

Grace and peace to you, my family in Christ! What a long road we all have walked to arrive in this place at this moment. We have been walking separately, but now God brings us together! I have heard stories of your journey to become Christ Church Gabriola: beginning as separate congregations, then sharing more and more until becoming one made the most sense. I'm sure there are many stories yet to come my way about that adventure! I look forward to hearing them all.

My journey began in Bellingham, WA and has taken me as far south as Tacoma, then up north through Blaine to Vancouver and now to Gabriola! I often say the Salish Sea is my home and where I belong! I fell in love with Gabriola years ago through my time at the Haven. I knew then that it was a special island, but I never imagined, never dreamed I would get to live here. Ministering with you all feels like a true call from God and with that call comes the gift of living on Gabriola. I'm still a bit stunned at God's loving gesture.

My love of the ecumenical church grew while I was a student of theology and ministry at Seattle University. My peers were United Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Disciples of Christ, Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Pentecostal, Lutheran and more. Seeking out and engaging with ecumenical partners deepens my faith in ways I would never tap into by staying safely in my own denomination. I am more generous with others, and more nimble in my faith and leadership because of my ecumenical partners. They teach me so much about how God is moving in our midst and ways in which we can respond as Christian community! God is just amazing! May God bless the Anglican and United traditions in this place, help us to learn from each other, and give us clear and full hearts to grow in Christ's love! What exciting work, holy work! I give thanks to God for bringing us together on this journey!

I cannot wait to meet you all! I look forward to conversations after worship, over dinner, with a coffee, on walks in the forest and sitting at the beach! May God bless us as we get to know each other, learn from each other and walk side by side through all that life brings.

My husband (James), our border collie (Joy), and I are wrapping up life in Vancouver and working on our moving plans. After our vacation the first week of December, we will be in the Nanaimo/Gabriola area while we wait to move into our house just after Christmas. I look forward to leading the congregation in worship on Christmas eve and Christmas morning, as we celebrate together the birth of Jesus! What a beautiful way to begin!

blessings,
Rev. Karen Hollis



