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THE DIOCESAN TIME



MAY 2020 A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

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CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Approach with reverence

BY SUSAN BARTHOS

How can we treat this pandemic in which we find ourselves like compost, not garbage?

Irish poet John O'Donohue tells us it is the quality of our approach that influences what we encounter or discover. "When we approach with reverence, great things decide to approach us."

We are exhibiting great reverence for the pandemic, though it is too often reverence rooted in anxiety and negativity. We are apprehensive and have so many questions. When is this all going to end and how it will end? Will we still have our jobs? How many businesses will close? To what heightened levels will domestic violence and mental illness rise? Will our children and grandchildren ever feel safe again? Most importantly, who will we lose to COVID-19?

Currently, we have few answers to these questions. Advice for battling our chronic, nagging anxieties abounds. Breathe deeply, meditate, pray, eat well, stay rested, go for safe walks outdoors, don't obsessively follow the news, phone a friend. All very good advice, but not compost material.

A dear friend called me last week to report breathlessly how worried she was about me, about how I was making out. "What, exactly, were you worried about?" I asked, perplexed. She had no answer. There was nothing tangible she could extract from her anxiety. She had placed me in a scene in a snow globe and shaken the globe until she could no longer see me. All she saw was a pandemic of snow swirling around me. Because this is a friend of many decades, I was able to softly say: "You know, just because you think it, doesn't make it so."

There is a lovely Zen story about managing anxiety that I share in my conflict and change management workshops. "When you hear anxiety knocking on your door, go to the door and open it. Recognize that anxiety is standing on your doorstep ... but don't invite it in for tea."

What we give power to has power over us. We can choose the thoughts we want to cultivate.

Jean Paul Sartre tells us: "We are our choices." Victor Frankl also talks about choices: "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."

How can we treat the pandemic in which we find ourselves like compost, not garbage? Courageously, by moving beyond anxiety and responding with self-reflection. We can choose to

leave anxiety on the doorstep, enter into Frankl's powerful space, and ask ourselves: "How do I want to show up in the post-pandemic world?"

We have a time-limited opportunity to move beyond anxiety and do some inner work while we are mostly confined to our homes. Let's approach this opportunity with reverence and cherish it. Let's each of us reflect on our values and our purpose for being here. Let's figure out who we want to be when the snow globe stops shaking and the new normal materializes. Let's really scrutinize the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour we carried into the pandemic and consciously choose the new identity we want to show up with, post-pandemic.

How do we shut the door on our anxious thoughts and focus on inner work? Gently. Slowly. One step at a time, the way we learned to crawl, then stand, then walk. Sit quietly and

start with a clean slate. Picture yourself holding a newborn baby and wish into the world the very best person you can be for that infant and all who surround them.

Anne Lamott says: "Courage is fear that has said its prayers." Pray for the courage and wisdom to be self-reflective now in order to be big and bold and brave and new in our post-pandemic world.

If each of us returns to the world with a new identity – one with pandemic proof values such as kindness, respect, honesty, accountability – we will have used our downtime wisely by cultivating a new way of being.

Take this time to dig. Dig deep. Dig deeper.

Susan Barthos is a member of the Parish of Horton (St. John's, Wolfville) and can be reached at info@susanbarthos.com

A prayer of hope in time of uncertainty

The Lord is Risen INDEED! Let us rejoice in the Lord always! For truly, beloved of Christ, there is joy to be found. I do not mean just a temporary happiness, or an avoidance of the serious reality of society has been living. We have been given the chance to consider our lives and our faith; and we can choose to find joy and opportunity:

There is joy to be found:

- In homes where we can stay safe, for the health of ourselves and our loved ones.
- In closed buildings, that inspire new ways for us to BE your church.
- In community, reaching out with strength in times of challenge.
- In prayer, faithfully

connecting us across time and space.

May we use this opportunity: To continue commitment to health and wholeness of all your people and your planet; To continue to reach beyond our walls and live our baptismal vows; To seek out new ways to know and love the people in our communities;

To renew our commitment to pray and praise without ceasing.

Creating God, Risen Christ, Energizing Spirit: May all we do faithfully proclaim your Good News - in the true joy that comes from you.

REV. LAURA MARIE PIOTROWICZ



Photo: by Oxana Lyashenko (Unsplash)

COLUMNIST

Isolation By The Bog

Like the rest of the world, a new normal has settled in over The Bog. We are removing ourselves from each other, we are listening to our leaders and self-isolating. We are staying home. It isn't an easy thing to do here By The Bog. We are a community that rallies around in times of trouble. We are a people who start to bake and cook casseroles as soon as word comes of any crisis.

Every instinct says 'gather together, circle the wagons, stay close and hold each other'; now we are being told 'stay away, keep your distance, no personal contact!' It seems so remote to us in a rural setting. We don't see large crowds here unless it is a community supper or a church bazaar. It is easy to limit our numbers to 5 or less because we might be hard pressed to find more than 5 in any one place at any given time.



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

Jason has been finding the isolation very hard, yet he knows he must be a good example for his flock. He has had a hard winter, what with the accident and the weeks with his mobility very much restricted. Now, just as he was getting back, the world is saying..."NO". Jason is a man of the times

and can use all of the new technology to make his job easier. He is on Social media and Twitter, Facebook and Zoom but he, and we, seem to need that personal connection. Our rector has taken to the old-fashioned way of communicating with his flock.... a phone call.

He has been calling each and every family on the Parish list at least once a week. It might be nothing more than a "Hi, just checking on you" but he hears our voice and we hear his and we all feel comforted by his concern.

Who knows how long this new way of living in community will go on... weeks...months? No one can predict but we are alive and well and virus free here at St. Bart's By The Bog and we as a Parish are here too. We have our Pastor looking after us if

only from afar, we have our beautiful church on the hill, overlooking the Bog and the ocean beyond, we know the church building is open for private prayers when we need to be in that quiet place, alone. We have our immediate families close at hand to share the solitude and isolation and we have our faith that this too will pass and we will come out the other side a wiser, kinder more conscious people who will be healed and strengthened by the knowledge that the more we are alone, the more we have each other and the more we need our faith.

I'll keep you posted,
Aunt Madge

Who is sitting close by my Orin and sharing a cup of tea and a chat with old friends if only via the telephone.



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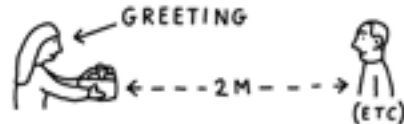
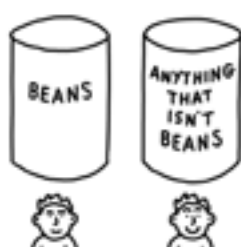
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THE FOODBANK
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(REALLY IMPORTANT AS
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AND NOW SELF-ISOLATING)WHY IS THE
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RATHER THAN PRESENTSLIKE THE
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BISHOP'S COLUMN

Mission in a time of crisis



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

I am writing this column on Palm Sunday. I am telling you this because the condition in our country, our provinces and our communities has been changing so rapidly over the past three weeks that the next three weeks, before this edition of the Diocesan Times is in your hands, may see equally dramatic events taking place around us. Thousands of people in Canada are sick with a virus which has no treatment, hundreds have died. Tens of thousands have been laid off (temporarily we hope) throwing individuals, businesses and families into financial turmoil. Public institutions of all kinds are closed, programs cancelled, classes on hold, buildings locked. For the church, this has meant that public worship has been suspended indefinitely. No one can visit a hospital or nursing care home. Gatherings are restricted to no more than 5 people and who must maintain at least 2 metres (6ft.) distance from one another. Pastoral care in the midst of illness and death means no physical presence. We repeat the new public mantra: Wash your hands, don't touch your face, stay home. Leaders, both secular and religious, have lost control of the agenda... we are making this up as we go along, doing the best we can do and making what seem to be the best decisions possible in the moment.

The word **pandemic** comes from the Greek: **pandemos**: "of all the people". A pandemic affects all the people.

A couple of months ago, the headline in the national newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada proclaimed that membership trends for our church indicated that the church would be gone by 2040. Statistics showing massive change in our church over the next 20 years have been overtaken by the pandemic reality; huge change, empty buildings and a shift to virtual gatherings supporting reimagined community outreach. These are not the nightmares of the future; they are the lived reality of our congregations right now. However, in contrast to the fears those earlier headlines provoked, the church is not closed and the church is not dead, rather, the church has left its buildings. For an organization which most of the time seems to be allergic to change, we have embraced change in a truly remarkable way!

The church is the people and the people are still called - even in the midst of a pandemic, perhaps especially in the midst of a pandemic; to proclaim and enact the kingdom of God. This is the kind of kingdom that Jesus proclaimed (so he told Pontus

Pilate) was not of this world. It was not outside the planet, but it was outside of the rules that most of the world lives by. It was a kingdom where the normal assumptions of power and privilege were turned upside down. This morning, our worship began with a reading of scripture, which recounted how the king of glory rode a donkey into a city that both celebrated and loathed him. Kings in this world don't ride donkeys, but in God's kingdom they do. Kings in this world do not submit their lives to a higher purpose and in so doing pick up a cross, but in God's kingdom they do. God's kingdom is built on the powerful image of light in the midst of darkness, words of forgiveness in the midst of pain, the power of life rising out of death and renewed hope in the midst of shattering despair. We are kingdom people and we need to live this kind of way now more than ever.

Our lives have been completely disrupted and the most asked question has become "How long must we live this way? When will it end? The answer, at least in this moment is "We don't know, so wash your hands, don't touch your face, stay home." The sports stars and media personalities which have dominated our popular culture, have become irrelevant in this fight. Instead, the staff at the grocery stores have been recognized for their service and the medical workers and support staff (including the cleaners) are our new heroes. We need those heroes when we face the loss of control in our lives and when we dwell with the feelings of powerlessness. We are living with a pervasive deep anxiety that comes from confronting the illusion that we are in control of our lives.

The word pandemic comes from the Greek: **pandemos**: "of all the people". A pandemic affects all the people. We are in this together. Physical isolation is essential to "flatten the curve" and in order to bring this contagion under control, social cohesion, connection and community are essential. Without them, we may eventually win the medical battle but lose the society itself. This pandemic has demonstrated, in a powerful way, that borders mean nothing and that we are not independent at all. Instead, we are interdependent. We need one another. We need the care we can have for one another. We need to both give and receive the self giving love exemplified in the actions of Jesus in the final days of his earthly life.

Those who give their life away find life.

In hope,
+Ron

STRIVE FOR FIVE - gender equality



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

I'm writing this in early April, as we are all invited to stay home as much as possible due to the spreading Coronavirus. In light of the past month, it is hard to imagine where we will be by the time this Diocesan Times is prepared and distributed. The world is changing at an alarming rate.

The issue of gender equality and women's rights may not at the forefront of people's minds, as we watch our daily briefings and try not to get sucked into a vortex of negativity based in fear and a lack of control. But it is an issue to remember.

The impacts of this pandemic are affecting women differently than men, both negatively and positively. Sadly, there has already been an increase in gender-based violence and domestic violence; there has been a decrease in women's access to gender-based health care (as resources are diverted); the disproportionately high number of women working in precarious employment or home-based businesses are at higher risk of economic challenge.

However, society is also recognising the invaluable involvement of women as essential workers:

women vastly outnumber men as lab technicians, nurses, carers, cleaners, administrators, grocery clerks, etc.. Women share a higher percentage in the care economy, at home and in the essential services.

So yes: gender justice plays a part in our COVID-19 experience. And we are able to embrace it even more in our post-Coronavirus reconnections.

As we live in this Easter season, we are navigating a new reality each day. Not unlike Jesus' disciples after the resurrection, we are invited create a new normal, a new expression of grace. We are being

given the opportunity to imagine a world where we can focus on truth and justice, on loving God fully and neighbour as ourselves, and on celebrating the gifts and dignity of everyone - regardless of gender - for Easter assures us that the equal image of God is upon us all. Alleluia!



The What and the Why

“The Confessional moment”

I have an old memory. It is sweet, it is sour. It reminds me of one of the most important lessons my dad ever taught me; “Tell the truth, and tell it now, no matter the outcome!” My dad worked for a very kind man by the name of Jim. I was 11. Jim’s office had a big glass door. Upon walking past the office one day I noticed a beautiful double barrel 4:10 shotgun standing in the corner. I impulsively walked in, (without permission) picked up the gun, and immediately dropped it to the hard wood floor. The fall split the barrels ruining the gun. In shock, I hurried immediately to my dad’s office and told him. Calm and cool, he showed no visible upset or anger. But what he said frightened me. “As soon as Jim comes back, go and tell him what happened.” I went outside, walked around the block a few times, and then in a panic waited for Jim’s return. When he arrived I followed him into his office explaining what I had done, and said, “I will pay you for the gun, or pay for it to be fixed.” Jim never even paused before speaking.



BRYAN HAGERMAN

“Just don’t you worry about it.” And that was that. The greatest lesson an eleven year old could learn. “No matter the outcome,” confess. The outcome was a lesson, attached to immense grace.

The seven deadly sins are:

1. pride
2. greed
3. lust
4. envy
5. gluttony
6. wrath
7. sloth

These 7 sins, along with sins against the Holy Spirit, are considered very serious. And they are! Happily they can be confessed directly to God who alone forgives sin. The scripture says we are also to confess our sins to one another. (John 5:16) This could be a close friend, a spouse, or to your local Anglican Priest. Therapists are often and for other reasons in the position to hear sins confessed too.

So what would the therapist do? Well he/she could help the person with the why of the sin, and then in some cases encourage the sinner to confess to God the what of the sin. The Apostle Paul had a problem with sin too, and with the why and the what question. “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.” (Romans 7:15) This was Paul’s and today for many of us, a major cognitive dissonance.

Today many clients come to a therapist with the inner struggle of the what, and the why of a form of sin. The task of the therapist is to hear the why, without judgment, and help the client move forward with a mechanism to change their behaviour. Many clients in therapy have no idea the amount of involuntary confession that they offer in confidence, and to a stranger. But they often leave feeling better nonetheless.

There is then the healing and confessional power of the Eucharistic moment. Robert Webber wrote about this; “But I can suggest one thing- flee to the Eucharist. Get to the table of the Lord just as fast as you can, because it is there that God can and does touch his people in a healing way. Many have affirmed that God through the Eucharist reached into their pain and touched them with his healing presence.” (P 111, Ancient Future Faith.) Webber believed that something miraculous and powerful could occur at the kneeling rail. This could be an emotional/physical/spiritual

healing. After the worshipper had offered their confession God could immediately intervene and touch them at that major troubling place in their lives. And any of the aforementioned 7 deadly sins will be forgiven, yes, even more so the habitual practice of that sin could be finalized in its practice. A habit could be taken away. A physical malady healed.

The Eucharistic moment is a confessional/healing moment. It may be the most powerful moment for an individual, and a congregation in whole of the week, month, year. Nothing compares to this. Nothing! Having received the wafer then the cup, one walks back to pew, a different person. We have confessed in public before God the what, and now we are cleansed. We can also receive at that moment a physical, emotional, and spiritual renewal. The what and the why have been taken to God for his consideration.

DR BRYAN HAGERMAN

ST PAUL’S CHURCH OUTREACH
COUNSELLOR

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Supporting parents: stories that matter

CYNTHIA PILICHOS, ANGLICAN
CHURCH WOMEN BOARD

To say that life changed in the “blink of an eye” pretty much captures the reality we are all living with now. The phrase ‘social distancing’, once unknown, is well and truly in our lexicon, although we have been transforming to the more accurate ‘physical distancing’, given that current technologies do allow us to remain connected.

The seriousness of the Covid-19 pandemic may have hit each of us at different times, with differing evolving realities acting as a catalyst for our growing comprehension of this unprecedented situation. With hindsight being 20/20 vision, we likely should have been aware much earlier about the rapid spread of the coronavirus and its forthcoming advent in our country; regardless, it is probably fair to say that the middle of March was the light bulb moment for most Canadians.

We are being asked to take



this opportunity of global crisis, which gives every sense will still be our reality by the time you are reading this, as we hunker down in our homes, physically isolated from many family members and all friends, to do what God asks of us, and that is: “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God”. Despite suspended liturgies, services, and all other congregational activity at all levels, we are still united in Christ, able to show our love of God and of our neighbour in many, if altered, ways.

The Anglican Church Women Board: Do justice . . . love kindness . . . walk humbly

with your God. This Faith & Fellowship Gathering has been postponed until September 26, with, happily, the new theme for 2020/21 continuing to guide the proceedings. There will be adjustments to our original plan, but the theme is a constant.

This Faith & Fellowship was to have been the wrap-up for the Board’s current Annual Project: Education – a life changing gift! However, we are still accepting contributions until the end of May. We give heartfelt thanks for all your contributors to date – parishes and individuals. Your generosity is astounding. We are thrilled to report that we have exceeded even our stretch goal of \$15,000, despite the loss of several spring fundraising opportunities, but the direct result of a very generous anonymous donation. Truly our God is walking with us!

Another key feature of this now postponed Faith & Fellowship Gathering will be the “official launch” of the Board’s new Annual

Project, the one for 2020/21, Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter. This Project has the Board seeking direct support from all our parishes and generous individuals for the extension of the Mothers’ Union Parenting Program in the Anglican Church of Canada’s Council of the North, through the training of Indigenous facilitators.

It is very easy to feel helpless in the face and aftermath of the many injustices experienced by our Indigenous sisters and brothers, but financial contributions and prayers for Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter really empower Anglicans in our diocese in a “go forward” way. We can take heart from the fact that the Mothers’ Union Parenting Program is tried and true; it has been successful at a grass roots level in 23 countries world-wide since 2002. An integral part of its success is its very nature: it is not an imposed, recipe-driven program. Rather, it is experienced by those in the Parent Support Group,

regardless of faith or no faith, in their own communities, embracing their own cultures and dynamics, sharing the stories that matter to them, guided by trained facilitators who really know how to listen.

Please note the ad for Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter in this issue of The Diocesan Times for how to contribute to this Annual Project 2020/21. As with all the projects of the Anglican Church Women Board, it is an “equal opportunity” initiative; it is not the women’s groups alone that are able to contribute to the Annual Project – all are welcome to do so, and all contributions are gratefully received. We are counting on you, all of you, for your continued financial support. We are also counting on your prayers for an outcome worthy of everyone’s support, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike: the raising of children and youth to be healthy, caring, kind, and loving adults and parents. So, here’s to Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter.

It's A New Day!

Diving deep into discipleship



Baptism
Photo by Linus Nylund on Unsplash



Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn, Diocesan Parish Vitality Coordinator

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

There's nothing like a pandemic to force us to consider what is most important, especially related to our spiritual lives. For the time being we are not permitted to gather in large groups for worship or other parish events. Churches everywhere are asking, 'Who are we if we cannot congregate on Sundays?'

We are *all* faced with the biting reality of what it means to be church, a Baptized follower of Christ, when we cannot do this for at least one hour on Sunday morning with our brothers and sisters. As horrible as this COVID-19 pandemic is (and we have a time to go before we move beyond this), it is helping us create new practices and patterns for ourselves as a people of faith. Therein is a gift for us to grow during this dreadful coronavirus season.

Laity and clergy alike are posing similar questions: How can we faithfully live out our Baptismal Covenant Promises

in this new era? What does it mean to be a disciple (an apprentice) of Jesus Christ now when we can't be with people? What does it practically look like and how do we dive deeper into a spiritually fresh, rejuvenating kind of authentic, active faith?

Each of our baptismal promises assumes that we are growing and maturing as

THE CATECHISM: A SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION

(The Book of Common Prayer, p.555)

Every Christian man or woman should from time to time frame for themselves a **RULE OF LIFE** in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel and the faith and order of the Church; wherein they may consider the following:

- The regularity of their attendance at public worship and especially at the holy Communion.
- The practice of private prayer, Bible-reading, and self-discipline.
- Bringing the teaching and example of Christ into their everyday life.
- The boldness of their spoken witness to their faith in Christ.
- Their personal service to the Church and the community. The offering of money according to their means for the support of the work of the Church at home and overseas.

Christ's committed followers. It states, "Will you...?" not "Do you...?" In turn we respond, "I *will*, with God's help." (Grammatically speaking, 'will' is an auxiliary verb, present singular in the 1st person that denotes a deliberate choice or decision for a future action.) Naturally this promise indicates that this is not a done deal, our maturity in faith. It is ongoing, life-long, and it is also an intentional daily determination to take steps to live out these sacred vows.

Growing up as a disciple does not happen by accident nor by just hanging around a church building or some dedicated religious folk. Take this example, I can attend every weekly Weight Watchers meeting, pay my dues to maintain my membership, and receive the printed and online materials. However, if I don't daily (sometimes hourly) apply what I'm learning and experiencing within the WW community, then I would be missing the mark. I would be on a good track, but transformation is highly unlikely unless I actively engage myself. I also need to band with others as we together join with God to bring about the Kingdom.

Application - the intentional, self-disciplined next steps are the pathway to our ongoing growth, maturity and transformation in and through Christ. God's Spirit meets us there. (It is going to look different for everyone.)

In our most recent MORE Mission School, Module #4, we've been talking about

that rich Anglican spiritual discipline called **developing a Rule of Life**. Instead of some dusty, outdated practice, rather it is a powerful gift within the Anglican tradition whereby we can deploy a process or a structure to bring about growth.

We note that our Baptismal Covenant Promises and a Rule of Life are not multiple choice. Choose four and forget the rest. Like a healthy diet, we need to strive to strike a relative balance in all the required areas. For example, if you absolutely love studying your Bible, you might participate in more of that than some of the other areas. But to dedicate oneself to this exclusively does not a well-rounded disciple make!

Here are some suggestions for how to develop a Rule of Life for yourself.

- Take each of the six categories and **write out your commitment**. What will you do to actively live each one out?
- **Be specific**. The more detailed and yet simple your intended actions are, the easier it will be to track your progress.
- Start with small stretch-goals. For example, don't commit to reading ten chapters of the Bible every day unless you know you can or you have built up a habit of that. Perhaps start with one chapter per day.
- What could you explore that might be new for you? For instance, have you tried Centering Prayer? Have you ever set a goal to 'bless' a total stranger each week (performed a good deed)? Challenge yourself with spiritual disciplines that are less familiar to you.
- Commit to revisiting this Rule of Life on the first day of each month or at another regular memorable interval.
- Make copies of your Rule and put them in prominent places so you will remember to stay on track. Put one in your car, in your Bible, on your refrigerator or in your Smartphone.
- Enlist a fellow Christian to join you in your Rule of Life accountability. Or create a small group whereby you are able to check-in on your progress (online meeting platforms may be required). You

may even wish to enlist the help of a Spiritual Director.

Something else to remember is that this is *your* Rule of Life for you in this season of life. This is not about pleasing your priest or competing to be the best in your choir. This is a spiritual growth tool to spur you on to maturity as an apprentice of Christ. Make it truly yours and be sure to challenge yourself in your growing edge. Like they say in the 12 Step Program, "It works if you work it."

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT PROMISES:

- Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?
- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?
- Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

A pandemic is an awful thing, but time and again God does amazing, mysterious things even in the face of tragedy. That's the message of the Cross – transformation and new life are possible with a little time and the power of the Spirit. This quieter, reflective season is a gift. Why not go deeper as a disciple and rediscover an exciting new chapter of authentic, active faith life?

Rev. Canon 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"

The call for a worldwide ‘good neighbour’ policy

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

“I should like to talk with you about a good man, whose exemplary life will always be a flashing light to plague the dozing conscience of mankind. His goodness was not found in passive commitment to a particular creed, but in his active participation in a life-saving deed; not in a moral pilgrimage that reached a designation point, but in the love ethic by which he journeyed life’s highway. He was good because he was a good neighbour.”

The Rev’d. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, **Strength to Love**, p. 20

While preparing my Good Friday meditations this year and reflecting on what it means to be a good neighbour in times like these, I came across one of my most treasured books, **Strength to Love**, a compilation of sermons written by Martin Luther King Jr. and published in 1963. (Please excuse the gender exclusive language).

It’s an especially meaningful and hopeful piece of literature at this jarring time in history,



Rev. Cathy Lee
Cunningham

while we’re forced by the global scourge of COVID-19 to drastically change how we live our lives, and witness the deep suffering experienced by so many across the globe, served by the real heroes and heroines of our age who risk their lives daily to care for them.

ASK MY NEIGHBOUR

When once asked if he was a Christian, the great scholar of world religions — Huston Smith — replied by simply saying, “Ask my neighbour.”

In the Biblical teaching, our neighbour is the one who is nearest to us in any given moment. Friends, strangers, fellow shoppers in the grocery store. All near us, all neighbours.

You recall the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25ff), where Jesus engages in a dialogue about what it means to be a GOOD neighbour, after some Pharisees ask him what they must do to “inherit eternal life”.

His answer (from The Message translation): “Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence — and that you love your neighbour as you do yourself.” He goes on, “Do it, and you’ll live.”

What we need to do to be good neighbours in this situation — to live — isn’t fundamentally hard to do: Wash our hands for 20-30 seconds; not touch our face; keep at least 6 feet apart; remain in the safety of our homes; go out only if absolutely necessary when we need food our medicine to stock up for another week or two.

Yet, how many of our neighbours across Canada are foolishly gathering in parking lots, parks and parties and other places, despite the fact that we know such behaviour can make those near us sick, or even kill them?

That’s why it pains me so deeply to see the struggles of our health care and government officials as they attempt to direct and protect us, based on the known science and the unknown mysteries of how COVID-19 is spread from person-to-person.

THE ULTIMATE MEASURE

The words of Martin Luther King Jr, speak truth as much now in our circumstance as they did, in the early 1960s, to his circumstance:

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. The true neighbour will risk his position, his prestige, and even his life for the welfare of others. In dangerous valleys and hazardous pathways, he will lift (his) brother to a higher and more noble life.” **Strength to Love, p.25**

In my home province of Nova Scotia, I thank God for the tireless work of our government and health care workers, for our Premier and for Dr. Strang, who constantly call us to be good neighbours, compassionate, kind and caring, so we “will live” and come to the other side of this sooner than later. Indeed, I thank God for all of those charged across the world with our protection and care. I can’t imagine the depth of their pain and fatigue. May God carry them and be with them.

A FINAL CALL TO GOODNESS

“The call for a worldwide

good-neighbour policy is more than ephemeral shibboleth; it is the call to a way of life which will transform our imminent cosmic elegy into a psalm of creative fulfillment. No longer can we afford the luxury of passing by on the other side. Such folly was once called moral failure; today it will lead to universal suicide. We cannot long survive spiritually separated in a world that is geographically together. In the final analysis, I must not ignore the wounded on life’s Jericho Road, because he is a part of me, and I am a part of him. His agony diminishes me, and his salvation enlarges me.” **Strength to Love (p.29)**

If we listen to the experts, this will be the first of two or three rounds with COVID-19.

May we, as the Body of Christ, as neighbours, as citizens first of heaven, then of our country, “actively participate in this life-saving deed” of being good, to do nothing less than preserve the precious gift of life on earth with one another, to be ready for the next time.

The next time someone asks me if I’m a Christian, I’ll reply, “Ask my neighbour, if I helped her live.”

I’ll see you back here in June, with a toolkit for parishes struggling to survive under the present and future strains and fallout of COVID-19.

If you need any help, assistance or resource suggestions to move through this time of pandemic, contact me directly at cathylee@cathyleecunningham.com or find me on social media @vocatepeace.

Photo Credit: Mish Vizesi on Unsplash



We need your photos

St John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Middle Sackville is researching pictures/drawings/paintings/photos of past Rectors that have served here at St John.

If you have any images for the following rectors we would appreciate your help as we move forward with our “Memory Wall”.

The Rev. Jerome Alley, D.D.	1819 – 1820
The Rev. Thomas H.C. Parsons, Deacon	1821 – 1824
The Rev. John Connolly	1828 – 1832
The Rev. Archibald Gray	1833 – 1851
The Rev. Thomas Maynard, D.D.	1851 – 1856
The Rev. John G. Mulholland	- 1857
The Rev. Walter Gray, B.A.	- 1858
The Rev. William Rupert Cochran, D.D.	1858 – 1863

The Rev. John Shaw Smith	1863 – 1873
The Rev. W.E. Wilson	1874 – 1876
The Rev. Arthur Tudor Tucker	1893 – 1896
The Rev. Newcome Reginald Raven	1896 – 1897
The Rev. George Michael Ambrose	1910 – 1913
The Rev. Charles Henry Fletcher	1913 – 1919

Copies of images can be sent to stjohnevangelistclergy@gmail.com attention Rev. Ruby Carter.

Mailing address is – St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, 934 Old Sackville Rd, Middle Sackville, NS B4E 1R3. Telephone 902 864 3154

Thank you
Murray Watson, Senior Warden

NEWS FROM AWAY



Dear Diocese,

“Surreal” is a word used on a regular basis these days to describe the topsy-turvy world of the Corona Virus. Today, jokes abound about people being isolated for so long that we become desperate enough to cut our own bangs (and the outcome). Through the magic of the internet, light hearted humour about being able to wear pjs to meetings and to church (because all gatherings take place by Zoom) appear daily, keep our spirits up, make us smile and for brief moments, allow us to forget our fears and the uncertainty of what the future brings.

Since I have no idea what the future brings, what the world will look like a month from now, when you receive the May edition of the Diocesan Times, I have to write from my experience today.

As the saying goes, “Yesterday’s history, tomorrow’s a mystery and today is the gift.” But on April 1, 2020, as I write this, today is not much of a gift to the millions who have been affected and

infected by the virus.

Although, for those of us feeling as though we are watching a tsunami headed straight for us, the gifts today are online concerts and jokes that compete with news reports that zero in on Covid-19 in the tug of war being waged between our hopes and fears.

News articles reporting the numbers affected are balanced out by articles about hope. We read or hear about how silence echoes across our cities yet we are still find ways of coming together. I run articles every day on my computer screen about the need for the church.

Today, the gift is caring for and about each other.

A few short weeks ago, (seems like a lifetime ago) I sat in the pew in Christ Church, Dartmouth. The preacher, an instructor at AST, pointed out that throughout history, in times like these, the percentage of Christians in the general population increased. Not because of some extraordinary miracle, but because we clump together.

The Book of Acts is one of my favourites because it gives

an account of how people of faith came together and supported each other and others. Acting collectively and collaboratively. A miracle in itself?

We have just entered the month of May, the month of Rogation, the time of asking God to provide the best possible right conditions for planting. I have a children’s book called “The Everything Seed” that I would read on Sunday mornings on Rogation Sunday and during spring planting at Messy Church. It explains how we are all came from the same seed and are all connected. <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/love-guide/session1/everything-seed>

And today, in the midst of being physically distant, scattered as we are, we remain spiritually connected and committed to each other and rooted in and through God, our creator, who is always present in our lives.

The other day I was pleasantly surprised to notice that the number of comments posted after one parish’s on line worship numbered at least as great, if not greater, than

the usual number in the pews three weeks before. Apparently, that wasn’t the only parish that had that experience. In spite of our fledgling, sometimes awkward and sometimes unsuccessful attempts at producing high quality on line worship using technology, we stubbornly remain connected while remaining apart, planting seeds of hope.

The only thing I know today (because today is all I have), is that we are God’s creation, intentionally created to be pack animals, social beings, and that we remain connected to and through a God who created all beings and all things. We were created for an interdependence each other and with all of God’s creation. That knowledge plants in me seeds of hope, watering my soul, carrying me through each one of these troubling days constantly mindful of God’s presence.

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

Living in the country is a blessing because I can go for long walks in the woods and long the river while remaining socially distant but spiritually connected to the creator and creation.

Today, as the skies clear of smog and the water of silt and oil slicks, and the spring rains wash away chemicals from the soil, we remain firmly connected.

One of the difficulties, at this point in the Corona Virus crisis is isolation. And may are finding a spiritual connection

with God in their connection with creation. And because of the numbers people who have rushed to the beach in huge numbers have found themselves in trouble because of it.

I live in the country. That is a blessing because I am able to go for long walks in the woods and long the river while remaining socially distant but spiritually connected to the creator.

As well as connecting with God on my walks, daily prayer follows me through each day. The discipline of daily prayer can be as simple as a quick request to God in the morning as I gaze out the window and watch the sun rise from behind the hill across the river to “Be with me through the day.” and in the evening, a quick “Thank you for being there through the day.” to the full and formal Daily Office. Praying the offices demands that I do not “free-wheel” and get stuck in a particular state of mind (bummed out), but instead I am lead through prayers that shapes me and creates a state of mind that provides hope and carries me through the day constantly mindful of God’s presence.

I have access to the internet and so I am able to be in contact with friends and remain part of a faith community. Actually, I find myself bouncing back and forth between Facebook live streaming and Youtube videos of services from various parts of our diocese and the world. From Cole Harbour to South Africa, from the cathedrals in Halifax to Canterbury England.

WHAT’S NEXT? A season of prayer & discernment



Six lay leaders from various parts of the Diocese offered engaging online worship during Holy Week to focus on prayer and all the change that lies before us. Starting Holy Monday and running each day until Holy Saturday, these short video services were shared on our Diocesan YouTube channel, Diocesan Facebook page and are still available on our Diocesan website. A printed order of service is available too.

Parishes and congregants are encouraged to continue this Season of Prayer & Discernment during the weeks

of Easter. (Be sure to check out the Holy Week worship videos if you haven’t viewed them already.) Explore a whole variety of ways to deepen your prayer life and listen to the Spirit’s leading as we together discern What’s Next? See: www.nspeidiocese.ca/pages/whats-next
Presiders are:

- **Holy Monday** - Deborah Beck, Anglican Churches of Pictou County (ACPC)
- **Holy Tuesday** - Dylan Stewart, All Saints, Cathedral, Halifax

- **Holy Wednesday** - Laura Bird, St. Paul’s, Charlottetown
- **Mundy Thursday** - Sean Francois, St. Andrew’s, Locks Rd., Dartmouth
- **Good Friday** - Allie Colp, Christ Church, Amherst
- **Holy Saturday** - Kelvin Hussey, Parish of Neil’s Harbour with Ingonish, Cape Breton

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Calling all birdwatchers!



BY MARY STONE

I am writing this piece on April 3, while we await the full onslaught of the COVID-19 virus in our diocese. As the virus plays havoc among us, causing us worry, stress and grief, we need to find ways to distract us from the barrage of media news. I found this helpful thought within list of resources on the Worldwide Mothers' Union website:

As we see the world slow down around us, nature takes its chance to make a comeback. While you look out through your windows, or enjoy some time in your gardens, take note of the birds fluttering past. Are there some familiar faces, often hiding away from the sounds of cars and planes, but rejoicing in the calm skies they find themselves in? Why not reflect on this Bible verse as you take some time to birdwatch?

Matthew 6:26-27

"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

By the time you read this, tulips and daffodils could well be bursting in peoples' yards. Trees and bushes will be budding, reminding us that the love of God, through creation is still here

to give us the support we need. And we being given time to really think about that, to recognize all that is right in our world. Like the birds, we now have the opportunity to revel in the quietness of our neighbourhoods, to relax into that calmness, to meet families in our community and to give thanks for all the people that surround us.

Things are not all sweetness and light, but it there are sweet things that help us along on this journey. I am reminded of Ethel, one of our Mothers' Union members, whose neighbour, whom she did not know, asked if she needed anything at the store. As it happened she did need a prescription picked up. The woman returned with the prescription plus a bag of groceries that she thought Ethel might need, refusing to take any money in return. Stories like this abound in PEI and Nova Scotia..

As restrictions on movement began, people in our area started giving monetary donations to Delish, our local British deli. They wanted the money to go towards meals for older people in the community. A call went out to our rector for names. She called our Neighbourhood Soup Servants, the idea for which began as a Mothers' Union plan and has now grown into a parish project.

A list was compiled and, always using proper hygiene procedures, meals were delivered to doorsteps, and were enjoyed by the happy recipients. Reaching out as God's hands....

As a member of Mother' Union, an organization whose motto is Christian Care for Families, I think about the fact that our children and grandchildren are experiencing something that they will never forget. They will be telling their grandchildren about it someday – the year they didn't have to go to school for 3-4 months, how they couldn't go to parks and playgrounds, how they had playdates on Zoom, how goodnight time was Facetime with grandparents, how they learned to cook to help out their parents who were working at home, how their teachers taught them on-line while they were 'at school' in their pajamas, how they made signs of hope and pictures to display in their windows, and, most important of all, how, for most, their parents spent every day and night with them! Suddenly parents have been thrown into being 24/7 parents – no school, no daycare, no babysitters, no breaks! What an upheaval! The 'at-home-parent' has become a reality in every neighbourhood! Perhaps in the future people will be saying, "Oh, you are an 'at-home-mom or dad'- wow! That is so much work!" We pray for all those families around the world.

Loving Lord,
we pray for your love and compassion to abound as we walk through this challenging season.

We ask for wisdom for those who bear the load of making decisions with widespread consequences.

We pray for those who are suffering with sickness and for all who are caring for them.

We ask for protection for the elderly and vulnerable, that they not succumb to the risks of virus.

We pray for misinformation to be

curbed that fear may take no hold in hearts and minds.

As we exercise the good sense that you in your mercy provide, may we also approach each day in faith and peace, trusting in the truth of your goodness towards us. Amen

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Teach us to pray: Lament as a spiritual practice



services cancelled, and the world sent indoors. Not only were our traditional Lenten observances curtailed by the necessary restriction on gatherings, our attention shifted to more solitary practices. For me, the words of the psalms, particularly the psalms of lament, that became a vehicle for prayer.



Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith

By the time you hold this paper in your hands, Dear Reader, the hope and joy we always anticipate of the Resurrection will have been revealed to us. Spring will likely have made a welcome entrance with its usual gorgeous palette, accompanied, no doubt, by glorious bird song floating on warmer breezes.

Now, these poetic predictions are based on what has happened at the end of every other Lent I have ever known but I must admit that the cataclysmic impact of Covid 19 and its subsequent rapid spread around the world, has curbed my enthusiasm. The World Health Organization declared a pandemic in the middle of the second week of Lent and so soon schools were closed, non-essential businesses shuttered, church

Lament is a poetic form that gives voice to our grief and sorrow. It is a prayer that enables the unburdening of our soul. Questions like "what's next?", or "how long", or "where are you?" often dominate a prayer of lament for in lament, we have permission, or perhaps we take license, to pour out all our anxieties, even our rage. And though we may think it's the "wrong kind of prayer", we are in good company.

The Book of Job and the writings of prophets like Jeremiah and Jonah are filled with laments; there's even a whole book in the Hebrew scriptures entitled "Lamentation". They are more than mere complaints – they are words of raw, unguarded emotion. Jesus prayed prayers of lament. After supper with his friends, he went out to the

garden to pray and there he cried out "if at all possible, take this cup away from me," revealing the daunting weight of his vocation. On the Cross, when all had deserted him except for John and the three Marys, he uttered the painfully honest question from Psalm 22 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

If there is any gift at all in this season of pandemic it has been in recalling the value of lament. Lament asks the two pivotal questions which shape our relationship with God: "Where are You?" – which is really a question about God's presence and "Why?", as in, "Where is your Love in all this?"

While the joy of Easter is something that has always

been assured, this year will surely feel different from any other. What I hold on to, what the Cross reminds me is that life is not all bunnies and pretty ribbons; it is also the minutia of life, all the unknowns, the uncertainties. And God, present on the Cross in Jesus, is also very present at the crossroads of life: in all the ERs, beside all the beds, in all the alleys, and in all the words of anguish, fear, complaint and resignation. These weeks leading up to Easter have truly been a desert, where many have felt deserted and afraid. It was in this crucible I put together some words that are psalm, lament, and prayer combined, hoping to express the flicker of hope I believe is still there.

Lay them all down

Whatever you are holding,
lay it down:
the clenched fists,
the fuming tears
the consuming anger
the helpless,
exhausted sweat
and the weeping.

Lay it all down,
except for
the trowel,
the seed,

the water,
the vision of something
other than what we're
seeing now.

Whatever you are holding,
all recriminations,
accusations, protestations,
lamentations;
lay them all down –
except for
the baby;
for those baby eyes
may well see the day
when all that people hold
are each other's hands
and hearts
and doors
and baskets of bread
and invitations
to the banquet table,
where bread is broken
and wine is poured
and stories told
and lives celebrated
and sacred signs
remembered –
where what was riven is
repaired
and there is enough for all
– over and to spare.

Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith
Diocesan Representative for
the Anglican Fellowship of
Prayer

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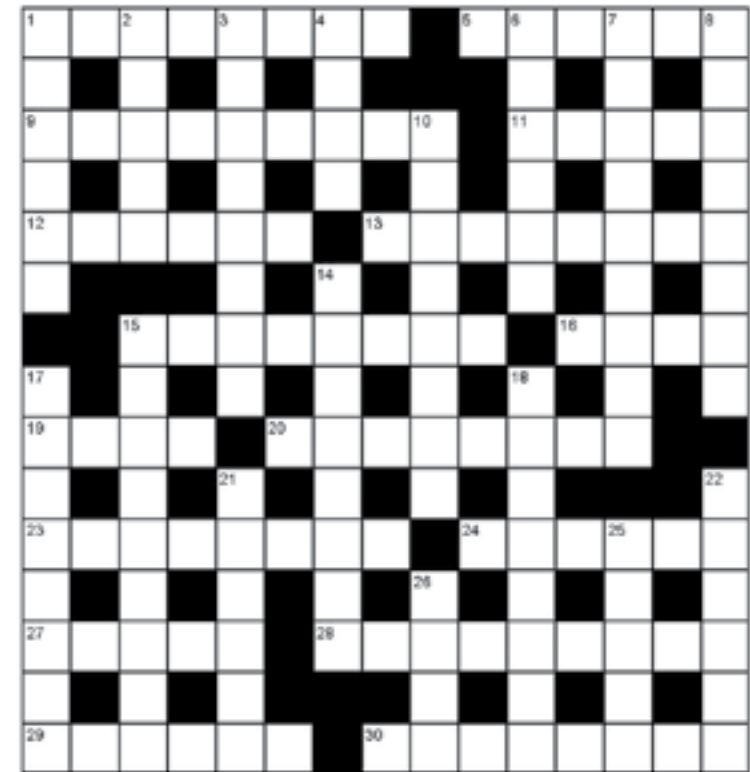
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Bible Crossword

by Maureen Yeats



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2020 May Puzzle Clues

- ACROSS:

 - 1- Conduit for conducting water from a distance (8)
 - 5- A disciple (6)
 - 9- Festival that is 40 days after Easter (9)
 - 11- "The darkness (God) called ____." (Gen. 1:5) (5)
 - 12- Turns away (6)
 - 13- One who is delayed (8)
 - 15- Throughout the world (8)
 - 16- Soft mineral, sometimes used as a lubricant (4)
 - 19- Mother of Jesus (Luke 2) (4)
 - 20- With good judgment (8)
 - 23- Alcoholic drink meant to stimulate the appetite (8)
 - 24- Dealer in textile fabric (6)
 - 27- Flightless South American birds (5)
 - 28- Complaint (9)
 - 29- Ran quickly (6)
 - 30- A man ____ with (Jacob) until day-break." (Gen. 32:24) battled (8)
- DOWN:

 - 1- Mountain on which the Ark landed (Gen. 8:4) (6)
 - 2- The brother of one's mother or father (5)
 - 3- Gift (8)
 - 4- Brother of Abel (Gen. 4:1-2) (4)
 - 6- Mother of Samuel (1Sam. 1:20) (6)
 - 7- Pertaining to a legend (9)
 - 8- Card game, also called Solitaire (8)
 - 10- Unnecessary (8)
 - 14- Providing food, for example, for a banquet (8)
 - 15- People who grow plants (9)
 - 17- Weakened (8)
 - 18- "Whoever ____ the wind will not sow." (Eccl. 11:4) notices (8)
 - 21- Very light woven fabric (6)
 - 22- One who is on good terms with another (6)
 - 25- Artificial water channel (5)
 - 26- Dock (4)

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MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan stories of people responding to God’s call

“From desert monastics to podcasts”

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

Hermit monks in the 3rd Century would never have dreamed that their legacy would spark a podcast series based in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Silent Fire: The Podcast is the collaborative work of Rev. Colin Nicolle, rector of the Parish of St. Mary’s and St. John’s (Summerside/St. Eleanors), and Joshua Hoffert of Summerside Community Church.

The two met on Instagram, noticing that they were both posting about the early Christian ascetics and both residing in the same Island city. Rev. Colin explained how it all happened, “Josh has been doing some amazing stuff through his ministry, Wind Ministries, bringing knowledge of the desert fathers and mothers to people who may not otherwise have the joy of knowing them. Writing is just part of his ministry, but after producing a series of devotionals on the desert monks as well as a handful of videos, he reached out to me in late 2019 with the idea of starting a podcast that could include both of us.”

Pastor Josh said Silent Fire was a title suggested to him by a friend. “I was thinking about how to get the early practices of the desert monastics into relatable language for everyday people,” he said. “The title immediately grabbed me and I’ve never been able to think of the life of simple prayer as anything else.”



Photo: Summerside Clerics host ‘Silent Fire: The Podcast’

The two ministers have varied church backgrounds and practice very different liturgical styles, so they thought it would be an interesting combination for a conversational-style podcast. “I come from a strictly liturgical background, I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church and became Anglican in university, whereas Josh comes from a charismatic background,” explained Rev. Colin. “The thought was that having someone like Josh with experience with prophetic ministry in a largely charismatic context conversing with someone like me with very little experience in his world, but lots in the liturgical world, and meeting in the middle to talk about the spiritual life could produce a lot of fruitful conversation for our audience.”

A podcast programme format is a growing popular platform of information for people who might be seekers of things spiritual. Rev. Colin says, “It’s not formal and written like a book. It’s a medium that we hope listeners or viewers can use to enter into the conversation with us, and hopefully respond to us and engage in the conversation. Neither of us are ‘experts’ on anything, but the hope is that where two or three of God’s people gather to talk about the spiritual life – surely there will be a resonance for others as well.”

“I love the idea of having two people that love Jesus talk about the ways they engage His life differently,” said Pastor Josh. The intention is to connect with people who long to dive deeper into the life of faith. “In my background, the contemplative life and the

mystical authors were lacking. My passion is to help people discover a life of prayer that transforms their hearts,” he said.

Silent Fire: The Podcast includes two 30-minute episodes per month, plus they will release mini-episodes which are a few minutes in length.

Conversation topics are planned for each episode. “Our first season of the podcast (will)...touch on topics like ‘The Mystery of God’ or ‘The knowledge of God’, and we try to relate these themes to the lives of the desert monks, but often talk in other directions as well,” said the Anglican priest. “Our second season is going to be one in which we reach out and begin to bring other guests in, specifically Christian leaders from other traditions, who can bring their

own take and wisdom on the topic from their particular background.”

Producing a simple video podcast is relatively easy, depending on the desired quality. The two ministers wanted to create a polished presentation so they used studio lighting, DSLR cameras, a quality microphone, and video editing software. “Most of this either Josh or I owned before starting the podcast,” said Rev. Colin. “An audio podcast can be started with nothing more than an idea, an inexpensive mic and a computer. There are loads of helpful resources online for anyone that wants to do it.”

The rector explained, “Once we produce an episode we upload the video to YouTube and the audio goes through an online paid service that distributes the podcast to things like Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, and Spotify.”

Silent Fire: The Podcast offers the audience an opportunity to participate too. Viewers are encouraged to listen, like, share, subscribe and engage. “Email, comment, start a discussion with us,” said the priest. “We’re looking to get people talking and thinking about their spiritual lives.”

Find the two clerics on YouTube by searching “Silent Fire: The Podcast Episode 1”. It is also available through Apple, Google, or Spotify podcasts, and other popular similar platforms.



MORE Mission Schools Postponed

They may be delayed, but the three remaining regional MORE Mission Schools will be rescheduled. Earlier this spring the Saturday learning sessions for the Regions of Eastern Shore, Cape Breton and Chignecto were cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

At this point Archbishop Cutler and organizers are monitoring the directives and advice of both provincial Chief Public Health Officers. These mission workshops will have new dates set when it is deemed by officials that it is safe to do so.

Module #4 titled, MORE Bold, explores themes related to (re)discovering our faith story and being able to share the message of God’s hope in the world. People are open to hearing this Good News message now more than ever!

Watch for these future dates and be sure to reserve them in your calendar. Participants are saying this is one of the best Mission Schools yet! MORE will be back!

COVID-19 Pandemic Responses & Resources

Our Diocesan website has you covered!

Check out this valuable library of resources that include Diocesan-specific videos, instructions, articles and links, as you and your congregation continue to navigate this pandemic. New items added daily on topics like:

- Best practices for authentic, effective online worship.
- Fresh ideas for worship during the Easter season, Mother’s Day, Pentecost.
- Creative activities and liturgies for children and families.
- Options for online discussion groups, Bible studies and other educational gatherings.
- Supports with pastoral ministry during physical distancing and isolation.
- Offerings, budgeting and various stewardship approaches.



- A list of local Anglican live and recorded worship links.

VISIT our COVID-19 Diocesan web page: WWW.NSPEIDIOCESE.CA (Click on the COVID-19 link, then see horizontal GREEN bar at the top.)

Have ideas to share or questions? E-mail: lvaughn@nspeidiocese.ca

Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

The need is still here



Rev Ray Carter

BY RAY CARTER

It seems like just yesterday the world was shocked by the photo of little Alan Kurdi

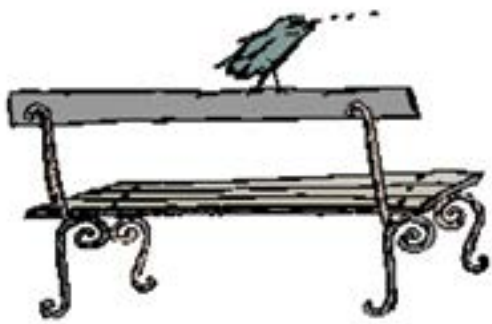
laying dead on a beach in Greece.

The photo was taken on September 2, 2015, almost five years ago. This photo brought home the horror of the war in Syria from which young Alan, his five-year old brother (who suffered a similar death) and his parents were fleeing. They were among a group of twenty-three people in two boats which capsized while seeking freedom. A total of twelve people, including five children, died in the attempt to find freedom and safety. Alan and his family were attempting to get to Canada.

You may recall that Canada was in the grip of a federal

election campaign and all of the political parties were saying how they would help relocate Syrian refugees if elected. The victorious Liberal Party agreed to bring twenty five thousand refugees to Canada by early 2016. And the people of Canada mobilized to offer support and welcome these new Canadians. Many parishes in the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island stepped up with treasure and talent to participate in sponsorship.

Now, nearly five years later, refugee families have been resettled, many of us have made new friends of people from the other side of the world, and life goes on. However, governments and climate continue to create refugees by driving them from their homes. This includes 343,000 people in Burundi, 880,000 in DR Congo, over one million in the Central African Republic, over nine million Syrians, 742,000 from Myanmar, and many million more people from countries like Venezuela, Nigeria, Yemen and many other countries. According to the United Nations there



View from the Deacon's Bench

are currently 41.3 Million Internally displaced people, 25.9 million Refugees under the UNHCR mandate, and 3.5 million Asylum-seekers worldwide. That equals 70.8 million people forcibly displaced in 134 countries worldwide.

My point is the need is still there for us to sponsor refugees to come to Canada and start a new life. Just think how much of an impact we make to the lives of the people we sponsor. It is truly life changing and possibly life giving. Some sponsoring groups from the 2015 push have continued to sponsor, including I am proud to say our Cathedral community. Refugee sponsorship has

become part of our on going outreach and ministry. And our diocese still has some funds available to help sponsoring groups.

The photo of little Alan Kurdi shocked many and caused a strong up-tick in sponsorship nearly five years ago but is being lost in the mist of time as new issues grab our attention. Currently the Corvid-19 virus

is commanding our attention. But guess what? In 2019 one thousand twenty eight people drowned trying to reach Europe by sea, doubtless many more "Alan Kurdi's" among them.

As I write this we are beginning Lent, and it feels like it was just Christmas! Remember after the birth of our Lord that nasty Herod proclaimed the "Massacre of the Innocents", the execution of all male children two years and younger in the vicinity of Bethlehem (Matt.2:16-18). What did Mary and Joseph do to save baby Jesus? They fled to Egypt. Jesus the refugee. Would you have stepped up to help sponsor this family?



Photo: Tragedy on a Greek beach

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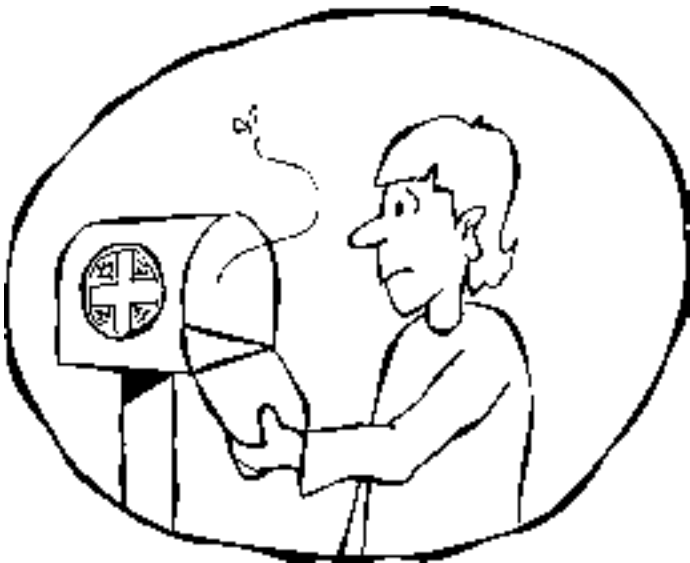
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He's wondering why his February 2020 edition of *The Diocesan Times* and the *Anglican Journal* didn't come. He forgot to renew his subscription!

Image credit: Mel Malton



Bishop Ron says:

"The *Diocesan Times* is our own newspaper. It tells our local parish stories and diocesan events.

So renew your subscription and stay connected throughout the year."

Who knew?

Hindsight is a wonderful thing.

Who knew, as we celebrated last New Year's Eve, that 2020 would be such a story of ever-unfolding tragedies?

We started this year full of hope and optimism but found challenge after challenge that tested our resolve and sanity. The price of a barrel of oil is a negative today, the COVID-19 pandemic is still affecting the world's health after 5 weeks of self-isolation and now rural Nova Scotia is ground-zero for the country's worst ever mass shooting. And it's only April!


During the televised memorial broadcast to



Paul Sherwood
Editor

honour those affected by the mass murder, singer/songwriter Dave Gunning sang "woke in the morning to a telephone ring ... changed everything."

While change is inevitable, perhaps we can pray for change that is a bit less of a shock.



“

Prince Philip and I have been deeply saddened by the appalling events in Nova Scotia, and we send our condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of those who have lost their lives.

I also pay tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the officers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other police services who selflessly responded to these devastating attacks, and to the emergency services who are supporting those who have been injured and affected.

My thoughts and prayers are with the people of Nova Scotia and all Canadians at this tragic time.

”

- ELIZABETH R

From the Church of England, April 2020

FUNERALS

A simple reflection
at home on the day of a funeral you can't attend

It's so difficult when you can't go to a funeral, whether for family, friend or neighbour. Many are facing this in the current crisis, so this short reflection has been specially written by a vicar for you to do at home, alone or with those who share your home. You might ask others to take part at the same time from their home.

When this time of social distancing is over, there may well be an opportunity to meet together at a special time of remembering and thankfulness. Your memories now can be part of that experience when the time comes.

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38-39

Before you find a place to sit quietly, you might like to find a photograph of the person who has died, write down some special memories, or play a special piece of music that connects you with the person you are remembering today. Think about those who are at the funeral and pray for them.

[Where it says 'N' in a prayer, just say the name of your person].

You might like to light a candle. Then pray:

Be with us, loving God.
Hear our prayers and comfort us in our loss, and help us to trust in your Son Jesus, whom you raised from the dead.
Strengthen our faith and renew our hope that N and all those we love will share in his resurrection.
Amen.

Read Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

3 He shall refresh my soul and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.

6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.



Reflect on your memories.

- What stands out in your memory about N?

- What will you always remember about them?

- What things did you learn through their life and death, including about God?

Now give thanks to God for their life and ask for strength for yourself and those who grieve.

Dear God,
thank you for N,
and for all that he/she meant to me and to others.
I so wanted to say goodbye.
Help me to know you are there,
holding all my hopes,
holding all those I love, especially N,
and holding me this day too.
Be close to us all this day with your peace and hope.
Amen.

Heavenly Father,
you have not made us for darkness and death, but for life with you for ever.
Without you we have nothing to hope for; with you we have nothing to fear.
Speak to us now your words of eternal life.
Lift us to the light and peace of your presence, and set the glory of your love before us today: through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Now say the Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

(or)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Now pray this prayer, which is used at the end of the funeral service to say goodbye.

God our creator and redeemer,
by your power Christ conquered death and entered into glory.
Confident of his victory and claiming his promises, we entrust N to your mercy in the name of Jesus our Lord, who died and is alive and reigns with you, now and for ever.
Amen.

HOME