

WORD MADE FLESH

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CONNECTING CHURCH &
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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, 2, and 3 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.

Cover: [Jr Korpa](#)



Photo: Cinna Baran

Word Made Flesh

This is my favourite icon. It's quite simple, especially in comparison to many other icons. Yet, for some reason, this icon has always captivated me in a way that others haven't; it demands my attention, yet the visual itself is extremely unpretentious. Despite its simplicity, it is rich with imagery that point to Jesus as the God-man.

Clothed in red and blue—colours which are often used to represent humanity and divinity, respectively—this is an image of the adult Jesus: The God-man. With one arm, He cradles a book (the Gospels), and with the other, He gives a gesture—a blessing of attentive peace. His halo, one which is borne only by Christ in iconography, contains the Greek letters meaning “He Who Is,” recalling God’s words to Moses from the burning bush. As though the halo were not enough,

the Greek abbreviations for “Jesus Christ” (“IC” and “XC”) appear beside His head. He gazes directly outward, meeting the eyes of the one who gazes back at Him.

Then, one looks to the words that are just to the left and right of His neck. The Greek *Pantokrator* is often translated as “Almighty One.” Yet, if you were tasked with making an image of the Almighty God, would you choose to depict Him in this way? Not with an army, and not with earthly splendor, He is depicted with a book, a simple gesture, and a human body.

Perhaps this is why this image of the Incarnation has always calmly demanded my attention. God does not arrive in overwhelming spectacle, but in a form that can easily be overlooked: a human face and a body of flesh. To behold Christ rightly requires more than sight alone; it requires the kind of attention that is willing to recognize the Almighty hidden within the ordinary.

If there is one thing that all our authors draw attention to, it's to be attentive. Be attentive to where God is, regardless of whether those places are expected or unexpected. Anil Pinto-Gfroerer reminds us that God is present in conversation, questions, and in the beauty of the created world. Krista Waring and Rev. Deacon Tanis Kolisnyk honour the memory of Elder Rev. Barbara Shoomski by speaking of the many ways in which she showed incarnational love to so many who were lucky enough to encounter her. The Right Reverend Rachael Parker reminds us that we are called to be *Christians*, “little Christs,” and continue the work of Jesus as best we can. Lastly, Donna Royer reminds us to notice and savour the presence of God whenever we can—in ways big, but more notably, in ways we may deem “small.”

Peace be with you; I hope you enjoy this issue.



CINNA BARAN

Editor of Rupert's Land News



Photo: [Nadin Mario](#)

Walking Together: Indigenous Matriarchs and the Living Christ

KRISTA WARING AND
REV. TANIS MCLEOD KOLISNYK

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory...”¹

The Spirit of God chose to dwell among us, becoming present and knowable. This is God choosing to be in a relationship—to walk with the people that God created. In doing so, the sacred is not separate from the world. Jesus went to the fringes to heal, feed and teach. He knew hunger, grief, joy and fatigue. God walks on the land, touches others, and finds joy in things like watching children play and learning about

community life. Jesus welcomed everyone to the table while speaking truth to power. He refused to become a traditional king, but rather the Prince of Peace.

Theologian Diane Butler Bass has written about the Lord’s Table as a place of welcome. In *Grounded: Finding God in the World*, she broadens the link among earth, body, and table, seeing the table as a sacred place where God meets people in tangible ways. In *A Beautiful Year*, Bass says, “Go back to the Gospels and see how many of the stories take place at tables, distributing food, or inviting people to a meal. Indeed, some scholars have suggested that Jesus’ primary work was organizing suppers as a way to embody the coming Kingdom of God.”² She speaks of a “Holy Thursday Revolution” and suggests that the “Last Supper (under Roman rule or any empire) was also the First Feast of the Kingdom That Has

¹ John 1:14

² Diane Butler Bass, *A Beautiful Year* (New York: St. Martin’s Essentials, 2025), 161

Come...shared in a community of mutual service, reciprocity, equality, abundance, generosity, and unending thanksgiving.”³ The Word made flesh is at the heart of lived theology, where the Lord’s Table is a place of reconciliation and transformation, and our ordinary lives become a sacred encounter. Through Jesus, God fully entered human life—into body, land, relationship, and story. This aligns well with an Indigenous spiritual value system. The table becomes a place where people are seen, stories are shared, dignity is restored, and community is formed.

During the Easter season, our Anglican Liturgical readings offer us stories such as the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-25). Jesus journeys with us and teaches us through those transitions. Even if we feel He is not there, He is with us, and He reveals Himself at the table in the breaking of the bread. I am sure many of us can recall sacred moments when God’s love becomes visible. Seeing God in the midst of us is a beautiful part of Christian and Indigenous life.

Last fall, the Diocese of Rupert’s Land was invited to meet David A. Robertson to discuss his book “52 Ways to Reconcile.” The day was rich with learning, questions to ponder, and challenges toward intentional steps along this pathway to reconciliation. All were invited to consider what it means to ‘live among’ others in a good way.

What insights emerge when Indigenous matriarchal wisdom is placed in conversation with the Christian doctrine of Incarnation? We learn a beautiful lesson that knowledge is not owned—it is carried and shared. What stirs within us when we witness Indigenous matriarchs walking alongside the story of God embodied? In many Indigenous traditions (including Métis, Cree, and Anishinaabe), women hold responsibility for life-giving roles; biologically, we are the water carriers and those who embrace spiritual responsibility. Stories begin to breathe in new ways.

As a Diocese, we have just lost Elder Barbara Shoomski. She was dearly loved by friends and family, by her parish at All Saints Anglican Church in Winnipeg, by Sacred Circle, and beyond our church walls in the wider community, including her home in Grand Rapids, Manitoba. She will be deeply missed. Her ministry exemplified that of an Indigenous matriarch, sharing lived realities through stories passed down from generation to generation. She has entrusted us with the continued work of reconciliation in the church and in the community.



Photo: [All Saints Anglican Church](#)

At her [Celebration of Life Service](#), it was clear that Elder Barbara intentionally responded to God’s call to love others and make God known. She carried God’s living word throughout her journey of giving and receiving love. Many Indigenous people deeply appreciated the life-giving elements of Indigenous spirituality, alongside the beauty of Anglican liturgy and song. An Honour Song was offered with the Indigenous hand drum and Cree prayers. The drum’s heartbeat affirmed that we are all welcome and belong here. It called us in and, in our time of grief, beckoned us to come closer and be present. Each deliberate strike was spaced like a footstep. God is here; we are here together; we remember and give thanks for a life well lived. Elder Rev. Barbara is now at rest with her ancestors.

³ Bass, *A Beautiful Year*, 162

Many Indigenous Matriarchs stand at the centre of life-giving theology, modelled spiritually, culturally, and communally. Their authority comes not from hierarchy but from relational integrity and lived experience. Elder Rev. Barbara Shoomski was a land and water protector, deeply



Photo: [All Saints Anglican Church](#)

committed to the MMIWG2S+ movement. She cared for people on Winnipeg’s streets, and her heart was in the ministry of Kakinow Ntomakanik, an Indigenous Ministry at All Saints Anglican Church that works -alongside Agape Table. She devoted her time to front-line ministry rather than committee work. Indigenous Matriarchs lead by listening, being present, and guiding those with ears to hear. She taught Indigenous Spirituality courses at the Canadian Mennonite University and St John’s College, in partnership with Rev. Tanis Kolisnyk, and reflected these values, nurturing emerging voices to take up and sustain the work of reconciliation. Matriarchs raise, guide, and nurture the next generation; they beautifully reflect the ongoing work of love in Indigenous communities and among all people.

In closing, we offer this prayer to start the day:
 Forgive the many errors that I made yesterday,
 and let me try again dear God, to walk closer in your way.
 But Father, I am well aware I can’t make it on my own.
 So take my hand and hold it tight, for I can’t walk alone.



KRISTA WARING (LEFT)

For more than a decade, Krista Waring has been intentionally making space for Indigenous voices to inform her life here in Treaty One territory. In March, Krista became an elected Warden at Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church in Winnipeg.

REV. TANIS MCLEOD KOLISNYK (RIGHT)

Rev. Deacon Tanis is Red River Métis who serves at Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church in Winnipeg and St Bartholomew’s Anglican Church in Winnipeg Beach. She is designated as a Knowledge Keeper by the Elders Circle of the Diocese of Rupert’s Land, is entrusted with coordinating Rupert’s Land Wechetowin diocesan initiatives, and has taught for many years at various institutes throughout Winnipeg.



Photo: Anil Pinto-Gfroerer

The Proximity of Heaven and Earth: Divinity imbued in nature

ANIL PINTO-GFROERER

The last time I wrote, we were in the depths of Holy Week, entering into the sublime solemnity of that festival. Today, I write to you from the stark and simultaneously bright Dawson City, Yukon. This town sits amidst snow-dusted mountains and at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers. It is the latest stop on a road trip undertaken by my close companions, Iona, Seika and I. Since the trip began in Winnipeg on April 18th, we have been continuously

bombarded by the immense beauty of this land in a manner which makes the reality of the incarnation, expressed in the divinity we witness imbued in nature, impossible to ignore.

As quite a young twig, I find the notion of incarnation quite difficult to understand, let alone explore, and so I turn again to the words of the former archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. In an article entitled “Heaven Meets Earth: In the birth of Christ, God comes to restore and set free every person and all creation,” Williams writes, “heaven and earth are not mutually remote territories but closer to one another than we could think.”¹

¹ Rowan Williams, “[Heaven Meets Earth: In the Birth of Christ, God Comes to Restore and Set Free Every Person and All Creation](#),” Plough, December 8, 2023

While theoretically it is possible to accept the fact that heaven and earth are nearer than we can imagine, it is a difficult notion to grasp and an even harder one to live into. One key question which the topic of incarnation brings up, is 'if Christ, the Godhead, love incarnate, takes on our human form, what does that mean for the way in which we live out our corporeal existence?'

This question came up in a recent conversation the three of us had with our old roommate and dear friend Sascha, whom we met up with in Vancouver. The conversation started when Sascha, who somehow found a way to beautifully break open the strong knot between the three of us and enter into our tightly wound dynamic, stated that the thing he found most difficult about modern Christianity was the way in which people thought of themselves as more Godlike than others. He went on to state that it was

actually, more specifically, the way in which people thought that they were capable of emulating Christ. Although we approached the conversation from a variety of perspectives, it seemed that we were all troubled by this idea and in some ways confused about where that left us.

If there is something seemingly 'off' about this notion of emulating Christ, but it is given as a clear directive in the final commandment, "...that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another,"² how are we meant to live in the world as Christians? How are we meant to live as embodied persons in a way which honours the God who crafts us in his likeness and who visits us in our own human flesh? Before exploring these questions, it is important to clarify two things. Firstly, the

² John 13:34-35



Photo: Anil Pinto-Gfroerer

language of the commandment indicates that Christ is not commanding us to be exactly like Him; we are not told that this is something we are even capable of. Secondly, the thing that Sascha was highlighting as problematic was the claim of superiority present in the idea of becoming God-like, a notion which does not have a place within this commandment.

So then, how are we to live? Williams states earlier in his article that: “To be ‘godlike’... is not to be in control or ‘on top of’ everything.”³ It is not a matter of refining our actions to perfection – a Sisyphean task. Williams highlights that by taking our fragile human forms, Christ shows us the path. By fully living into our mortality, the Godhead turns our awareness towards the ways in which we are reliant on each other. Even beyond our basic needs, which are met physically, it is impossible for love to be encountered entirely apart from our bodies – it is continuously received through our senses via images, sounds, sensations, and words. Despite the fact that humanity is incapable of

reaching perfection, without our bidding, the one who is perfect enters into our history and redeems our broken bodies making them the site of integration into his divinity. Williams writes: “the Redeemer...is not ashamed to be fed by what God has made, by the warmth and the shelter and the milk of a human body.”⁴ This quotation is striking in that it explores something more of the importance of receptivity, a topic which Williams returns to time and time again. Christ shows us that the way to be God-like is to remain permeable to what is given, to accept our reliance.

While this path can steer us away from any notion of God-like superiority, it is not an easy path for us as pride-filled humans to undertake. However, when we encounter the non-human natural world: the towering cliffs, the grazing bison, the impossibly intricate blossoms, the

³ Rowan Williams, “Heaven Meets Earth: In the Birth of Christ, God Comes to Restore and Set Free Every Person and All Creation.”

⁴ Rowan Williams, “Heaven Meets Earth.”



Photo: Anil Pinto-Gfroerer



Photo: Anil Pinto-Gfroerer

migrating hummingbird, the running streams, the golden sun — it seems to live into this permeable receptivity with less conscious effort. As evidenced by the way in which mycelium develops, and the ways in which food chains and ecosystems operate, non-human nature understands its responsibility to live in interdependence without thinking about it. If you have had the privilege of sitting with an Elder or Indigenous teacher and hearing them discuss our relationship to the natural world, you may have heard the term “All My Relations.” This teaching, held by many Indigenous groups of this land, relates to a way of living which honours each being on this earth as family and as interconnected.⁵

Williams continues on in his article to say: “Once we have been healed from that lethal wound that has broken our connection with living truth, healed from the terrible fiction that freedom is separation rather than communion, the world is made new.”⁶ Williams here addresses the incarnation as being fundamentally about the way in which

Christ takes on our human form and makes our bodies the conduit through which we are connected to him. Therefore, the invitation for us as Christians is to live into our corporeal state in a way which honours our place as one part of the body of Christ.

⁵ Rod McCormick, “A Message From Our Director,” [All My Relations: Faculty of Education and Social Work: Thompson Rivers University](#), accessed April 30, 2026

⁶ Rowan Williams, “Heaven Meets Earth.”



ANIL PINTO-GFROERER

Anil Pinto-Gfroerer is a recent graduate of the University of King’s College, Halifax, and is a lover of art history. She currently works as a bookkeeper and is part of the congregation of St. Margaret’s Anglican Church. She spends most of her free time with her friends Seika and Iona, eating junk food and conversing about the world.



God with some Skin

RACHAEL PARKER

Photo: [Peter Olexa](#)

Good day, everyone. Bishop Rachael from the Diocese of Brandon writing. While I am tickled pink to have been asked to write another article for *The Rupert's Land News*, I must say that I find the topic interesting (and challenging) considering the time in which I am writing. It is the Easter Season. Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia! Not many weeks ago we heard Jesus tell Mary, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father."¹ As we walk through this Easter season, we are walking with the Risen but not yet ascended Lord. His time of "Incarnation" has come and gone, and now He is somehow "in between"—He is here, but preparing us for when he won't be...

I have always found myself in a bit of a theological pickle during Eastertide. I am so excited that we get to live in the glory of the Lord as He has broken the very bonds of death and shared with us the promise of eternal life. Yet I am also aware of a nebulous feeling of wanting desperately to hold onto what isn't actually here. My brain knows the Resurrection has happened and that the Ascension is coming. My heart knows that we all need both the Resurrection and the Ascension for God's plans to fully be made manifest. Yet, my gut has this low-grade dread that

struggles with the reality that He was here—really here—and now He is sort of here, but preparing to not be here. Confused? Welcome to my world! I theologially know that this is all Truth. I spiritually know that this is all Grace. However, that part of me that is fully human, prone to second-guessing, and houses a fair amount of room for sheer doubt, leaves me pondering and silent (maybe I am channeling Mary...)²

So, here I am in Eastertide, pondering the Incarnation and wondering what is it that God is asking us to consider. Let's begin with a definition. According to Merriam-Webster, "Incarnation, derived from Latin meaning "to put on flesh," refers to a deity, spirit, or abstract quality embodied in an earthly, human, or animal form. It is the physical manifestation of a spiritual or divine being, or the extreme embodiment of a concept. The term most commonly refers to the Christian doctrine of God becoming human through Jesus Christ."

¹ John 20:17

² Cf. Luke 2:19, 51



Photo: [Jan Antonin Kolar](#)

In our Christian tradition, we have approximately thirty-three years of Jesus' Incarnation to learn from. We have four Gospels which directly connect how Jesus related with us in human form—incarnate. We are also gifted with the truth that God humbled Godself to become one like us, with us. Through the Incarnation, humanity was blessed to have God walking in our midst, teaching, healing, laughing, crying. God became one of us. The Incarnation of the Very God into the Son, Jesus, allowed humanity then and now to participate in the greatest gift and miracle this side of eternity. The Incarnation gave us a foretaste of what is to come, when we will walk with Jesus in our own eternal incarnation as a forgiven, redeemed, child of God in eternity. Yet for right now, we are here, walking in the world that Jesus walked in as the Incarnate Son of God, but in which we walk as incarnate children of God.

If you're paying close attention, you will notice that I capitalized the "I" when I referred to Jesus' Incarnation, but I used the lower case "i" when I referred to us as children of God. This is quite intentional. You see, the longer I live, study, pray, and try hard to walk the path Jesus has prepared ahead of me, the more convinced I become that *Jesus continues to be Incarnate through us as we do our best to be incarnate Christians—little Christs*. We can debate the Incarnation until the Second Coming, or we can live the vocation Jesus has placed upon each of us as we incarnate

His love, His purpose, and His desire that all of God's creation—each of God's children—would choose to share in His Incarnation and Resurrection and Ascension.

In Ronald Rolheiser's book *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*, the author tells the following story:

"A four-year-old child awoke one night frightened, convinced that in the darkness around her there were all kinds of spooks and monsters. Alone, she ran to her parents' bedroom. Her mother calmed her down and, taking her by the hand, led her back to her own room, where she put on a light and reassured her child with these words: 'You needn't be afraid, you are not alone here. God is in the room with you.' The child replied, 'I know that God is here, but I need someone in this room who has some skin!'"³

What that little girl was asking for was an incarnation of God, right there in the room with her. She needed to see and feel and hear the presence of Jesus to satisfy the very real humanity that was hers. In essence, was she not asking for exactly what God gifted us in Jesus Incarnate? She wanted—the presence of the One who loved her, and knew her, and whom she could absolutely trust to protect her. So, what did she do? She went to her mother who became the

³ Rolheiser, Ronald, *The Holy Longing: The Search For a Christian Spirituality*. (New York, New York: Doubleday, 1999), p 77

incarnation of Jesus for her. She needed God with “some skin” and God moved in her mother’s skin to give her exactly what she needed.

You and I, and all those generations who came after the Mary’s, the Apostles, and the first disciples, have been longing to know that we have a Saviour right here with us. If we are honest with ourselves, we will admit that we would like to see God with some skin on from time to time. Wouldn’t that just make everything a little bit easier?

There is something powerful and comforting and encouraging in knowing that God is Incarnate right here with us in Jesus. As Christians, we believe that Jesus’ Incarnation gave Him that extra understanding of being fully human, which allows us to be comforted knowing that God does get it. Jesus lived the real human life and can empathize with the human state in all its glory and frailty. And then there is the truth that Jesus was also fully divine. That truth allows us to also know that we have been in relationship—full relationship—with the fully divine God too. In Jesus’ Incarnation we have been, and continue to be, privileged to be in a completely whole and encompassing relationship with God through Jesus Christ, who was, is, and ever shall be “God with some skin.”

As with any real gift worth receiving, though, the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ brings with it the responsibility of all of us to continue in that Incarnational relationship by having incarnational relationships ourselves. In our baptism we enter a new kind of all-encompassing relationship with the Triune God which then calls us and challenges us to become living incarnations of Jesus’ love with all whom we meet. It isn’t enough that we simply talk about our faith. It won’t suffice that we treat others the way we want to be treated ourselves. We are called to the higher vocation of living as little Christs. We are called to become the skin on God for someone who is searching and in need of hope and healing.

No matter our best efforts or most fervent prayers, we will never become the Incarnate One that is the fully divine, fully human God Incarnate, but we can do our best to live into the call Jesus has on us to be His hands, and feet, and His voice of compassion, hope, and justice in the world. Jesus has commissioned us to be an incarnation of His love in the world. We are called to become the “skin” on God for those around us who are seeking God’s generous and ever-present Incarnational Love!



RACHAEL PARKER

The Right Reverend Rachael Parker was elected as the 8th Bishop of Brandon on November 25, 2023, and consecrated on March 18th, 2024, the Eve of St. Joseph. She holds a BA Honours in English Literature from

Brescia University College and a Master of Divinity from Huron University College.

Being in the World

DONNA ROYER

Photo: [Pascal Meier](#)

For many years I lived with a mental 'to-do' list. Household tasks, childcare duties, work commitments, and relationships all demanded my time and attention. I thought life was quiet when half a dozen, rather than the usual two dozen things, vied for my attention. In the evening, as I reviewed my day, I'd pat myself on the back, reassuring myself that I'd been busy and productive.

The busyness that filled my days was imposed by both others' expectations and my own. I finished projects ahead of deadlines and made decisions quickly. Rather than reduce the to-do list, it meant the addition of tasks to the list that otherwise would not have made the cut. I was proud when

others described me as effective, efficient, and reliable. In my eyes, I was a failure if I disappointed someone. I feared being of no value if I wasn't needed.

My mind was frequently busy considering prior conversations and assessing what had been said. This meant I was generally 'too busy' to be bothered by my body's physical signals for attention. I seldom noticed a strain or ache, until my body escalated it to a full-on injury to make me listen. Weariness became exhaustion before I'd rest. A headache simply meant taking medication to blunt it and working harder to focus on my task.



Photo: Art Institute of Chicago

After more than 45 years of constant busyness and being ignored, my body said ‘enough.’ I wish I’d listened to its call for respect before it had to shout to get my attention. Instead, I had to journey through the recovery from a mental health breakdown in order to find the more incarnationally centred life I now live. I am thankful to have gotten here—but do not recommend the route I took.

Recovery, for me, was learning how to be in the world differently. That reorientation has affected every area of my life. Life is calmer and slower. It is sustainable and deeply satisfying. It is grounded in the senses—in my body’s response to the world. Being human is not only good enough, but everything. I am now a participating witness in life, encountering God’s presence in mundane moments. I no longer fight and wrestle God at every turn, trying to control what is His responsibility—and I’ve come to accept that’s most things. I now infrequently have a plan for the future, and even less often a backup to it. I have learned to trust that future-me will be okay meeting what comes her way. I trust it will be something good, and know, if it’s challenging, God will send help my way.

I listen for my body’s wisdom and respect her input now. I rest when I’m tired and attend to minor health issues more promptly. I’m less embarrassed when tears or loud laughter punctuate my conversation, recognizing it is my body processing large emotions. Rather than relying on fast, convenient food, my hunger is now satisfied with more nutritious and flavorful choices.

Projects generally take longer, but I enjoy the process—not simply the outcome. I used to resent it if a quilt was taking more than a month to complete. I would devote hours of work each evening and weekend to power through what was supposed to be a leisure activity. Now it doesn’t matter if it

takes a year or two. I savor each step, setting the project aside when it’s not engaging, and celebrate each step. Eventually, the quilt is finished.

How much I anticipate enjoying an activity now influences my decisions. I take long rambling walks in the autumn so I can revel in the scrunchy sound made by the leaves as I walk through them. A chance meeting at the post office or after church may turn into lunch with a friend. A restaurant may be chosen for its ambiance, as much as its menu.

I notice physical details. I become enthralled watching the tiny bubbles clinging to the bottom of a pan while I wait for water to boil. This flower, with its damaged petal, is as beautiful in its uniqueness as that one with its light blue tint. I notice the sunbeam as it slowly moves across the altar during worship.

It is not just my relationship with the material world which has shifted. I now take the time to interact with people as individuals. Exchanging books at the library often includes a half-hour visit with the librarian, perhaps hearing of her garden, her current read, or a family member’s health. In the spring, a trip to the local dump with garbage wouldn’t be complete without hearing an update from the attendant on the number of goats born on his farm.

The present moment, whatever it holds, is the one I try to live in. Instead of asking “why?” I focus my energy on my response. When I’m ill, I shower myself with creature comforts and TLC. I offer practical assistance when a neighbor suffers an injury. Sudden interruptions in my day, like needing to wash my dog after she’s been sprayed by a skunk, are reframed as invitations to notice and give thanks to God for the complexity of creation.

A good day is now measured by how present I have been. When

I review my day, I ask questions like ‘Where did I feel most alive?’ ‘Where did I see God?’ and ‘How was I surprised by God?’ The answers are often simple, small, and seemingly insignificant moments—feeling the cold wind on my cheeks, or when my dog,



Photo: [Daniil Silantev](#)

who runs free, returns to check on me if I've been too long absorbed in taking a photo during our walk in the woods.

The shift to a more incarnational life has also changed my understanding of meaning and purpose—now it comes from witnessing Love's presence changing the world. My role is mainly to stay out of her way and watch what unfolds. I notice her in people's words, like the community member quietly praising and thanking the summer student who was hired to water the plants on Main Street. Love is present when the hydro worker walks the extra 10 feet down the ditch, picks up the littered can, and tosses it into the back of his truck before pulling away. I know Love has been present when I stop to stretch my legs at a heritage cemetery and find the grass cut and the flowering hedge trimmed.

Even my vocal prayers have changed. They now share my emotional responses to what I've witnessed with Christ. Sometimes they're whispers of awe, other times they are screams of frustration. But usually, they are simple gratitude for all that is.

Even though I discovered this incarnational world by a route I cannot recommend, I now believe three things let me access it. First, I focus my attention on the here and now—what am I actively doing? Second, I look for God in the physical world where our bodies are currently existing—what am I experiencing through my senses of sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste? And then the final, third step, is to look at the details—it's where God hides himself in plain sight. What specifically makes this fingertip different from that fingertip? When you sense awe, wonder, gratitude, or surprise—you've likely caught a glimpse of God incarnate. Persistence and practice may be needed, but like any skill, with practice it can be learned.

Before my breakdown I worshipped the incarnate God in the sacraments and corporate worship. I still do. But I no longer disregard my embodied reality. I hope you'll join me in looking for His incarnational presence in our lives.



DONNA ROYER

After decades of active ministry on behalf of, and within, the Church, Donna now lives a quieter, slower, life as an intentional contemplative Solitaire. She spends her days on her rural Interlake acreage reading, creating textile art, taking photos, and wandering in the woods.