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Publisher | Bishop Donald Phillips

Editor | Kyla Neufeld

Accounting | Bernice Funk

Advertising | Angela Rush

Layout & design | [cityfolkcreative.ca](http://cityfolkcreative.ca)

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Editorial offices:

Anglican Lutheran Centre  
935 Nesbitt Bay  
Winnipeg Manitoba  
R3T 1W6

RLN exists to explore issues at the intersections of faith and life. In doing so we solicit and publish a range of opinions, not all of which reflect the official positions of the Diocese.

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1 Land, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, and Dakota people and the homeland of the Metis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work, and serve God the Creator here.

RLN welcomes story ideas, news items, and other input. If you want to be involved in this media ministry, please email the editor at: [rlnews@rupertsland.ca](mailto:rlnews@rupertsland.ca).

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To be a steward is to take care of something: an estate, a household, finances, employees. But there is an aspect of surrogacy that makes stewardship itself an office; stewards are always in the service of someone else.


April's issue of *Rupert's Land News* explores two ways in which we are called to be stewards: first to the Church and, second, to the environment. As Christians,

we are in the service of God to show God's love to the world. As the Church, we nurture God's love through worship and prayer and it, in turn, becomes the catalyst that informs what we say and do; we become the instrument by which it is shared with others. In this issue, Geoff Woodcroft, incumbent at St. Paul's, Fort Garry, writes about the power of a church that shares God's love generously.

We are also called to be stewards of the environment. In his article, Jamie Fox, the Pembina Valley Centre Director for A Rocha, talks about caring for the environment as an act of social justice – how the effects of climate change are often felt first, both here in Canada and around the globe, by the poor. He also

talks about the importance of environmental stewardship to reconciliation between Settlers and Indigenous peoples.

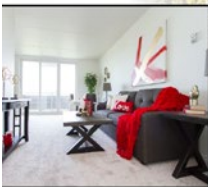
In the back half of this issue, we also have some tips from Beverley Eert about reducing the carbon footprint of our homes and some feature art for Easter.

Stewardship is about taking care of something, but there's more to it than that. To be a steward means to leave something in better condition than it was when we took it on. It means to care for something with all that we are, rather than putting in the bare minimum. When we talk about being stewards of the Church, or stewards of the environment, we are talking about the act of ensuring a better life for future generations. That is the challenge to which we all must rise. 

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## UPCOMING ISSUES

- ▷ In **May** we'll be looking at **Myths** and how they can speak to a contemporary context and the Christian tradition.
- ▷ In **June's** issue on **Pop Culture**, our last before summer break, we'll explore how to be more thoughtful consumers of media.

# CARING FOR THE BODY

*Donald Phillips*

This article might be about health and wellness or even physical exercise. However, having just gone through the loss of my mother – being very conscious of the effect of the vascular dementia on her body, and needing to carry out her instructions about the care of her body after death – my focus has been on life, death, and the body. We have also just celebrated the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ – the Gospel account of which is full of references to the body, as Jesus was tortured, executed, prepared for burial, and ultimately resurrected.

How we view and care for the body is very much an issue of stewardship. The treatment of Jesus' body in the last few days of his life was designed to devalue him and his body. By contrast, Joseph of Arimathea spared no expense in caring for Jesus' body after death. He wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and purchased a brand new tomb in which to lay it. Several women disciples also bought spices with which to anoint his body. All of these actions witness to the fact that a body is a *symbol*, meaning that it both represents *and participates* in the reality of the person it

represents. And this reality is particularly poignant for those who knew the person.


In the New Testament, and in many Christian prayers, the Church is referred to as the Body of Christ. In a very real way we, as the Church, the community of Christ's present-day disciples, *are* the Body of Christ in the world. And our stewardship of the Church represents how we care for this "presence of Christ" to those around us.

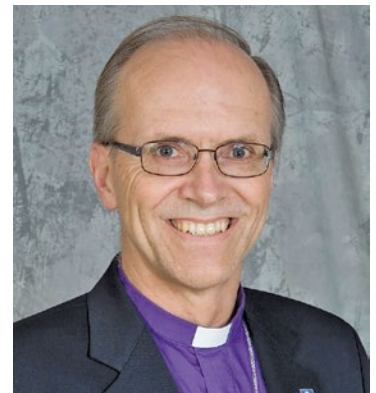
*Our stewardship of the Church represents how we care for this 'presence of Christ' to those around us.*

This realization is both glorious and sobering. It is glorious to think that, as a community of Christian disciples, we are anointed with the presence of Christ – that others can actually meet and experience the risen Christ in their interactions with us. And it is sobering for precisely the same reasons. The risen Christ has entrusted this revelation of God's love and truth to us. How we worship together, work together, share fellowship together, forgive one another, heal and support one another, and turn to share the same things with those not yet part of the Church is a representation of

the living Christ.

For 50 days we intentionally celebrate and focus on the living reality of the risen Christ. It is a festive time of the Church year. But first and foremost we are stewards of Christ in this world. Our neighbours, colleagues, and those we meet in need, won't likely meet the risen Christ in a garden as Mary Magdalene did, or on a country road as the two travelling to Emmaus did. They meet him in us – individually

and collectively as stewards of his body. The risen Christ's power and love is already available to us; we simply have to share it as generous stewards. 



△ *Donald Phillips,  
Bishop of Rupert's  
Land*

# THE VALUE OF A GENEROUS CHURCH

*Geoff Woodcroft*

We have been rehearsing the phrase “Stewards of Faith” since the Diocese of Rupert’s Land Synod 2016. The phrase seems new to most of us, and some of us have been unsure what it means; I still get lost in the deep images the phrase conjures up for me. But, I believe “Stewards of Faith” to be an increasingly valuable name for something we have always highly valued: Generosity.

Stewardship Development is part of a title I have been wearing for a few years. That title, like Stewards of Faith, is a bit of a puzzle for our diocese, in that some folks might think that my role is to enhance the flow of cash from pocket to plate and not a whole lot more. I, however, believe

my role is to teach how God’s generosity patterns and reforms the Church each new day.

Exploring God’s generosity in ourselves, in our worshipping communities, and as the Church called and sent in our neighbourhood(s) has always been a matter of Christian faith. Thanksgiving for God’s generosity is central in our worship tradition, personal devotions, and blessings; our practices of fellowship and community projects all show God’s abundance in hospitality offered and accepted. The Church survives, grows, and flourishes because God’s generosity continually flows through it to care for everything else around it. God saturates us, and indeed all that lives, in generosity.

Stewards of faith are called to do nothing less than what the Anglican Church of Canada has set as its Five Marks of Mission:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptize, and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation;
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

If you would like to support the work of *Rupert’s Land News*, please consider making a donation. Your donations help cover the costs for the Editor’s work – which includes putting together each Monthly issue of RLN and Weekly newsletter, maintaining the website, and advertising parish events – and the costs for layout and design with Cityfolk Creative.

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△ *Worship at St. Paul's.*

God generously equips us to engage the continuous call to serve by giving us the strength of skill, imagination, and ingenuity through one another and our environment, our rich tradition, and the story of God's saving acts through Christ. We accept the call to serve through our Baptism and life-long learning in the Church. We accept the responsibility of stewarding all that is entrusted to our care to further the reign of God.

So, how do we, Stewards of Faith, know we are responding well to God's call? How do we know we are wisely utilizing God's generosity to live out God's mission?

Our present standards for measuring the health of Church communities are largely quantitative metrics – Sunday attendance and weekly offering. These metrics may have served us well in the past, but unfortunately, with a few notable exceptions, do little to aid

Anglican faith communities in seeing their value and worth in God's mission. What if, instead, we chose to reflect upon the quality of relationships we share outside of the buildings that house the Church? For St. Paul's, Fort Garry, I use a resource called the Electronic Vestry Book, developed by Brian Ford. It documents St. Paul's vital mission and ministry happening in our wider community context. The software enables parishes to track,

tabulate, and report various things a parish might wish to measure. For example, it can measure ministry and mission projects and initiatives, number of disciples involved, hours worked, types of donations, and how church buildings are used as a staging area for such work. The book can also include narrative(s), so that a running journal may show how we embraced God's work *and* how we shared God's story with God's people. It goes

If you are interested in more tangible examples of the work religious organizations do for the common good of their communities, check out [the Halo Project](#). This project looked at the common good value, or "Halo Effect," of 10 congregations in Toronto, which offer services like weddings, artistic performances, suicide prevention, ending substance abuse, housing initiatives, food banks, and job training. It discovered that for every dollar spent by the congregations, the socio-economic worth was an additional \$4.77; that's money for services that Toronto didn't have to spend.



John Longhurst wrote about the Halo Effect for religious organizations in Manitoba for the [Winnipeg Free Press](#) in 2017. Longhurst argued that cities like Winnipeg, which now tax religious and not for profit groups, have failed to see the inherent good that these groups are doing. He maintains that with the taxation there is an eroding of the capacity to do good totalling hundreds of thousands of dollars for our communities. He also argues that should our groups fail to survive, it would be the various levels of government that would be forced to decide whether they pick up the good that was being done, or not.

a long way in showing us a clearer picture of who and what the Body of Christ is as a collection of interdependent relationships, and it shows me the good work we're doing at St. Paul's.

God uses our relationships in the Body to teach us about the skills and other resources that are available for us to do ministry and mission. As we "continue in the Apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and in the prayers," we see the generosity of God perfectly enabled for this world through one another. As one Body we look into the world and realize that God is stewarding us to share our combined gifts and strengths for showing God's kingdom. Each of our parish



Photo: Evan Young

△ *The St. Paul's choir.*

communities has a wealth of expertise and goodness, enough to positively impact the community that surrounds us. As we develop our relations within the Church, we build our capacity for sustained and vital ministry and mission in the wider world.

The Anglican Church is not a service industry, nor is it an exclusive *members only* organization that merely serves its own. The Anglican

– God asks stewards to pour their lives out for others. God asks stewards to meet regularly to tell of the news of God's work, to gain strength for one another, and to rejoice in God at all times and places.

A Church that wrestles and yearns to better understand the value and worth of each steward, is a Church that is actively yearning to hear God's call. rln

Church represents a significant Christian group that is very much alive in the mission field of God. Each steward of faith has an important story, which, once shared in community, looks sort of like a link in the chain of God's Saving Acts. You and I are part of the product that God pours into all life everyday

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△ *Geoff Woodcroft is incumbent priest with St Paul's, Fort Garry. Presently he serves as Rupert's Land Archdeacon of Stewardship Development, and is working with Resources for Mission Coordinating Committee.*

# CREATION CONNECTS US TO OUR NEIGHBOURS

*Jamie Fox*

I started defending the environment by arguing with people about the amount of napkins and paper towels they used. “You’re killing my future children!” is a phrase I’d often yell at my friends when I was a passionate, but naïve, teenager. In my mind, napkins were a symbol of our disposable attitude toward the world. Whether or not I was right is debatable, but it certainly helped that I was comfortable enough with being a slob that I could wipe my morally-pure jam hands on my pants.

Looking back, I don’t know if I could have coherently expressed why I felt that this was an important concern for Christians to have. I probably would have stumbled through a statement about how having “dominion over” creation didn’t give us permission to selfishly pillage creation. But I thirsted for a firmer basis for this value in Christianity.

I work with a Christian environmental organization called [A Rocha](#), which strives to see the transformation of people and places by showing God’s love for all creation. Through my work, I’ve come to find there are many diverse and wonderful

reasons to steward the environment from a Christian perspective. Even more, these reasons span the political spectrum and the Christian traditions.

God loves and cares for creation, and not just the human part of it. Psalm 24 tells us the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it. We can also see that the whole of the trinity is engaged with creation. In Colossians 1:16–20, Paul tells us that Christ Jesus is the creator, sustainer, and redeemer of *all things* – not just people! *Ruach* is the Hebrew word for “spirit” and “breath.” We are told of a star breathing God (Psalm 33:6) who also breathes life into all living things (Psalm 104:27–30). My favourite though, is how the Father brags to Job about the eccentricities of the animals: Ostrich is fast – but a terrible parent (Job 39:13–18). God considers creation to have inherent value.

We are part of creation too. It sounds obvious, but we often forget. In the creation story we are told that God spoke many things into existence. But God formed Adam from the *adamah*, a human from the humus, an earthling from the earth. We’ve been created for

and from the world we live in. We are made up of the same elements as the rest of our universe and participate in their exchange through things like eating and decomposing. Although we have created the illusion of distance from the natural world in our current society, we are still ultimately dependent on the natural systems of our world for our basic human needs.

But even if these two foundational points are not convincing, there are many areas of Christian interest that are heavily affected by the ways we steward the environment.

The poorest and most vulnerable people in this world are often affected first, and most severely, by climate change and environmental degradation. Raphael Magambo, the A Rocha National Director in Kenya, talks about how [70 percent of Kenyan communities depend on the soil as farmers](#).





When previously dependable weather patterns change, these communities face major challenges. This is a personal experience for him, as his brother has had devastating losses in crop yields because of changing weather patterns.

A Rocha U.K., along with other like-minded organizations, has created a resource describing a hopeful, Christian response to climate change. This includes an examination of [climate change's impact on the poor](#). In a video by Tearfund, the story of a man named Andrew, from Mala-wi. Andrew explains that because of a changing climate, his crop yield is halved. When the rain does come, it often causes flooding which covers his fields with feet of sand.

Here in Canada, a significant obstacle to



Photo: Tina Wiebe

△ *A Rocha practises conservation and restoration of the natural world through both scientific research and practical conservation projects. Here, a biologist searches for insects.*

reconciliation between Set-tlers and Indigenous peoples is the destruction of the land. [David Scott](#), who is a part of Swan Lake First Nation, spoke to us at an A Rocha event in November. Scott explained that he is one of the last on his reserve who knows the traditional songs

for the Sun Dance. The dance had several purposes, but one was to recommit to the land. We can see that this commitment perseveres, as groups of Canada's Indig-enous peoples are often at the forefront of environmental activism in Canada.

Scott is also one of the

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last of his generation who is fluent in Ojibwe and Saulteaux: "I see young people that are trying to find their way back.... They're struggling to find their way back but they don't know their language." Scott laments the loss of language as an obstacle to Indigenous peoples' healing. Land has always been a key influence on indigenous languages and identity; Scott suggests that reconnecting with the land can be a step toward healing. He described a profoundly helpful experience his mother had while revisiting the landscapes of her upbringing. If Settlers want to take reconciliation seriously, we must commit to environmental stewardship as a way to express solidarity with Indigenous peoples as well as to support them in healing.

Creation connects us to our neighbours. Creation is



Photo: Jamie Fox

△ Children learn about trees in the Pembina Valley.

God's and that alone makes it worth caring for. But when we come to understand how our consumer-based habits of use and throw away can have real impacts on others around the world, we see that environmental stewardship is also a way to practice love and justice for our neighbours, both near and

far. In my own life, caring for creation and understanding how this fits into God's work in this world has deepened my faith. It has also helped replace my youthful arrogance with a patient, yet active, hope for our world.



Photo: Jamie Fox

△ The A Rocha Pembina Valley Interpretive Centre's motto is "Footprints of Hope."



△ Jamie Fox is the Director of the A Rocha Pembina Valley Interpretive Centre, where he helps people to explore, understand, and enjoy creation as well as to recognize our place in it.



# PARISH NEWS **ROUND UP**



## ▷ Agape Table

After months of searching, Agape Table has found a new home at [The Wave Church](#) (364 Furby Street) after reaching a principle agreement with Waves of Glory Inc.

Agape Table servers breakfast every weekday to an average of over 300 low-income Winnipeggers and currently operates out of All Saints' Anglican. However, Agape Table is moving because space will no longer be available after All Saints' redevelops the property.

If you would like to contribute to the transition costs or kitchen renovations, [you can donate to Agape Table here](#).

## AGAPE TABLE'S TOP NEEDS

- Hats, mitts, scarves
- Coffee or tea
- Creamer or sugar
- Peanut butter
- Juice
- Vegetables for soup (fresh or frozen)
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap
- Socks
- Underwear
- Feminine hygiene products

## ▷ Diocesan Search Committee Update

We have received over 600 completed surveys that are now in the process of being analysed, the results of which will form a portion of the Diocesan Profile. Various diocesan ministries have also contributed their insights for inclusion in the Diocesan Profile.

The Provincial Canons require that the Diocesan Profile be made public no later than April 12 ("...at least 65 days prior to the day of the meeting of Synod..."), although the Search Committee is working to have the Profile available by April 6.

When the Diocesan Profile is published, nomination forms will be made available at the same time and the Provincial House of Bishops and members of the Synod of Rupert's Land will be able to propose nominees who have given their assent. Proposed nominations will be accepted by the Search Committee until April 27.

Individuals who have been proposed will be contacted to confirm their willingness and to provide in a standardized format information requested by the Search Committee. The names and information of each person to be nominated for election will be published by May 26.

Please continue to keep the work of your Search Committee in your prayers and also those who may be discerning a call.

—James Dugan, Diocesan Search Committee Chair



This page of the Parish News Round Up is sponsored by Richard Rosin. For more information, see his ad on page 7.

# REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT AT HOME

*Beverley Eert*

With Spring beginning to make an appearance, you may be thinking about sprucing up your home, or getting to those renovations you put off over Winter. Whatever it is,

here are some helpful tips for simple things you can do to reduce the carbon footprint of your home, as well as save on energy costs.

HEATING

It's not always easy to turn down your thermostat at night and/or when you are not home, so replace your old thermostat with one that can be programmed.

A lot of heat is lost through windows, so ensure all glazing has lined drapes or blinds... that you remember to draw every night.

To eliminate [vampire loads](#) (the way electrical devices consume power even when shut off), use power bars to switch electronics in both your office and your entertainment area, and remember to turn them off or purchase programmable units.

Unplug [wall warts](#) (like battery chargers) when not in use, or avoid them altogether.

At night, turn off as much power as possible, including refrigerators and freezers that won't be opened before morning.

POWER

LIGHTING

Use the lowest watt bulbs possible.

Replace multi-bulb fixtures with fixtures that require only one or two bulbs.

Task lighting is both more efficient and more effective, so place lamps in strategic locations and avoid the ceiling fixtures.

Always turn off unnecessary lighting; light only your immediate location.

Decommission multiple exterior fixtures.

If your older home needs more insulation, do the attic first, using either loose fill or batt insulation.

The easiest way to add insulation to exterior walls is to retrofit a layer of rigid insulation under the siding.

Replace single pane (and even double pane) with triple pane windows. Replace poorly insulated exterior doors.

INSULATION



◀ *Beverley Eert is the Creation Matters Working Group representative in the Diocese of Brandon. She has a degree in Architecture from the University of British Columbia and ran her own design and building company in Vancouver before retiring to Manitoba.*



# LEARNING TO LIVE WELL IN COMMUNITY

*Frances Drolet Smith*

Today many Christians are seeking fresh ways to express ancient truths. The Sisters of St. John the Divine, an Anglican order based in Toronto, is planting new seeds of community life and mission, renewing the monastic life both in the Church and *for* the Church.

Companions on an Ancient Path, an 11-month program that began in 2016, invites women of any denomination, age 21 and up, to spend a year in spiritual formation, learning to pray, serve others, and study while living among the Sisters in intentional community.

Why would anyone, much less a woman in her 20s or 30s, want to embark on such an adventure? The experiences of those who embraced the program in its inaugural year bear witness to the program's value.

Amanda Avery, a Companion last year and the director of a program for low-income children in Halifax, described her time in the Companions program as "exciting, stressful... yet joyful and said that, "The experience has changed me and has given me new insights and new ways to look at not just God, but myself and my community and the people that are in



Photo: SSJD

my community."

Another participant, Christine Stoll, a mathematics teaching assistant, found the Benedictine balance of the Sisters' life formative. "Living here, for me, has been good and healing," she said. "In terms of discernment, I wasn't expecting to have everything all figured out at the end of this year, but I think I have a clearer sense of what it is I need to do."

The Sisterhood's community life is based on the sixth-century St. Benedict's Rule, which has guided individuals and groups of people to live well in community by engaging in a balanced life of prayer, work, study, and leisure. Benedict invites his readers to "listen with the ear of your heart," a welcome invitation in a noisy world. This early monastic rule is part of the Wisdom tradition of Christianity and is firmly rooted in and inspired by the Scriptures. Despite its

antiquity, it remains fresh for our time, as it is primarily a guide to daily life lived in Christ and a call to live such a life extraordinarily well with others.

Living is an often hectic existence. Despite being instantly connected to people and events half way around the world through an assortment of technologies, we can feel increasingly disconnected from others. While the internet offers an online community for every interest, it lacks tangible, in-depth human interaction. Though products such as Facetime and Skype offer visual community in real time, the warmth of human proximity remains illusive. Living in an intentional community provides that face-to-face contact.

Those who engage the Companions program step into a challenging daily rhythm of prayer, study, and service; no doubt



Photo: SSJD

participants will be surprised by what they discover about themselves. Alongside their personal spiritual quest, a key aspect to being a Companion is committing to a life lived fully, faithfully, and authentically with others. Community life, both inside a Convent or out in the world, calls us to be our best selves. Where better to discern gifts and explore a

call than within a community already engaged daily in those very things and whose members have insights to share?

Maria Potesio, currently in the Companions program and formerly a Customer Relations


Co-ordinator for a bank, has found the program to be a life-changing experience.

"Through the acceptance and love of the sisters, I have been able to see God's love for me in a way I never saw it before. I am learning to be more vulnerable, open and honest with myself which has been healing."

Alice Chiu, another participant, appreciates the convent as "an oasis in the city," particularly in her vocation as a hospital chaplain. "Companions have a schedule similar to the sisters, which at the beginning felt overwhelming. But after several months, I am learning how to find balance in the program. I go to the chapel 10 minutes before each daily service and let the Spirit hold me in a few moments of peace. It is in the silence and stillness that I feel God is really near me. Spending time in nature, in the garden or the labyrinth, also grounds me, and makes me feel more able to give myself to my

work."

The 2018–2019 cohort begins in September. Any women interested in exploring the Companions program may request a detailed program description, application, and further information by emailing the Companions Coordinator, Sister Constance Joanna: [cj@ssjd.ca](mailto:cj@ssjd.ca) or phoning 416-226-2201, ext. 316. Applications will be considered anytime before June 15.

The Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine is a contemporary expression of religious life within the Anglican Church of Canada, founded in 1884. The Sisterhood is a prayer- and gospel-centred monastic community bound together by the call to live out the baptismal covenant through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. 

– Frances Drolet Smith is Rector of St. Alban's Anglican Church in Dartmouth, N.S., and an Oblate of SSJD.

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For more information about being a Companion, visit [ssjdcompanions.org](http://ssjdcompanions.org) and these social media sites:

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**EASTER**

# CELEBRATION OF THE LIGHT

*Anneli Anderson*



*Anneli 3*

Sanctifier of time and space,  
 maker of dancing quarks and ancient quasars,  
 of energy and element,  
 blessed are you, God of Gods.  
 Your saving love endures forever;  
 your holy light pierces the cold darkness of death and chaos;  
 you cut a covenant of life with your creatures,  
 which no evil can overcome.  
 May the glorious radiance of resurrection  
 dispel the shadows in our lives and conform us more closely to your risen Christ,  
 to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 be all honour, praise, and glory. Amen.

*—Revised Common Lectionary*



◁ Praise be to God, the Father of lights and colour. His faithfulness never ceases to amaze me. I am humbled that the Creator of the universe is faithful to meet me at the empty canvas time and again, allowing me to partner with him with the creative spirit in me.  
*—Anneli Anderson lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband Dave, and loves to make things, garden, and take walks. You can see more of her artwork at [studioanneli.com](http://studioanneli.com) and on Instagram [@designanneli](https://www.instagram.com/designanneli).*