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Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

St. James Armdale offers quiet oasis of rest for busy Halifax commuters

BY JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

MELT, short for Missional Engagement Leadership Team, at St. James Armdale had a simple but meaningful vision—providing a quiet corner to those who pass by their property. The space, they thought, could be used for prayer, meditation, or reflection on God's beautiful creation.

What came out of this dream is the newly curated Meditation Garden at the Armdale Roundabout side of the church—2668 Joseph Howe Dr., Halifax. Anyone walking (or driving by) can pause at this garden, which looks over the Northwest Arm and its sailboats, the Armdale Yacht Club, and the Dingle Tower at Sir Sanford Fleming Park.

"Sometimes we would see people sitting on the grass, pavement, or ledges, either waiting to be picked up, waiting for the bus, or just resting wherever there was a space to sit," shared Alice Galpin Nicholson, chair of MELT. "MELT wanted to offer an inviting,



A quiet moment of rest and reflection at the newly created Meditation Garden at St. James Armdale in Halifax

quiet outdoor area to rest and reflect."

DT sat down with Galpin Nicholson to learn more about how this peaceful space came to life.

What inspired the MELT group to start this project now?

The MELT group had a brainstorming session about three years ago to discuss ways of bringing mission outside the walls of the church and into the community. Several ideas came to the surface, one of which was to provide a quiet outdoor space for prayer, meditation, and reflection.

We wanted a welcoming area where anyone in the community could feel comfortable and included even if they have never entered a church. MELT put together a budget and request to the Finance Committee the following year. It was approved at Parish Council. A year of planning, selecting an

area on the property, choosing a theme, and purchasing benches and sculpture fitting for our missional project [followed]. In May 2026, MELT purchased a three-foot cement angel, a pedestal, and two benches from Unique Garden Statues in Sambro. These items were erected in early June. Two rock gardens were prepared by Cypress Landscaping, one to house our Jesus Rocks creations and the other to house memorial painted rocks to remember loved ones and pets. The blessing of our Meditation Garden will occur in September.

St. James is located in a high-traffic area, and many people park their vehicles in front of our church, recharge their electric vehicles, walk through our property, wait for the bus, use our parking lot, or pick up some much-needed food or personal items from God's Tickle Trunk, our free take-what-you-need cupboard. People are busy, and everyday stresses can be overwhelming.

Cont. on page 4

Celebrating 50 years of women priests in the Anglican Church of Canada

BY REV. DR. KATE HEICHLER

On November 30, at 6 p.m., members of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will gather in All Saints Cathedral in Halifax for an exuberant service of Holy Eucharist to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ordaining women to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada. (Women were allowed to be ordained deacons in 1969.) That date coincides with the sixth anniversary of Bishop Sandra Fyfe's ordination to the episcopacy and installation as bishop of this diocese, which took place under severe Covid restrictions with only 10 people present, so the service will include a celebration of that occasion. A reception at 4 p.m. will precede the worship.



Ordination to the priesthood of (now) Archdeacon Katherine Bourbonniere, pictured with the Right Rev. Fred Hiltz, then Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese.

Women bishops, priests, and deacons are commonplace in the Anglican Church of Canada these days and in our diocese, but 50 years is not a

long time; many of our current ordained women leaders faced some adversity in their path toward ordination. Even younger women ordained in recent years confront subtle discrimination and assumptions about their authority, not to mention the challenges of exercising priestly ministry while also parenting and sometimes working at another job.

One of our local saints, Brenda Clark, was ordained to the priesthood in this diocese on July 29, 1979, after a nine-year diaconate. She has written of her sense of call, which began when she was five years old, and the struggles she faced in moving toward ordination:

"I was not the only woman

in Canada going to her bishop and sharing my story. It was happening everywhere and not just in Canada. The whole matter of women's ordination became a topic of discussion throughout the ACC. A motion to allow the ordination of women to the diaconate was coming forward in the General Synod at Sudbury in 1969. Bishop Davis arranged for me to go as a youth delegate. When this motion came before the Synod, our Primate Ted Scott, then still a bishop, had already spoken to me and helped me frame a very short speech. He said, 'You have to speak as though it is a given that women will be ordained.' He prompted me to ask, after I said who I was and what I was about, 'When will ordination be open to women?' After

much back and forth, it was decided that women could be ordained to the diaconate. That next spring, I was ordained to the diaconate on the Day of Pentecost, 1970—56 years ago. The door had opened."

The next few years saw a series of doors opening and sometimes shutting as the church slowly moved toward full inclusion of women in all orders of ministry. One goal as we prepare for this November celebration is to gather similar stories of many ordained women in our diocese, as well as the stories of those who supported and encouraged them, their families and friends, and their bishops and colleagues.

Cont. on page 4

Pray as you can

BY HEATHER CARTER
DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE
ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF
PRAYER

“My life flows on in endless song, above earth’s lamentation.” The beginning line of hymn 401 in Common Praise, attributed to Robert Lowry, is, for me, a reminder that we are held and supported by divine grace through the tumults of our age.

This summer has presented both lament and joy. Wars across the world, homelessness, food insecurity, worry about health care in our cities and towns, deadly fires and heat domes in Europe, and migrants fleeing to what they desperately hope is safety. Across the media, a bombardment of bad news is announced—over and over again. At the same time, we have been gifted with succulent produce from farmers’ fields, a soul-satisfying palette of colour from the vibrant freshness of spring through lush, forest green, and flowers everywhere. Summer’s ease has prompted gatherings of friends and families in backyards, at street festivals, and in outdoor gardens and parks. Our oceans and lakes have refreshed us, and wildlife has beckoned us to listen and watch.

We are called to praise. We



Photo by Heather Carter

pray the Jubilate, a psalm of praise at morning prayer: “Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.”

It is often hard to reconcile the two ends of the spectrum. Grief sometimes presents itself as a shutting down. When my cousin died in a freak car accident at an early age, my aunt said her heart was like a stone and she was unable to sing for many years. One day, her song resumed as healing occurred. How did she maintain hope during those silent years?

Maybe it was her faith, her prayer life, or perhaps people praying for and with her, helping her through the gap between her grief and the grace of healing.

Intercessory prayer (from the Latin “intercedere,” meaning “to go between”) is an act of love and care for another that acknowledges deep pain, ac-

companying another through their lament, trusting in the power of prayer even when results are not seen. God is already with us. “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20. “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. Romans 8:26

It is our custom to include prayers of intercession in our worship, praying for people, groups, places, creation, and those things that are heavy on our hearts. Many parishes have prayer groups who pray daily or who come together to lift up concerns. They share the weight, supporting one another as well as those needing care. Prayer mailboxes outside churches and prayer trees or bulletin boards within churches hold requests for intercession from churchgoers and the community at large. If you have a regular prayer practice, you may have a list of concerns that are included. Those who may be slowed or halted in more active service by disability, age, or distance are able to participate in a loving ministry through praying for others.

Such prayers aid in the transformation of pain to healing and wholeness—for those

we pray for ... and for the person praying. Compassion and possibility become the focus rather than outrage and despair. Tara Brach, a spiritual teacher in the Buddhist tradition, says, “To cultivate the tenderness of compassion, we not only stop running from suffering, we deliberately bring our attention to it.” This may seem counterintuitive, but pushing away or ignoring the pain of the world does not make it disappear, nor does it create a peaceful heart that is capable of possible action.

A few years ago, a friend gave me a homemade “blessing bracelet” that had five beads. One of the ways to use this bracelet as a spiritual tool is to choose and pray for five people or concerns daily. That’s it. Narrowing the focus to a manageable number of problems allows deeper prayer and more space or silence to notice a response or a nudge from the Spirit to take a small action and maybe become more attuned to how God is loving this person or situation already.

Aware that Christ’s compassion is still alive in the world, my heart calms and I sing again: “Since Love is lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?”



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Seven decades of faith: Mary Tothill named St. John’s Faithful Servant



Mary receiving her award from Denise-White, a Licenced Lay Minister in the Parish



Mary with her award as Faithful Servant



Mary with Rev. Keith Denman, Supply Priest

Sunday, June 14, was a special service at St. John the Baptist Church in River John. Not only was it Communion Sunday with Supply Priest Rev. Keith Denman of Westville, but Mary Tothill, member of 70 years, was honoured with the Faithful Servant Award, new this year to mark Bishop Sandra Fife’s fifth year as Diocesan Bishop. Each parish can select some-

one who has made a significant contribution to the life of their parish.

Mary’s devotion to St. John’s and the community at large made her an obvious choice. Over the years, she has led Sunday School, Girl Guides, and Beavers and been a member of the choir and served as church warden as well as being church secretary and treasurer. Mary has also been

very involved with fundraising activities, such as quilt making, Sunday breakfasts and suppers, and in 1976 worked to bring the church hall here to be used for many church functions. The ways Mary continues to support the church are many: reading scripture at services, preparing the altar for Communion services, cleaning the worship space, and attending parish-

wide events. She also keeps in contact with church members, some of whom can no longer attend services, which helps to support the wider church community.

Mary’s contribution to the parish is appreciated by all who know her and wish her well in the years ahead. Thank you, Mary!

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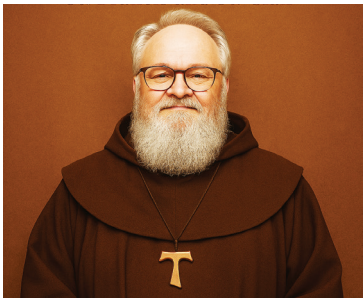
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Cedar Smoke and Incense: When the Church Learns to Listen



BY STEPHEN JOSEPH IRÉNÉE (IRENAEUS) WEISS, M.ED. (COUNSELLING)

(ÉTIENNE JOSEPH IRÉNÉE WEISS)

There is a strange habit in Christianity—especially in its more colonial forms—where we assume that if something does not look European, sound Latin, or smell like old Anglican incense, it must somehow be dangerous.

Give us frankincense swinging in a brass thurible, and everyone nods reverently.

Give us cedar, sage, sweet-grass, or tobacco offered in a smudging ceremony, and suddenly people start whispering the word “pagan” like they’re casting out demons from the church basement.

Funny how smoke is holy when we recognize the container.

That may sound sarcastic, but honestly, that is where the real conversation begins.

The issue is not whether Indigenous spirituality looks pagan to European Christianity. The issue is whether the Church can recognize Christ already at work in cultures it once tried to erase. Smudging may not be the threat—pride might be.

And that, frankly, is where the real fire starts.

For many years, churches across Canada—including our own Anglican tradition—did not merely misunderstand Indigenous spirituality; we actively tried to destroy it. Residential schools were not simply educational failures. They were spiritual violence. Languages were forbidden. Ceremonies were condemned. Elders were silenced. Sacred relationships with land, ancestors, and Creator were treated as superstition rather than wisdom.

But if we are honest, the Church has never been particularly good at dealing with people it labels “different.”

Indigenous peoples were not the only ones pushed to the margins.

Persons with disabilities were too often treated as objects of pity instead of full participants in the Body of Christ. We built steps instead of ramps, silence instead of



Photo by Content Pixie on Unsplash

listening, and assumptions instead of relationships. We spoke of healing as though disability itself was a failure of faith, forgetting that Christ did not ask first if someone was worthy of dignity—He simply sat with them, touched them, and called them beloved.

The LGBTQ community has often received the same cold welcome dressed up in polite theology. Too often the Church has said, “You may enter, but leave your whole self at the door.” That is not hospitality. That is spiritual customs control.

Christ did not build checkpoints.

He built tables. And those tables had no name tags.

The woman at the well, the tax collector up a tree, the leper no one touched, the Roman outsider, the bleeding woman, and the thief on the cross—Jesus had a remarkable habit of making the religiously uncomfortable feel seen and the religiously comfortable feel nervous.

Frankly, I think He enjoyed that.

The Gospel has always been most alive among the people respectable religion tried to avoid.

So when we talk about Indigenous ceremony, smudging, inclusion, disability, gender, sexuality, or those who have been made to feel like outsiders, we are not discussing separate issues.

We are discussing the same sin.

Pride.

The assumption that some people belong closer to God than others.

The assumption that holiness wears proper shoes, speaks proper English, and knows how to use the right fork at parish supper.

Christ overturned tables for less.

Then, after generations of saying, “Your ways are wrong,” the Church now finds itself awkwardly trying to talk about reconciliation while still clutching the same assumptions.

That is not repentance.

That is public relations.

Real repentance requires listening.

It requires the humility to admit that maybe Christ was present in places we were too proud to notice.

Smudging and Indigenous ceremony do not need to be seen as threats to Anglican faith when they are practiced with Indigenous leadership, theological care, and Christ at the centre. They can become acts of prayer, cleansing, lament, reconciliation, and renewed relationship with Creator, creation, and neighbour. But the Church must approach them humbly, not as spiritual tourists but as repentant guests learning from the peoples whose wisdom it once tried to silence.

That distinction matters.

There is a difference between reconciliation and appropriation.

Buying sage at a gift shop and waving it around before vestry is not reconciliation. That is spiritual tourism with better branding.

Reconciliation begins when the Church asks permission before it takes symbolism.

It begins when we care more about the people than the

ceremony.

It begins when we realize that cedar smoke means very little if we are still ignoring clean water advisories, treaty obligations, missing Indigenous women, and the generational trauma the Church helped create.

You cannot smudge away injustice.

You can only repent of it.

As Anglicans, we often use the word “inculturation,” which is a fancy theological way of saying the Gospel enters a culture without demanding that culture become British first.

Thank God for that.

Because if Christianity required becoming English, half of us would be disqualified on tea preferences alone.

Inculturation is not syncretism for the sake of trendiness. It is not spiritual buffet theology where we take a little Buddhism, a little yoga, a dreamcatcher from aisle seven and call it enlightenment.

It is the discipline of asking:

Does this practice reveal Christ more clearly?

Does it deepen humility, justice, mercy, reverence, healing, and love?

Does it honour the Creator rather than worship creation?

Does it make room at the table for those the world pushes aside?

Does it lead us toward Christ or away from Him?

That is the test.

St. Francis of Assisi understood this better than most.

Francis did not spend his life building walls to keep people out. He crossed battle lines to meet the Sultan during the

Crusades, not as a conqueror, but as a witness. He walked into enemy territory not carrying a sword but carrying the audacity to believe that God might still be present there.

Imagine that.

A Christian entering another faith tradition not to dominate but to listen.

Frankly, that alone would terrify half the internet.

Francis did not become Muslim. He did not abandon Christ. He did something much harder.

He treated another human being as someone capable of reflecting God.

That fits beautifully with the old Franciscan instinct:

Look for the Gospel in everything; keep what reflects Christ and leave what does not.

That is not compromise.

That is discernment.

And Scripture supports it.

Paul stood in Athens surrounded by pagan altars and did not begin by shouting condemnation. He began by saying, “I see that in every way you are very religious.”

Then he pointed to their altar “To an Unknown God” (Acts 17:22–23) and used it as a bridge to preach Christ.

Paul did not start with destruction.

He started with recognition.

He looked for the doorway before he reached the house.

Likewise, he wrote:

“Test everything; hold fast to what is good.”

That is not permission for theological chaos.

It is permission for mature faith.

Fearful faith needs enemies everywhere.

Mature faith knows Christ is not so fragile.

And perhaps the greatest act of faith is this:

to believe that the Holy Spirit was already moving before we arrived.

Sometimes in cedar smoke.

Sometimes in hospital rooms.

Sometimes in Pride marches.

Sometimes in wheelchairs.

Sometimes in grief.

Sometimes in the person the Church was taught to avoid.

The question is not whether Christ is there.

The question is whether we are humble enough to notice.

The best advice!



BY BRYAN HAGERMAN
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Grandfathers and grandmothers can simply be the best for many reasons. They serve as the emotional and historical foundation of a family. Like parents, they provide children with unconditional love and a sense of belonging. They tell stories and let children in on some fun hidden knowledge of their parents. Although they do not generally provide discipline, they are examples, models to live by, who act as safe, stabilizing presences. They can even act as a buffer between parents sometimes. Research is showing us that close relationships with grandparents result in lower anxiety and loneliness. They also offer practical support for parents, like emergency childcare or financial help.

Now, as there are no perfect parents, there are no perfect grandparents. Neither can consistently live up to the



Photo by OPPO Find X5 Pro on Unsplash

ideals we have. However, they can serve an important function in families.

Rebecca had a really great grandfather. He told great stories from his earlier days, spoke about how he loved his life and why, was a very good listener, gave her some sound guidance concerning university, played with her as a child, talked to her as an adult, and secretly helped with school funds. And again, as long as she could remember, he secretly maintained a bag of toffees, which he kept in his pocket and which he distributed every time he showed up.

Rebecca was in her third year of university. She loved school, her studies, her chums, and learning. But in her third year, Rebecca had a math professor that could be rude when questioned or asked for help. Students stayed away from him, questions went unanswered, and

grades plummeted because he would not explain the most important aspects of the math when asked.

Rebecca and her friends were drowning. Some quit the course; others stopped coming regularly. Rebecca needed this course for her major. What to do?

Good news; her grandparents were coming for Sunday lunch. Rebecca decided to find the time to tell granddad her problem and see what advice he offered. Granddad sat on the sofa as Rebecca told her story. He listened carefully, and when she was finished, he gave his response. “Rebecca,” he said, “I am sorry that this is happening to you and your friends. It shouldn’t be happening to you or to anyone.” Then he paused, looked her in the eye, and said. “Rebecca, I have a question for you. Suppose your best friend came to you about a science course

she was taking with the same problem. And she asked you for advice. What would you say?”

Rebecca was at first unhappy with his response. She wanted him to tell her what to do. Later that day she came up with the solution she needed after thinking deeply about what he said. She had her answer. She now knew what to do. She could now objectively stand outside of her situation, look at it, and come up with a decision, her own best advice for herself.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “advice” is “an opinion, suggestion, or recommendation given to someone about what they should do or how they should act in a specific situation.”

Seeking advice is a necessary act on any given day when we face difficult situations. Advice and wisdom are not the same, although we need both in decision-making. If advice is a recommendation regarding a decision, wisdom is about insight and perspective. Again, according to Cambridge, “Wisdom is the ability to use your knowledge, experience, and good judgment to make sensible choices. It means knowing how to apply what you have learned to handle life well.”

So, we can integrate both

into our decision-making process. The scripture is clear about wisdom. It can come directly from God. “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” James 1:5

So why do we go to counselling? For advice and insight? No to the first and yes to the second. A good counsellor will not tell you what to do, how to think, or how to act. They don’t offer advice. They can ask questions that make us think and give us insight as to how we might act or decide. Is there divine wisdom? Absolutely! As already referenced, scriptures can help us with the wisdom we need if we ask with faith. Rebecca’s grandfather did not offer advice but gave her a wise answer to help her find her own answer.

In summary, God gives wisdom to those who ask with faith. Godly people play a role of conveying such wisdom to help us make wise choices. The best decisions come from integrating God’s wisdom into our decision-making process. One perspective offered a clear way forward, and it went like this: often the best decision comes from objectifying a situation. Wisdom includes the pursuit of advice when faced with a decision.

St. James Armdale ...

Cont. from page 1

Can you tell me more about the angel sculpture and the two rock gardens (“Jesus Rocks” and the Memorial Rock Garden)?

St. James has been the home of Jesus Rocks for the last seven years. Parishioners and friends get together on a regular basis and paint rocks with an inspirational message. The rocks were then planted throughout the community (left in various places for anyone to take). We in-

cluded a Jesus Rocks Garden and a Memorial Painted Rock Garden in our Meditation Garden.

What has the initial reaction been from neighbours, commuters, or parishioners who have already stopped by?

The initial reaction has been very positive. People have asked to have their pictures taken in the meditation area. One person said a prayer of thanks over the garden. MELT believes the more the word gets out that anyone

can use the area, the more use it will get.

You mentioned distributing hand-created invitations to local businesses and groups. What is your hope for how the broader Halifax community—beyond regular churchgoers—will interact with this space?

The reason for this article is to invite anyone to stop by the Meditation Garden. Special invitations have been created to raise awareness and will be made available in local busi-

nesses and community organizations and agencies.

Is there anything else you’d like readers of DT to know about St. James Armdale or the MELT group’s upcoming missional work?

The MELT group started because one of our parishioners was accepted to and completed the Connectors year-long program on Missional Development. MELT provides many opportunities to promote the mission of God’s work here

on earth by inviting all who are seeking to their activities, whether they are church, dechurched, unchurched, or unsure. Some opportunities are community BBQ and family fun days, community meals, painting sessions, book clubs, kindness and blessing bags, the community food cupboard (God’s Tickle Trunk), clothing swaps, and refugee support. All are free of charge.

Celebrating 50 years ...

Cont. from page 1

Equity cannot be assumed; it is often hard-won and vulnerable to reversal. We invite anyone in the diocese who recalls supporting or offering themselves for ordination to contribute their story by emailing office@nspeidiocese.ca.

The organizers hope every parish in the diocese will join in preparing for this celebration.

Here are some of the ways to get involved:

- Make a list of the women

ordained in or from your parish and female rectors—and also those who felt called and were not welcomed into ordained ministry; those stories are part of the fabric too.

- Collect the stories of these women, and those who supported them

- Decorate a leaf depicting your parish’s women clergy and stories (these will be gathered and hung in the Cathedral for the service; materials will be sent out in advance so they are the same size)

- Pray for the occasion (a

Collect will be sent for prayer in worship during October and November)

- Host a watch party for the national celebration being held November 25 in Victoria, B.C.

- Host a watch party for our diocesan celebration for those unable to attend in person.

Brenda Clark’s story had many setbacks. She writes of the Synod at which the motion was first put forward to ordain women as priests:

“When the motion was put to the Synod of our diocese, a

priest with a very authoritative way of speaking rose and downed the idea of women clergy. I went to the mover and seconder and asked them to withdraw the motion; had it been defeated, it would have been much harder to pass it in the future. They did so. The next year they came with the same motion and told me they would not withdraw it again. For me, it was about me and my future; for them, it was about the diocese and the church they wanted to be part of. Rodney Stokoe, my professor of Pastoral Theology, rose

and quoted from the Book of Acts when the Sanhedrin was opposing the Apostles, saying, ‘If it is of God, it will last.’ The motion passed. It’s lasting—deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops, even our new Archbishop of Canterbury!!!”

There is so much good news to celebrate about our church’s welcome to ALL saints who are called and gifted by the Spirit to proclaim good news. We hope that our diocese will come together and rejoice November 30.

Community, celebration, and commitment



BY CYNTHIA PILICHOS FOR ANGLICANS POWERING POTENTIAL

Happy New Year! An odd greeting for September? Possibly ... but September is definitely a month of beginnings—a new academic year, from pre-primary to post-secondary; activities starting up after a much-appreciated summer break; people dusting the beach sand from their feet and getting back to “real life” and commitments, known and new. September is the month of the new year, Rosh Hashanah, for our Jewish colleagues, so it’s a time of celebration! For Christians, the month of September is the Season of Creation, also a time of celebration. So, yes ... Happy New Year!

Christians globally start this Season of Creation on September 1 with the World Day of Prayer for Creation

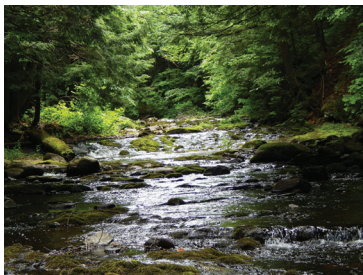


Photo by Josie Weiss on Unsplash

and conclude the season on October 4, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, as St. Francis is often seen as the patron saint of ecology. It is a month-long season that encourages Christians to renew their relationship with God and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment, emphasizing ecological responsibility and spiritual reflection. Anglicans Powering Potential appreciates the leadership of our Diocesan Environment Network in promoting environmental stewardship and climate justice—thank you!

The Season of Creation theme for 2026 is Living Water, inspired by Ezekiel 47:9, 12, a passage that describes water flowing from God’s sanctuary, gradually deepening to restore barren lands, revive waters, and sustain flourishing ecosystems. The theme highlights the intercon-

nectedness of spiritual life and environmental stewardship, as exemplified by the symbol of Immersion in Living Water, calling participants to immerse themselves in God’s life-giving water and actively work for the renewal of creation through prayer, education, and climate action.

The Season of Creation began in 1989 when Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed September 1 a “Day of Prayer for Creation” within the Orthodox Church. This initiative aimed to raise awareness about environmental issues and encourage prayer for the care of creation. Over the years, the observance gained traction among various Christian denominations. In 2001, it was incorporated into the calendars of several European churches, and in 2015, Pope Francis formally adopted the Season of Creation in the Roman Catholic Church. The Season of Creation has since become a global event, celebrated by many Christian communities worldwide, including the Anglican Communion (see anglicancommunion.org/campaign/season-of-creation). With this global embrace, individuals and communities are encouraged to engage in

prayer, sustainability projects, and advocacy for climate justice. It is a season that fosters unity among different Christian denominations, promoting a shared commitment to environmental stewardship and the ethical treatment of the Earth.

Anglicans Powering Potential wishes to start this “new year” with an alert in our diocese of another celebration that fosters unity and a shared commitment globally, this time to justice and peace: the World Day of Prayer 2027 and its 100th anniversary on March 5, 2027, with the theme, United in Prayer for Justice and Peace. This is an amazing milestone, and APP applauds the theme as one that fosters unity among not just Christian denominations but many faith communities. We will be sharing plans for this centennial event in forthcoming issues of The Diocesan Times, as the United in Prayer for Justice and Peace theme speaks to the very heart of APP’s awareness-raising, advocacy, and action ministry in line with our Anglican Communion’s own social justice Mark of Mission: to transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace

and reconciliation.

The Season of Creation serves as a vital reminder of humanity’s responsibility to care for the Earth and its resources. Equally, the World Day of Prayer 2027, with its centennial theme of United in Prayer for Justice and Peace, serves as a reminder of humanity’s responsibility to care for one another while striving for justice and peace; that peace is more than just the absence of conflict; and that there is no true peace without justice. The Season of Creation encourages believers to reflect on their relationship with God and creation and to take meaningful action towards sustainability and environmental justice. Through prayer and community involvement, the Season of Creation aims to inspire hope and foster a deeper connection with the natural world. The World Day of Prayer 2027 has the potential, through prayer and community involvement, to encourage people of faith to reflect on their relationship with God and one another, regardless of who the other is; to inspire hope; and to take meaningful action towards building peace with justice for all. May it be so!

60 years and counting: St. John’s Halifax Mothers’ Union A journey of faith, fellowship, and hope (1965–2025)

SUBMITTED BY BERNICE CAMPBELL, BRANCH LEADER, ST. JOHN’S HALIFAX MOTHERS’ UNION

The St. John’s Halifax Mothers’ Union Branch has celebrated a remarkable milestone—60 years as the second-oldest active branch in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Our story began on February 14, 1965, when the St. John’s Fairview Mothers’ Union was enrolled. Six decades later, we give thanks for the fellowship, faith, and steadfast service that has shaped our journey.

The 60th celebrations were held in November 2025. At the Sunday, November 23, 2025, service with our St. John’s church family, branch members renewed their vows, and Mothers’ Union Past Diocesan President Maxine Simpkin offered the homily. On November 1, 2025, we celebrated with our Mothers’ Union family at the Diocesan Fall Rally. In a nod to our history and to the hope that carries us forward—branch members wore fascinators,



Members of St. John’s Halifax Mothers’ Union branch at the 2025 Fall Rally

adding a touch of joy, colour, and celebration on both days.

Dedicated members have carried the branch through seasons of growth, transition, renewal, and COVID. The branch entered a period of abeyance in the late 1990s, with the members continuing to gather every Christmas. In 2005, the branch was reinstated and enrolled three new members. By 2010, the branch’s membership of 27 represented different countries, varied vocations, and diverse life experiences—all united by a shared commitment to supporting and nurturing families. There was a membership of 13 in 2025.

Our church building in Fairview was sold March 2007, followed by a six-year pilgrimage of worshipping in temporary locations. Branch events and meetings were hosted in sister parishes, and members opened their homes for meetings and Christmas gatherings. These moments reminded us that our community was never defined by walls but shaped by count-

less small acts of presence, kindness, shared purpose, and faithful showing up for one another that stitched us together and revealed the joy of belonging.

Christmas Eve 2013 was the first service in our new building on Kearney Lake Road (now Larry Uteck Boulevard, West Bedford). Before the drywall was installed, parishioners were invited to write prayers on the exposed walls. The Mothers’ Union Prayer is woven into the structure of the building on the sanctuary wall to the far right of the stained glass. A new banner—St. John’s Halifax—was commissioned for our 50th anniversary and hangs in the church; a reminder that names may change, buildings may shift, communities may evolve, yet the heart of our witness endures.

Our branch ministry makes baptismal banners for the newly baptized, including a gentle ministry of knitting prayer pocket squares that offer comfort and support to those who are ill, in a health crisis, and navigating life’s

challenges. The squares, freely given to parishioners and to give as gifts, come in a variety of colours, each with a tactile cross worked into the centre. Our outreach supports programs at various levels, always seeking to meet needs with compassion, dignity, and hope.

Entering our 61st year, we remember with gratitude those who came before us and whose faithfulness shaped our ministry. We pray for God’s guidance as we continue the Mothers’ Union mission of supporting families, building community, and walking together in hope.

The Canadian Mothers’ Union is part of the global Mothers’ Union movement that has over four million members in 84 countries. Its mission is to demonstrate Christian faith through practical action, strengthening families, promoting peace, and addressing social issues such as poverty, injustice, and violence. In 2026 the global Mothers’ Union meets in South Africa for its 150-year celebration.

For All the Saints, September 2026

BY REV. JOHN K. MORRELL
EXCERPTED FROM STEPHEN
REYNOLDS’ “FOR ALL THE
SAINTS”

The three readings for September reflect martyrs of the 3rd, 19th, and 20th centuries. “During the early Christian centuries, the term acquired the extended meaning of believers who are called to witness for their religious belief and, on account of this witness, endure suffering or death. The early Christians who first began to use the term “martyr” in its new sense saw Jesus as the first and greatest martyr, on account of his crucifixion. The early Christians appear to have seen Jesus as the archetypal martyr” (Wikipedia). From the early church to the present time, Christians in many different nations of the world suffer hardship, persecution, and even death for their beliefs.

September 2—The Martyrs of New Guinea, 1942

In the summer of 1942, the forces of imperial Japan reached New Guinea, which lies just to the north of Australia. All white people were ordered to evacuate the northern coast, but a number of Anglican missionaries decided to stay with their people for as long as possible. Their faithfulness resulted in martyrdom.

Among these martyrs was Vivian Redlich, an English-born priest. He celebrated the eucharist with his people one last time, then headed into the



Photo by Andres F. Uran on Unsplash

jungle. Five other Anglican missionaries joined him. One of them was Lucien Tapiedi, whose work among his own people had already made him a true apostle of Christ. Under his guidance the small company of refugees tried to reach the coast, but they were ambushed and captured by native collaborationists.

Tapiedi stepped forward in an effort to save his companions, only to be cut down and butchered. A few days later Redlich and the others were beheaded, and their bodies were cast into the sea. May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson were Anglican missionaries at Gona; Hayman was also Redlich’s fiancée. When the invading army landed near their mission, these two women fled into the jungle. Encountering other refugees, they attempted to cross the mountains to safety at Port Moresby. When their party was ambushed, the two missionaries managed to get away together—only to be captured a few days later and murdered by the invaders.

None of these martyrs died in vain, for their example has nurtured a strong Papuan Church. This church particularly rejoices in its celebration

of St. Lucien Tapiedi for his witness.

September 13—Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, 258

Cyprian was one of the great heroes of the third-century Church because he guided the Christians in the North African city of Carthage through a period of frightening persecution until he himself was martyred in the year 258.

He was a wealthy 50-year-old barrister when he converted to Christianity, and he probably viewed his baptism as his retirement from public service. But the Christians at Carthage decided to exploit his social position and political prestige, and they elected him as their bishop in the year 248. The next decade proved to be very difficult for the Church in North Africa. The pagan government renewed its persecution of the Church, and, on the advice of his presbyters, Cyprian went into hiding for two years. When he returned to Carthage, he had to deal with many people who had lapsed from the faith during the persecution, but once it was past, wanted to come back to the Church. Cyprian refused to slam the door of

God’s mercy and the church’s forgiveness on them because he understood the weakness of human will.

So, he opened the arms of the Church to returning apostates but required them to undergo public penance in order that they might learn something of what it cost to love and be loved by Christ. Cyprian himself was called to fulfill this love when, early in the year 258, the imperial government began a new round of persecution. He was banished from Carthage but insisted on returning and surrendering himself. After a brief trial at which he bore unyielding witness to Christ, he was taken outside the city gates and beheaded.

September 20 – John Coleridge Patteson, Bishop of Melanesia, and his companions, martyrs, 1871.

John Coleridge Patteson was the first bishop of Melanesia, a vast chain of islands in the South Pacific, where he was martyred in 1871. He had left England and a comfortable curacy 16 years earlier in order to help Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand. He was assigned to work among the island peoples of Melanesia, where he quickly learned some 23 of their many different languages and dialects. He believed that the Melanesians might benefit by learning certain skills from European civilization, but he was entirely free of the veiled racism that spoke of “the white man’s burden”—in his eyes, the na-

tives of Melanesia were the equals of any European. After he became bishop in 1861, he acted on this conviction by labouring to build up an indigenous ministry. He also campaigned to end the virtual enslavement of Melanesian labourers by Englishmen from Australia and Fiji.

While on a routine visitation of his vast diocese in September 1871, Patteson anchored off Nakapu, one of the Santa Cruz islands where, a few months earlier, five of the inhabitants had been murdered by some Anglo-Australian raiders. Unaware of this atrocity, the bishop crossed the reef and was rowed ashore by the islanders. Soon afterwards, his companions were showered with arrows as they waited in a boat just beyond the reef. Three of them were wounded. A couple of hours passed, then a canoe floated out from the shore, containing the bishop’s mangled corpse. A few days later, two of his companions died of tetanus.

When the people of Nakapu learned that they had murdered a man who sought to defend them against their oppressors, they sought to be reconciled with his soul by receiving from his successor the gospel, which he had tried to bring them. So, despite the tragedy of his death, the spirit of Patteson’s work lived on, and today the Church of Melanesia is an independent province in the Anglican Communion.

Licensed Lay Ministers to gather in Truro for Annual Conference

SUBMITTED BY MAXINE SIMPKIN, PRESIDENT, LICENSED LAY MINISTERS ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Members of the Licensed Lay Ministers Association of this diocese will be gathering on Saturday, September 23, 2026, for our annual conference. This will be a one-day event

on the theme of Flourishing Faith: Approaches to Deepening Discipleship. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Canon Lisa Vaughn.

The conference will take place at St. John’s Anglican Church on Church Street in Truro. Registration forms have been sent out to all active members of the association with the option of staying at the Super 8 Motel on the evening of September 22. This



LLMs at Debert Annual Conference 2025

change of venue and format was necessitated by the closure of the Debert Centre.

The association has created a new training curriculum, which is available on their website nspeilayministers.com.

ca. Training may take place within a parish or region as is most convenient and takes a minimum of two years to complete. Contact information for the Executive and Board of Standards as well as

other information is available on the site.

We note with thanks the retirement last year of our Warden of Lay Ministers, Rev. Tom Henderson, and wish him well! We warmly

welcome our new Warden of Lay Ministers, Rev. Darlene Jewers!

Application forms for Lay Ministers in Training and Licensed Lay Ministers are on our website and may be sent to Rev. Darlene.

Our Annual General Meeting was held at St. John’s Church in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in June. We are grateful to our hosts for their hospitality, to the Rev. Dr. Dawna Wall for presiding at the Eucharist, and for the presence of Regional Dean, Rev. Dr. Patti Brace. Attendance at the AGM and the Annual Conference are open to all members, which numbers close to 300 dedicated lay people in our diocese.

Church anniversaries and the history of St. Alban's Church, Woodside



BY THE REV. TAUNYA J. DAWSON
CHAIR, DIOCESAN ARCHIVES COMMITTEE
DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND P.E.I.

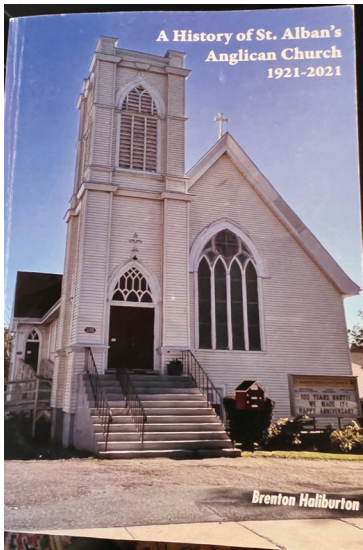
Anniversaries of our churches remind us of how far we have come in our goal to be a beacon of light in the communities in which we serve. Our history is worth preserving, and I encourage all to share the history of our beautiful churches in the communities in which they serve. I highly recommend Dr. Brian Cuthbertson's book "A Journey Just Begun" as a starting point—written to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (which is now 316 years old!).

The church I currently serve, St. Alban's, Woodside, will be celebrating its 105th anniversary this year. Not as exciting as the 100th, but still a time to celebrate what this sacred space has come to mean in the life of the community.

Woodside lies just to the south of Dartmouth within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Its population grew with the arrival of sugar and oil refineries. Anglicans in the early 20th century would travel eight kilometres to attend Christ Church—not easy without a car or bus service! Eventually a number of Anglicans began to worship at the Mission Hall located on Irving Street. In 1917, Diocesan Secretary Canon Dr. Reginald V. Harris initiated talks about erecting a church in Woodside. On May 5, 1919, a motion was passed to erect a church in Woodside able to seat 253 people. Throughout 1920, much effort was made to canvass funds for the building of the church. Finally, after sufficient funds had been raised and a loan from the diocese for \$5,000 was approved, the cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Worrell on September 18, 1921. It was



An early automobile parked outside St. Alban's Church



A History of St. Alban's Anglican Church by Haliburton, Brenton

quite a celebration, including a procession of the choir from Christ Church!

St. Albans was originally intended to be called "The Mission Church of the Good Shepherd," but the first rector, Rev. Henry Leggo, decided to change the name to "St. Alban the Martyr" after a church he had served in Holborn, London. Eventually, the church would become known as St. Alban's—dedicated to the first Christian martyr in Great Britain.

Eventually the church felt financially secure enough to separate from the Parish of Christ Church. The motion to do so was passed during a meeting of Christ Church Parish Council on January 12, 1923. It would still take some time for the mortgage to be paid; however, the fifth rector, Rev Frederick Moore, managed to encourage the parishioners to do so. Due to his efforts, the church was able to be consecrated in January 1944.

St. Alban's is the home of some old and some unique and beautiful furnishings. The bell is older than the church, cast by Meneely & Co. of New York in 1886. In 1948, three



Laying the cornerstone of St. Alban's Church

beautiful stained glass windows were installed in the Sanctuary as a memorial to those who served and died in the Second World War, with funds raised by the Ladies' Service League. In 1965 the Ladies' Service League also raised funds for a window to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the church, located in the western end of the nave and known as "Christ Blessing Children of All Nations." The altar is rather unique since it has white stone in the center, which has five engraved crosses: a large one in the centre and small ones in each corner.

The parishioners of St. Alban's have always had an active parish life. In the early years there were garden parties, a theatrical troupe, and musical performances. The youth had a Boy Scout troop, as well as Brownie and Girl Guide companies. In 1930 a young people's society was formed as well as a junior boys' choir. In the early years, the Ladies' Guild held card parties in the winter months to raise funds. In more recent years, activities that have been fondly remembered are the "Strawberry Social," "Newfie Night," "Cookie Walks," a Coronation Tea, and a parish trip to McNab's Island.

The parish has had several long-serving rectors. Rev. Frederick Moore served for 26 years, Rev. Canon Louis White for 17 years, and Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith for 13.

Currently the parish remains active with an "Open Door" held in the parish hall every fortnight in the fall, winter, and spring, selling nourishing dehydrated soup packs, planting a "Plant and Share" garden, and holding regular take-out dinners organized by the Ways and Means Committee. The annual October blessing of pets has included everything from a bearded dragon to a hedgehog! This summer, the church is open on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for prayer and tours, as well as regular 10 a.m. Sunday worship.

Let us all celebrate and share our history. If your church has

a significant anniversary coming up, we would love to hear more information about your history and planned events.

Sources

Cuthbertson, Brian. *A Journey Just Begun: A History of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, 1710-2010*. Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, 2010.

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Quick Clarification & An Invitation to Share Your History

This clarification has to do with the June 2026 submission for "This month in the archives."

Bishop Inglis consecrated the first St. John's Church on June 26, 1791, the Sunday after the feast day of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. Typically, when an Anglican church in Nova Scotia is simply called St. John's, the dedication is almost always to St. John the Baptist. If the parish is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist or St. John the Divine, that title is explicitly included in the name. Later diocesan records refer to the church as St. John the Evangelist, but no records have been located to date to explain how this came to be. If anyone has any records or insights on the naming of St. John's, they are most welcome.



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BY THE REV. MARIAN LUCAS-JEFFERIES
COORDINATOR, DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT NETWORK (DEN)

“Our biblical text for this year is drawn from Ezekiel 47:1-12, which portrays God’s life-giving water flowing from the temple of God. The river grows deeper and deeper, restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems. The vision invites human responsibility: recognizing ecological damage and embracing interconnectedness, we are called to immerse ourselves in the water and actively safeguard and work for the renewal of creation so that environmental healing and human well-being may flourish together.” seasonofcreation.org

Dear Diocese,

The theme for this year’s Season of Creation is “Living Water.” The tagline is “Immersion in Living Water.”

In a diocese that has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world, I hope that you all had a chance this summer to “immerse” yourself in ‘living water’ and enjoy time for



rest, relaxation, and spiritual refreshment.

As many of you know, I can often be found immersed in the water (swimming), beside the water (walking or cycling), or on the water (sailing or paddling).

Yesterday, as the sun began to set at the end of what had been a blistering hot day, the air and water absolutely still, I found relief from not only the heat of the day but also the hustle and bustle of life as I paddled my canoe. A spiritually refreshing moment. I wasn’t trying to make time to get somewhere, but I was taking time, slowly and gently, drifting on the river, immersing myself in thoughts about the interconnectedness of all things. Connecting with creation and the creator.

Recently, after a leisurely trip sailing from Fredericton to St. Margaret’s Bay the summer before and leaving our boat, Sisu, “on the hard” over the winter at a local marina on St. Margaret’s Bay, our trip back to New Brunswick to take her home in July this year, was an adventure that came with

both challenges and unexpected delights. As a Swiss woman we met on the waterfront in Yarmouth told me, she wanted her time living on the water, sailing the Atlantic Ocean and then the Caribbean for the past eight years, to be a spiritual experience.

We certainly met challenges during our three-week journey. We overcame strong winds, big waves, and fog. At one point we had a few hair-raising minutes when we were threatened with the possibility of crashing on the rocks below a cliff after a fan belt broke on an incoming tide with not a breath of wind preventing us from sailing to safety. Motivated by the possibility of disaster, my husband changed the belt in record time. Then once the motor was running again and we were safe, I took a moment to record one of the daily “reels” we posted on Facebook and promoted (or perhaps provoked) him, daring to ask him if the trip had been a “spiritual experience.” Adrenalin still pumping, he responded that our adventure was going to break his spirit. It didn’t, but it made for a great story after we got home.

However, immersing ourselves in the experience did help us to understand in a deeper, richer way the power of the sea and the urgency for taking action to protect the oceans that are threatened by the abuse we inflict on them and, in the end, realize that it certainly had been a spiritual experience.

Today, as it says on the

T-shirt my son gave me for my birthday, and as an Indigenous woman, an elder, repeats at every opportunity as a mantra, we know more than ever, “Water is life.”

So, as you celebrate the Season of Creation this month, may you take time to reflect on living water and life-giving water, its sacredness, and the responsibility each one of us has to ensure that living water is available for coming generations.

So, we pray:

“We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave your people water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus’ wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

You bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. You satisfy all who thirst and give us the life only you can give.”

(Adapted from All Creation Sings, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

Water is life!

Blessings,

The Rev. Marian Lucas-Jefferies

Coordinator, Diocesan Environment Network

Renewing stewardship: An expression of our baptism

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2016 BY REV. CANON LISA VAUGHN

Mention “stewardship” at Parish Council or from the pulpit, and you are often met with uncomfortable shifts in pews or rolling eyes. Too often, the word is misunderstood as code for “the church needs money.”

True stewardship has nothing to do with parish survival or emergency budget appeals—it is about our relationship with an extravagantly loving God. It is everything we do after we say, “I believe.”

Renewing our approach to stewardship means recognizing it as a fundamental way to live out our baptism as children of God. When we invite people into discipleship, we invite them into practices of faithful stewardship. It is a holistic spiritual discipline—



Photo by Kiy Turk on Unsplash



like prayer, scripture reading, and worship—that reflects our daily trust in Christ.

Everything we possess—our time, talents, physical health, resources, and the creation around us—has been entrusted to us by God. Nothing is strictly ours. How we use that abundance demonstrates our real priorities and declares who God is in our lives.

October naturally brings an emphasis on “giving thanks.” In this season of autumn harvest, we pause to acknowledge the lavish generosity of God. Our response is not born out of guilt, fear, or maintenance budgets but out of deep gratitude and joy.

To foster this renewed way of living in our congregations this fall, consider these key leadership practices:

Frame giving as worship: Elevate the offering time to highlight the spiritual significance of giving time, talent, and treasure.

Talk openly and authentically: Share personal stories of giving. If leaders hesitate to discuss money and faithfulness, parishioners will too.

Focus on mission, not maintenance: People—especially younger generations—give to support king-

dom impact, not institutional maintenance. Tell stories about the real lives transformed through your ministry.

Make action steps clear: Teach people how to give, and invite them clearly to specific, meaningful opportunities to serve.

When we live into our baptism by offering our best to God, it is deeply satisfying. Watching what God accomplishes through our faithful response becomes infectious—and transforms both our churches and ourselves.

Check out a variety of resources from the Anglican Church of Canada page:

anglican.ca/resources/giving-thanks-praise

“You can’t be human without a home”

BY ANDREW SHERIN

Miroslav Volf, Director of the Yale Centre for Faith and Culture, discussed home as a source of joy and humanity in his podcast, *The Theology of Home and Homelessness of God*, with his colleague Drew Collins. Volf stated, “You cannot grow without the place we call home. There’s a place in which you come and you cannot grow to be who you are without having this place that we call home.” Of course for some, home can also be a source of strife and pain beyond the usual sibling rivalries. A home is a bounded set of objects and relationships necessary to grow fully into a human being. Volf and Collins also discuss the precariousness of Jesus’ ministry; essentially, he was without an earthly home; he was homeless.

For several years, I was involved in the federal government’s program to address homelessness, after several permutations and name changes now called Reaching Home. I served on the Community Advisory Board for the HRM initiatives under this program, administrated locally by the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS). I had the privilege of sitting at the table and advising AHANS on how to distribute the federal funds. At the table were the provincial government housing representatives and the leaders of the non-government



Construction of Ozanam Place, Halifax, N.S. March 2025 © ssvphalifax.ca

organizations working directly with the persons who did not have a home. The mission of these organizations was to ultimately provide a home for those unfortunate not to have one or couldn’t keep one. They were organizations operating emergency shelters for men, women, families, and youth; supportive housing, i.e., housing with services for mental health and addictions; and affordable and deeply affordable permanent housing. They also provided housing support workers to help clients find apartments with private landlords.

Their work, for the most part, advanced the concept of Housing First. This concept requires that you provide housing, a permanent ongoing home without condition, and treatment and support for whatever issues, physical or mental, that are keeping that person from being housed. Recently this concept has been criticized, especially

in the USA, suggesting that treatment should come before providing housing. A recent study by the University of California Berkeley suggests not. The study used data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to follow nearly 300,000 unhoused veterans with mental illness over three years. During the study, Housing First participants were significantly less likely to die from exposure to extreme heat and cold, from violence, and from infections associated with unsafe injection drug use, particularly Hepatitis C, which accounted for around 76% of the reduction in infection-related deaths. These deaths were directly caused by the absence of safe and stable housing. Some of those housed permanently did seek treatment. For many the provision of a home was an intervention in itself. Treatment first participants showed no lasting improvement in health outcomes.

The work of HRM organizations serving or ministering to those who are homeless and participating in the Reaching Home program in HRM using the Housing First concept as guidance is striving to provide a place for those who are homeless with a place to grow, a home.

In HRM the latest Point in Time (PiT) count (essentially a census conducted on one day), October 15, 2025, reported 197 persons homeless and unsheltered and 953 who were homeless and sheltered, including those persons in the hospital or incarcerated with no fixed address. The 2025 PiT was unable to determine the number of hidden homeless (e.g., couch surfing), so the overall 2025 estimate is likely too small. Hidden homelessness in 2024 was estimated at 138 persons. Compared to the 2024 PiT sheltered and unsheltered persons who were homeless, the number increased by

15.7%, or 156 individuals.

The National Housing Advocate, Marie-Josée Houle, in her 2025-2026 report states, “When everyone has housing, it unlocks potential—for the economy, for communities, and for people” (emphasis added), a statement consistent with Miroslav Volf’s message quoted above that “you cannot grow without the place we call home.”

The report advises the government on the development of a new National Housing Strategy as the current strategy reaches the end of its cycle in 2027–2028.

The National Housing Strategy Act declares, “The housing policy of the Government of Canada is ‘to recognize that the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right affirmed in international law.’”

The National Housing Advocate makes recommendations in her 2025 report to better realize the right to adequate housing in the next cycle of the National Housing Strategy.

In the next few issues of *The Diocesan Times*, I will explore the Advocate’s recommendations.

Making the right to housing a reality and investing in housing consistent with that right will make a home to grow for those now without a home.

Reimagining our assets: Join the Diocesan Property Task Group

Across our diocese, congregations are asking critical questions about the future of their physical spaces. Some parishes are seeking to consolidate buildings, while others are eager to use their facilities for more than Sunday morning. From underutilized structures to lands overflowing with potential, our church properties represent a powerful opportunity to renew civic spaces for the well-being of both urban and rural neighbourhoods.

God is calling us to awaken to new possibilities for justice, community partnership, and neighbourhood flourishing. How might our bricks, mortar, and land be leveraged to help address the housing crisis for low-income families? Could our spaces host local small businesses, non-profit agencies, or government ser-

vice hubs? Whether through social enterprise partnerships or creative redevelopment, we have a chance to transform our physical assets into thriving centres of local mission.

To guide and support congregations through this process, we are forming a new Diocesan ‘Reimagine Property Task Group’. This team will assist parishes in discerning their vision, gathering practical resources, and identifying the necessary expertise to bring projects to life.

Whether you can join our Core Task Group, serve as an on-call advisor in your field of expertise, or contribute your skills to specific, individual projects, there is a place for you. We welcome both full team involvement and occasional, project-based support.

We need your skills and

passion. If you have experience, professional expertise, or a deep interest in property redevelopment, housing, community partnerships, or social enterprise, we invite you to share your gifts. Perhaps you are an architect or a project manager, familiar with municipal planning or property law, or experienced in the construction trades. You have wisdom and special gifts to help equip our church communities to reimagine their spaces for a hopeful, flourishing future.

To express interest or learn more about joining the task group, please contact Lisa Vaughn at the Synod Office—missiondirector@nspeidiocese.ca or 902-789-4840.

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Contemplations of a Grasshopper Mind: Gardening

BY MICHELLE BULL

One of the pleasures of summer, for me, is gardening. I inherited a beautiful garden at our cottage from my mother-in-law, full of roses and hydrangeas and daylilies and various flowering shrubs. It is a lasting pleasure to me.

Every morning, I step out onto my front porch and survey the day and the cove and the state of the garden: what has bloomed in the night? It's peaceful and lovely and brings consolation to my soul.

Mind you, the garden is also full of goutweed and marjoram, besides the usual weeds. My mother-in-law, in her 80s and 90s, hadn't quite kept up with them. So I spend quite a bit of time weeding. In fact, once I get through the initial weeding for all the garden beds, it's time to start again, because the weeds are highly vigorous.

And then there's the pruning of shrubs, which would have buried the house by now without drastic cutting on my part. Two summers running I worked on freeing the cherry tree from a lot of multiflora roses. Now the problem is picking and pitting all the cherries for pie before the



Pink and white roses thriving in the cottage garden

birds eat them.

When I took over the garden, it was badly overgrown. I started in one corner, weeding, and I made some delightful discoveries. There was a lovely white rose buried in there, barely surviving. Now it's in full bloom with dozens of roses. Then I found a delicate pink rose. I still haven't liberated the whole garden, six years later.

Each year when I come to the cottage, I walk around the garden and see what has survived the winter and what is thriving and what needs some TLC. It depends on the winter a lot. This year the hydrangeas were suffering, partly from

the drought last summer and partly from the cold winter. The dying rhododendron I rescued, however, was thriving and in full bloom. Always surprises. Always joy and delight.

Gardening takes work and attention and patience. Each plant needs the right soil, the right fertilizer, the right amount of sun and shade, and the right amount of water. The gardener has to walk around and observe everything, really know the plants, and care for them. And then there's a fair bit of luck, with rain and temperature.

This is a bit like our spiritual lives. I don't know about any-

one else, but I want to be good NOW! I want to be patient NOW! I want to get over that fault of mine NOW! Instantly! But it doesn't work that way in the spiritual life or in gardening. Both take time and attention. Both take love and coaxing. Both bring delightful surprises, talents, and habits we had no idea we had that just need a little TLC to grow and bloom.

Both need weeding. I can pull goutweed all summer until there is none showing. The next summer, there's a whole lot again. The roots are still there. It's the same with bad habits we have. We can pay attention for a while and work on them, but when we forget about them for a bit, they pop back up, because the roots are there. It takes time to actually get rid of the roots, especially if they're entwined with the flowers, but it does happen eventually.

We can give our spiritual lives an advantage by making sure we have the things we need: prayer, time to contemplate and be with God, Bible reading or other spiritual reading, and worship. This is like adding fertilizer and water to our gardens. We can weed out the things that distract us. We can cut back

the thorns that threaten to smother us, whatever those may be in our lives. In my case, busyness and perhaps endless scrolling on Facebook.

We can't help the weather or the things in life that happen over which we have no control: politics, grief, betrayal, job loss, and illness. But we can prepare ourselves to weather them by strengthening our spiritual lives. The well-fed, well-cultivated spiritual habits fare better than ones that were barely hanging on.

It all takes a lot of patience. No garden is perfect as soon as you plant it. It is the work of a lifetime, and the same is true of our spiritual lives. Perfection is not the goal. Growth and bloom and fruit are the goals, and just enjoying it.

And remember, it all grows, wants to grow, because that's how God has made it. Our vegetables produce so much, with very little help from us. The flowers bloom because that's what they're created to do. We just help.

We are also created to thrive and grow and bloom and take pleasure in our spiritual lives, finding the same joy and delight and peace we find in the garden.

Anglicans Powering Potential Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island



Anglicans Powering Potential are re-imagining Bonhoeffer's spike as a series of nails of varying sizes and shapes, to remind us that we can make a difference, that small things can have a big impact. Interested? Email: app.nspeidiocese@gmail.com



"We are not simply to bandage the wounds of the victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spike in the wheel itself" Dietrich Bonhoeffer



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September Bible
Crossword

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June Puzzle Answers

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Sept. 2026 Crossword Clues

ACROSS

- 1 Alter
- 5 Fill
- 9 Singing voice
- 13 Subdue
- 14 Saul, later
- 15 Luck o’ the ____
- 16 Son of Adam and Eve
- 17 Mined metals
- 18 Receiver of a gift
- 19 Biblical unit of length
- 21 Garden of ____
- 23 Soar
- 24 Good grief!
- 25 Sister of Leah
- 29 Sarcastic
- 30 Mr. Donahue
- 32 North American country
- 33 Biblical weeds
- 36 Resources
- 37 Long-term memory
- 38 University (abbr.)
- 39 Dye with wax
- 40 Run away
- 41 Move up and down
- 42 NT church leader
- 43 Where Jesus died
- 44 Sphere
- 45 Stare
- 46 Thai
- 47 Smelly vegetables
- 49 Movie: 2001’s talking computer
- 50 Advertisements
- 53 Overlook
- 55 nonbeliever
- 57 Unripe
- 60 Garner
- 62 Covered stadium
- 63 Expenditure
- 64 KJV pronoun
- 65 Double-reed instrument
- 66 Prefix ten
- 67 Trying
- 68 Fasting season

DOWN

- 1 Workers
- 2 Capital of Afghanistan
- 3 Nail filing board
- 4 Healthy
- 5 Squishy
- 6 Expression of disgust
- 7 Day of the week
- 8 Otherwise
- 9 Rodeo bull
- 10 Old Testament city
- 11 Compass point
- 12 That girl
- 15 Utopian ideas
- 20 Belongs to us
- 22 Quaff
- 26 Howdy
- 27 Painter Richard
- 28 Tinsel cloth
- 29 Marry
- 30 Fisherman disciple
- 31 Secret of Samson’s strength
- 33 Not allowed
- 34 Squirrel’s dinner
- 35 Jewish teacher
- 36 Created
- 39 Sanctify
- 40 Day of the week (abbr.)
- 42 Annual storm causing current
- 43 Golden ____ (Israelite idol)
- 46 Brown from the sun
- 48 Last letter of Greek alphabet
- 49 Employer
- 50 Mud brick
- 51 Evil angel
- 52 Partly frozen rain
- 54 Abel’s brother
- 56 Object of false worship
- 57 The Creator
- 58 Regret
- 59 And so forth
- 61 Expression of Surprise



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The Bible – Your power tool

BY ANGELA RUSH

This summer has been a time of my life where turning to scripture happened over and over. I felt lost and needed so much direction and support. It has been a time for so many things. A time for needing strength. A time for needing help dealing with anxiety and fear. A time for needing patience. A time for needing to feel hope. A time of confusion. A time of feeling rejection. You’re probably wondering what on earth has happened to this woman this summer. Let me tell you in three simple words. Selling My House.

This was something I had contemplated for a few years. I had approached that time of life when society says, “Hey, you’re over 60; time to retire.” In late spring of this year the process began. Step one was not in motion. “Declutter,” my mom said. “The more you get rid of, the less you have to move.” So, together with my daughter’s help, I packed bag after bag and took them to Value Village or Goodwill. Some items were simply given away to someone in need. I must have taken at least a dozen full carloads of donated goods over the span of about two weeks to one place or another. Some items went to the local woman’s shelter or a family in need. There was a sense of peace, and that came with doing this, confirming that it was the right thing to do. It did feel sad at times, however, to see some of these things go. “Keep pushing forward,” I would tell myself. “You can do this.” The plan had been set in motion now, and I had to stick to it. I can’t hang on to things and still move forward. I truly felt then, as I do now, that it was part of God’s plan for me.

My home was now ready for step two of this plan—the staging. My agent/friend



Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash

Alison is so awesome; she arrived with a truckload of furniture and decorative pieces for my home. She brought beautiful prints for the walls, bedding and throw pillows, end tables, lamps, chairs, a dining set, and so much more. She began to work her magic. It took her only one day to make my house “camera-ready.” “Wow, I think I want to stay now,” I said jokingly. I knew that this house was already on the move. It was no longer completely mine; it felt strange and hard to explain. We now were just waiting for things to unfold. Pictures and videos came next. With every step, the co-existing stress and fear came with it. Afraid to take this step, the self-doubt that came with wondering if it was the right one sent my anxiety into a tailspin time and time again. Yet with every step I also felt guided. God was with me, and I would find that calm moment of existence amongst the chaos. I would be given some sort of sign that, yes, it was the right thing to do at the right time. I have met some amazing people also. A new friend named Juline has a very strong and rooted faith, and I always can count on her for prayer and direction. New friends are new blessings. I will treasure them always. I

never knew that something as simple (or so I thought) as selling a house could be one of the most stressful times of my life. I know it sounds crazy, but it’s true. This stress is nuts. “It’s just a house,” I would say to myself. Why so much emotion? Well, I have discovered that we do in fact have a relationship with our home; crazy as it sounds, it exists.

Welcome to step three. Then came the first offer. The turmoil inside me sent me straight to my Bible, looking for some scripture on having faith and dealing with loss. I’ve been in this home for 30 years. When I told Alison how I was feeling, she was so comforting. “Of course you feel these things; you raised your daughters here, and you celebrated everything here, good and bad.” She then continued to explain that “selling your house is one of the most stressful events in a person’s life.” Then in her calming nature, she reminded me that I am selling a house, four walls and a roof. “You aren’t selling your memories; you take them with you to the new place.”

God has led me to many scripture verses during this ongoing process, Isaiah 41:10 for example, where we are reminded of the five promises

from God (I will read them daily now). I am with you. I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my right hand.

The offer fell through. Just when I had reached a place of calm and serenity about everything, I had to start over again. Thank goodness for the Serenity Prayer at this point. Alison had an idea: let’s plant St. Joseph in the garden. I had never heard of this, but apparently it is done to bring the right buyer to the home. Oddly enough, when I told my daughter about it, she knew of someone who had done it. So Alison arrived with her Amazon-delivered St. Joseph statue and tiny shovel. Together, we planted him as instructed. We even prayed together over it, and it was so incredible. A moment I will treasure always. When the house sells, we are supposed to take him with us.

We took a week to pause and do a few things with the house to get it ready again. “Let’s take a break and relax a bit, then come up again fresh and ready,” Alison calmly said to me. I needed this break as the constant stream of people coming and going with showings was taking its toll on me emotionally. I must say, though, that through all of this process, I’ve felt God constantly teaching me about having faith, being resilient, being humble, having trust, and being patient. I am learning to trust the process. I have learned that anxiety cannot exist in the same mind space as gratitude. Feel grateful for everything.

My journey continues with more showings this week. God willing, an offer and then the next phase begins.

When stressed or anxious, pray back the scripture to God from Isaiah 41:10. I know I will. Something like

this. “Lord, the promises you made I believe; please give me strength because it comes from you. You are truth.”

There are many other places in the Bible to turn.

Psalm 46:10 – “God is our refuge and strength...”

Proverbs 3:5 – “Trust in the Lord with all your heart...”

Romans 12:12 – “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer...”

I really love Romans 12:12. I stumbled into it and just love it.

So, I suppose that this summer so far has been, and continues to be, a time of learning for me. Never did I think in a million years that this “house selling process” would carry so much with it. But some of the best life lessons and times with God come during the difficult times. I guess this is what it is when we read Psalm 23:4, “...walk through the valley of the shadow of death...”—that ever-so-famous metaphor for going through a rough time.

I am being taught that in everything, give it to God. The Lord knows our paths; He walks with us and carries us. What is so amazingly cool is that He can be both walking with you and waiting for you at your destination at the same time. My advice to you would be to always trust in the Lord. Keep your Bible handy—it will direct you through any situation. It’s a power tool that you plug into your heart and soul. Whether you are selling a house, changing a job, ending a marriage, getting married, burying a loved one, or celebrating a new life, whatever that life brings you, give it to God and seek His direction. We, you and I, are not intended to do anything alone. He is always with you, as He is with me. Thank you, Jesus, for so much. Amen.

All things new: Community Roots Day Camp 2026

All Things New, the theme of this year’s Community Roots Day Camp, invited campers to explore the many ways transformation happens in our lives and in the world around us. We discovered that when things fall apart, new life often emerges. Broken pieces can come together in new ways and flourish.

We learned by creating, exploring, and asking questions. Did you know that you can change a jar half full of whipping cream into butter just by shaking it? It worked, and it was delicious! Using the ancient art of origami,



simple sheets of paper became beautiful butterflies. We transformed old cardboard boxes into a welcoming shelter, reminding us that there is always room for everyone in God’s house.

Our exploration extended beyond the church walls with a visit to the Randall House Museum. We learned about the remarkable transformation of Wolfville’s waterfront, from the time when the Mi’kmaq people summered

and fished along its shores, through the Age of Sail when today’s Willow Park was a bustling harbour, and later how the arrival of the railway changed the flow of the water and reshaped the landscape. Campers created their own changing waterfront dioramas using rocks, sand, water, and origami boats.

Each day at camp began and closed with a simple worship service of prayer, scripture, and song. We talked about God’s work of transformation in creation, and as the days unfolded, relationships flourished, and we saw signs

of God’s presence in every one of us.

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who made this year’s Community Roots Day Camp possible: our incredible volunteers and leaders, those who generously provided snacks, and the campers whose curiosity, enthusiasm, and imagination made the week so special. We are especially grateful for Allie, Frances, and Sam for their leadership and the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, which has supported St. John’s through the three years of Community Roots.