

Vancouver Island Retreat

By Claire Donovan

31 of us gathered for our 5 day retreat in Nanaimo, B.C. in August.

Our theme was *“Unveiling the Holy”*.

Carma Gjerner, a spiritual director, writer, storyteller and artist, joined us from Minneapolis to lead our journey. She told bible stories from new perspectives, with playful images that she drew.

We processed and prayed using prayer canvases. We used poems as lectio divina, shared our creative gifts during an annual coffee house and sang and danced and prayed together. Several retreatants led morning prayer.



Carma telling us the story of the lost coin

Theo, a new retreatant this year, wrote and shared this prayer at our retreat this summer:

Dear God:

You are wind beneath my soul!

Thank you for helping us too with wisdom, faith freedom, peace, food!

And for allowing us to be a part of your life.

We serve you, oh God, with love and kindness.

And we show caring as well.

Oh mighty God!

The day has arrived.

We are truly blessed with beloved and kindness.

Thank you. Oh God.

You have helped us with pain and suffering.

Let us light you and holy light.

In your holy warm love,

Amen.





Richard Gerrard describing the images in the theme banner he created for our retreat



Acting out the Good Samaritan



Working with a poem in small groups



Singing and dancing

Tiana wrote this poem prayer:

Loving God...

As the birds sing sweetly in the trees... it sounds like You calling out to us. You steady our hearts to be still and get to know You more. You behold us right in Your open wide loving arms with a beautiful embrace.

We can hear Your small voice even in the quiet. We also hear it in the loud crashing waves on an open sea.

Thank You for the river full of memories that follows us around.

We can feel Your breath from the wind breezes and from the whole ocean. You do this so that we can see Your light.

In dark times we really need You and look to You. In our everyday lives, You are the light that shows us the way through the night.

Breaking through the darkest nights we follow Your daylight. It sparkles on the horizon in the break of dawn that You created.

In Jesus Glorious Name, Amen.

