

News Release from Diocesan Council of the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia

DIOCESE DELIVERS SUMMER PROGRAMS IN NEW WAY

The Anglican Diocese of British Columbia has decided to carry out summer programs for children, youth and families in a different way. Su McLeod, the Diocesan Family Ministry Facilitator, has been asked to design and implement an alternate program for the summer of 2012, to be based in various locations on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, and not at Camp Columbia. This summer program will be partially funded through the diocesan budget. Diocesan Council made this decision at its meeting on Thursday, November 24, 2011.

Since 1947 the Diocese has held summer camps at Camp Columbia on Thetis Island, where thousands of children and adults have encountered the wonder of God's creation. It has also served as a facility for schools and retreat groups in the spring and autumn. However, maintenance of the infrastructure has been deferred over many years, resulting in significant risk-maintenance issues around the water system, buildings, and the kitchen. Rather than put any camp or retreat participants at risk, Diocesan Council preferred to separate the issue of the delivery of camp programs from the issue of infrastructure improvements at Camp Columbia.

The Bishop of British Columbia has been asked by Diocesan Council to form a team to review and make recommendations about the site. This may include partnering with other institutions to maximize the use and potential of the site. Any proposals are expected to be in compliance with current zoning and by-laws as established by the Islands Trust. The Diocese intends to preserve and protect the camp site and its unique amenities and environment.

Archdeacon Bruce Bryant-Scott, Commissary to the Bishop and Executive Officer for the Diocese, welcomed the development. "It allows us to move from maintaining a set of buildings to focusing on mission to children, youth, and families. This gives us space to step back - a Sabbath, if you will - and to consider the best possible use of this wonderful asset at Camp Columbia."

For further information, contact: Ms. Su McLeod, Diocesan Family Ministry Facilitator, at 250-386-7781 ext. 249 or by e-mail at family@bc.anglican.ca