

# ST. MARK'S OCEAN PARK

## 2010 and Beyond – God's Abundant Blessings Continued

By Drew Gauntley



## 2010

Rector:	Rev. Craig Tanksley
Associate Priest:	Rev. Jonathan Blanchard
Music Director:	Deanna Blanchard
Office Administrator:	Leigh Peddle
Youth Coordinator:	Lauren Smith
Rector's Warden:	Lynne Hurd
People's Wardens:	Barbara Carington Smith, Kerry Zeal
Treasurer:	Anne Field
Order of the Diocese of New Westminster:	Stan Hodgson

The Rev. Craig Tanksley aptly described 2010 as a year when we should all "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" as we were blessed by God with many new things and growth in our ministries.

Generous donations in the form of a brand new cathedral organ, a new sound board and strings for our grand piano and a beautiful new cross attached to the apex of the west stained glass window were appropriate reminders of His abundant gifts to us. The Vestry meeting approved the establishment of a Capital Renewal and Enhancement Fund with a goal of \$200,000 for individual projects and by the end of the year, total receipts for the fund had already exceeded \$115,000. This enabled us to complete repairs to the south wall to address the previous problems of water damage as well as install a new furnace for the church.

Treasurer Anne Field reported that we had a surplus at the end of the year of \$2,000 and that we had successfully covered an increase in expenses from the previous year of over \$10,000. She was pleased that parishioners had continued to support the operating needs of the parish at the same time as they had so generously provided money for capital projects. The increased giving was undoubtedly due in part to Envelope Secretary Lawrence Hurd's report that the number of identifiable givers had increased by 7%.

Our community Outreach Ministry had another great year adding more families to the Lunch Basket for Hungry Children Project and providing funding for diapers to "Stepping Stones" a non-profit organization who assist pregnant and parenting youth faced with overwhelming odds and challenges. The Blanch Biddle Trust provided a bequest of \$10,000 to provide nutritious breakfasts for 30-40 students and a further investment in the A Rocha Vegetable Garden yielded organic vegetables for Women's Place and the White Rock Food Bank.

The Parish continued to support external missions contributing over \$13,000 to various projects including PWRDF, the Food Bank and the mission work of Staci and Daniel Silva in Brazil. Journey of Christmas had almost 1,400 visitors thanks to countless hours of volunteer support and dry weather for all but two nights. Under the tireless direction of Linda Zeal, Vacation Bible School was again a huge success in an exciting rainforest environment as children learned about many of Jesus' parables.

2010 was a year of growth in the Children's Ministry with Pancake Sunday, the annual Parish Picnic, a hot dog social and "Kid's Corner" at Holly Berry Fair contributing to great times for the kids. Of course, the highlight may well have been the Annual Christmas pageant under the direction of Pat Zammit and especially the beautiful song "Would you Like to Hold the Baby"! Thank you Wendy, Margaret, Linda, Natalie and Pat.

There were numerous other successful events such as the Men's Club chicken and salmon BBQ's, a Lenten Lunch convened by the Evening Guild and the Holly Berry Fair that they conducted together with the ACW. In the fall, we had a very successful Parish Council – "Great Moments in Christianity" with Dr. Jim Heugel during which we learned of four pivotal moments that helped determine the path of Christianity as we know it today. In the evening, we enjoyed a gala Medieval Banquet with costumed guests, a town crier and a court jester all enjoying a roasted suckling pig for dinner.

In April, a new Seniors Social Ministry was begun by Sue Indridson and Janet Cormode with a drop-in group meeting every second Wednesday for card and board games, plus refreshments. In addition, many outings were undertaken including movies, VSO concerts, Music Intima at St. Phillips, the Nutcracker Ballet, Stanley Park, Van Dusen Gardens and a Carol Ship cruise from the Plaza of Nations.

The spiritual life of the parish flourished with the Prayer Shield praying for members of the Executive Committee and the Parish Council during meetings and for their work in between them. The Prayer Chain consisted of 17 parishioners who prayed daily for special requests and the Prayer Shawl provided 27 knitted shawls and 35 crocheted squares to those who were grieving, in poor health or celebrating a special birth or graduation. There were 10 members of Prayer teams stationed on the left and right hand side of the Sanctuary during the 10 a.m. Holy Communion Service praying for various needs with parishioners.

Stan Hodgson was appointed to receive the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster. Stan was a stalwart member of our parish since 1984, served on the building committee for the sanctuary, started the Men's Club and served as a warden and member of Parish Council. Not only was he strong proponent of Bible Studies, but he was also an instigator in getting Alpha up and running at St. Mark's.

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Associate Priest:	Rev. Jonathan Blanchard
Music Director:	Deanna Blanchard
Office Administrator:	Leigh Peddle/Eleanor Herd
Youth Coordinator:	Lauren Smith/Heather Davies
Rector's Warden:	Lynne Hurd
People's Wardens:	Kerry Zeal, Drew Gauntley
Treasurer:	Anne Field
Order of the Diocese of New Westminster:	Hilda Smith



Above all, this was a year of transition but a time when we saw the hand of God guiding and providing. In August Lauren Smith left for school in Calgary and we welcomed Heather Davies to lead our youth ministry. In September, we thanked Leigh Peddle for 22 years of service as administrator and Eleanor Herd stepped in to this incredibly large role. In October Jonathan and Deanna Blanchard announced that they would be leaving in early 2012 for a new ministry in Winnipeg.

Once again, prayer played a great role in moving us forward through the Prayer Shield's coverage of Parish Council, the Prayer Chain, Prayer Shawl and Prayer teams, as well as the intercessors that meet between the services on Sunday morning. Through the many staff changes, we have been blessed with answers to prayer by the new people raised up by God.

Under the direction of Barbara Carington Smith, we started the onerous task of the Screening in Faith Program, required by the Diocese and our insurers to protect the vulnerable in our parish. Over 100 different ministry descriptions were created and

with the strong support and cooperation of all of those involved in ministry, they were all signed before the year-end deadline. The process also required us to make certain that all of our tenants had similar programs in place for the protection of their members, as well as providing proof of insurance coverage.

The Executive Committee and Parish Council undertook several capital projects and used monies from the Capital Renewal and Enhancement Fund to complete repairs to the Building Envelope, install a new furnace and double-paned windows in the Rectory, install a new dishwasher for the kitchen, achieve improvements to the sound system in the sanctuary, reconfigure the office, replace the out-dated telephone system and Education Centre and concrete repairs to the sidewalks.

A Parish Continuity Plan was created in order that we had detailed plans for dealing with natural disasters as well as lists of names and contact details for all ministries in the event that they were ever needed. A new rack was installed in the narthex and plans were developed to create new brochures to describe all the significant ministries.

With God's help, we covered all of our expenses with almost \$3,000 to spare, despite incurring unexpected maintenance costs and those related to the changes in staff.

In addition to its regular fund raising events, BBQ's, and Christmas parties, St. Mark's held another highly successful fall "Faith Forward" conference featuring the Rev. Dr. John Oakes. Linda Zeal employed a theme of "Son Surf Bash" for Vacation Bible School and was joined by 10 youth leaders and 16 adult leaders/helpers in leading 72 children closer to the Lord.

The Youth Group transitioned smoothly to new leadership under Heather Davies with meetings twice a week for "Rethink Sundays" and "WAC Tuesdays", They continued to support two children through Compassion Canada and also baked cookies, packed shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, fed the homeless, prayed for people and having lots of fun while doing it.

The ACW continued to support several missionaries, charities and worthy causes, including the Ulstroms in Taiwan, the Silvas in Brazil, and the Seafarers Mission. They collected pop can tabs to support children at Dialysis Camp, used stamps to support Theological training in the Arctic, soup labels to assist a school for the deaf in Burnaby and unused prepaid envelopes to raise funds for Pacific Assistance Dogs for the Handicapped. In addition, they supported several ministries such as Journey of Christmas, the Church Garden and the Senior's Christmas lunch, as well as contributing to a new street sign.

The New Comers Team, under the leadership of Holly Bear Tanksley, hosted 2 special fellowship lunches. These lunches provided the opportunity for 21 adults and 2 children to introduce themselves and meet for fellowship with some of the church leaders and learn more about our parish. Meanwhile, Olive Pociwuschek's visiting ministry attempted to meet the needs of parish members who were "shut in" or had

health concerns that curtailed their contact with the church and their friends. There were 23 visitors and 29 visitees with some visitors visiting several parishioners.

Our Bible Study Groups continued to be a way of maintaining our communication with God and each other on a regular basis bringing close fellowship through prayer and study. There were 8 groups meeting in homes and at the church, including a well attended Lenten series. There were 12 different studies from a variety of sources, at which 95 persons attended, with some 10-15 attending more than one study.

Hilda Smith was appointed to the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster in recognition of her many years of dedicated and selfless service to the Lord in St. Mark's since 1983.

## 2012

Rector:	Rev. Craig Tanksley
Associate Priest:	Rev. John Mash
Music Director:	Annabelle Ip
Office Administrator:	Eleanor Herd
Youth Coordinator:	Heather Davies/Joshua Brown
Rector's Warden:	Betty-Ann Bainbridge
People's Wardens:	Drew Gauntley, Michael Klaver
Treasurer:	Barbara Carington Smith
Order of the Diocese of New Westminster:	John Reader



For the second consecutive year, the parish was affected by staff movements, both in terms of those that happened and those that did not, but at all times we continued to feel that God was holding us in hands. In January 2012, Jonathan and Deanna Blanchard moved with Samantha and Timothy to Winnipeg, leaving behind a congregation that was extremely grateful for their efforts during what were at times challenging circumstances. We were blessed by the wonderful and capable ministry of

the Rev. John Mash, who together with Dorothy provided us with great preaching, loving pastoral care and warmth of fellowship.

Early in the year, we welcomed Annabelle Ip to the roll of Music Director and she has been striving to find music whose text and mood complement the themes of the service. The choir continued to benefit from the dedication and talents of long-time members as well as being able to attract new members.

Heather Davies moved on to new, international ministry opportunities in Burundi and was replaced by Josh Brown who brought a remarkable depth of wisdom and teaching to our teens. With the retirement of Doug French after 22 years of outstanding service as our IT man, Josh also took on the volunteer role of webmaster and began to design a new design for our website.

In April 2012, the canonical committee met and interviewed candidates to fill the large shoes left by Jonathan. An offer was made to a highly competent individual, but they decided that the Lord had other plans for them and it was then agreed that we wait until early 2013 before re-advertising the position and proceeding to the interview and selection stage.

In anticipation of the needs of a new assistant priest, the parish directed its attention to the Rectory where new kitchen cabinets and appliances were installed, a complete repainting of the interior was completed and the forest canopy trimmed to increase the lighting and appearance of the property. When it was apparent that there was not a new assistant priest to occupy the rectory, a tenant was located to provide some income, at least until the summer of 2013 so that it will be available if needed.

The sanctuary carpet was replaced along with the kitchen freezer and improvements were made to the sound system in the hall. The Altar Guild also completed a major repair and polishing of the altar vessels.

Once again, the Parish ended the year with a surplus, this time of almost \$6,300 at a time when contributions to the Capital Fund were a further \$38,000.

A major audit of the Parish Privacy Policy was completed and several changes implemented to ensure the privacy and safety of information entrusted to us with a new Privacy Policy created and made available to all parishioners.

John and Roberta Braddock completed new brochures detailing all of the major ministries of the Parish in a colourful and uniform way for the benefit of parishioners and members. The Clergy and Warden's Committee (previously known as the Executive Committee) completed a major review of the previous newspaper advertising program. It was determined that we would place more advertising in the general section of the Peace Arch News, not just the Religion page, and do a much more focussed job of advertising significant events.

The year saw the parish hold several special events, including:

- A farewell luncheon and presentation to the Blanchard family
- A rewarding spiritual retreat for Parish Council under the direction of Rob Des Cotes, Pastor of Fairview Baptist Church, Vancouver
- A joyous celebration and feast for our Honorary Assistant Priest, the Rev. Eric Lowe on his 60 years of ministry
- Chris and Debra Simmons' concerts in February and July – "Love in ¾ Time" and "Summer Stock", the latter featuring 70 years of music from Broadway
- An immensely successful Parish Conference – "Wisdom – Living Well in a Busy World" led by Mark Davies
- Fraser Valley Wind Ensemble concerts in May and December

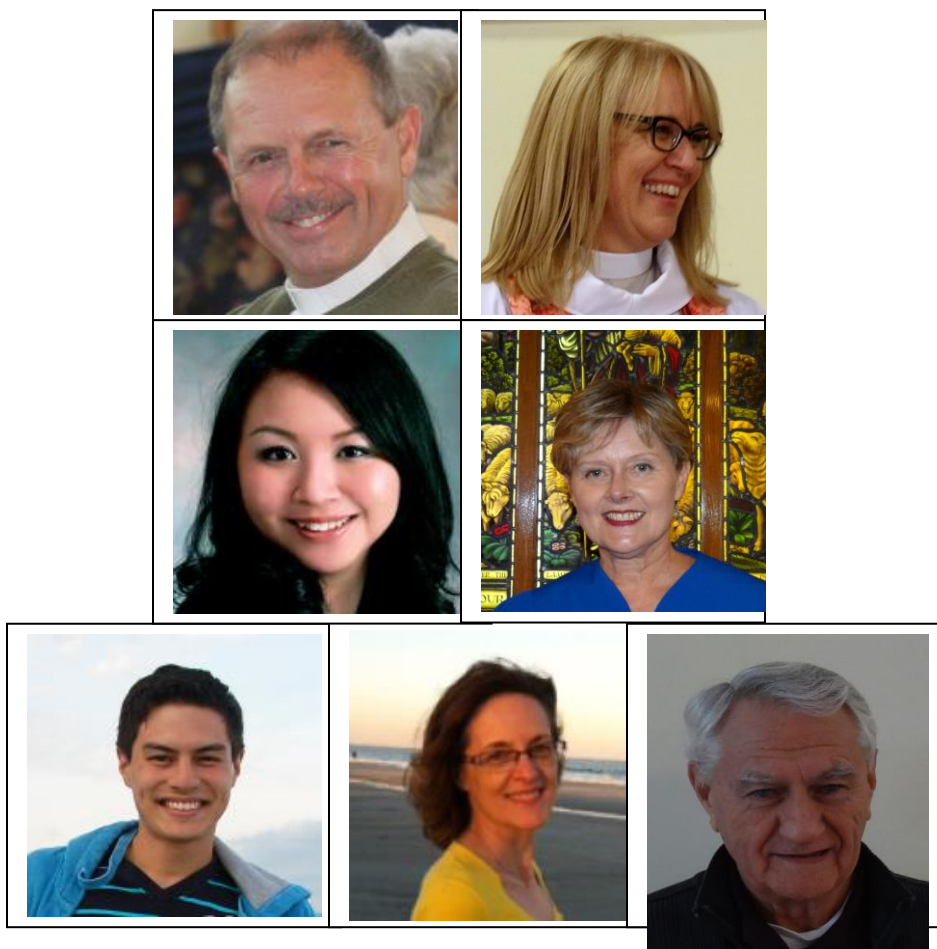
During the year, a new Home Eucharist ministry was established with 5 individuals trained and licensed to take communion to those who are unable to worship with us on Sundays. We also launched a Ministry for Young Families through periodic potluck suppers so that children and families can relax, play, eat and fellowship together.

John Reader became the fourth parishioner to be honoured with the Order of New Westminster. John began attending St. Mark's in 1983 and in 1985 began to raise funds to build the new sanctuary building. When the original construction contractor went bankrupt, John took over as construction manager and saw the project through to completion in 1989. He was a warden for St. Mark's on six occasions and conceived/started the Journey of Christmas in 1999.

## **2013**

Rector:	Rev. Craig Tanksley
Assistant Priest:	Rev. John Mash/Rev. Denise Doerksen
Music Director:	Annabelle Ip
Choir Director:	Janet Rendell
Office Administrator:	Eleanor Herd/Sheila Johnston
Youth Coordinator:	Joshua Brown
Rector's Warden:	Betty-Ann Bainbridge
People's Wardens:	Drew Gauntley, Brian Switzer
Treasurer:	Barbara Carington Smith
Order of the Diocese of New Westminster:	Rea Anderson





The year 2013 was filled with blessings from God and answers to prayer. In September, the Rev. Denise Doerksen accepted our call to be Assistant Priest and she immediately set about beginning to know us all personally, discovering our dreams, spiritual aspirations and our connections with each other. Before too long, she understood our ways, systems, rituals, habits, unwritten codes, protocols and liturgical practices. Denise loves to hand build clay and we are all looking forward to her shaping and molding us in a way that will give even greater glory to God.

Unfortunately, Denise's arrival meant that we had to say good bye to the Rev. John Mash who had stepped in so graciously and brilliantly to support Craig in liturgical and pastoral issues. We miss John and Dorothy but know that the Lord is not quite ready for them to retire completely and that there are other parishes that can benefit from their ministry.

In mid year, Eleanor Herd moved on to new opportunities and we were extremely fortunate and blessed to find Sheila Johnston finishing a temporary assignment at the Synod office after many years with the City of Richmond. Sheila has excellent organizational and people skills and has brought a glowing and confident style to the office.

Early in the year, we decided to pay additional attention to our choir and added Janet Rendell to our team as Choir Director. The choir has begun to grow again and is now resplendent in stylish new gowns that arrived in early September.

Our Sunday school continued to flourish under the leadership of Wendy, Margaret, Kate, Linda and other volunteers. Food was collected for their "Lunch Boxes for Kids" project; monies donated to the Christian Children's fund and gifts donated for a Christmas hamper. In August, Linda Zeal directed "SonWest Roundup" – our annual Vacation Bible School that had 80 children registered, 12 youth leaders and 17 adult leaders. The Wild West theme was embraced with great enthusiasm and the connection of the story, bible verse games, recreation games, crafts, and (of course) snacks were all well received.

Meanwhile, Josh Brown completed our new website and created wonderful memories and milestones for our Youth Group. He concentrated on discerning a ministry that reflected the diversity of the youth group and what it means to be set apart by God in a world where many young people find themselves lost.

Significantly, Megan Heath and Gareth Featherstone went on a life-changing mission to Burundi in which they experienced the joy of the Lord in a new way, while helping to build hope in Jesus' name. They set about fundraising with creativity and enthusiasm and received financial support from the Church, parishioners, ministry groups and the Sunday School children.

The faithfulness of St. Mark's people was clearly evident in the support that was provided to our community, both locally and internationally, not only through direct financial donations, but also by the efforts and events of the ACW, Ladies Evening Guild and Men's Club. Led by an increase in funding of our Community Outreach Ministry by 22% to \$16,361, the total Missions and Outreach contributions grew by \$7,600 to \$48,204 for the year. Our Youth Group's collection of boxes for Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child" reached a record high.

The year 2013 was also a significant year for St. Mark's as our clergy and synod delegates participated in the Special Electoral Synod to elect the new Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster. The Reverend Canon Melissa M. Skelton was elected on the third ballot and will be ordained and installed on St. David's Day, March 1, 2014. At the time of her election, Canon Skelton was Canon for Congregational Development and Leadership; and Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Seattle in the Diocese of Olympia.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, visited us in November. He attended a Men's Club Dinner and then addressed the parish in the sanctuary about developments in the Canadian Church and the activities of the Primate's World Development Fund. A host of delicious desserts prepared by the ACW followed in the church hall and John Braddock presented three cheques of \$500 each from the ACW, Ladies Evening Guild and Men's Club to help with the Syrian crisis and the relief effort to aid the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Our Ministries continued to have their traditional events – the Pancake Supper, ACW Spring Lunch, chicken and salmon BBQ's and Holly Berry Fair. Journey of Christmas visitors were up about 100 to 818, despite our losing one afternoon and one evening openings due to snow. The Ladies Evening Guild held two car boot sales for the first time. Our Concerts Ministry brought the Lady Larks to St. Mark's for a Remembrance Day concert which was attended by over 230, with great attendance from the community.

It was our pleasure to nominate Rea Anderson as the fifth parishioner to receive the Order of the Diocese of New Westminster. Rea has provided many years of faithful service to the parish as warden, treasurer, trustee, Synod and Alternate Synod Delegate, as well as acting as auditor of ACW and Evening Guild financial statements for many years.