again, we have the opportunity to learn the message of Easter, and to step forth in faith and love. "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev 21:5). Even me, and even you. Happy Easter to all.



Doug Carnegie, Warden



Betty Ann Xenis, Warden

## **HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES ARE AS FOLLOWS**

### **Maundy Thursday**

We join the parish of St. Saviour's in Penticton at 7:00 p.m.

### **Good Friday**

Back home in Summerland, Liturgy with music at 10:00 a.m.

### **Easter Sunday**

In Summerland, we celebrate the Festival of the Resurrection commencing with pre-service music at 9:45 a.m.