



Lots MORE coming!



Photo: Some of the 180 attendees engaged at the MORE event held at St. Peter's Church in Birch Cove on Feb 4th.

It as a mega-MORE Mission School for the urban and suburban areas of HRM! All three regions - Chebucto, Dartmouth and Fort Sackville - gathered for an exciting learning event that outlined the basics of mission. About

180 participants came to St. Peter's, Birch Cove, including the presenting team of Bishop Ron Cutler and four other clergy leaders. The energy in the room, animated discussion and the hope-filled suggestions fed

the crowd with inspiration. One person said that the "presenters, missional checklist, videos and graphics, case study, difference between outreach and mission (and) resources" were all great. Another participant

commented that they liked that "so many people are looking to the future." MORE - Mission Schools were developed as a result of the Diocesan Synod responses in 2015. "It's a great idea! Wonderful to have this

rolled out and the fact that voices were heard at Synod is refreshing and revitalizing."

NOTE: Read the MORE article inside about upcoming Mission Schools on Page 9.

Special service appreciation at St. Francis by the Lakes

Photo left: Archdeacon Mark Kingsbury expressed his appreciation for their dedication and tremendous work as Wardens on behalf of St.

Francis by the Lakes Anglican Church, Lower Sackville, to Frank Bezanson and Richard Kearns. Archdeacon Mark painted a scene at St. Anne's

Camp for presentation to Frank (left) and for Richard (right) he did a painting of a ship on which Richard served, HMC Halifax.

Photo right: While at the annual parish meeting of St. Francis by the Lakes, Lower Sackville, Archdeacon Mark Kingsbury presented "Parishioner

of the Year" certificates to Bill Scammell (left) and Shelley Brushett (right). Missing from the picture are Wanda Joudrey and Jonathan Seaward.



COLUMNIST

The gifts of bread & friendship

Father J has been busy visiting his flock this past month, taking Communion to those who for whatever reason cannot be in church on Sunday. As he says "getting the feel of the hidden congregation". Every parish has members who seem to live just outside the boundaries or inner circle. St. Bart's is no different. Rev Billie was faithful in her quest to include everyone but there were a few that even her sharp eyes and inquisitive mind missed.

Jason saw this as a challenge for him during his first winter in The Bog. He asked many of us if we knew of souls who could or would appreciate a visit. He kept his eyes peeled for signs of folks in need of care and he was fearless when it came to knocking on doors that had remained firmly shut to any and all visitors.

Such a door was the back door of a neglected farm house on what we locals call 'the back road'. Jason was out looking for souls to save as my Orin would put it, when he spotted the large house tucked away at the end of a long driveway. He went down the weedy road and found the house of our local hermit. The front door had not seen anyone for at least 25 years but there was a well-worn path from the back door to the wood shed behind the house.



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

So Jason got out of his car and went up to the door and knocked.

He knocked and knocked but saw very little signs of life inside the house and was just about ready to head back to his car when a very old and grizzled face appeared at the window beside the door.

Jason opened his jacket and moved his scarf so that his

'dog collar' was visible and waved at the man only to be met by a blank stare. And so they stood for a minute, each sizing up the other, finally the face moved from the window and the door creaked open. Father J put on his best 'pastor face' and said 'Hi'. Silence was his answer so he continued on as if the old face had said "welcome, come on in!" which it didn't!! "It's cold out here, mind if I come inside?" again nothing in return. But the door did open wider and the face moved aside to let Jason enter the kitchen.

The back door with its need of a good coat of paint did not reflect the state of the house inside. The back porch was as neat as a pin with firewood stacked in the wood box and a mat by the door with a corn broom so that snow and mud could be swept from boots. The next door into the kitchen was ajar and Jason could see that the room reflected the same care and cleanliness. A few dishes were stacked on the drain

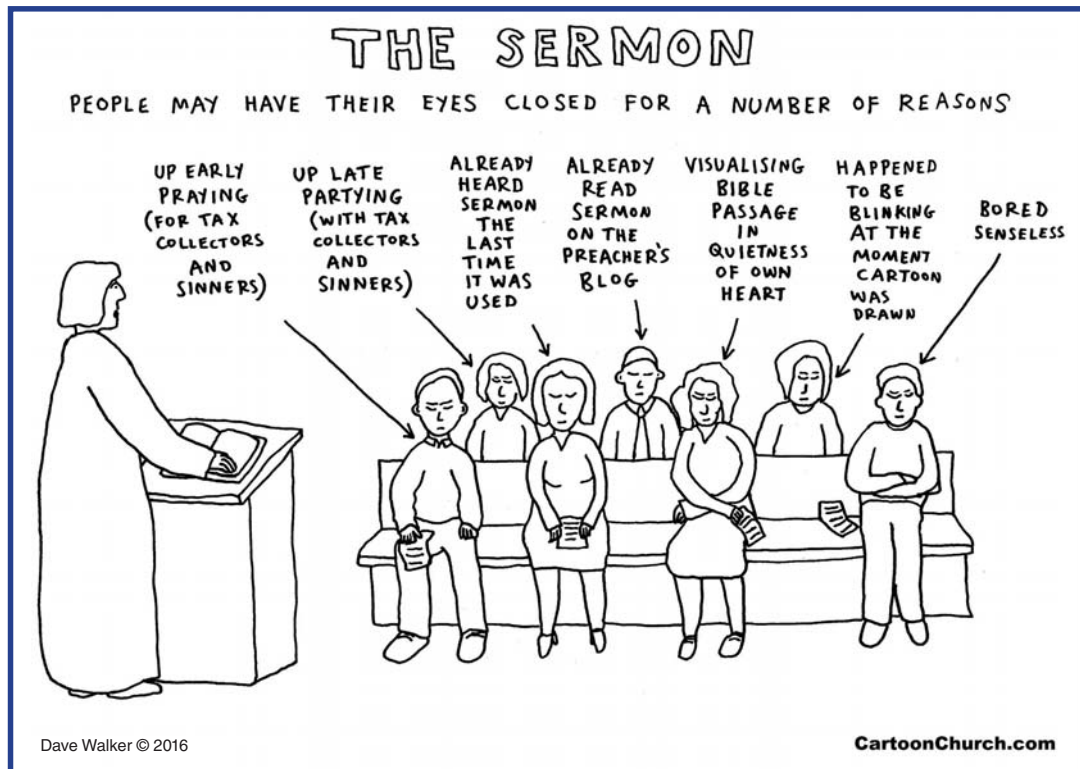
board to dry and three loaves of homemade bread were cooling on the counter. The smell of fresh baked bread was intoxicating!

This was a house where shoes and or boots were removed before entering the kitchen so without being invited, Fr. J did just that.

A very old wood burning kitchen range sat along the wall with a warm fire glowing in it and the water source was a pump at the sink. It was like J had stepped back in time to another age in The Bog. He was finally greeted by the homeowner with the words "I don't go to any church anymore". "Doesn't matter" said Jason, "I've come for a visit".

And so a new friendship began to blossom for both men. Before the rector left, he topped up the wood box in the porch and swept off the back steps, he left with a fresh loaf of brown bread under his arm and a promise to drop in again, but this time he would bring Communion. The Hermit of the Bog had said he would like to take Communion once again, just like he had as a young boy many, many years ago.

Yes, a new friendship. I'll keep you posted, Aunt Madge



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GUEST COLUMNIST



Archdeacon Sandra Fyfe,
Rector, Parish of Horton,
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Walk in the darkness as in the light

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS OR SO our parish has shared a Taizé Prayer service on Ash Wednesday with members of our local Baptist church and it's been a moving experience - literally. Every year we start in a circle at the back of our church where we sing, hear words inviting us to observe a holy Lent, and recite parts of psalm 51, asking God to "create in (us) clean hearts." Then, individually, in our own time, we move to the archway near the entrance of the church, where prayer desks are set up on either side, and receive the imposition of ashes.

After receiving the imposition of ashes, we move again, individually, and take our places in the pews, where we hear words of absolution, reminding us that, "with God the darkness brings comfort not fear, love not hatred, righteousness not punishment."

We are then encouraged: "walk in the darkness of your life as in the light, for both the dark and the light belong to God, as do you."

"What our world needs most right now is people who are not afraid to enter into the darkness. In my pastoral work, this is sometimes the only thing I can do; the only gift I have to share."

These are powerful words for our time, calling to mind Psalm 139, where we are assured that there is no place we can go where God is not already present, no darkness where God is not already there to meet us. Rather than inviting us to look for the light, or to be bearers of light, this psalmist invites us to embrace the darkness, trusting in the faithfulness of a God who is there with us and will help us find our way.

So often we find ourselves trying to transform the darkness around us, or waiting for the

light to come, and I'm not suggesting that this isn't part of our call as Christians; it absolutely is. But perhaps what our world needs most right now is people who are not afraid to enter into the darkness. In my pastoral work, this is sometimes the only thing I can do; the only gift I have to share. Offering a "quick fix" or what appear to be easy solutions to deep-seated problems is not helpful and doesn't usually lead to deep and lasting healing or the restoration of hope. Sometimes we have to take the long view, and the long view means being willing to spend some time in the

darkness, as hard as that might be.

That's where the season of Lent can be helpful. The word comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning "spring." This is the season when things we cannot see are growing under the soil in the darkness; when bulbs lie under the ground waiting to push through the cold, hard ground of winter and bloom. It's a reminder that even when it looks to us like nothing is happening, things are in fact changing, and so are we.

We've seen signs of this already, like when, in response to recent world events, people from every corner of the globe have come together to express their solidarity with others. Rather than being overwhelmed by a spirit of apathy that would have us believe "it's not my problem," we have rallied around one another, recognizing our common humanity. Rather than allowing others to be overwhelmed by the darkness, we have entered into it with them, so that they will not have to experience it alone. Just as the bulb that looked dry and lifeless when planted receives the nourishment it needs in the darkness to eventually be awakened to new life we, too, can find in the darkness a source of strength and hope.

And so we wait...but that doesn't mean we have to stand still. In the liturgy I described above, as we receive the imposition of ashes we are told: "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." But after hearing these words we're not expected to stay where we are, kneeling there with ashes on our foreheads. We each get up, in our own time, walk forward and prepare ourselves to receive holy communion, and the assurance that God walks with us always.

As we begin our Lenten journey then, may we recommit ourselves to walking in the darkness as we do in the light, trusting in God's presence and guidance along the way. May we not fear these dark days, but know them to be times when God is powerfully at work, transforming us and our world by opening us more and more to one another.

May Lent be for us a time to be attentive to what God is doing in our midst, in both the darkness and the light. May it be a time to remind ourselves that God is always in the business of transforming darkness or, at the very least, of blessing us with a kind of "night vision" that enables us to see well enough to put one foot in front of the other, even when things around us continue to look dim.

Have you seen the light?

March 1st, 2017 was Ash Wednesday. This marked the beginning of an austere season of reflection known as Lent. My experience of Ash Wednesday was almost destroyed when a colleague told me the following story -

A child attended the Ash Wednesday Liturgy for the first time with his mother. They went forward dutifully with the rest of the congregation for the Imposition of Ashes. The words, "Remember that you are but dust and to dust you shall return..." were intoned by the celebrant, echoing throughout the church, reminding the participants of their mortality. Upon returning to their pew, the child began to quiz his mother about various aspects of the service. Most intriguing was the formula used for the Imposition of Ashes. The



Rev. Dr. John Roddam

child inquired, "What is 'but dust?'" The mother was later found under the pew, beet-red, valiantly attempting to suppress her laughter!

Ever since, I've had to suppress a chuckle when I hear or say

the words for the Imposition of Ashes! Perhaps this is why the formula has been changed in the BAS!! We cannot take ourselves too seriously, even in Penitential Seasons!

In a spiritual/religious setting, words are important but often misunderstood. I attended Church from the time I was days old at my baptism at the back of St. James Anglican Church, Pictou, NS one cold winter Sunday afternoon.

However, I did not come to encounter the living Lord Jesus Christ until I was 23 years old - after hearing many words in Church. Few words 'landed' beforehand. While the Traditional Prayer Book affirms "a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour" as a prerequisite for Holy Communion - see: The

Exhortation BCP (1962) Pp. 89. - I had no relationship with Jesus.

Later when the Holy Spirit caused a hunger in my soul to seek the Lord and bless me with the grace of Conversion, I saw for the first time. This experience was reminiscent of a travelling salesman who served the Eastern Shore in the 1950s. He was a committed follower of Jesus and wanted to share his faith.

He was known to ask, "Have you seen the Light?" Often folks would look at him quizzically and he would retort, "You'll know it when you see it!"

It is a profound thing to have walked in darkness and then have the Light of Christ unfold around you, illuminating the path. Everything changes!

Have you seen the light? Lent is a time to remember

that we walk in darkness, in sin, in hopelessness - except for the mercy of God! The Father gave His Son to transfer us from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son He loves (Colossians 1: 13) - Jesus the Light of the World.

Let us pursue the Light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and grow into His likeness -

3 Now by this we know that we know Him (Jesus), if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." (1 John 2: 3-6)

Want to change the whole world?

Start with your own world and compassionate eyes

BY CATHY LEE CUNNINGHAM,
PART-TIME RECTOR OF THE
CHURCH OF THE GOOD
SHEPHERD, BEAVER BANK AND
FOUNDER, THE VOCAPEACE
INSTITUTE

Greetings and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus as we look forward to beginning our Lenten journey!

FROM DARK: LOOKING AT THE WHOLE WORLD IN JANUARY 2017

As I write this, so much has happened in the world over the last month.

In Upper Big Tracadie, N.S., Lionel Desmond, a Canadian armed Forces Veteran who served in Afghanistan and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, killed his wife Shanna, their 10-year-old daughter, Aaliyah and his mother Brenda, before turning the gun on himself. Yet another tragic consequence of the growing mental health crisis facing our nation and the world, as our soldiers come home from war bearing deep psychic wounds without adequate compassionate care for them and their families.

In the United States, the inauguration of President Trump followed by his Executive Order to ban entry into the United States from certain refugees and other travelers of seven majority Muslim countries, fanned the flames of intolerance and hatred.

Most tragically for our country and our dear Muslim brothers and sisters - the brutal attack on the Centre Culturel Islamique de Quebec, where it took 27-year-old Alexandre Bissonette, a student at Laval University, less than five minutes to enter the mosque, open fire, murder six praying men and injure 19 others. This spawned more reactionary violence, with 29 reports of hate incidents to Montreal police in the 48 hours immediately following the attack.

Finally, the missile launch tests performed by Iran in



Rev. Cathy Lee Cunningham

defiance of the new U.S. Administration, followed by an escalation of international tensions whereby the new U.S. National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn, announced that the US "is putting Iran on notice." Iran's response: "We will continue to test launch missiles because we have the right to defend our nation". And then, there's Putin in Russia, Assad in Syria and Kim Jong-un in North Korea and the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Thanks be to God, this is not the only news from the beginning of January to reflect on.

TO LIGHT: RE-LOOKING AT THE WHOLE WORLD IN JANUARY 2017

Also in January, we've seen evidence that we are - in many powerful ways - moving toward a more compassionate world, despite the darkness: 4.8 million people gathered for the Women's March and Sister Marches around the globe (even in Antarctica) in peaceful protests, standing for human rights; thousands at Standing Rock; millions stood in solidarity with refugees, students and families whose lives have been affected by the Trump travel ban; thousands gathered at vigils to mourn and pray for those who lost their lives in Quebec City; Paris turned off the lights of the Eiffel Tower to send symbolic love across the Atlantic Ocean to mourners

in Quebec City the day after the attack; millions were teaching their children to love, forgive and show mercy, no matter what; families welcomed refugees to their new homes; our Canadian Prime Minister tweeted a word of radical hospitality and hope to those fleeing terror and persecution around the world who might be turned away by our southern neighbour (#WelcomeToCanada). Ordinary people, standing for a more compassionate world, right where they are, by the millions. Now that gives me hope for a better world. How about you?

FROM LOOKING AT THE WHOLE WORLD TO LOOKING AT OUR OWN WORLD

When I undertook my studies for Teaching Negotiation in the Organization in the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, I was blessed to be in class with many different people with differing perspectives, from all over the world - Pentagon workers, Ivy-league professors, United Nations staff and field workers, CEOs of large corporations, government officials and local community leaders. Together, we looked at the whole world through the lens of "our own worlds". By listening without judgement, we were able to make new discoveries about the unlimited potential we have to solve the toughest problems we face as a human race on a stressed planet.

Through the process, we found that the deep longing every human being has to experience belonging in a community of like-minded individuals (some call it one's "tribe") and the affirmation that we experience when we feel heard and given an equal voice "at the table" is what drives us, for good or for ill. When we have equal voices and approach our divisions with compassion, we find hope. It brings us together, multiplies possibilities and transforms our experience of the world. It's hard work. It's good work. It's essential work. That work is easy to do when you're sitting in a learning circle at Harvard! Of course, it's much more challenging to do at home. But I've seen it done, time and time again.

SO, WHERE DO WE START? RIGHT WHERE WE ARE

Karen Armstrong uses the Confucian concentric circles of compassion as a starting

TWELVE STEPS TO A
compassionate LIFE

FIRST | Learn about compassion
SECOND | Look at your own world
THIRD | Compassion for yourself
FOURTH | Empathy
FIFTH | Mindfulness
SIXTH | Action
SEVENTH | How little we know
EIGHTH | How should we speak to one another?
NINTH | Concern for everybody
TENTH | Knowledge
ELEVENTH | Recognition
TWELFTH | Love your enemies

Karen Armstrong,
Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life

point for Step Two on the Compassion Journey: Look at Your Own World. The circles begin with family, then friends and community, then the country in which we live. We might want to add "parish" to the friends and community circle. As we engage the exercise, she cautions us to look with realistic, yet gentle eyes on the challenges we face: "We look around us and realize that something needs to be done, yet find no immediate solutions. But we should not approach the task with the hard zeal of a reformer; there should be no anger, frustration, or impatience in our survey. We must look at our community (family, parish, workplace, school) with compassion, estimate its strengths as well as its weaknesses, and assess its potential for change."

For those who feel overwhelmed, she offers words of assurance: "No single individual can take on all these problems. During this step, ask yourself what your particular contribution should be and where you should concentrate your efforts - in business, medicine, the media, education, the arts, politics, or in the home."

So, get out your journal and coloured pens (and I will, too),

gather your friends and family, draw out the concentric circles of compassion, pray, and start the brainstorming process. If you want to further explore possibilities for the parish, within the context of your local community, I recommend that you start with the Charter Tool Box, a resource available on the Charter for Compassion website: www.charterforcompassion.org/communities/charter-tool-box-framework.

I'll see you back here in the April Issue, as we consider the Third Step: Compassion for Yourself. In my experience, this is one of the most difficult spiritual disciplines of all.

As always, I am ever yours, in deep love for Jesus,
Cathy Lee

A NEW COMPASSION PAGE FOR YOU!

Head to www.vocapeace.com to get access to the fully-updated Compassion Page, to support you and your parish explore and act on *The Charter for Compassion* in 2017.

Diocese of NS & PEI
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God wants ...
Are you ready for ...

M  **RE**

More than chips & chocolate

BY ALLIE COLP

Of all the seasons of the church year, Lent is one of the hardest to wrap our heads around – and yet somehow one of the easiest to participate in. Giving something up for Lent is a pretty popular thing to do – often as more of a personal challenge that a spiritual practice.

Giving up chips or chocolate during Lent isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it only scratches the surface of a season with much more potential for meaningful growth and change in our lives.

Lent offers an opportunity to re-evaluate or begin to develop

a daily spiritual practice. No matter what age you are, finding new ways to grow closer to God is an important part of a life of faith, and this is a time to be intentional about that.

Often, this does start with giving something up to create space for something new. Maybe it is still giving up chips so that you have space to be more attentive to the food you eat and to give thanks for good harvests and for the hands that made it possible for you to enjoy a healthy meal, or not using your cell phone for the first hour of the day and spending time in prayer during that hour instead. Whatever that looks like for you, whether it's finding new or


old or deeper ways to connect with God in preparation for Easter will help us to find more meaning in that celebration.

As you are reading this, Lent may have already begun, but the good news is it is never too late to start this journey. A good place to start is by taking some time for prayer, and by talking to your priest or your youth leader or your kids or your parents or other people from your church. Share some ideas about how to create some space this season to journey with God, and then how to continue on after Easter. However you decide to mark this time, may this holy season be one of growth, exploration, and blessing.



Photo: One way to engage in Lent may be to try new styles of prayer, like a paper chain prayer where you add a new link with something you are giving thanks for that day.

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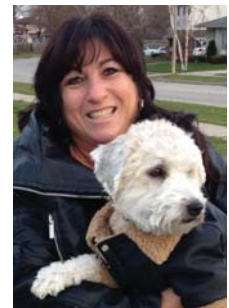
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Meet Angela: our new advertising agent for The Diocesan Times

Diocesan Times editor Paul Sherwood extends a warm welcome to our new advertising agent Angela Rush. When she applied for the advertising position at The Diocesan Times, the opening words in her e-mail were "As I sit at my computer, I pray – God please give me the right words to say, because I feel in my heart this is the job for me!" Her ministry with advertising led Angela to be the advertising person for other Canadian Anglican newspapers after she reached out to them at the last General Synod.

Rush brings a successful track-record in advertising, sales, marketing and customer service with over 15 years of experience as an advertising representative with several magazines. She organized and led many successful promotional and fund-raising initiatives, led an ALPHA group and is a 'cradle' Anglican. Contact Angela For all your advertising needs or suggestions for new initiatives: diocesantimes.ads@gmail.com or (905) 630-0390 (Burlington, ON)



Diocesan Times advertising agent Angela Rush with her dog, Karma. Photo: A. Rush

MEDICALLY ASSISTED DYING: A SECOND PANEL AND CONVERSATION



Photo: Attendees on November 23 at The Great Hall in All Saints Cathedral for the panel discussion MEDICALLY ASSISTED DYING: a just

expression of care for the dignity of every human being. This panel discussion was presented in follow-up to the Anglican Church of Canada's

June 9th Report on physician assisted dying, which does not argue for or against the practice, recognizing that it is now part of the legal landscape, but

focuses on pastoral obligations. This discussion explored the implications for all concerned including patients, families, care providers and support

communities. The panel of theological, medical and legal experts presented information and addressed the audience's questions.



Panelist:
Dr. Kenneth Rockwood, Geriatrician, Professor and Director of Geriatric Medicine Research at Dalhousie University. He is also the founder of DementiaGuide Inc., a web-based company that provides information, support and quality services for those living with dementia, and those who care for them.



Panelist:
Professor Jocelyn Downie, Professor in the Faculties of Law and Medicine and Faculty Associate of the Health Law Institute at Dalhousie University. She is a prominent legal scholar on physician assisted dying and wants to help Canadians care deeply and effectively for the dying.



Moderator:
Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke, Academic Dean and Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, Atlantic School of Theology. Dr. Clarke is well acquainted with the Anglican Church of Canada position and recent report.

Medically Assisted Dying

The Diocesan Times presents a summary of the two panelists' and moderator's talks from the Medically Assisted Dying panel discussion. On the following page is the first presentation from Dr.

Kenneth Rockwood. The other two presenters will appear in future editions of The Diocesan Times.

This topic is not an easy one to cover since there are so many points of view and the legal landscape is changing. However,

the discussion is valuable for examining the options, opinions and legalities of medically assisted dying. The three diverse backgrounds of the presenters in medicine, law and theology allowed a broad coverage of the topic.

Medical Aid in Dying: a personal perspective

KENNETH ROCKWOOD,
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

For twenty-five years, my practice as specialist in internal medicine and geriatric medicine has put me in conversation, and in touch, with people who are dying. For twenty-five years, on many medical matters, I have happily engaged in public discussions and policy advocacy. On the question of whether to provide medical aid to people who are dying - of the sort which aims to hasten death - however, I've been more content in a justly deserved obscurity. That's because, in contrast to the public gigs, where my positions flow readily from my research and so have been tested, I am not really sure that I understand well enough all the implications of Medical Aid in Dying. I have agreed to participate in these public discussions not because I believe that I know exactly what should be done. Rather, I recognize that some of my questions will be questions that others have too. I have no claim on the best moral and ethical point course. I simply offer a few perspectives from my clinical life. My goal here is that we should not be surprised at how Medical Aid in Dying is likely to turn out in practice.

My view is that we are headed for some years of grief. A lot of grief, uncertainty and worry will come as anticipatable, but surely unintended adverse consequences of the new legislation, as it plays itself out in regulations and accepted practices. For example, my experience in working with the narrow, literal, corporate-serving and typically unsympathetic interpretations of insurance companies about benefits to people with neurodegenerative disorders makes me leery of how the regulations will be employed. So too does the large gap between what our privacy legislation requires and how our healthcare institutions design and implement privacy regulations. Indeed, I expect that some of the resistance that we are now encountering in trying to understand how many people are availing of Medical Aid in Dying (such as what in general terms their diagnoses might be, or how old they might be - even

something as straightforward as how many are requesting and receiving it) will run afoul of "privacy concerns". (I am insufficiently creative to imagine how its joined-at-the-hip companion of "patient safety" will be invoked to obscure the process, but likely that is entirely my failing.) I expect that the routinization of the process of medically assisted dying is likely to be burdensome - which I don't see as a bad thing. The greater concern is that it is also likely to be arbitrary. That is because, as in other parts of daily medicine, there is much "operator dependence". Much about the care you get depends on who you see, and in which type of environment they practice. Practice variation can be substantial, and arbitrariness is commonly at its heart. Some is inevitable, and not just innocuous, but even beneficial. Therapeutic relationships are often personal, and not everyone benefits equally from the same approach; in variation there can be strength. But variability can be pernicious, especially in matters of life and death. This will be tricky and I doubt that we will get it right from the start.

Another concern arises from the way in which "capital C capital P" Palliative Care is invoked as a pragmatic alternative for many patients. For many this will be true, but for many others the idealized notion of a well-funded, multidisciplinary, quickly responsive, far-reaching Palliative Care will fall far short. I do not see any merit in relying on the promise of

a soon-to-come-and-now-improved Palliative Care system even as a stop gap measure, despite its requiring our urgent attention and action.

None of these practical concerns however fully accounts for my ambivalence about Medical Aid in Dying. This ambivalence arises from two important parts of my practice. For many years it has been my great privilege to care for many people with progressive and fatal neurodegenerative disorders, and for their families. Our interactions are often important and poignant - sometimes humorous, and sometimes tragic. It can be a searing experience to care for someone with an advanced neurodegenerative disorder, whose mind is still largely intact but who is physically suffering. It is all the more searing when they are in a state that they had feared and explicitly stated that they did not wish to endure. The playing out of that anticipatable suffering is difficult to witness.

Over against this however, is my Emergency Department experience as an internal medicine specialist. There, I am often asked to see people urgently for whom the idea of dying is entirely new. The person who in the morning was just a bit troubled by a nagging cough, but who now by the afternoon has received a life altering diagnosis very often wants to be treated as aggressively as they think they might endure. That desire often

occurs independently of how others might see their chances. We must move very carefully between these two cases of varying but low chances of surviving. Likewise, we must also be careful not to equate disability with the need for palliation. This is a very real fear. Indeed, up until the last few years, my reflex when asked about Medical Aid in Dying was to be opposed. My typical response was that when I saw the bad things that happened to my frail older patients in circumstances that were meant not to harm them, I was skeptical about letting loose the opportunity to dispose of them and all the inconvenience they might impose on practitioners (and sometimes on families too). Philosophers and ethicists typically assure us that this concern is baseless: there is no evidence for a "slippery slope". **Even so, while I don't doubt that what they say is true in as much as there has not been a rush for an uptake in Medical Aid in Dying, I wonder about the loosening of attitudes around the dignity of life, including the dignity of life with progressive disability.** Might this more readily allow Medical Aid in Dying in manners such as terminal sedation, which might not find their way into the official record? Would not that make any such slopes invisible?

The clinical experience in what happens at the end of life is broad and not at all one-sided. It is instructive to look at the "work arounds" now being discussed by people who are concerned about the

current legislation. They are asking for an advance directive that could allow them to refuse oral hydration and nutrition (and not just intravenous hydration and nutrition). There is also the pragmatic consequence of limiting accessibility to Medical Aid in Dying to people who are competent. How many people with dementia will seek to die before they might need to - when they can still enjoy life - on the grounds of being worried about the procedure being refused to them should they wait but then be found incompetent? Tests for competence are somewhat tricky now, but imagine how much more fraught they will be if the question is actually life or death.

Sometimes physicians make appeals to their special knowledge to help sway their argument. Commonly this is an obnoxious way to hide their ignorance. Here, my special knowledge as a physician is a show of ignorance. Usually it is very difficult to know what is happening with an individual patient with a level of certainty that can forecast their particular outcome. We are much better in forecasting outcomes for groups (e.g. "if I saw ten patients in a similar circumstance, I'd be surprised if more than one lived for a year, and usually only a few make it for six months"). That still leaves some people some months, which when it is all the time that they have left, is everything.

There are many uncertainties with the path we are now on. I worry that, handled badly, the legislation will foreclose discussion, prematurely forcing people to take a position so that a particular outcome might be achieved. I worry about the political and bureaucratic instinct to be blind to unintended outcomes - something we must be alert to in the church as well. **The remedy for all this is transparency and dialogue. We can start by knowing how many people have asked for Medical Aid in Dying, how many have received it, and broadly of the nature of their illnesses. For now, even though I am not clear on how best to proceed, it seems wrong, when asked, to simply keep these doubts to myself.**



MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan stories of people responding to God's call "Shooting hoops in Shelburne"

BY REV. LISA G. VAUGHN

Dribbling, dunking, free-throws, layups and jump shots. Just another night at 3-on-3 Basketball Church in Shelburne.

B-ball enthusiast, coach and rector, Rev. Ed Trevors, has been hosting this sports-related Fresh Expression of church for the last couple of months at the local high school. Some 30 to 50 people show up once a month on Sunday nights, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. They come to compete and learn how to improve their game, as well as scout-out the Christian faith.

Basketball church is open to anyone regardless of level of ability. Most of the budding athletes are teens, but the ages range from four to 30-something, including several Special Olympians. Young children enjoy 'drills and skills', while the older youth and adults play 3-on-3.

The gathering is unabashedly Christian, including a short devotional time and a gospel lesson.

"I wanted to make sure it was unapologetically church," said Rev. Ed. "I wanted everybody to understand that it starts with prayer. It ends with prayer. In the middle we're going to talk about God and what he has to say to you."

The message one night focused on NBA player Stephen Curry and his reliance on Christ. A devout Christian, the point shooter has a custom of writing Philippians 4:13 on each of his shoes before a game.

"Steph Curry when he started becoming a superstar for the Golden State Warriors, had a contract with Nike," explained Rev. Ed. "Nike wanted to provide him with those shoes but they didn't want him to... 'deface their product.' So he rejected the contract and signed with Under Armour."

The priest-coach said, "If



Photo: Rev. Ed Trevors and players at Basketball Church in Shelburne, NS

you look at his shoes, every game... he has written on them, 'I can do all things through Christ.' He's arguably one of the top shooters in the league right now, the backbone of the Golden State Warriors."

Other half-time talks have focused on humility and courage. Rev. Ed says the Christian teachings are going over well with the players, but he admits he is a little nervous.

"Some of these kids are really good. They're going to go off and play college ball," he said. "So it's kind of intimidating, right? Because it's really a moment of evangelism. A pure moment of evangelism, but every set of eyes is on me and everybody's listening."

With more than 25 years coaching experience, Rev. Ed saw 3-on-3 Basketball Church as a good fit for him and the neighbourhood.

"Shelburne's a basketball town," he said. "I have a great interest in basketball. I love it! My kids all play it. ... I thought, if this is what I have to offer, how can I use it to share God's Word? People love to play. ... People need something to do. I was trying to bring the community together, and I thought this would be a great way of doing it."

Organizing for this new form of church is simple: Christ Church rents the gym for 2 hours, parishioners supply tasty snacks, a table with a cross is set-up, scripture is written on a whiteboard and people show up. There is no cost to attend, but \$2 is the suggested offering.

Basketball Church is connecting with local residents who are not actively involved in church life. Rev. Ed estimates that only 3 to 6 percent of those attending have a Christian background. All the rest of the players are not involved in a faith community.

"I want the church to be relevant, and touch their lives in a way that currently isn't," said Rev. Ed. "Now what they're getting out of it, I don't necessarily know, but they're listening and that's the seed. ... So they're getting something, they're enjoying it and they're seeing that the church can happen in different places."



Photo: Getting busy at Basketball Church in Shelburne learning new skills on the court and in life.

It's A New Day! Hunger for the Holy

BY REV. LISA G. VAUGHN

Augustine of Hippo nailed it 1,600 years ago! We are hungry for the holy.

In his classic text, 'Confessions', the bishop and saint penned, "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."

Synod delegates in 2015, both lay and clergy, named it too. Feedback from a series of table discussions revealed a craving for God. When asked what they wanted, individuals wrote things like: "to be more spiritual,"



Rev. Lisa Vaughn
Diocesan Parish Vitality
Coordinator

In his book, 'Developing Healthy Churches', he writes, "The Church needs equally to have this focus in its life, nurturing and giving expression to its faith in God in all that it does."

Attending to our spiritual health is the foundation for our identity in Christ and is the springboard for everything we do as church. To be "energized by faith" relates to our worship and sacramental life, where people are moved to experience God's love and grace. Motivation and our lively stamina emanate from our longing to serve the Lord and one another. These congregations creatively engage scripture as truly the 'bread of life' and can connect it with daily living. Churches that are energized in faith are intentional and active in nurturing disciples. They encourage people to go deeper in their relationship with God and to share it with others.

Now, what does that look like, practically? What can we do in our congregations to create opportunities to encounter this Holy God? There is no one-size-fits-all and perfect answer, and leaders have to discern what is most appropriate for each church's particular culture and context.

One of our Synod delegates succinctly wrote, "We need to go back to the basics in our faith and foster our feeding together." For many of adult Anglicans, we have had no catechesis (faith teaching) since we were age 12 or 15 when we were confirmed.

There are various ways to review and refresh these Christian essentials, whether it be through a teaching sermon series, bulletin inserts, small group studies, meeting-opener devotionals, website or Facebook posts, etc. Topics to be covered could be how to read the Bible, different forms of prayer (lectio divina, St. Ignatius of Loyola's examen, etc.), the spiritual

discipline of fasting, healing (unction), private confession (reconciliation), developing a rule of life and gratitude-inspired stewardship.

Feeding our hunger for the holy is so much more than filling our heads. We are empowered by our private and corporate worship. In particular, Synod delegates named that they pined for accessible, engaging and participatory liturgies. As one priest said, "People are crying out for fearless worship. Yes, fearless!"

There are all sorts of creative worship planning ideas on the web. Our Bishop has given us permission to use any authorized Anglican liturgy. Start by checking out the Anglican Church of Canada's 'Supplementary' and trial-use resources (see Resource Category: Liturgical Development). The Church of England has a site which includes interesting rites for Children's Eucharist, St. Valentine's Day, Fathers' Day and All Creation Workshops (see New Patterns for Worship: Sample Services).

One other fabulous Canadian resource is the free down-loadable, printable package called '**Becoming the Story We Tell: renewing our engagement with Christ crucified and risen.**' This

gem from the Primate's Task Force (revised 2016) "is a process for re-entering the deep drama of the gospel, and restoring the connection between our baptism and our annual immersion in the story of Christ's Passion." It includes small group activities, worship ideas, preaching helps, articles and much more! (www.anglican.ca/primate/tfc/becoming/)

Certainly there is no shortage of recipes to try as we seek to satisfy this hunger for the holy in God, either for ourselves or for our congregations. What it will require is a commitment to make this a priority in our lives and ministry. After all it is the most exciting and matchless opportunity of a lifetime, for us and for people who are seeking soul satisfaction.

As St. Augustine points out, "To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek Him the greatest adventure; to find Him, the greatest human achievement."

Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn is the Diocesan Parish Vitality Coordinator. For articles, inspiration and insights on congregational vitality and mission see the Facebook page "Parish Vitality Coordinator - Diocese of NS & PEI."

“

Attending to our spiritual health is the foundation for our identity in Christ and the springboard for everything we do as church.

”

"to rediscover who we are," "to spiritually challenge our youth and adults," "to be fed," and "to learn how to grow."

Comments from recent Vital Church Maritimes conferences and a Building Healthy Parishes Team (VSST) strategic retreat show similar desires, to know and experience God more. Additionally, when revitalization assessments are conducted in several of our congregations, consistently the #1 mark of a healthy church, "Energized by Faith," is the lowest score. There is a

desperate cry in our people to encounter the holy!

Somehow in all our parish busyness - calendars packed with liturgies, reams of activities and scores of meetings - we are starving ourselves of that which truly satisfies. We are struggling to meet God and many of us are starving.

Anglican priest and author, Robert Warren says, "The need of the hour is for individuals to return to the heart of what the faith is all about: our pursuit of the knowledge of God and its outworking in our lives."



Photo: Feeding our hunger for the holy is so much more than filling our heads.



March MORE Mission Schools

THE SOUTH SHORE AND THE VALLEY REGIONS are hosting the Diocesan travelling MORE: Mission School this month.

This free day-long workshop is for anyone – lay or clergy – who want to explore themes around what “mission” is, what it looks like and how congregations might shift to be more “missional.”

MORE – Mission School, Module 1 is the first in a series of five teaching sessions being rolled out over the next few years to help to equip Anglicans in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island to respond to our shifting culture.

Mission School runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and features talks, videos, plenty of small group discussion, a case study and MORE! Parishes are asked to bring a TEAM! Bishop Ron Cutler and the Innovation Group facilitate each session.

Materials and a simple lunch are provided at no cost to participants. Registration is required.

- South Shore Region – **March 4** in St. John’s Hall, Townsend Street, Lunenburg (corner of Cornwallis St.) REGISTER by March 1.
- Valley Region – **March 25** in Holy Trinity, Middleton (45 Main St.) REGISTER by March 22.

CONTACT: Kathy Saunders (902) 420-0717 or ksaunders@nspeidiocese.ca

A MORE Mission School for the Eastern Shore Region is being organized. Watch for details!

Green Team 2016 Update

BY CORY MCCONNELL
ST JOHN’S, WESTPHAL

Over the course of the past year, the Green team became active in a number of areas. In our initial meeting an interest in education, particularly with regard to recycling, was a key desire. To fulfill this desire, we contacted Halifax Waste Management and organized an information session. The session dealt predominantly with the current laws and regulations put in place for recycling in Halifax. In addition, a brief overview of why recycling is so deeply important was also included.

Another of the key project of the Green Team in partnership with the priest and choir director was the development of a service centered on the theme of caring for creation in April, in close proximity to Earth Day. The service was derived from online resources from various churches throughout the world.

Our final and most ambitious initiative was the resurrection of the Harvest Dinner. In previous years, our parish held an annual Harvest Dinner fundraiser. However, recently the dinner has not been occurring due to the strain it placed on the organizers. Consequently, we brought

forward the idea of hosting the Harvest Dinner as the Green Team under the banner of “Support Local”. The majority of the food was all purchased from local sources to support Nova Scotian farmers. The event served as an opportunity to financially support our parish, community and spread awareness for the importance of buying local.

2016 was a successful beginning for our Green Team. We plan to build on our accomplishments and expand the scope of the Green Team into a number of areas in our parish, diocese and wider community.



Photo: Harvest Dinner Team preparing the “Support Local” dinner.

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by Heather D. Veinotte, Playwrite

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www.heatherdveinotte.com

Teach us to Pray: finding a partner in prayer

For several years, I met regularly with a man who was seeking spiritual guidance. He would sometimes share his concerns for his family or his work, but mostly we discussed prayer – how to pray, when to pray, what to pray. He lamented his difficulty in setting a regular daily time for prayer: when praying at bedtime, he often fell asleep, “mid-petition”. When praying in the morning, he felt rushed and distracted, getting family to school and himself to work.

He also identified that he felt alone in his prayer – not alone from God so much but isolated from others. He loved Sunday worship but through the week, he missed the fellowship and shared prayer. In examining ways to minimize this sense of isolation, I suggested praying morning or evening prayer alongside a monastic community, that praying at the same time might offer a sense of inclusion. Again, the discipline of length and timing were challenges for him.

Sometime later he told me what was most helpful was our agreement to pray for each other for a few minutes every day at 3 p.m. Regardless of where we were or what else we were doing, we made a covenant to pray for each other. A lot of years have passed since we first made that pact. In fact, he's moved to another province but I hear about him from neighbours. Despite the passage of time, I



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

marvel at how often, when 3 p.m. rolls around, that the prayer for him still rises in my heart. The bond we forged over several years of partnering our prayer still carries on most mid-afternoons.

Having a “prayer partner” is not a new concept. The author of the ancient book of Ecclesiastes muses on the value of relationships: “It's better to have a partner than go it alone . . . if one falls down, the other helps . . .” (Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10 The Message)

In the 7th century Aidan of Lindisfarne, an Irish monk, developed an effective ministry throughout Northumbria. His influence included the development of schools in which the monks could be formed in their faith. Upon entering a school, each of the brothers took on an “Anam Cara”. Anam Cara

is a Gaelic word that means “supportive friend” or “soul friend” or “prayer partner” - one who accompanies another on their spiritual quest. Aidan counselled that such a partner relationship had a sustaining quality and would assist a brother's faith to increase exponentially.

A prayer partner is a wonderful gift to give yourself today. Among the potential benefits a prayer partner can offer is:

- **Encouragement** – affirm what you're doing well and that you are loved.
- **Support** – assist you to hang on when you're discouraged
- **Accountability** – help you remember and maintain your commitments
- **Strength** – aid in carrying burdens
- **Focus** - remind you that Jesus is able to meet our needs and answer our prayers

Prayer partnerships are a covenant relationship with the participants themselves determining “how” the partnerships are lived out. Clergy, spiritual directors, parish organizations, and friends are all good sources for leads on potential partnerships. Both the Anglican Church Women and the Mothers' Union encourage similar such prayerful pairings, for they strengthen both individuals and communities. The current ACW newsletter, Winter 2017, has an excellent



article on prayer partners which you may find helpful.

The parameters of such relationships can be as simple as my daily 3 p.m. prayer for my partner, or may be more complex. Each Tuesday evening, at 8 p.m., a friend who lives on Salt Spring Island “meets” me via Skype, a video-based internet link, for Compline. Granted, it is a little early for Compline, but it's the best time to connect in our full lives. After several years, we've become familiar with each other's families and a wide range of church and community concerns. Following a brief “catch-up”, we share in Night Prayer, using the booklet produced by the Anglican Church. We alternate weekly, taking turns as officiant and reader of psalm and a Gospel. A place – a holy space really – is given to praying for each other aloud. This is a powerful experience and in it I am reminded that my friend, my partner in prayer, has truly heard the

joys and concerns of my heart and offers them to God on my behalf. This experience has deepened my prayer – and our friendship.

Praying for someone in particular is a gift – and a blessing. If you are interested in exploring a prayer partnership, speak to your clergy or connect with Bev Scammell, the ACW Prayer Partner contact person at 902-865-0434 or bill.scammell@ns.sympatico.ca

The author of Ecclesiastes writes “By yourself you're unprotected. With a friend you can face the worst. Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.” (Ecclesiastes 4: 12, The Message) St. Chrysostom so eloquently reminds us, that Christ “dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in (His) name, (He) will grant their requests.”

Prayer partners are blessings indeed.

Stranger in a strange land

By the time you read this, I will be working far from home for the next two months in a city called Zhuhai in southern China. Zhuhai sits between Hong Kong and Macau and is a lovely coastal city with a temperate climate and fresh sea air.

Besides editing The Diocesan Times, my ‘other’ job is teaching commerce courses with Saint Mary's University in Halifax. And Saint Mary's offered the opportunity to travel to China to teach two introductory courses in Quantitative Methods to Chinese first-year university students. The language is English, the material is familiar and the location is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



Paul Sherwood
Editor

I'm hoping to attend Anglican services while away and I'll be sharing those activities online (Facebook)

and in future editions of The Diocesan Times. The Anglican Church is not so easy to find on mainland China but I'm sure something will turn up. I'm curious to experience the familiar and not-so-familiar parts of the service. And hopefully find some in English.

On the way back home in April, I'm meeting Rev. Bert Chestnut in Whitehorse for a few days. I'm certain he will have a few stories to share about his life in the North.

So the next two editions of The Diocesan Times (April and May) will be edited and designed in China, then sent via Internet to the printer in Toronto. I've never done this before, so I'm asking all contributors to get their material in as soon as possible

for those months (by the first DAY of the preceding month.) This year the print deadlines are earlier to get the news out faster and let the advertisers share their messages sooner.

I'm also asking for your help supporting The Diocesan Times again through our Annual Appeal to all readers. Although the paper is free to all identifiable givers in the diocese, we still need your help to meet the costs of producing the printed newspaper and web presence (editing, design publication and delivery). We're working hard to get more advertisers this year and our share of the Anglican Journal appeal is growing. But the costs of printing and distribution are more difficult to control. Please use the

enclosed envelope in this edition of the paper to show your financial support.

And keep sending in your stories about your parish activities. If you need help, I am happy to come to your parish and report on your service or event with photos and a write-up. Just give me a bit of notice and I will do my best to be there.

Finally, if you have a spare moment, say a prayer or two for me during my time away – I may need them. In March I'm celebrating a milestone birthday in China without family or friends but I'm still having a birthday cake - just not with all those candles!

I'll see you again at Eastertime!

LENTEN

Quiet Day

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March Clues

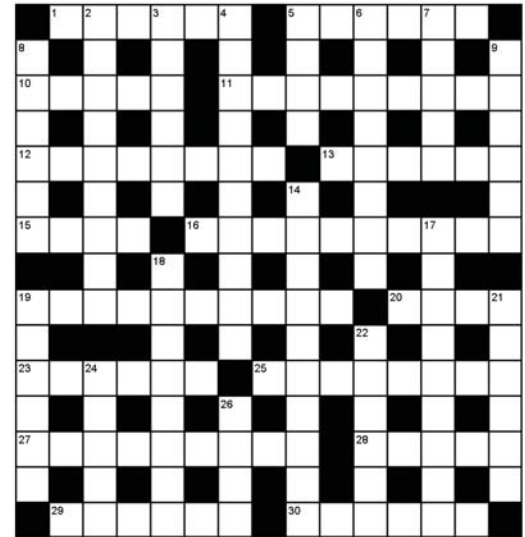
- ACROSS:**
 1 – Filled cream puff dessert (6)
 5 – “To have lawsuits ... with one another is already a _____ for you” loss (1 Cor. 6:7) (6)
 10 – Easier alternative passage in a piece of music (5)
 11 – “The Lord is my light and my _____” means of being saved (Ps. 27:1) (9)
 12 – “(Christ sent me) to proclaim the Gospel, and not with _____ wisdom” movingly expressive (1 Cor. 1:17) (8)
 13 – Likely to happen, in the _____ (6)
 15 – “And the Lord rained _____ on the land of Egypt” balls of ice (Exod. 9:23) (4)
 16 – “For which I am an _____ in chains” authorized messenger (Eph. 6:20) (10)
 19 – Holding (10)
 20 – Season of the church year (4)
 23 – Turmoil (6)
 25 – Issued authoritatively (8)
 27 – Completely satisfactory (9)
 28 – Glow with light (5)
 29 – Small room for storing clothes, etc. (6)
 30 – “Then the (slave) who had received one _____ also came forward.” large amount of money (Matt. 25:24) (6)

- DOWN:**
 2 – Caretaker (9)
 3 – Counting frame with rods and beads (6)
 4 – Feeling of indignation (10)
 5 – Spice used in making pickles (4)
 6 – Halibut, sole, etc. (8)
 7 – Excuse (5)
 8 – Spouse of the Virgin Mary (Matt. 1:19) (6)
 9 – Wild donkey (6)
 14 – Song of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:46-55) (10)
 17 – Person who is an expert in nutrition, American spelling (9)
 18 – “(Saul) was going along and approaching _____” city in Syria (Acts 9:3) (8)
 19 – House of worship for Christians (6)
 21 – Diacritical marks used in Spanish over the letter “n” (6)
 22 – Type of engine commonly found in trucks (6)
 24 – Force back (5)
 26 – Editorial mark meaning “let it stand” (4)

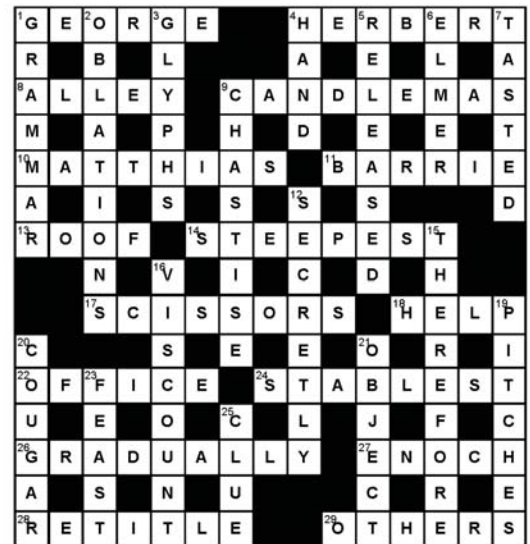
Bible Crossword
 by Maureen Yeats



March Puzzle



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Prayer the Church's banquet, angels' age, God's breath in man returning to his birth, The soul in pilgrimage, the heart in paraphrase ...
 — George Herbert

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Seventy-six trombones - a cause for celebration

DEACON MARILYN HAMLIN

I would make a guess that, over the years, most of us have reflected upon and mulled over what has been, what is and what might be. We have thought about things that happened in the past and imagined what the future might bring. If you are anything like me, there are times when you search within yourselves, taking stock of your strengths, your weaknesses and any changes that may be occurring in your lives. We probably ask ourselves similar questions. Are we living up to the expectations we've had for ourselves or the expectations we think others may have for us? Are we living up to the expectations that God has had and continues to have for us? Early each year, especially during the month of January, annual meetings are taking place in our churches, and these very same questions often arise among members of both large and small congregations.

As I prepare to write this piece, I am pondering and mulling over a number of these topics. For some reason I usually seem to do it during the month of February, the month in which I was born. This year as I think about another birthday (albeit not a particularly significant one), I have made the decision to give thanks and celebrate with some form of fanfare. I do not intend to divulge how old I will be, but I will say that if I could have 76 trombones to mark the occasion, it would be a magnificent way to celebrate the many years which have paraded on by.

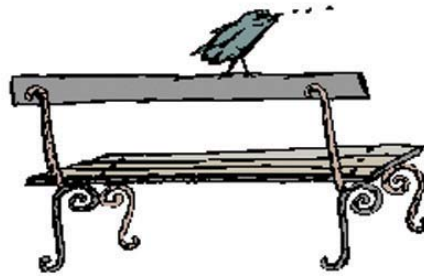
Also, during these weeks of midwinter, I've been reading

material that gives rise for reflection on the spiritual and religious nature of a particular group of people at a particular time in our Christian History. One of the books that I return to again and again is "The Celtic Way of Prayer" by Esther de Waal. When snow blankets my garden and I am fortunate enough to be sitting comfortably in front of a warm fire, I gravitate toward the prayers, the poetry and the rhythm of the language enclosed within the pages of this book and in other writings of similar style and subject matter. I celebrate the power these books have to bring another aspect of the Christian story into my life, another way to praise God, another path to follow on this journey that the Creator has mapped out for me.

J. Philip Newell writes in "The Book of Creation", to learn of God is to listen to the heart of life. **I believe that in listening to the heart of life we are able to hear, to feel and to know its love.** Newell describes it as "Listening for the Heartbeat of God", which happens to be the title of

Philip Newell writes in *The Book of Creation*, "to learn of God is to listen to the heart of life."

another of his books. He speaks of finding God at the heart of all life. In my



View from the Deacon's Bench

spiritual life, I feel it as an ongoing awareness of God's love. It is a radiance that illumines the darkness of winter. On unexpected occasions this radiance will burst forth and God's love is reinforced.

One of the many blessings in my ministry as a deacon is the relationship I have with the children of our parish and surrounding community. Our church supports the local schools' breakfast program, and as liaison between our church and the school, it is my task (a very pleasurable one) to visit the schools on a regular basis. We have had representatives from the program attend our worship services and share their thoughts and experiences with us. To show their appreciation, the school children who enjoy these healthy snacks, make cards of thanks which we display on our church outreach bulletin board. Although it is not possible for me to talk about God on school premises, it is by our actions that we are speaking words of love. Whenever we can, we celebrate that love, the heart of life, and we make a joyful noise.

In our church Sunday school,

story time with the children is a wonderful opportunity for them, for me and for the congregation to learn more of God. These times we spend together, taking turns talking and listening to one another are what I like to call "Heavenly Moments" and I rejoice in them. The children appear to be quite comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings about who God is and what God means to them.

On one Sunday recently, we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism. It was very quiet that morning as our Priest blessed the water and dabbed it liberally on the head of the tiny baby. Afterward, when the children and I came together for story time, we talked about how baptism is an outward and visible sign of the love surrounding this child; the love of family, the congregation, the Church and God. We formed a circle around the font... big ones, little ones and a small child lifted up in the arms of a sibling.

We each dipped our fingers in the water and touched the forehead of another saying the words, "I love you". This was a moment when we were all learning of God, listening to the heart of life.

This was the moment Esther de Waal writes about in her book... a moment recorded by the Scottish Celtic folklorist Alexander Carmichael... a moment when a prayer might be sung over a newborn babe. "A small drop of water/To thy forehead beloved", an occasion to celebrate with 76 trombones, if we had them.

On this past Christmas Eve there were more moments in which to rejoice. We were celebrating the birth of the Christ Child and the children and I were opening a gift that was symbolic of this marvellous occasion. The gift wrapped in tissue and ribbon was to help us learn more of God and God's love for us. When we unwrapped it, the children found objects which were hidden in a box, objects which I considered could be symbols of this exquisite love. As each one was removed and examined, there was discussion about why it might have been a suitable example. The last item in the box was a Bible. As it was lifted out, one of the youngest in the group loudly exclaimed, "That's the Book of Love".

How fortunate it is to be part of moments like this in the life of a parish. How amazing it is to know that our children are learning of God, listening to the heart of life, hearing God's heartbeat. They freely open themselves up without restrictions, without preconceived notions.

I will continue to reflect, and to ponder and probably ruminate on occasion, especially when my birthday rolls around each year. May we all experience similar reasons for celebration with or without 76 imaginary trombones.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Michelle Bull to be ordained the priesthood March 3rd at St. Peter's Eastern Passage, 7p.m.

Rev. Susan Slater to be ordained to the priesthood March 24th at a location to be determined.

The ordination of transitional deacons to take place June 22nd, at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, 7p.m. Details to

follow at a later date.

Rev. Bonnie Baird, Parish of South Queens will retire from active ministry May 30th, 2017.

Rev. Leonard Bednar resigned from Parish of Trinity, Halifax effective June 30th, 2017.

Rev. Aidan Kingsbury retired from active ministry in the Anglican Churches of Pictou County January 31st, 2017.

Request for time or to make a presentation at Diocesan Synod

The 147th Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will be held Thu to Sat, May 25-27, 2017, at Dalhousie University, in the MacInnes Room of the Student Union Building, 6136 University Ave., Halifax, NS.

Requests to make a presentation to Synod or be allotted time for some other activity must be submitted by 5p.m. on Friday, March 10, 2017.

Not all presentation requests may be approved. Preference will be given to presentations that use the lived experience - witness - of parishes or individuals to show how the

activity being presented is connected to the missional work of the Church.

To apply for presentation/ agenda time at Synod, complete the application form here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/synodtime

Looking for display space? For display space only, please contact Victor Henriksen at: vhenriksen@hfx.eastlink.ca

St. Francis by the Lakes Anglican Church
Presenting Our 14th Annual Dinner Theatre Experience

The Other King Henry



Meal: salad, roast beef dinner and dessert
Wine, beer and pop available for purchase at each show
Tickets \$30 each / non refundable / no reservations
Meals not available as take out
Food allergies and sensitivities must be identified at time of purchase

Youth Performance @ 4:00 pm: Easter Monday, April 17th.
Cost 6\$ for those 6-18 years of age only. Food: veggies, pizza, ice cream

Early Evening Performance @ 5:00 pm (19+): Sunday, April 23rd

Evening Performances @ 7:00 pm (19+): Friday, April 21st & Saturday, April 22nd
Thursday, April 27th. Friday, April 28th & Saturday, April 29th

Tickets available at Box Office ONLY

St. Francis by the Lakes Anglican Church
192 First Lake Drive, Lower Sackville

Box Office Hours:

Sunday, March 19th, 26th & April 2nd and 9th: 8:45-9:45 am

Wednesday, March 29th: 6:00-6:30 pm

Tuesday, April 4th: 6:30-7:30 pm

After Box Office dates, contact Elaine, 902-864-3634