



The Concelebrants at the August 6 morning liturgy. All spouses of clergy can be seen in the photograph (a rare *Topic* photo of Bishop Skelton as a clergy spouse!). PHOTOS Caesar Castro & Michiko Tatchell

The Biggest & Best Convocation So Far

Filipino EAM/ACAM Convocation at St. Michael's, Multicultural in Vancouver

FRED VERGARA

Missioner for Episcopal Asiamerica Ministries, the Episcopal Church, New York City, New York

GREG TATCHELL, ODNW

St. Michael's, Vancouver



Fr. Fred Vergara and Bishop Skelton cutting the cake at the SMM Church Hall potluck, following the Sunday Eucharist that closed the Convocation. PHOTO Caesar Castro & Michiko Tatchell

Matago Tago FILCON

Long Live FILCON



The two Engnan brothers. PHOTOS Caesar Castro & Michiko Tatchell

Over the August 2017 long weekend, the Rev. Wilmer Toyoken and the faith community of St. Michael's Multicultural (SMM) Anglican Church hosted a three-day Anglican Communion event with 144 attendees. More than 70 were from the US and Philippines, 70+ were from BC and Alberta, and 23 of these were youth, from all points of the compass.

The presiding authority was the Rev. Dr. Fred Vergara, Missioner for Episcopal Asiamerica Ministries (EAM), who provided the title of this article, judging this Filipino Convocation (FILCON 2017) "the Biggest and the Best Convocation so far" (over a period of ten years). He also provided the keynote addresses on Saturday, and gave an inspiring Sunday homily. The theme of the Convocation was *On Board the Jesus Movement*, which is the current priority program of the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop, the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry.

Episcopal Asiamerica Ministry

The Episcopal Asiamerica Ministry (EAM) is the Episcopal Church's National Asian-American ministry body. It has been in existence since 1973, and has a three-fold ministry: to Asian-Americans; to Asian Immigrants; and the special focus of the time here in Vancouver, August 4–6, "a ministry of bridge-building to churches... belonging to the worldwide Anglican Communion and churches in concordat with the Episcopal Church." The nascent Canadian equivalent to EAM, the Anglican CanAsian Ministry (ACAM), is a child of EAM, inspired by their model, and formed north of the border in 2015.

Filipino Convocation in 2017

The Episcopal Filipino-American Convocation meets for two consecutive years. On the third, they join with the other six EAM Convocations in a pan-Asian Consultation (the last was in Seoul, the next in Hawaii). The Convocation held in Vancouver is the first time the *Filams* have met in Canada (EAM's historic first in Canada was the Japanese-American Convocation at Holy Cross in June 2016). Since 2013, six lay and two ordained members of the our diocesan Filipino Anglican community have attended Filipino-American EAM Convocations in San Francisco (2013), Los Angeles (2014 and 2016), and Seoul (2015). The Rev. Wilmer Toyoken has attended three of these. It was in Seoul that planning for Vancouver's FILCON 2017 began. What the eight participants consistently saw at those four events were four intertwined activities: *Worship, Cultural Celebrations, Renewing Relationships, and Planning & Educating.*

Worship

During the three days of FILCON 2017, the 144 participants worshipped together five times. The worship leaders of the five services were from all over the Anglican Communion: the Philippines, New York, Guam, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Surrey, and New Westminster.

Cultural Celebrations

As anyone who has visited SMM well knows, the Cordillera Filipino culture is very rich. Those in the diocese who have been lucky enough to visit the Philippines have discovered that the richness they see at St. Michael's is the same richness they see in the Philippines. The FILCON 2017 Cultural Evening was especially so and while it is hard to narrow it down, two photographs of the Cultural Evening included might suffice to give a sense of the cultural richness.

At St. Michael's 125th Anniversary celebrations in 2014, one of the special events was the blessing by Bishop Melissa of a traditional set of Cordillera gangsa/gongs. They received a heavy workout at the cultural event.

Renewing Relationships

For those of us who have been to reunions in our lives, we know the joy of re-engaging with people from our past. This aspect of FILCON 2017 was on abundant display.

The Rev. Louie Engnan, priest at St. Michael's, Surrey and officiant at the FILCON 2017 Noon Day Prayer on Saturday, was re-united with his older brother, Gerry who was a co-Convenor of FILCON 2017, and serves at St. Mark's Church in Van Nuys, California.

Jasmine Quines is the wife of the Rev. Brent Quines, co-Convenor of FILCON 2017, from Los Angeles. James Baldo, ODNW is People's Warden at SMM. Sandra Baldo, James' spouse is chair of the SMM Stewardship Committee. Grace Wandag, original Chair at the 2010 formation of the Anglican Church Women (ACW) at SMM, is the wife of Bishop Alex Wandag of the Episcopal Church of Philippines's diocese of Santiago (and also considered by the community of SMM as their other bishop). Jasmine and James were graduates of the same high school in Sagada, a year apart (1985 and 1986). And Grace? Well, Grace and Bishop Alex were Godparents at the marriage of Jasmine and Brent in the Philippines in 1994 and Brent, in turn, became a Godparent at the marriage of Grace and Bishop Alex's oldest son.

Post Convocation • Survey Results

Survey results from FILCON 2017 have been very encouraging. It was a matter of splitting hairs to determine what was most appreciated, as the average rating was 9.9! But, within that narrow range, some highlights emerged:

- There were tens across the board for both the FILCON 2017 event as a whole, and the Vancouver location.
- A two-way tie, for the Cultural Night and the Keynote Speaker.
- The Saturday Eucharist.

The overall effect of all of this best captured by a comment from one of the evaluations:

"I really enjoyed talking to the people, (it) really felt like home in the Philippines." ♦

More photos on Page 13...

The Biggest & Best Convocation So Far

Filipino EAM/ACAM Convocation at St. Michael's, Multicultural in Vancouver

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11



LEFT SMM's People's Warden, James Baldo, ODNW and his group in traditional dress leading the gangsa (gong) dance. RIGHT The Rev. Dr. Fred Vergara preaching at the Closing Eucharist on Sunday, August 6. PHOTOS Caesar Castro & Michiko Tatchell



LEFT Schoolmates and Godparents: Jasmine Quines, James Baldo and Grace Wandag. RIGHT SMM women's group wearing the yellow t-shirts of FILCON 2017, and holding a banner that will have a permanent place of honor in SMM's Church Hall. On the banner are the Igorot words MATA GO TAGO FILCON when translated means LONG LIVE FILCON. The banner received an enthusiastically raucous reception from those gathered in the SMM Hall. PHOTOS Caesar Castro & Michiko Tatchell

All Shall Be Well

Interview with the Reverend David Taylor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

or plays a different instrument than one with a keyboard (or only plays a keyboard using chords), then it is a very inaccessible hymnbook.

Children need to have access to music in order to help them articulate the faith they're inheriting from us. Music needs to be accessible to them too. I try to write simple tunes that can be picked up by any ear, adult or child. I also sing to my children. It is one way I show them that I love them.

Q. Could you share with us a music experience that truly uplifted and inspired you?

A. Music has inspired me in so many ways. It is tough to pinpoint one example. I grew up singing old evangelical hymns and the music of the Maranatha Singers. I have fond

memories of my mother giving me my first hymnbook, which I still have, and playing cassettes of worship music in the house. This was music of safety and love for me.

When I grew older I listened to contemporary worship music put out by Hosanna Integrity and Vineyard. This music was very personal to me and was a way I could intimately express my love for God. It was music of inspiration for me.

When I moved toward liturgical Christianity I listened to the organ at Westminster Abbey in Mission. It was music of majesty and transcendence.

When I became rooted in the Anglican Tradition I discovered the breadth of all that I experienced before in one place. It was music of unity.

Q. Where would you like to be in your ministry as a composer and performer in five years?

A. I have promised my family that I will not record any more music until we do some renovations on our house. But when that is done I have a number of new hymns and chants I would love to record using the Christian calendar as the template. If the music I have written is sung in people's homes or at churches that is amazing to me. If it inspires people to give thanks to God for the many wonderful things God has done for us in this world, then *All Shall be Well*.

Q. What else would you like *Topic* readers to know about the recording?

A. *All Shall be Well* is available on iTunes (\$10), Amazon music and most streaming platforms by searching: the Rev. David Tay-

lor. Hard copies of the CD are available for \$20 and I am happy to supply sheet music with chords to any who wish to use this music in their community. I can be contacted by email at dmatthew.taylor@gmail.com.

com and my website is www.awakenlove.ca.

The album is dedicated to the memory of the Rt. Rev. James Cruickshank for his love and support toward my family, my vocation and me. ✠

Donation cards were included in the September 2017 issue of the *Anglican Journal* and *Topic*

There are three ways to donate to the *Anglican Journal Appeal*

Complete and return the enclosed postage-paid donation card

Call 416.924.9199 ext. 259 to make your contribution by phone

Visit canadahelps.org and search for

"The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada"

and select the Anglican Journal Fund

We can't share the Good News without you!

Even a \$10 contribution helps give voice to the stories that matter most to Anglicans here in the diocese of New Westminster and across the country

THANK YOU!



The Rev. David Taylor. PHOTO Phil Crozier, photophilcro