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THE DIOCESAN TIME

FEBRUARY 2020 A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Cutler
calls it
quits!
page 3

Well done!

BY BARBARA KENT

It's fun to share happy stories, and I'm excited to tell anyone about a rewarding and successful PWRDF campaign we had at the Church of St Andrew in Cole Harbour this fall. It's a personal story for me because I promised my father, Dennis Shaw, that I would assume his role as parish representative when he passed. It was a very important program that he supported whole-heartedly. The first year we encouraged parishioners to buy goats, last year it was chickens and this year I really wanted to make a bigger impact, so I proposed building a well in Kenya. It was a \$3000 endeavour but I know my parish and they always respond when there is a challenge and a need.

Coincidentally, we had a visit from the Diocesan Environmental Advocate and former parishioner, Rev. Marian Lucas-Jeffries the week before

we had the roll out. The whole idea of being responsible stewards of our earth fit hand in hand with our idea to build a well. It also spoke to gender equality issues because in Kenya, young girls are forced to travel as much as 8km a day to fetch water for their families. This means that only boys are given the privilege of attending school! That's just wrong! So each week, I'd put a fact about water on a white board for everyone to read. Things like: taking a bath uses 180 litres of water or 1.1 billion people have no access to clean drinking water or a small bucket of water weighs 20lbs. Educating and exposing parishioners to the need and injustices facilitated their response because we are a caring Parish.

We proposed building our own well as a visual aid to our campaign. Our go-to guy at St Andrews's, Frank Smith,

brought in 150 bricks and slowly we started to construct the well right in the church. We sold the bricks for \$20 each and also had a huge water bottle for anyone who wanted to drop in their loose change. With the buy-in passion of our Rector, Rev Katherine Bourbonniere and her unlimited energy to motivate us, there was never a doubt we could do this. By Christmas we had well surpassed our goal and were able to purchase pumps and repair kits to accompany the well.

If all our challenges were easy, they wouldn't be as rewarding! A quote that our previous Rector, Canon David Reid, often said was motivation enough for me; "The task ahead of us is never as great as the power behind us!" Never doubt the power of people working together for we can do wondrous things!



Photo: The early stages of building the well building.

New approach to Christmas Memorials

BY DONNA MATTHOLIE

For a number of years the Parish of French Village has had a Christmas Memorial program whereby Parishioners could purchase Christmas flowers in memory of loved ones.

But sourcing poinsettia plants in support of local suppliers at a reasonable cost was proving very difficult and time consuming. Often the poinsettias were left homeless after the Christmas services.

With this in mind, Parish Council decided to focus on a more sustainable Christmas memorial for 2019. We chose to support the PWRDF "World of Gifts", and set a goal of purchasing a farm at a cost of \$450. A particular incentive was that for every \$1 donated the Government of Canada contributed \$6.

A 'Farm' consists of: 1 cow, 1 goat, 2 piglets, 40 chickens, 20 kg bag of seeds, organic farm supplies, farm tools and

10 pineapple seedlings. Cows and goats improve a family's nutrition with a regular source of milk and eggs which can also help a family's income with the sale of milk, eggs and offspring. They are also major manure producers – especially pigs which improves crop yields. Bio-fertilizer helps farmers increase yields without polluting the environment. And pineapples? They provide nutrition and crop diversity in the community.

As in the past, a tax-deductible donation of \$10 was suggested, with memorials printed in the bulletin.

The response was amazing. Our parish boldly embraced this initiative and, instead of purchasing one farm, we raised well over \$3000- enough to purchase seven farms and additional livestock for this very worthy cause.

The gift of a farm for a village or a family is empowering - and truly is the gift that keeps on giving.



Photo: One of the new village farm gifts through PWRDF.

COLUMNIST

From cast to walking cast to boot

Winter is upon us and the saga continues at the rectory here By the Bog. Jason had learned to use crutches quite well for the first month or so following his accident, or incident as he likes to call it. A new cast with a walking heel helped the mobility of our rector and by late January Jason was hobbling around the Sanctuary on Sunday morning and with the help of Jim and Larry, our retired clergy, he was almost in full charge of worship life at St. Bart's.

A long alb seemed to hinder Jason's mobility, so we began a new liturgical practice no albs, just a stole of the appropriate colour around the neck of the celebrant. This was a practice that all the clergy adopted in support of the rector. Jim wore his suit jacket with stole, Larry kept to his usual sweatshirt routine, but Jason opted for a new hand knit sweater that he received at Christmas. It was a navy-blue sweater with a cable stitch pattern;



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

a wonderful example of the talented parishioner who had started the project in early autumn, never dreaming that her sweater would become a part of the Sunday Eucharistic vestments.

I noted that each priest who stood at the altar put his own unique twist to the service. Jim was quite formal and looked the part. Larry has always seemed more

laid-back and his different sweatshirts gave us a hint of his character. Jason kept the new sweater for use only on Sundays for as long as he would need to be without the Eucharistic vestments.

Next step in the recovery will be a BOOT! Something that many folks dread but Jason awaits with great anticipation. More mobility, more freedom. Soon we will have late winter thaws and mud too! That will slow down any outdoor activity coming from the rectory.... maybe.... Our J seems to be able to figure out how to get around with large plastic grocery bags tied around his cast or hopping to and from the car much to the distress of any and all who have to watch!

We have been right there with Jason and Miranda, helping out when we can, giving them time and space to heal and learning to take on some of the duties that we have always assumed were part of the job description of

a parish Priest.

It has been a learning experience for all involved. St. Bart's will carry a scar as a lasting memento to this time in our lives as a parish. You see, when Jason took his tumble and landed in a heap on the floor in front of the pulpit, the ladder went with him and crashed into the front pew. There is a significant gouge on the seat, and it took some scrubbing to get the blood stains off the book rack and the hymnals that were sitting there! Jason will carry his own scar on his forehead from that same book rack. We will keep any and all ladders well out of his reach in future and the Christmas decorating will be left to the team of parishioners who have been doing it for years. always with two folks at each ladder, one to climb, one to hold it steady. I think that is called "team work".

I'll keep you posted,
Aunt Madge



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ARRIVING AT CHURCH

THE PERILS OF ARRIVING AT CHURCH TOO EARLY:

ROWDY CHILDREN (AND ADULTS) WILL PROBABLY CHOOSE YOUR PEW

INCREASED RISK OF BEING APPROACHED BY A ROTA ORGANISER

DANGER OF SITTING IN A PEW THAT HAS BELONGED TO SOMEONE ELSE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME ITSELF

A GREATER CHANCE OF BEING ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN A LITURGICAL RITUAL OF SOME KIND

THE DANGERS OF ARRIVING AT CHURCH TOO LATE:

THE HINGES WILL SQUEAK AND THE DOOR WILL BANG

THE HYMN BOOKS WILL BE LOCKED AWAY SOMEWHERE

ALL EYES WILL BE UPON YOU

THE CHAOTIC STATE OF YOUR DOMESTIC LIFE WILL BE REVEALED TO ALL

← THE ONLY SEATS REMAINING WILL BE IN THE FRONT ROW

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BISHOP'S COLUMN



The Right Reverend Ron Cutler,
Bishop of the Diocese of Nova
Scotia and Prince Edward Island

There is a time for everything

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

*a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace."*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

On many occasions over the years I have been asked by clergy, "when is the right time to leave a position?" I have replied rather unhelpfully that "you will know when it is time". This

past autumn, I have had the growing conviction that "it is time" for me to step down from the position of Diocesan Bishop. However, it wasn't until I was able to go on retreat before Christmas that I was able to sort through the strands of my life and to make up my mind. As a result, I intend to resign as Diocesan Bishop and Metropolitan as of July 31, 2020.

When is the right time to leave? The work of the Kingdom of God is never done but it is not only my work. It is the work of the whole church. The prayer attributed to Archbishop Oscar Romero echoes St. Paul's acknowledgement that the followers of Jesus build on one another's work. I have tried to build on the faithful ministry of those who have gone before me and I trust that others will build on what I have done.

"We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest."

We are in the midst of challenging times, but I am not convinced, despite some recent alarmism, that we are not at any worse moment in the life of the church than at any other time.

In fact, I believe that we are living in a time of great opportunity for proclaiming and living out God's mission of reconciliation. We have challenges which are unique to our time, of figuring out "what to keep and what to cast away" as we proclaim Good News, form disciples, serve the people in our communities and exercise stewardship of creation. As the diocese enters a time of discernment and goal setting, it is right that the diocese also should choose a new bishop to lead on the next stage of the journey.

Our diocesan Canon on the election of a bishop puts some restrictions on the timing of an election. This summer, Anglican Bishops from around the world will gather for the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury, England. I attended the last conference in 2008, three weeks after being consecrated as a bishop. It had a incredible impact on me as I entered this ministry. It is important for the new bishop to be at this once a decade event. In order for this to be possible, I must resign now.

As I write this, the Diocesan Council has not yet met to choose the date for an electoral Synod. I will be recommending that council choose the canonical minimum amount of time of 16 weeks from the date of the call. I will also ask that the selection committee appointed by the Diocesan Council review the expectations of the Diocesan Bishop in light of both the changing circumstances in our diocese and the earlier decision to have only one bishop.

I will have time later to say good-bye, however I do want to say thank-you now. Thank you to those who have offered me hospitality throughout the diocese. Thank you for those who have held me in prayer. Thank you to those who are asking wonderful questions about how we proclaim the faith in this present context. Thank you to those who have exercised a ministry of leadership and those who are stepping into leadership roles. Thank you to those who are imagining what vibrant Christian community looks like in this time...and with deep thanks to God.

+Ron

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favourably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery. By the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation. Let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(Collect for the Ordination of a Bishop)

*I will have
time later to
say good-bye;
however I do
want to say
thank-you now.*



REV LAURA MARIE PIOTROWICZ
RECTOR, ST. JOHN'S, LUNENBURG

Strive for five

Although here in churchland, we know that the 14th commemorates the Saints Cyril and Methodius, we also know that the world is focusing on another saint, who bears an anecdotal history of a more loving nature: the 14th is Valentine's Day!

As we move in that arena of love, the colour red is dominant: red hearts, red roses, red chocolates, and red dresses!

Amidst this festival of red, I invite us to recall that the red dress has additional meaning for us here in Canada.

The REDress project, initiated in 2010 by Métis artist Jaime Black, used red dresses, hung in public spaces, to bring an aesthetic response to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada. For a decade, we have seen these dresses

hung in forests and cities, in museums and malls; each empty dress a reminder of a life and love gone missing.

Femicide in Canada is disproportionately an intimate matter (over 76% of women victims have been murdered by family or intimate partner, while an equal percentage of male victims are killed by casual acquaintance/criminal relationship/stranger). For our indigenous sisters, the sheer volume of murders is staggering: indigenous women are nearly 7 times more likely to be murdered than non-indigenous women. (Indigenous women are disproportionately over-represented in all forms of violence.)

And so we are called to action: we are called to love. We as a country, and as a church, can stand up against these injustices for the sake of the women who live in constant fear, and for the

families who love someone symbolised by a red dress.

This season of love, this season of red, I invite us to act in love, committing ourselves to find ways to end the cycles of violence that threaten our indigenous sisters. This may be through learning about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its 94 Calls to Action... or perhaps by studying "Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls"... or by requesting to enter into dialogue with a local indigenous person about these serious issues...

Most certainly, our faith calls us to love through prayer: to the God who created us all, who loves us all into being, and who desires us to love one another as we have been loved.

Prayer for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Holy One; Creator;

We hold sacred the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls of this country.

We lament with families torn apart by violence, with those who were forced into Indian Residential Schools, with those who were dehumanized by losing their names, languages, and lands.

We grieve with every red dress hung, with every voice that has been silenced, with every spirit that has been crushed by colonization.

We detest the heritage of hatred, division, and denial of human rights.

We acknowledge our failings; we ask for your help.

Help us to learn, help us to listen, help us to reconcile. Help us to learn our nation's history, to reject our racism, to be stirred to action against further devastation.

Help us to honour your beloved children, as we together seek healing in your great family. Amen.



NEWS FROM AWAY



In the beginning was the Word

and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made... In him was life, and that life was the light.... John 1: 1-4

Dear Diocese,

You are reading this article at the beginning of February. Feb. 2 is “hump day”, the day that falls between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox during the natural rhythm of the earth as we continue to circle the sun. Feb. 2 we also celebrate Candlemas in the church. Candlemas, the day we are reminded of the light that Christ is in our lives. According to the Gospel of John, from the very beginning, Christ has been light for our souls.

As we celebrate sunlight growing noticeably longer each day, we also celebrate the growing light of Christ in our lives, marked by reflecting on the presentation of our Lord in the temple. Nothing generally extraordinary about that day in that place, at that time. Or so most people thought. But people of deep faith, Simeon and Anna knew better. And that encounter lit up their lives.

This past Sunday three children were presented for baptism at The Church of

St. Andrew, Cole Harbour my “home parish”. Nothing extraordinary in that place, and in this time? We know better. Each child was presented with a candle representing the light of Christ in their lives. And we pray that those children will grow up as Christians and reflect the Light of Christ in the world.

But before the presentation of the candle, everyone in the building was reminded that we are all called to reflect that light through each commitment: to come together as a community, to study, to be kind and caring, to respect all people and to care for God’s creation.

Our rector, Rev. Katherine, reminded us that at the end of that “to do” list, the one we call the Baptismal Covenant, we are asked if we will commit ourselves to “strive to safeguard the integrity of God’s creation and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth?”

In the beginning our loving God created the earth, an Eden, for us. Now all creation

is at risk. Somewhere, somehow, we missed the command to care for the planet and are only just now digging out the instruction manual and frantically reading it.

I write this article today, Diocesan Times deadline day. Today, is also December 31, the last day of this year and this decade. Tomorrow, we enter a new era. My New Year’s resolution is to pray that you will have a blessed 2020 and that you are able to keep your commitment to your New Year’s resolutions, including a personal effort for a greener and healthier planet.

May each one of us be a shining example, lighting the way, influencing others, part of the solution, caring for all of God’s creation.

And may we never lose sight of God’s light of salvation and peace inspiring us to carry out our commitment to healing in a hurting world. May the light of Christ grow in us and may Christ’s light continue to radiate from each one of us.

Blessings from the outer world,
Rev. Marian Lucas-Jefferies

Stimulus response

An overly tired and cranky person (they put down their ailing pet the day before) walks into a post office with a big envelope, no stamp, addressed, and places it on the counter. The smiling attendant says, “do you want a stamp”? The response/reaction is ...?

This could be a choice facing any of us. How often have we, in a similar situation reacted with a sharp word, a rude phrase, a harsh comment, sarcasm, or, wait for it; a kind response? However having chosen the unkind comment, and realizing what we have done, the words now hang in front of us, frozen in space. Regrettably, we can’t take them back. The damage is done. People we love; friends, colleagues, strangers, are offended or hurt and we remain helpless by our own impulsivity. O the tongue!

In James chapter 3 we are asked to consider how we speak. “The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.”



BRYAN HAGERMAN

Isaac Newton’s third law of motion states that “for every action (force) in nature there is an equal and opposite reaction.” For example, a basketball bounced on a hardwood floor returns to the one who has thrown it down. The third law also applies to walking. When you place your foot on the ground, a force is applied to it. As a result the ground applies an equal force onto your foot in the opposite direction, moving your foot forward. To employ an analogy from the science

of physics, words hurtfully expressed are like a verbal third law of nature. The emotional reaction, at first, is one of hurt.

Victor Frankl in his best seller “Man’s Search for Meaning” writes; Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. According to Frankl, we have very little time to choose, perhaps less than a second after the emotional jar has been bumped, to decide the outcome.

This sounds like an impossible situation. We spend our lives either responding or reacting, given a stimulus and yet we have so very little time to choose whether it is a response (positive) or a reaction. (negative) So what to do?

Tom Wright in his book “After You Believe” writes that “we must therefore do the hard work in the present of becoming the people we are destined to be. We are starting with a human character already in Christ,

“risen with him” (Colossians 3:1) and “abiding in him.” (1 John 2:28) Wright, p 140.

In this case the hard work is the determination to positively respond in the space between stimulus and response, when our emotional jar has been bumped.

I recall while learning an African language many years ago that in the beginning, I had to translate in my head what I wanted to say before speaking the words. In that setting, saying the wrong word or phrase could seriously hurt one’s reputation going forward. So, I learned in time that even when it became habitual to respond, because I knew the language, I still hesitated before I spoke. I now believe if we retrain our minds to hesitate for a second and think before speaking when we are cranky, we give ourselves time to respond positively, not to react hurtfully. In so doing we grab the hurtful words before they come out. Another way to forgo a hurtful reaction to a perceived annoyance is by way of self-awareness. On any given day, when we awake, we can take stock of

our emotional reserves, and monitor how we are feeling. In this way we are more careful in how we respond.

On the spiritual level, NT Wright believes that the most important Christian virtues, “Faith, Hope, Love” become our beginning point. Grace employs these virtues. Titus says the following;

“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Titus 2(11-13)

Our self-awareness, energized by the three spiritual virtues, helps us to maintain healthy responses when bumped emotionally, and give us the gracious aptitude to catch and redirect the words that may have otherwise darted forth.

DR BRYAN HAGERMAN
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[HOME](#)

It's A New Day!

READ, MARK, LEARN AND INWARDLY DIGEST



Photo by Matt Botsford on Unsplash

By REV. LISA G. VAUGHN

Christian education and spiritual formation were once again named as Diocesan priorities by members of Synod last May. Growing participation in the Education for Ministry program, attendance at MORE Mission Schools, Diocesan Youth Conferences and Vital Church Maritimes events are all strong evidence of this hunger.

There are a variety of approaches to helping congregation members explore and deepen their faith understanding in scripture, tradition and reason. One way is to study our sacred biblical

texts.

“Studies reveal that regular engagement with the Bible is the number one tool for helping Christians grow in their faith, but it is actually one of the great weaknesses for many Anglicans,” says Episcopal priest, Rev. Marek Zabriskie. He is the founder and editor of *The Bible Challenge*, a popular study guide that helps people read the entire Bible in a year.

A 2013 Angus Reid Forum study reports that only 5% of Canadians claim to read the Bible daily, and 14% say they do at least once a month.



Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn, Diocesan Parish Vitality Coordinator

Many people share that they are intimidated when they study the scriptures. Some attempt to read these ancient texts, but find themselves bogged down in long genealogies, foreign archaic terms and challenging teachings. Here are some tips to help you and, hopefully your Bible study friends, get started.

HOW: Carve out a time and a place in which to do this. A comfortable chair in a quiet corner of the house is ideal, but if all you have available is your lunch room at work or your car while waiting for an appointment, that will do. Begin with prayer to settle and be opened to the Living Word of God.

TIME: You may wish to start with a modest amount of time for this study, perhaps 15 minutes. If you’re exploring scripture in a group a period of 60 to 90 minutes is fitting. Promising to commit to two hours of study every day may not be a practical or reasonable expectation. Less is better if you are more apt to stick with it!

WHAT: Choose a suitable Bible to read, especially if you are new to this. Beginners may try *The Good News* version, *New Living Translation* or a paraphrase like Eugene Peterson’s *The Message*. Scholars and churches tend to use the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV).

REMEMBER: The Bible

is neither a science book nor a history record, although it may include some elements of these in its pages. It is also not a novel, but rather a library of sacred texts that are grouped together in particular ways and not necessarily placed in chronological order. We would not walk into our local library and start reading the first book on the first shelf, then continue with the next. It’s the same with the Bible. It is perfectly appropriate to read from a book in the middle of the Bible or even better, from the New Testament.

HOW MUCH: The quality and deep dive in your scripture study is far more important than the number of chapters you cover in a sitting. Take your time and allow the sacred writings to speak to your head and your heart.

HELPS: Consult a commentary that explains the background and offers scholarly research for each passage. Study Bibles include references, notes, maps and charts to guide readers in these ancient texts. Audio versions of the Bible may be more suitable for people who struggle with literacy or are on the move.

The three Worlds of Scripture can provide a framework for your Bible study. Consider...

- **WORLD BEHIND THE TEXT:** What is the historical context and cultural environment when the text was written? Who wrote it and what was their background? What is going on in the life of the original audience? Why is this an important message for the readers/hearers of that time?
- **WORLD OF THE TEXT:** What does the passage actually say? What is the story or message? Who are the characters? What is the action and the dialogue? Where does it take place? What details

are included? What information is missing from the story and who is silent? What comes before and after the passage?

- **WORLD IN FRONT OF THE TEXT:** What is the message for us today? Who, in particular, would appreciate this story or lesson? What is challenging for contemporary readers? How does it speak to important issues today, related to justice, religion, culture, politics, the economy, inclusion, etc., etc.? How can the truth(s) of the scripture passage inform us or be practically applied in 2020?

Exploring scripture study with others is hugely advantageous in growing Biblical literacy. It not only expands our individual reflections, but it also stretches us beyond a limited and/or literal interpretation. Plumbing the depths of a passage with fellow pilgrims on a spiritual journey is exhilarating and one approach to experiencing the Holy Spirit’s revelation within Christian community. It also provides broadened perspective when striving to live and minister missionally.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, says, “To be a biblical church is surely to be a community that lives out this great story [of creation and redemption] day by day and commends it to people everywhere as the most comprehensible truth possible about the nature of God and God’s world.”

Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn is the Diocesan Parish Vitality Coordinator. For articles, inspiration and insights on congregational vitality and mission see the Facebook page “Parish Vitality Coordinator – Diocese of NS & PEI”, and the Anglican Net News, “Six-Minute Study”.

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A video published by General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada.
www.anglican.ca/faith/identity/written-on-the-heart/



PWRDF fund raising with angels
BY CAROL SIMMS
St. Luke’s Anglican Parish in Hubbards N.S. raised \$920 for the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund, by selling Angel Ornaments. Thank you to everyone who purchased an Angel. “We do believe in angels”



MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan Stories of People Responding to God's Call

"Hosting a Hub of Hospitality"



Photo: Some of the Community Café drop-ins.

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

A mug of hot coffee, a homemade muffin and some genuine hospitality await guests who stop by the free Community Café in New Germany.

Situated in St. John in the Wilderness' Anglican Church Hall, on Highway 10 in rural Lunenburg County, this mission-oriented initiative is held Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Clair and John MacInnis are the hosts, striving to make connections with newcomers.

After earning a Master of Arts in Theology at Wolfville's Acadia Divinity College, Clair sensed she had to put all the courses on evangelism to work. Her goal was to create a truly welcoming space to get to know her neighbours and begin to respond to their needs.

She explained, "Sometimes it's hard to break in a group when you move somewhere, because people have lived there forever, right?"

"There is no coffee shop in New Germany. There wasn't then and there isn't now," she

said. "So I thought about it and talked about it for three years, and people said, 'oh yeah, yeah, it's a good idea,' but nobody really wanted to do it. So I said, 'okay I'm going to do it.'"

In the fall of 2018, after seeking permission from Parish Council to use the hall, the

"The local people were very friendly, and they welcomed us by building a fire, because it was rainy and cold."

- Acts 28:2 (CEV)

MacInnis's got busy. "I just got my coffee maker and made muffins," Clair said. "We advertised at the few local businesses and in our bulletin, and word-of-mouth. It started

with four people on that first Thursday in November and it just slowly grew from there. At the most we've had about 55. We average around 30 now."

A database list of guests and where they are from is being kept. More than 1,500 drop-ins have taken place over the past year (many are repeat attenders).

The weekly drop-in attracts mainly new residents and some tourists. "We don't get a lot of local people. We get a lot of people who have moved to the area," said Clair. She and her husband John, moved from Bedford, NS, to the nearby community of Springfield in 2007.

"It's surprising how many people have moved to the area from other parts of Canada. Like our Korean couple who came, obviously from Korea, through Dallas, then Toronto, and then here," she said. "A lot of people have made their way to our area and this has become not only a gathering spot, ... but it's also a lifeline for some people who now have nobody around, like a new mom."

Community Café helps create

more than welcoming space for people in the New Germany area. Freewill donations support other important causes. "It's all no charge," Clair explained. "Most people donate every week, and with those donations I do buy some of the supplies. We give money to local schools and the food bank, and this year for Christmas we supported a family." A grandmother with two children received \$650 in food and gifts.

Clair said it is important to be intentional about their ministry in that they purchase quality, fair trade coffee, Just Us, from the co-op in Grand Pre, offer gluten-free pastries, and she decorates for the seasons, making the hall feel more festive.

Last spring they started a farm market outside and offered vendors space inside during the colder months and Christmas. "We had produce and honey, some different types of crafts, a lady who was a baker and the Korean couple who have their Sushi and spring rolls," said Clair.

The village gathering spot is also a venue for presentations on things like election voting information, gardening and a Kombucha workshop. Others have hosted small meetings during Community Café.

One new resident couple purchased an old farmhouse nearby. She was from Ontario and he from Australia. Clair said, "They started coming to the café and they found out about a babies and toddlers group and some other things. She was pregnant. She had her baby in April, and in May she invited the whole community when she hosted a double birthday party at the café for her husband and for the new baby. There were lots of cakes brought."

Clair continued, "Because that's her family, her community now, where her mom's in Ontario and he's so far from home. It's really made a difference."

At a recent parish workshop, parishioners shared excitedly about this new venture. Several noted how important Community Café was for networking and providing an opportunity to have

deeper conversations with new people. Parish clergy, Rector, Rev'd. Mellanie Cohoon and Associate Priest, Rev'd. Catherine Robar stop by the drop-in and others support by donating baked goods, washing dishes, etc. "There's no lack of people helping," said Clair.

The organizers refrain from pressuring guests about their church. "It's a reaching-out to people, and although we don't say we're the Anglicans... people know," said the retiree.

"One person said that they had gone to church as a child, but drifted away, and actually had a bad experiences. Coming to the café this person said she knows that it's run by people from the church. ... It's really changed her outlook and has urged her or pushed her a little closer to going back to church," she said.

"I'm not someone who will preach in someone's face. That's just not the way I am," explained Clair. "The quiet subtle ways of doing things I think are more effective. If this one person alone says, 'Oh, maybe I better rethink this about going back,' well that's great."

A committed Anglican, Clair describes her approach to missional ministry. "We keep asking people to come to the church. It doesn't work. We have to go where they are," she said.

"The only way that we are able to help people is to build relationships, so having the café has done that. It has built relationships and is building relationships, not only for me but for a lot of people within the community, especially the newcomers," Clair explained. "Then you can find out what the needs are once you've built the relationships."



[HOME](#)

Supporting Ministry and Mission

CYNTHIA PILICHOS, ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN BOARD

The January 2020 issue of the Anglican Journal was chock full of articles related to the visible decline of churches as we have known church to be. The statistics are sobering, and they are, indeed, “a wake-up call” as Primate Linda Nicholls notes; they do challenge us to think how we might be “presenting [the] hope and good news” of the Gospel in ways that are meaningful to a current demographic. Archbishop Linda asks what we might need to try in order to do this.

As one reads further in both the Journal and The Diocesan Times, one is presented, however, with amazing stories of mission and ministry, with accounts of what parishes and faith communities are trying, actions that are making a difference in the lives of many. It is true that few of these inspiring situations, if any, translate into increased attendance in the church pews on Sunday, but they are evidence of the Gospel alive in the communities in which they find themselves.

When one reads the stories of parishes in our diocese experimenting with ways to share the good news of the Gospel within their communities, one reads also how such parishes have availed themselves of diocesan grants that are designed for the activating of new ideas. It is very likely that these parishes have had many of their parishioners attend



some or all of the MORE Missional School Modules. It is also possible that parish members have attended some or all of the Vital Church Maritimes Conferences, or had some of their younger members participate in the Diocesan Youth Conferences. Maybe they have been, or are, a parish engaged with the Community Roots Camp Project out of the Diocese’s Youth and Family Ministry Team. Many of our parishes have taken advantage of diocesan personnel, such as Rev. Lisa Vaughn, Parish Vitality Coordinator, or Allie Colp, Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, to help with the process of re-imagining the church to have it be more relevant in a post-modern, post-Christian society. I expect that many of the people in these parishes are regular readers of The Diocesan Times and the Anglican Journal. In other words, there are many “institutional” resources to be accessed, human and other, within our diocese, to help in the process of re-imagining church for inspired ministry

and mission.

What about the national church? Fortunately, most Anglicans are very aware of the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund and contribute to it so that it can accomplish its mission. However, it is still surprising to realize that there are Anglicans who are unaware of the existence of the Anglican Foundation. It was established in 1957 to support ministry in the Anglican Church of Canada. The Anglican Foundation depends on regular donations from individuals, parish groups, parishes, and dioceses to be able to award grants for a variety of needs, a key one being creative, new ministry initiatives. Giving to the Anglican Foundation so that it can respond to grant applications sends a strong message that you care about the mission of the Anglican Church of Canada within Canada.

The Anglican Church Women Board for our diocese offers several opportunities of support for ministry and mission, and not only for women. To help with one’s spiritual life, the Board sponsors a Lenten Quiet Day, in partnership with a hosting parish, that is open to all. This opportunity highlights the importance of the relationship between the Anglican Church Women Board and the Anglican students at the Atlantic School of Theology, because it is AST students who offer the reflections on a theme. In 2020 the Lenten

Quiet Day takes place on Sat. Mar. 28 at St. James, Shubenacadie, with reflections on the theme, Mission is Possible: Empowered by God.

The Anglican Church Women Board supports ordained ministry through the annual awarding of Kingston Memorial Fund Bursaries to AST students destined for stipendiary ministry. This bursary has been made possible by an endowment from former diocesan Archbishop and 7th Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Most Reverend George Frederick Kingston. In 2019, the following students were recipients of a Kingston Memorial Fund Bursary: Rev. Shirley Cole, Debbie Fice, Blane Finnie, Jane Magrath, and Rob Paddock.

The Board has a continuing education award, the Anniversary Bursary, for an Anglican woman 5 years or more removed from formal studies, who is enrolled in any recognized program. There is sometimes a misperception that the studies have to be of a theological nature – that is not so. The deadline date for application has past (December 31), but the Board would be happy to consider a late application. As well, donations to the principal of this Fund are always welcome!

Any questions regarding the Anglican Church Women Board are best directed to the Board’s e-mail address: acw.nsboard@gmail.com, as this avenue allows for a prompt response.

It is easy to do lots of hand wringing and bemoaning about the decline in church affiliation and attendance, but it is much more validating to think and act creatively and to actively seek resources to “fertilize” what Archbishop Nicholls sees as “green shoots” of growth within the church community. Maybe there are fewer people in the pews, but those who are there are often “deeply passionate and deeply committed to their faith and their church” (Bishop Peddle – Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador) and that is cause for hope, not only to Bishop Peddle, but to all of us.

It is worth remembering the words of anthropologist, Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” The Anglican Church Women Board is partnered with the King’s Kikima Grannies for the Board’s current Annual Project: Education – a life changing gift! and the King’s Grannies always end their inspiring presentation with that quotation. Closely allied to those famous words of Margaret Mead is the lesser known quotation of hers, but one that is just as relevant in the face of the church in today’s world: “Never believe that a few caring people can’t change the world. For, indeed, that’s all who ever have.” Amen to that!

Mothers’ Union: a global membership

4 million members in 84 countries

By MARY STONE

Two years ago Worldwide Mothers’ Union was divided into 11 zones (A – K). We in Canada are a part of Zone B which also includes South America, USA, and West Indies. Each Zone has a trustee who works with Mary Sumner House in London, UK to support and meet with Provincial Presidents in developing action plans. Kathleen Snow, Diocese of Fredericton, is our Zone B trustee.

Over these last two years each Zone has worked through the MULO process (Mothers’ Union Listens, Observes, and Acts). This has allowed the voices of over 200,000 members to be heard as to how the communities in which they live and work can be

transformed.

From these many meetings a new definition of our identity has emerged.

Our identity:

Mothers’ Union is a global, women led, volunteer movement. United in our diversity and living out our faith, we support individuals and families to transform their lives. Embedded in the Church and community, we have unprecedented reach that gives a voice to the stigmatized and vulnerable round the world.

Across the globe this identity is acted out in many different ways depending on the needs and situations in each community. It is amazing to discover how many needs are the same the world over – faith and confidence building, sup-



porting family relationships, awareness of human trafficking, addressing gender based violence, supporting food programs in schools and communities, loneliness for the

elderly, poverty and refugee support are some examples.

It is exciting be a part of such a huge community of like minded Christians while doing our small part in the Diocese

of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island to investigate and address the needs in our own communities.

Bring me a higher love

By CATHY LEE CUNNINGHAM,
RECTOR, CHURCH OF THE GOOD
SHEPHERD, BEAVER BANK

"Think about it, there must be higher love, down in the heart or hidden in the stars above. Without it, life is wasted time, look inside your heart and I'll look inside mine."

- Lyrics, "Bring Me a Higher Love, by Steve Winwood, Will Jennings (1986)

Greetings and peace to you, in the name of Jesus, God's love incarnate in flesh like ours, as we move into February, a time at which our Western culture celebrates all of the facets, joys and struggles of love.

The world's on fire: how will we serve?

As I write this, the Australian wildfires continue to burn. According to VOX.com, "More than 15.6 million acres torched. Over 1,400 homes destroyed. And, according to one biodiversity expert's count, an estimated 480 million animals killed."

The video of a koala fleeing the fires and being given a



Rev. Cathy Lee Cunningham

drink by cyclist who stopped to help is absolutely gut-wrenching. The suffering on the planet seems to be escalating at alarming rates.

The United States assassination of Iranian General Qasim Soleimani has inflamed the tensions between the two nations which could unleash yet another endless war with consequences for the whole world.

As Sarah McLachlan sings,

"The world's on fire." She responds with a promise to "bring what I am able".

As I was thinking about all of these things, Whitney Houston's angelic voice came through the radio waves, "Bring me a higher love...." a remix of the 1986 Steve Winwood song, which is now back at the top of the Pop Charts thanks to her and a DJ named Kygo. What few people know is that the song is actually a hymn.

The WHY behind the lyrics

The real meaning behind the lyrics, written by Will Jennings:

"I was born in East Texas and my mother and father's families were from Arkansas and the generations before were from the Deep South. My father's father was a Methodist preacher, a circuit rider, in Arkansas. My earliest memories are of the music in church and of my aunts and uncles singing the beautiful old hymns. 'Higher Love' is a generation past that, when things were not so much taken for granted, so that one has to plea, 'Bring me a higher love,' and the lines are all trying to explain WHY there must be higher love. A modern hymn, you might call it."

In case you haven't figured it out yet, "higher love" is code for God. And, as much as the song is a plea for that love to come to earth, it is also an anthem for a new generation, a calling to those who would dare to step up, into the responsibility of bearing that higher love into this broken-hearted world.

To me, it's also a wake-up call sermon, meant for all of us to hear:

"World's a turnin', we're just hanging on, facing our fear and standing out there alone...."

Things look so bad everywhere. In this whole world, what is fair? Walk the line and try to see. Falling behind in what could be....

BRING ME A HIGHER LOVE....

Where's that higher love I keep thinking of?"

This then caused me to think of one of my favourite people, Simon Sinek, who tells us that if we want to find that higher love and bring it to earth, we first need to discover what he calls our "WHY".

Start with why

With over 40 million views, translated into 47 languages, his 2009 TED Talk on the concept and process of finding our WHY has much to offer us as we discern our unique individual and collective purposes in Higher Love, in God, as servants of our God at this time-on-fire in history.

According to Sinek:

"The WHY is the purpose, cause or belief that drives each every one of us. Your WHY is the one constant that will guide you toward fulfillment in your work and life. The WHY was born out of pain. It was born out of a time in my life, many years ago, where I had lost my passion for what I was doing."

He went on to describe how he had withdrawn from his life and relationships, how he wasn't himself anymore. He wasn't going out. He didn't want to get out of bed to do the same work that to others — from the outside — looked like a dream fulfilled.

So, he stopped. Closed his business. Began discerning that WHY, and built a whole new future based on living out of it. WHY? To serve the world, bring people together in happiness, fulfillment, safety and joy. To build a better

world.

When we bring our Baptismal Covenant, Bible and intention to dwell in Higher Love to this WHY process, we've suddenly got a powerful pathway as Church, to embolden and amplify our calling as bearers of Higher Love, right where we are.

Putting these two things together — our WHY and our Higher Love — will change the world. Even if only small bit by small bit.

So, this coming Lent, let's answer the call of Higher Love, to get out of our own way, overcome our overwhelm, fatigue, fear, complacency and all that's falsely holding us back, because we're on a planet in profound need of that love.

That Higher Love — God.

Look inside your heart, I'll look inside mine.

Listen: Bring Me a Higher Love

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTYOkcRH220>

Resources to Help You Find Your Why

<https://simonsinek.com/find-your-why/?ref=mainNav>

The Power of Why

<https://simonsinek.com/commit/the-power-of-why/>

Free Webinar: Finding Your Why

<https://simonsinek.com/commit/why-discovery-webinar/>

See you back here in the March Issue, with an article on leading from the waters of baptism.

Photo credit: C. Valdez on Unsplash

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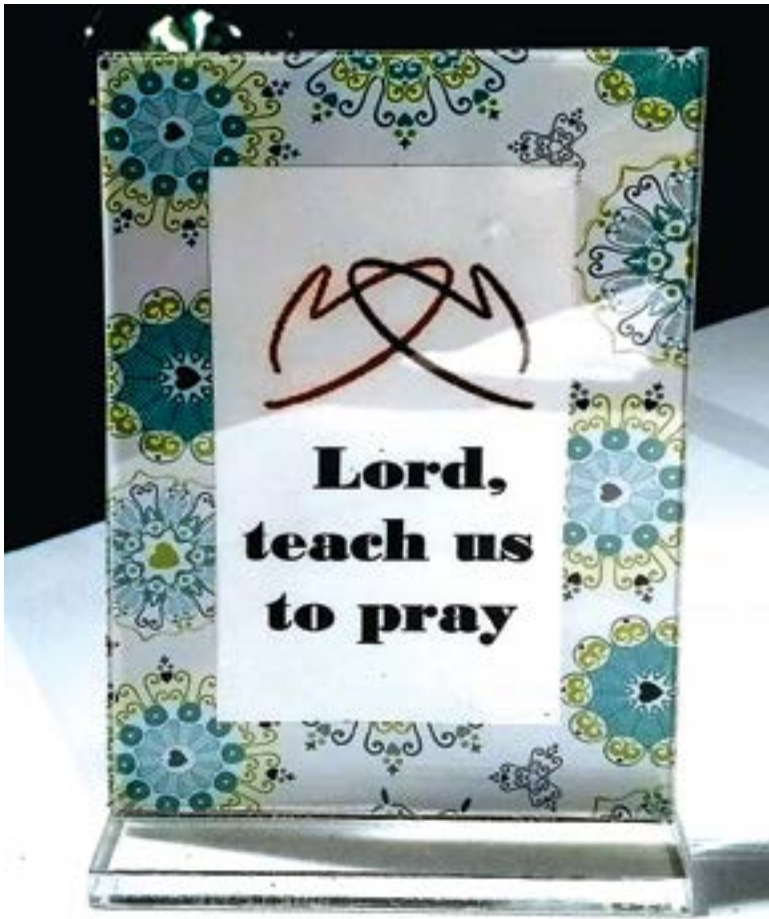
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Teach us to pray:

Prayer shapes who we are



Since 1983, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (AFP) has been mandated to encourage the ministry of prayer in Canada. As a resource to the Church, the AFP aims to foster a habit of prayer among Anglicans, providing resources to engage individuals and groups in

conversation with God.

Let's be honest: the Church has not always done a good job of teaching people "how" to pray. As Anglicans, we enjoy the rich tradition of our common books of prayer. The words of our traditional and contemporary prayers (especially for me, the

psalm prayers) have been a sustaining part of my prayer life. A prayer doesn't need poetic words, nor does it need to be long. "Help!" is sometimes the only – and best – prayer we can muster because in that single word we acknowledge our need of God and our dependence upon God's grace. Another great prayer is "Thanks", which we can never pray enough, and another is a little wordier: "What do you want me to do, O God?" Still, many of us could use some help in learning "how" to pray.

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer offers a variety of prayer resources through its website www.anglicanprayer.org. Among the available resources is a downloadable 7-part video series on the principal kinds of prayer which could easily form the basis of a parish study program. Likewise, another series "Praying Congregations: the heart of the Christian Community", featuring the Rev. Jane Vennard, could also stimulate discussion.

In a series called "Encounters on the Journey" one finds 2 videos (and audio files) by Canon Herbert O'Driscoll and another by the Rev. Greg Mercer. The AFP website also features articles, prayer



Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith

cycles and the Fellowship's newsletter published 5 times a year.

Does prayer have a purpose? Does it matter if we pray? Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has said "Praying is simply sitting before God and allowing him, through Jesus, to shape who we are." The Archbishop concludes his comments: "Prayer matters. Prayer changes things. History shows that a renewal of prayer can result not just in churches transformed - but whole societies too. It doesn't really matter how you pray – whether your tradition is ancient or modern. It only matters that you pray."

Prayer is essentially a conversation and like all good

conversations, there needs to be a balance between talking and listening. The shape of our faith expresses our experience of Christ – and so our prayer shapes us. Deepening our prayer can give us access to that experience with more consistency – and when we need it most. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer wants to help us do just that.

As the AFP diocesan representative, I'd be pleased to assist you and your parish to deepen your practice of prayer. If you have a question about prayer or topic you'd like to know more about, resources from the AFP catalogue can easily be emailed to you or printed and sent to you. And if time permits, I'm available to visit your parish or group for a prayer workshop or to consult with you by phone.

You can reach me by email at fdroletsmith@gmail.com, by phone at 902-420-0717 or by snail mail at The Diocesan Centre 1340 Cathedral Lane, Halifax NS B3H 2Z1

Prayer shapes who we are – and in turn, enables us to re-shape the world.

REV. FRANCES DROLET-SMITH
DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE,
THE ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

WANTED! Parish news

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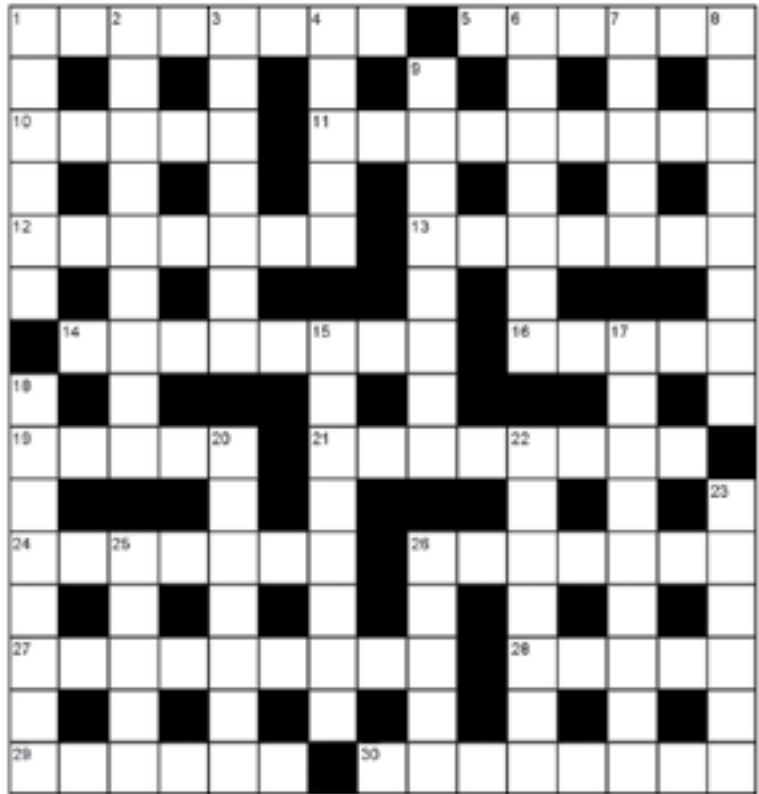
[HOME](#)

Bible Crossword

by Maureen Yeats



FEBRUARY Puzzle



2020 February Puzzle Clues

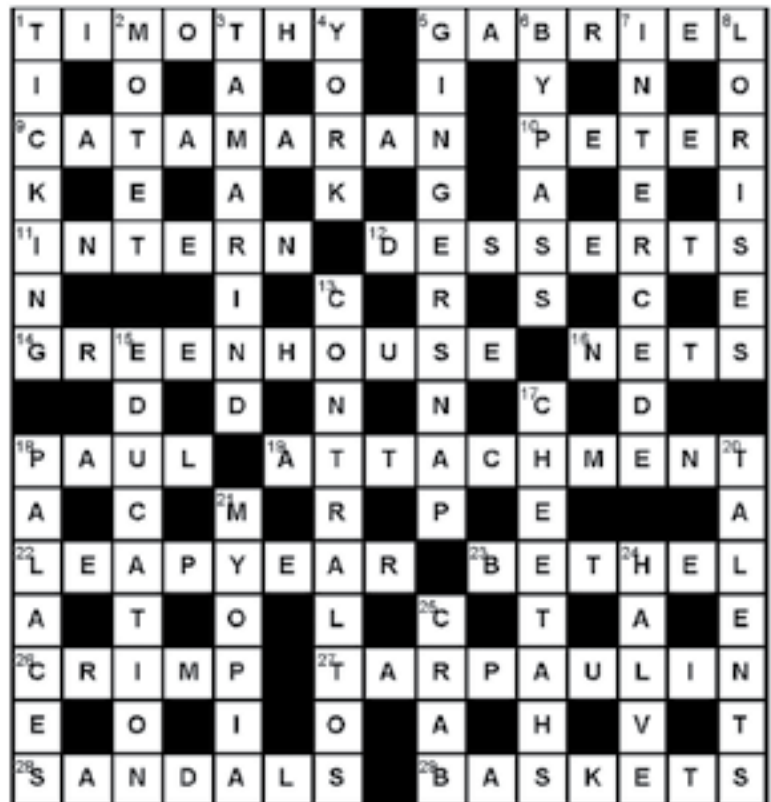
ACROSS:

- 1- Apostle appointed to replace Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:12-26) (8)
- 5- Old Testament poetical book (6)
- 10- An emirate on the Arabian Peninsula (5)
- 11- One who gives up something voluntarily (8)
- 12- The first known Christian martyr (Acts 6-7) (7)
- 13- "They stripped him and put a _____ robe on him." (Matt. 27:28) bright colour (7)
- 14- Major Jewish festival (see for example Exod. 12:11) (8)
- 16- First wife of Abraham (Gen. 17:15) (7)
- 19- Shout of encouragement (5)
- 21- Labels bearing a person's name (8)
- 24- Lists of ingredients and instructions for cooking (7)
- 26- Deserved (7)
- 27- Not worthy of trust (9)
- 28- Loop with a running knot which tightens when pulled (5)
- 29- African fly that carries the protozoan for sleeping sickness (6)
- 30- People who sing by themselves (8)

DOWN:

- 1- Free from vanity (6)
- 2- Knives, plates, cups, etc., (9)
- 3- High places above level ground (7)
- 4- Brother of Moses (Exod. 4:14) (5)
- 6- Sharp, shrill sounds (7)
- 7- Referring to a particular place (5)
- 8- Elastic (8)
- 9- Very small metric unit of length (8)
- 15- "He _____ from their sight." (Luke 24:31) disappeared (8)
- 17- "Simeon ... was _____ and devout." (Luke 2:25) upright (9)
- 18- Certify a person's credentials (8)
- 20- Basketball team based in 22D (7)
- 22- Large city in Ontario (7)
- 23- French farewells (6)
- 25- Class system in India (5)
- 26- Maxim (5)

JANUARY Solution



LENTEN QUIET DAY



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NEWS BRIEF:

Missional Leadership Cohort, The Connectors TWO

THE TEN CONNECTORS

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

A second group of lay and clergy leaders are embarking upon a year-long adventure, exploring mission in their respective contexts. **The Connectors TWO** is a missional leadership learning cohort that meets monthly to mutually encourage, challenge and deepen one another's vocation, while being held accountable to missional goals.

The Connectors offers the promise of intensive, transformational leadership development for a missionary diocese.

This year's supportive network of peers includes eight lay ministers and two clergy. They are: Amanda Avery, All Saints' Bedford; Heather Carter, Cathedral Church of All Saints'; Patsy Clothier, Parish of Horton (St. John's Wolfville); Nichola Fish-Cumine, St. Mark's Halifax; Lorraine Fisher, Christ Church Berwick; Edith Marshall, Parish of Tangier; Gillian Power, Parish of Hatchet Lake & Terence Bay; Catherine Robar, Parish of New Germany; Maxine Simpkin, St. John the Evangelist, Middle Sackville; and Ashley Slauenwhite, St. James' Mahone Bay.

Some of the outcomes for the program include: to understand more deeply our post-Christendom culture, our unique local contexts and the potential opportunities they pose to the formation of Christian identity and devotional practice; And to gain biblical and theological insight into God's mission and the church's missionary identity. This leadership development initiative also equips participants to engage in



Photo: The Connectors TWO: (backrow from left) Jill Power, Nichola Fish Cumine, Lorraine Fisher, Heather Carter, Catherine Robar, Ashley Slauenwhite, Maxine Simpkin, Archbishop Ron Cutler, (front row from left) Patsy Clothier, Amanda Avery and Edith Marshall.

action/reflection experiments and pilot projects intended to respond to mission-oriented opportunities.

The first group of eight Connectors wrapped up their year in October 2019. They continue in their ministries and remain connected with

one another, planning to meet from time to time for mutual support.

This learning forum is a Diocesan investment in the future vitality and growth of parishes as we seek to join God's transforming Spirit in our neighbourhoods. The

Connectors are selected because they exhibit the passion, skills and entrepreneurial spirit for this work. Additionally, their parish environments are ideal, whereby missional initiatives can take root and be nurtured.



2020 MORE Mission Schools

Start the New Year off with boldness!

We are hosting nine regional MORE Mission Schools throughout the diocese, from January to April.

This fourth round of workshops is titled **MORE Bold**, and helps participants (re)discover their faith story. Best practices and tips will be shared about how to tell God's story of hope and good news for the world. Module 4 explores what it means to be a disciple today, especially related to our Anglican identity.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! See: www.nspeidiocese.ca or call 902-420-0717 (ask for Lisa).

Archbishop Ron Cutler and a team of lay and clergy leaders facilitate each FREE workshop. They run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- | | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• South Shore• Valley• Eastern Shore• Cape Breton• Chignecto | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Feb. 29 - St. James' Mahone Bay- March 14 – Christ Church, Berwick- March 21 - St. James' Seaforth- March 28 – T.B.A.- April 4 - All Saints', Springhill | <ul style="list-style-type: none">(Registration Deadline Feb. 26)(Registration Deadline March 11)(Registration Deadline March 18)(Registration Deadline March 25)(Registration Deadline April 1) |
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MORE is based on God's desire to give the world MORE of what it really needs – hope, love, and freedom. We encourage each congregation to bring a team!

Many blessings through all stages of life

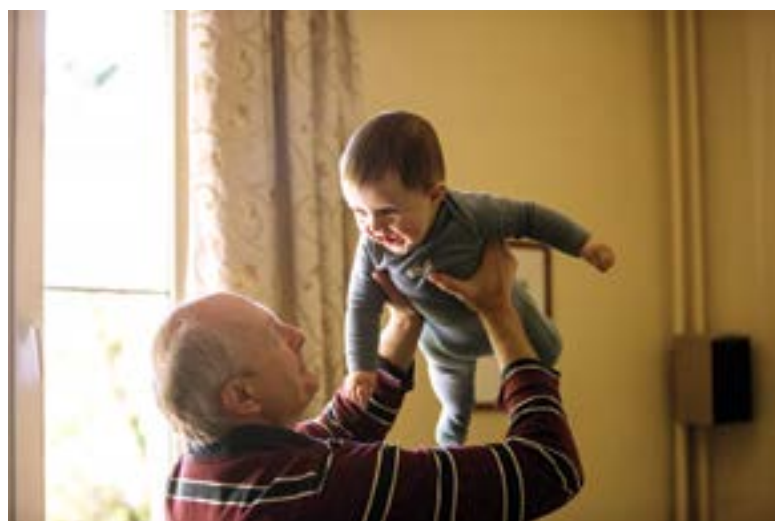


Photo: Grandad with grandson by Johnny Cohen on Unsplash

by Deacon Lynda Downing

Each month I am blessed to gather with very dear folks in a senior's care facility. While I worship and visit with them, it becomes so evident to me that they are given many blessings that we rarely put into words to feed others.

While reading Matthew's Gospel, especially Chapter 5, verses 13 & 14, it opened for me how His words have assisted these dear seniors to grow in faith. How scripture has and continues to open possibilities for our faith to blossom into exceptional love.

Theologians and the learned have interpreted so much wisdom and clarified the ways of the world through the centuries. A particularly warm reflection comes from William

Barclay in his commentaries as well as more contemporary works. "My mind and soul are permeated with Jesus giving great common examples, for many languages, to aid us all to become more peaceful." Barclay's words taught his contemporaries what it meant to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. There is so much for us to learn from the wisdom of these past generations.

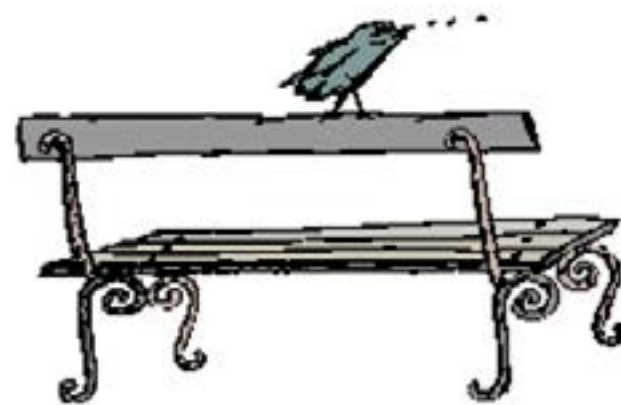
We can see God moving through all stages of life as we journey together as church communities. We see precious, sweet, and unique babies whose joy and wonder in all things helps us to see salt and lights for the world in their innocence and love.

As those babies grow into young children who

experience freedom in movement and nature, their faith grows as they fully trust and follow the faith of those guiding them. They see their families and church elders as the salt of the earth and light in the world. Their young faith grows when nurtured by the love of their church communities, and in turn, their young faith inspires, feeds and delights the older generations.

As children mature, there are sometimes setbacks and obstacles in understanding, but this struggle toward understanding is the most rewarding time of growth. If endured, it develops a faith on a sure foundation. Faith lived out by searching for examples of the salt of the earth and the light of the world and faith that chooses, again and again, to be salt and light to others. It is a faith that discerns what claims to be light and salt to the world and prophesize when it is not.

As we grow into seniors, we recognize the examples of the salt and light which have sustained us over the years. We can look back and see how Jesus has been with us at all times, even those times when we felt abandoned. He calls us to continue to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He gives us this great responsibility as our abilities shift, and as we find ourselves



View from the Deacon's Bench

asking where do I fit and what I can do now that my abilities have changed.

Wisdom allows us to review our lives and see how Jesus has been tremendously present to us when we needed Him - through physical stress and loneliness, how Jesus equips others (the salts of the earth and lights of the world) to be available to love us through difficult times. Going through life with Jesus and seeing Jesus at work, we can know that in times of need or disagreement, Jesus has the means to help us by always giving us hope and through that hope peace.

Seniors of faith know and trust that Jesus can lead us, as they know of his constant presence with them. In our life's journey we may ask ourselves, what can I do to give back for what Jesus has given me. You may feel your

gifts are to teach God's love or to serve people inside and outside the church in outreach and mission. There are means to help even when physically unable as we can all pray, and prayer is powerful.

If you feel a longing to follow God more fully but are unsure how to proceed, seek Spiritual Direction. If you have the smallest inkling, pray for guidance while speaking with ordained members, and by reading books that have helped others in your position. Singing hymns of Praise like Number 502 in the Common Praise Book called "You are Salt for the Earth."

Let us go forth in peace, to love and serve the Lord, striving no matter where we are in life's journey to be Christians who are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

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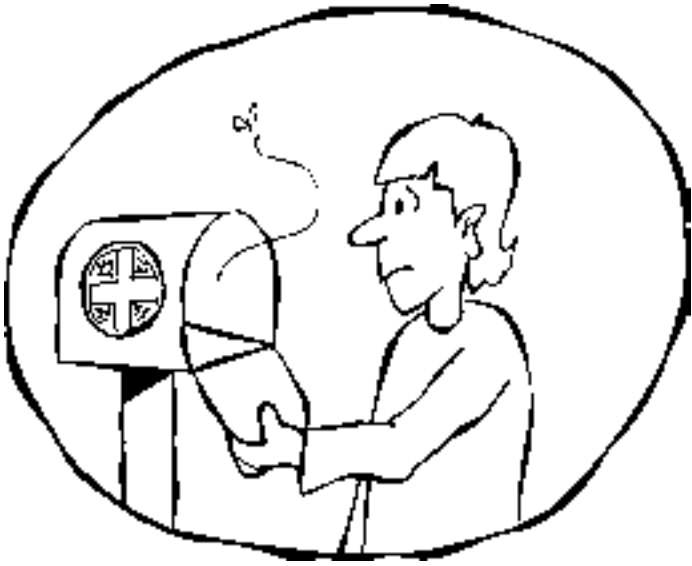
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