



Meet our new neighbours and friends

Several years ago I heard our diocesan bishop, Fred Hiltz, preach a sermon about our “neighbours”. Bishop Hiltz asked the question, who is your neighbor? He then went on to explain that yes, the people who live next door to us are our neighbours, and the people who live in the same city are our neighbours. He then went on to explain that, due to the ease of communication and travel in this century we should consider all of humanity as neighbours. The words of Bishop Fred’s sermon have never left me.

On November 4, 2015 I received an email from Naom Alquaos, a UNHCR refugee living in Amman, Jordan. Naom told a story of persecution and flight from Iraq to an almost worse situation in Libya, and flight from persecution of her husband Ragheed and young son Anis, to a situation in Jordan where employment was denied and life was very hard.

At the time, the photo of a dead Syrian child on a beach in Greece was galvanizing the world (at least some parts) to action to help the fleeing population of war torn Syria. At our Cathedral, a committee was struck and families were being identified for us to sponsor. A Syrian family was selected, and Naom and her family were also selected. I think the total number of people affected by our sponsorship efforts were eight people. Today’s estimate of refugees in the world is sixty million.

Well, after our government made its quota of twenty five thousand refugees, the wheels were dismantled from the interview apparatus they had constructed and wait times became their normal two years!

Fast forward to January 31st of this year, and a joyful welcoming committee met an overjoyed family of three at the Halifax airport. Naom, Ragheed and Anis are no



Photo: Ragheed, Anis and Naom Alquaos welcomed on their arrival to Halifax by Deacons Ray Carter and Heather MacEachern.

longer refugees, they are New Canadians and happy to be counted in our numbers.

Although they have always been our neighbours, now they are much closer neighbours!

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” Matt 25:40

And then there were three...

A trio of regions experience module #2 of MORE Mission School this month. Lay and clergy in the South Shore, Valley and Eastern Shore areas have an opportunity learn about the nature of mission and how to navigate the choppy waters of barriers and resistance.

These **free** practical and engaging workshops run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This session of MORE features a model called FOCUS and includes Bible studies, small group discussion and a scenario exercise in which to practice the teaching. Mission Schools are led by Archbishop Ron Cutler and lay and clergy facilitators from different churches. Registration is required.

Easy and fast online registration: www.nspeidioce.ca.
(Or call 902-420-0717).

- South Shore Region - March 3 – Holy Trinity Church Hall, Bridgewater – Deadline: Feb. 28
- Valley Region - March 17 – Christ Church Hall, Berwick. Deadline: March 14.
- Eastern Shore Region - March 24 – Tangier Fire Hall, Tangier. Deadline: March 21.

If you missed module #1, no problem. MORE Module #2 material stands alone in its presentation. Videos and resources for the first session are available from the Diocesan website (See Resources drop-down bar).

MORE is based on God’s desire to give the world MORE of what it really needs – hope, love, and freedom. MORE is not a program, but a way of seeing ourselves and our church transformed so we can grow and nurture new disciples!



COLUMNIST

When Lent faces the world ... and wins

The calendar the world follows and the church calendar have been at odds with each other these last few months. First we had to deal with Christmas falling on a Monday which led to a very short celebration of Advent 4. Then there was the question of when to remember the visit of the Magi and Epiphany ... do we move it ahead to New Year's day or have it on the 7th of January?

Next we had the date of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day being the same. Interesting concept here ... first we vow to abstain from sweets for forty days, then we shower our loved ones with boxes of candy!

Someone pointed out that Easter Sunday and April fool's Day fall on the same date in 2018 ... and the dance goes on. The world moves in on us at an ever growing speed and those who still want to follow the religious practices of our heritage have to fight for the right and privilege of practicing this discipline.



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG
Sarah Neish

Gone are the days of no entertainment for the days and nights of Lent, gone are the rules and traditions of fasting and extra worship through the time leading up to Holy Week and Easter (if we don't get 'fooled' that is).

Father J wanted to do something special to mark the Lenten season, something that would say to our small world here By the Bog that we at St.

Bart's are aware of this season of penance and prayer. Mid-week services had been tried in the past but the attendance was always small and winter weather made it hard to plan ahead around snow storms and icy roads. Last year we had a few weeks of Bible Study with others in the community and that was continued again this year but Jason really wanted to mark this time in our church year as a time of prayer.

The Parish Council agreed to make a real effort to mark the last two weeks of Lent as a time of reflection and a Worship Committee met to work on a plan for the whole community. Our brothers and sisters from the United Church joined in on the preparation for a Good Friday service, the first ecumenical service in several years. An evening Hymn Sing was planned for Palm Sunday and the Guild decided to revive the Lenten Chowder lunches they had served in the past, just for the two weeks before Easter.

As I write this news item, we

have not seen if our efforts have been successful. But, as Father J always says, "If we don't try, we will never know". The world looks on these forty days of Lent as just more days of winter, more days and nights of cold and isolation as we return to our own houses and settle down in front of our television sets, each watching our own favorite shows, watching a world 'out there' that can seem quite foreign to us here By the Bog, yet close to us as we watch the politics, crime and sports the world is wanting to share with us.

As a parish we have made a decision to share Lent with the world we know by how we live and worship here at St. Bart's By the Bog. We will sing the wonderful Lenten hymns we love and share in the chowder lunches we have enjoyed in other years, we will spend Good Friday as a Community in prayer together and we will embrace Easter Sunday as a day of Resurrection.

I'll keep you posted,
Aunt Madge



THE DIOCESAN TIMES
VOLUME 73 NUMBER 3

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Published monthly except in July and August by The Diocesan Times Publishing Company.
Online editions available via the diocesan website:
www.nspeidiocese.ca

Printed by and mailed from:
Webnews Printing Inc.,
North York, ON

Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the management board of The Diocesan Times, the diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island or any representative thereof, except where expressly stated.

All material subject to editing.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
The first day of the month preceding the month of publication: e.g., the deadline for the April edition is March 1st.

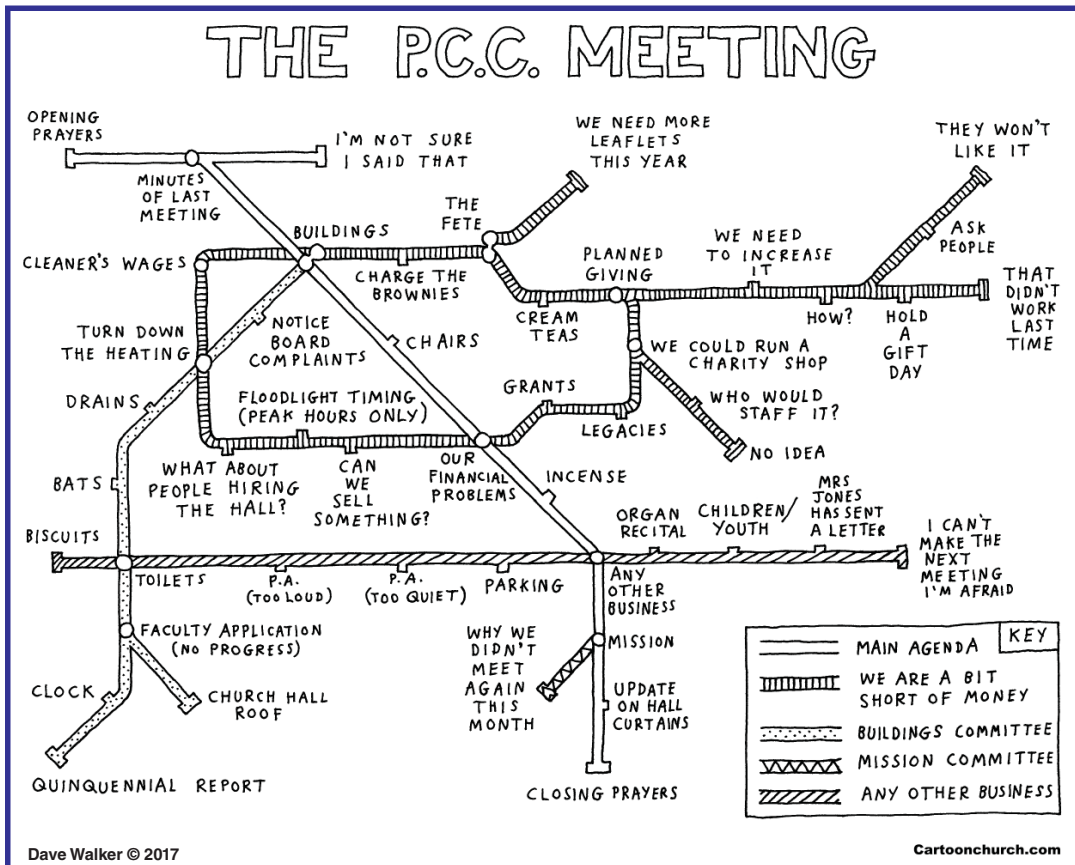
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(416) 924-9199 Ext 259/245

Subscription rate for both The Diocesan Times and the Anglican Journal:
\$20 per year
Single copies: \$2



ARCHBISHOP'S COLUMN

Our Lenten journey



Archbishop Ron Cutler, Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

I frequently encounter a fear or suspicion of going beyond the bounds of the familiar. I find it as much in myself as others.

“Come and journey with a Saviour who has called us from our birth, who has washed us in the waters and who loved us on the earth...”

Come and journey, journey outward, where that cross calls us to care, where injustice and where hunger and the poor call us to share...

Come and journey, journey onward; all our gifts we now shall bring to the building of a city that is holy, Christ its King...

COME AND JOURNEY WITH A SAVIOUR, TEXT HERBERT O'DRISCOLL, COMMON PRAISE #482.

On the first Sunday of Lent each year, we journey into the wilderness with Jesus... “And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.” Mark 1:

This time on his own (with God) for Jesus is foundational to the ministry which follows. It is a time of discernment, of decision making. The location means that external

considerations are stripped away so that he can be wholly focused on understanding God's call and how that calling is to be fulfilled. The biblical texts do not give us any details about this time other than that Jesus struggled. This was only the beginning of the journeying for Jesus. It is clear that he did not stay in one place expecting spiritual seekers to come to him.

This year the Sunday gospel readings are mostly drawn from the gospel of Mark. Much of this gospel has the feel of a ‘road story’. Mark is written in a sparse yet descriptive style that gives the sense of constant movement. Even the references the Jesus spending time in prayer seem to be wedged into the action. Although much of the teaching of Jesus takes place in a very small geographic area, he does journey to Jerusalem at least a couple of times. He seems to be constantly on the road. “He left that place and came to his hometown... Then he went about among the villages teaching... From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre... Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea

Philippi... They went on from there and passed through Galilee.” In Mark Chapter 10 the journey has a new emphasis,

“they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem...”

The Exodus forms a scriptural backdrop to part of our Lenten reflections this year. It is a formational event in the life of the Jewish people, as such it is a part of our inheritance. This journey was a time of trial and developing trust – literally for daily bread, but also for what Jesus would later call “living bread”. That dependence on God during the journey, to places unknown yet full of promise, is not something that comes automatically, it has to be developed, worked at with perseverance.

When Jesus commands the disciples to “Go”, he is only telling his disciples to do what he has done. He is echoing God's command to Abraham and to Moses. It seems that in all of his life (at least what we see in the gospels) he has been going. Going to where people are so that he might proclaim the good news of The Kingdom.

Lent is a time for the journey deeper into the heart of God, a time of listening, of being attentive in prayer and in silence. Of listening to the way that God is speaking to us now through scripture, or the quiet. Of gathering with others who are on the journey, to speak and to listen, to share the insights, the encounters that we have along the way. To journey to new places even if we don't leave our own community. Journeying takes us to new places whether they are physical or metaphorical journeys. We may leave behind some concept of home, but we carry that home with us. What was the home for Jesus in his journeying?... “My Father”.

There are lots of days when I feel like I am on a perpetual journey from parish to parish, place to place. This journey is not one where I take God along to someplace new. I am just as likely to encounter God in others I meet on my journeys as I am to bring others an encounter with God. Yet I often encounter a sense in places where I go for worship or meetings or other events, that folks want to “stay” rather than “go”. I frequently encounter a fear or suspicion of going beyond the bounds of the familiar. I find it as much in myself as others. Yet the one whom I have vowed to follow still says “Come follow me... he sent them out two by two... go into all the world and proclaim the good news”.

May Lent be for you a time of journeying inward to repentance and renewal so that you may journey outward to those places where God calls us to proclaim, serve and care.

+Ron



Rev. Dr. John Roddam

“The reader is invited to consider his/her life against the Ten Commandments”

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten Season. The BAS contains a gentle exhortation, describing the disciplines practiced in this Penitential Season –

I invite you therefore, in the Name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God... (Pp. 282. BAS)

Self-examination: For centuries, Christians have considered their lives in juxtaposition with the Scriptures. I have a devotional book given to my grandfather when he was confirmed. Therein the reader is invited to consider his/her life against the Ten Commandments! The questions take the reader into a sobering assessment of one's life, how we fall short, and need the grace & mercy of God operative in our lives!

- **PENITENCE:** Specific action issuing from a sense of regret. For the Christian that is seeking God's forgiveness with amendment/change of life. True and deep penitence commonly leads to a significant change in lifestyle... and an attitude of gratitude for God's goodness!
- **PRAYER:** Penitential seasons are a call to deepen in our walk with the Lord. Prayer is our lifeline to a vital relationship with God just as good communication is the basis of a strong marriage. To further the analogy – just as a marriage is strengthened by a listening heart, so is our intimacy with our Heavenly Father is enhanced through listening prayer.
- **FASTING:** The suppression of bodily appetites (not just food!) can enhance the spiritual component of our lives. It also points to areas

in which we are in bondage. Fasting is a discipline that enhances our relationship with Jesus.

- **ALMSGIVING:** We are called to look beyond ourselves, consider the needs of others and respond in tangible and practical ways. As the Lord has loved us, so we are called to share His love with others in word AND deed.
- **READING & MEDITATING ON THE WORD OF GOD:** Rather than an afterthought, the second ‘and’ in this exhortation is a call to a core discipline in our tradition – reading & reflection on Holy Scripture.

There are many good resources online that help believers understand and practice these disciplines. While there are a plethora of good sites generated by a simple Google search, there are some crazy ones as well.

How does one navigate this? I generally look to reputable leaders and consider their recommendations.

If you want to find some sites on prayer, try looking at my personal website and my recommendations at www.PleromaInternational.ca

By the way, Pleroma is the NT Greek word for “fullness.” This concept of knowing the Lord in His fullness has always captivated my interest just as in the Eucharistic prayer we ask that we may obtain remission (removal) of sin, AND all other benefits of his passion! (Pp. 83. BCP – 1962)

What are these benefits? There are many – often unknown and unexplored by the believer! However, the Ash Wednesday exhortation calls us to explore some of the core disciplines of the Faith. How are you doing?

Rev. John Roddam is the newly appointed Rector of the Parish of Kentville in the Annapolis Valley.

Revisioning the Allotment System – A “Missional” Proposal

Report of Financial Management & Development VSST Allotment Task Group April 2017

Have you seen this document? Many people across the Diocese have begun to hear “rumours” of changes coming to the allotment system, and some are asking if it will put their churches and parishes in a worse financial position. We want to take this time/space to share with you the basic goals/details of this proposal and what we believe will be the benefits for parishes, churches and the Diocese.

• **THE GOAL**

To revise the allotment system such that an exemption is granted on the basis of missional activity and missional ministry, rather than based on Building Repairs and Maintenance.

• **BACKGROUND**

We must be mission focused/driven, and the current allotment exemption for building repair and maintenance can be seen to place an unhelpful focus and priority on bricks and mortar. It ‘incentivize’ spending on the building to maximize exemptions and minimize allotment owing. The system ‘rewards’ building care rather than encouraging engagement in missional activity in our communities.

The Diocese has worked to reshape its programming and budget based on missional priorities. Diocesan Council put \$42,500 for New Missional Initiatives into the 2018 Budget. We are investing more in supporting and encouraging parishes and churches to move themselves, their ministry and activities, in missional directions. In this regard, it is imperative to adjust the allotment system to

have congruence in priorities, exemptions and incentives.

As the MORE Mission School has travelled throughout the Diocese, we have reinforced the key understanding that this missional shift is not a new program or the next hot things – it is the reason we, the church, exist! We exist to bring people into relationship with Jesus Christ and to share with the world the life-giving, life changing good news of the gospel. Mission is central to who we are and who we need to be as we move into the future – it is not an add on, nor can it be an afterthought. It must be part of everything, every conversation, every plan, every budget, every time of worship, part of every disciples’ understanding of their purpose and ministry.

Therefore, if anything, we need an exemption that promotes spending and focus on this central part of our identity and activity. We believe this change will encourage parishes to participate in mission, to be motivated for mission, and rewards them for doing it.

• **THE PROPOSAL**

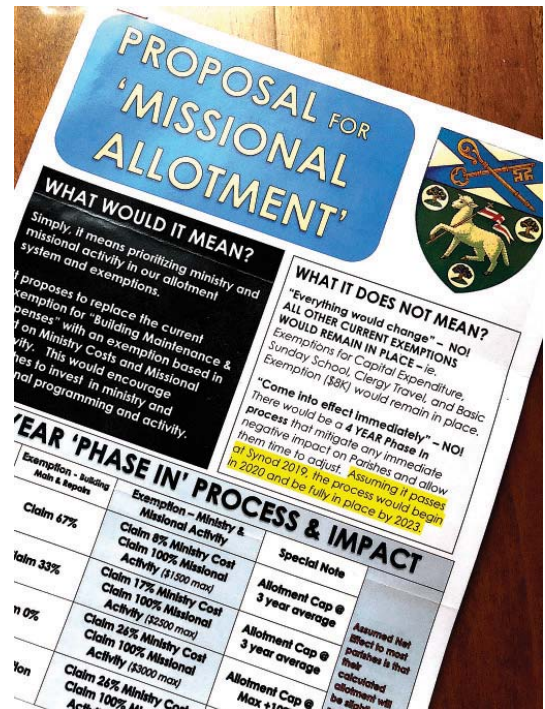
The recommendation is NOT that we abandon all current exemptions. Most current exemptions WILL remain in place – i.e. the \$1000 exemption for Christian Education, Clergy Travel, Approved Capital Expenditures or Capital Expenditures for Major Construction, Interest and Principal paid on mortgages and loans, etc.

The singular thrust of this proposed change would replace only the exemption for building repair and

maintenance with an exemption based in part on Clergy/Priest-in-Charge salaries and in part on missional activities.

The basics of the proposal are:

1. Clergy leadership is critical and key to helping parishes/churches move in new directions, therefore, part of the missional transition will see an exemption based on a portion of the clergy/PIC salary.
2. Parishes/churches should look for ways give precedence to missional leadership, training and work in their daily activities for both clergy and lay people.
3. That the average parish’s amount of exemption from Building and Maintenance will be either entirely or mostly be offset by the exemption on clergy salary (even in parishes with Part-Time Clergy Leadership – based on actual figures)
4. That a further exemption on all missional activities/programming would bolster parishes/churches to increase their participation in missional activity, and allow most parishes to reap the benefits of lower calculate allotment.
5. Most parishes will need time to adjust from the current exemption priority for Building/Maintenance. We recommend a three year phase in, with the first and second years including CAPPED ALLOTMENT for all



- parishes (based on the average of three years prior), such that they do not experience any increased burden as we enter this new missional reality.
6. Parishes using their buildings for missional activities will be able to partially claim building expenses as part of this missional exemption
 7. This change can actually benefit parishes and churches and the Diocese – in fact, our review of actual parish financials indicates that the majority of parishes would see an immediate decrease in allotment.

• **SUMMARY**

The One Page Summary of the Proposal has already been sent to all Parishes and we have asked Parishes/Churches to discuss it at Annual Meeting, to include

it in their Annual Report and to reach out with questions or concerns. If you have not seen it or heard it mentioned, please contact us. FMD (Financial Management & Development) and members of the Allotment Task Group will be visiting regions, speaking with Regional Councils in the months ahead for discussion and feedback. Keep watch as next month we will present more details of the proposal and its impact on actual parishes.

Ultimately, we intend to suggest changes to Canon 16 at Synod 2019 that would bring this proposed change into effect. We see this as the next step in moving the Diocese and its parishes missionally and we believe there is substantive promise and potential in this proposal for the future of the church.

Nova Scotia Anglican Cursillo Movement

Upcoming ULTREYAS

New Time in 2018! Starting at 7 p.m.

- Mar 13 Saint John’s, Westphal, 1215 Main Street, Dartmouth
- Apr 10 Christ Church, 61 Dundas St, Dartmouth
- May 8 Saint Francis by the Lakes, 192 First Lake Drive, Lwr Sack.
- Jun 12 Saint Lukes, 9 Veteran’s Ave, Dartmouth
- Jul 10 Saint Timothy, 2320 Prospect Road, Hatcher Lake



- Aug 14 Saint Peters, 346 Cow Bay Road, Eastern Passage
- Sep 11 Saint Nicholas, 29 Westwood Boulevard, Up.Tantallon
- Oct 9 Emmanuel, 322 Herring Cove Rd, Spryfield
- Nov 13 Church of Saint Andrew, 2 Circassion Drive, Cole Hbr
- Dec 11 All Saints, 1408 Bedford Hwy, Bedford

MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan stories of people responding to God's call

"It's all fun & games!"

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

New people tend to *belong before they believe* as they integrate into faith communities these days. That is why building relations and nurturing friendships is one of the first steps in missional ministry. Holy Trinity Church in Bridgewater has been hosting Family Games Night for several months to help broaden the networking of relationships between congregation members and the wider community. The brainchild of the Spiritual Development & Pastoral Care Committee, the initiative is designed to be a fun all-ages event and a religiously non-threatening environment in which to invite newcomers.

Rector, Rev. Simon Davies says, "The idea is to have fun and have fellowship – nothing to do with raising money. It's just an opportunity to relax and have fun together."

The community-building event is easy to organize and set-up too. "We book the hall and set out the tables," said Rev. Simon. "People are invited to bring their favourite games

and we have some games provided too. We bring a flat screen TV in for the Wii (sports video) game." A few volunteers prepare refreshments and snacks.

Family Game Nights are hosted every three months or so in Holy Trinity Hall. They run from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on either a Friday or Saturday. Every once in a while they begin with a potluck supper. Anywhere from 30 to 70 people, from teens to seniors, show up. Games include Crokinole, Crib, Scrabble, Dominos, Wii and table hockey.

The parish rector says the uproar of merriment during the evenings is fabulous. "You hear laughter, which is great, and I think the other thing which is a testimony to the success of it, you can't get people to leave," said Rev. Simon. "Normally by 9:30 p.m. there are still two or three groups of people still playing. We're saying, 'Time's up!'", he chuckled.

One of the goals of the fun night is to connect with folks who may not have many relationship connections. The pastor explains, "It reflects the desire within the



Photo: Family game night in Bridgewater

congregation to be a welcoming congregation and to reach out to people who maybe are alone and need that fellowship which can come with being a part of a faith community."

During the winter Holy Trinity parishioners hold services in the hall. Lately, the lectern, altar, credence table and communion vessels have been set up in the same space. "New people have become comfortable with being involved (in Family Games Night), therefore for them

to be at worship is not a big step," said the priest. "We had all the tables out, the games going on, everyone having tons of fun, right there alongside things to do with worship," Rev. Simon said. "I thought, 'Wow!, that feels really natural' and I think everyone else thought that too."

Some of the rector's dreams for Family Games Night is to explore the possibility of inviting residents from local seniors buildings and arranging for transportation for those

unable to drive. They would also like to encourage their Sunday School youth to pass the word to their peers. "It's just a fun thing to do," said Rev. Simon. "It's not overtly churchy, so it would be easy for them to invite their friends." Holy Trinity's lively gatherings are gaining popularity in the South Shore town. "It is now becoming something that people ask about," he said. "It will be very much a part of the fabric of this parish and our mission."

LETTERS from AWAY

Dear Diocese,

God always seems to come up with the unexpected. And so the adventure continues. I'm back!

I'm back in the diocese (as though I had ever really left) and in parish ministry. Although I have to admit that after two years of "retirement" that I had forgotten how fast-paced parish ministry is.

Since Jan 2 was the first day of my appointment as interim priest in The Collieries Parish, County of Cape Breton I figured that I should get on the road early (5 am) and make an appearance that day. Much to everyone's surprise, after a 6 hour 45 minute journey from Public Landing NB to Glace Bay, Cape Breton Island, I pulled into the driveway at the rectory just before noon.

As I slowly and painfully climbed out of the car after

drive, the rectory was abuzz with activity. People were diligently setting up house for me, going out of their way to make the rectory comfortable for the new interim priest. A bed was being carried through the front door and up the stairs. Dishes were in the cupboard. A kettle on the counter. Most of what I would need for this four month appointment, everything from lamps to matching shower curtain and towels, had been thought of. That included a Cape Breton staple, something very important to me, tea. The welcome I received was warm and wonderful.

It hasn't taken long here in The Collieries Parish (Glace Bay and surrounding area) for me to get a sense of this parish as a community of faith that has a positive attitude and exudes a spirit and spirituality that is contagious.

I hit the ground running the next morning. As Rev. Myrna, the associate priest here says, they didn't give me much more than a few hours to get my feet under me before the action began. In a five point parish, the workload might be heavy, but the support and enthusiasm of the people in a parish can make the load light.

The people in this parish are quiet about their ministry but I was told by a colleague from another faith tradition that this parish has a long history of caring for people in the community. It's true.

My high energy played out to their advantage during a recent event that exemplifies their nature, a community supper, where a very well presented and incredibly delicious turkey supper was served and almost a hundred people left with gift bags. I was more than happy to be



Photo: Even Frosty the Snowman came to the party

assigned to entertainment and join the band using a drum kit borrowed from the Salvation Army. Watching people dance, sing and smile was the highlight of the evening.

So joining a faith community that is humble but generous,

action packed but supportive, is a blessing that has resulted in a nice fit and a good place to be.

News after my return to the inner world,

Rev. Marian Lucas-Jefferies

Boar's Head Festival anything but boring

BY ELIZABETH HALLEY

Initially, the only thing I knew of The Boar's Head Festival came from stories I had heard from the people involved in the productions years ago at Saint John the Divine. I didn't know much of what the tradition of a Boar's Head Festival was and I had never actually seen a production before. After

spending a lot of time chatting with the two directors, Bruce Connelly and Ralph Lee, as well as with the music director, Paul Halley, and doing some of my own research, I came to a better understanding as to what the show was all about and began forming the program of what was to be our own production of the medieval celebration.

The show was put together really in just a couple of months. We started by collecting costumes, props, puppets, convincing people to be a part of this weird event, then organizing cast, fundraising, publicizing, volunteers, hiring crew, staging, etc. The cast was wonderful and thanks to all of the hugely talented and generous people involved, it all came together in just two rehearsals. This was also largely thanks to Bruce

Connelly, the director. (Ralph Lee, who directed and made all the puppets for the Mummings play, came down with pneumonia and sadly couldn't be there for the shows.) Bruce is a gem of a person and a genius at what he does. He kept his calm throughout, organizing a cast of over 60 people during a dress rehearsal that was moved, due to a wind storm, to the hours just before our first show.

The day turned out perfectly well and there was a great buzz in the Cathedral of beautiful music, dancers practicing, singers warming up, actors memorizing lines, and everyone from the age of seven to seventy dressed in beautiful costume.

In the end, the event was truly magical. I could not have been happier to have all those lovely people in that lovely



Photo: Father Christmas (aka Gary Thorne)

space together. With two sold out shows and a happy cast, crew, and audience, it felt like one big family and the beginning of what we hope will become a twelfth night tradition.



Photo: Mary and Joseph announce their news

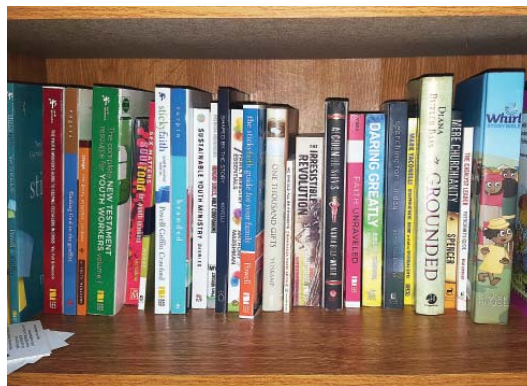


Photo: Staghorn dancers and prancers

4 books to inspire your youth or family ministry

BY ALLIE COLP

Our diocese has loads of great books and resources to support ministry happening in your parish, and to help individuals grow in their faith. Some of these are available in the resource centre at the synod office, and others are available from the youth and family ministry office. Here's a couple things to read that could breathe new life into programs in your parish or inspire leaders to think in different ways:



1. Art, Kids, and Christian Education: How to Use Art in Your Christian Education Program by Ardy's Koskovich Sabin – Augsburg Fortress (2001)

So often in children's ministry, art is limited to step-by-step crafts with a prescribed outcome. These crafts are great and can be lots of fun – but making room for children to be creative and imaginative, inviting them to create art instead of a craft, can be an incredible thing too. This book is full of lots of

inspiration and great ideas for how to encourage that in your ministry.

2. Growing Young: 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church by Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin – Baker Books (2016)

This book is based on an in depth study that was done on parishes that are "Growing Young" – that are growing

communities with at least a certain percentage of people under 30. While the specifics of the churches they studied don't translate directly to congregations here, the 6 strategies that this book focuses on are scalable and relevant in just about every situation. It's a really great read, packed with ideas and tools for evaluating where you are at and where you want to go.

3. Bonhoeffer as Youth Worker: A Theological Vision for Discipleship and Life Together by Andrew Root – Baker Academic (2014)

Bonhoeffer as Youth Worker is a little bit different than most of the other books in the Youth and Family Ministry Library – but is no less valuable. It shares some of the story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life and his writings, and explores the importance of youth ministry in those, and explores how to do youth ministry in a deeply theological way. That sounds like a lot and quite dense, but it's a really great book and highly readable!

4. Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead by Brene Brown – Avery (2012)

This one is different in a whole other way. Daring Greatly isn't specifically about youth and family ministry at

all, but in so many ways it is. Brene Brown is a researcher who has done oodles of work on shame, courage, vulnerability, and empathy, and the way she explores those things in this book (as the title implies) can be transformative to the way we do ministry. Vulnerability is generally seen as a dangerous place – and care absolutely should be taken with vulnerable people or situations – but it's also the place where incredible things can happen. By becoming a bit more familiar with vulnerability and how to work with it, we can honour that in ministry and be transformed together.

These are 4 real good ones, but there are lots and lots more, so if nothing here piques your interest, get in touch and we'll find something for you. Even if it isn't something that is specific to your ministry, reading and learning and growing closer to God through that will help your ministry flourish.

The Diocesan Times Editorial Policy

revised January 2018

1. *The Diocesan Times* has a responsibility to inform Anglicans in the diocese about the work of the church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, to present news about trends in the diocese in a timely fashion and to stimulate debate on issues of concern to the church.

2. *The Diocesan Times* is published by the diocese but it is not the official voice of the diocese. As a church-sponsored and financed paper it carries out its mandate as approved from time to time by Diocesan Council and monitored by its Management Board.

3. Within this policy, the editor is free to select and edit material for publication and to state his/her editorial mind critically, without fear or favour, it being understood that taste, courtesy and the purpose of the paper are to be observed.

4. The content of *The Diocesan Times* should reflect truth, accuracy, readability, fairness, relevance and significance.

5. Official statements of church policy shall be identified as such. If an article questions or calls for change in existing policy, the existing

policy shall be stated.

6. All editorials are to be signed. With the exception of editorials, the editor shall not print his/her personal opinions in the paper.

7. Letters to the Editor

a) In order to allow the widest expression of views and permit as many people as possible to express those views, *The Diocesan Times* shall publish its policy on letters to the editor.

b) The published policy on letters will be: "The editor of *The Diocesan Times* welcomes letters on any relevant subject but reserves the right to condense them. Letters, including those sent electronically, must include the name, contact information and telephone number of the writer. Pen names may not be used."

c) An editor's note at the conclusion of a letter is to be used solely for clarifying a matter of fact.

8. All major articles are to have by-lines indicating the author of the article. Where a news story is written by someone who has or may be seen to have an interest or bias in the subject

matter, a brief pertinent description of the author shall accompany the article declaring the interest or group affiliation. The published policy on guest articles shall be "*The Diocesan Times* welcomes submissions for guest articles. Submissions should address topical issues and the writer should have some acknowledged expertise or experience in the subject. *The Diocesan Times* reserves the right of editorial discretion in approving submissions for publication, and also the right to edit for length and style. Submissions must bear the identify the writer and contact information where the author can be reached. The author's name and credentials will be published and pen names may not be used. Information on how to reach *The Diocesan Times* is available in the masthead."

The Diocesan Times operates in accordance with the Statement of Ethics and Standards of

Professional Practice of the Associated Church Press (rev.2015).

Distributed to and approved by The Diocesan Times Management Board, January, 2018.

Published in the March 2018 issue of The Diocesan Times.

By the time you read this, I'll be in China



by Paul Sherwood
Editor, *The Diocesan Times*

My 'other' job is a university lecturer at Saint Mary's University (SMU) in Halifax. SMU has an agreement with Beijing Normal University in Zhuhai, China (it's near Hong Kong) to share academic resources. It is there that I will be teaching first year commerce students the joys and celebrations of quantitative methods. And no, I don't deliver my lectures in Mandarin - these students are fluent in English.

So for the months of March and April I will not be able to cover local events or services. Which means I need your help to send in those photos and stories that are unfolding in your parish. The deadlines are still the same - get your materials in by the first DAY of the preceding month; that is, for May, I need your materials by April 1st. No kidding!

The other news I want to share is the meeting of the Anglican Editors Association in Halifax, May 24-27. Diocesan and national church editors will gather for three days in the Great Hall at All Saints Cathedral. The theme this year is "Communication Channels for Today and Tomorrow." We'll explore the best use of current and alternative communication channels to meet the needs of our church membership and beyond. Our own Mike MacKenzie is leading the social media workshop on Friday morning.

And what's a conference without some challenging content; so Saturday morning we will have a panel discussion on Doctor Assisted Dying and how to report such a sensitive topic in our papers.

All this activity would not be possible without the support of *The Diocesan Times* management board. They will ensure no big conference surprises crop up in my absence.

Finally, I want to recognize the contribution made by so many people month after month who make this newspaper what it is. So a large 'Thank You!' to all who take the time to write and take photos of the events in their parish.

Cheers,
Paul

In recognition

The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island wishes to recognize a generous gift recently received from the estate of Allan G. Conrod. Allan gave freely of his time and advice to bishops and many committees of the Diocese, advice that was invaluable in influencing the future direction of the Diocese. Allan contributed significantly to parish life in the parishes of St. James, Armdale, and St. Stephen's, Chester. We offer our heartfelt thanks for Allan's presence in the life of our diocese.



Photo: Alan G. Conrod

It's A New Day!

Let's talk about faith

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

"The greatest gift we can give another human being is an introduction to the God who loves them." That quote by minister and author Bill Hybels, sums up the goal of mission in a simple, powerful way.

Most of us agree with this premise, but struggle to verbalize the introduction. We worry that we fumble the words that lead to faith. We fear crushing rejection from the other person as we raise the (often taboo) topic of religion.

Realistically though, what is the worst response they can give? Tell you off? Stop being your friend? If we approach these opportunities to explore the Christian faith with the utmost respect, sensitivity and genuine love, a negative reaction is rarely experienced. People may express that they are not interested in discussing this particular subject, but it is extremely unusual to abandon the relationship.

Conversations about Christianity are most fruitful when we have formed authentic friendships. We have grown to trust and care for one another, and it is easier to talk about important issues when both parties possess a true interest in each other's well-being.

Ultimately, our motivation to engage non-churchgoers in conversations about faith matters should be based on

"If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way." - 1 Peter 3:15b,16a (NLT)



Rev. Lisa Vaughn
Diocesan Parish Vitality
Coordinator

love. The impetus is not about boosting Sunday attendance, increased offerings, more volunteer labour, or about saving your church or the Anglican tradition. One gauge is to ask 'not what they can do for us, but what we can do for them.'

Our approach emanates from a gracious unconditional love that we have experienced from God and it naturally spills over in our words and actions, in the hopes that others can come to realize this precious life-transforming gift too. As Jesus taught, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

A way of humbly approaching these missional conversations is through the lens of a D.T. Niles quote: "One beggar telling another beggar where he found bread." We have found the Bread of Life that we all desperately need, and we are compelled to spread that Good News to others. Another helpful view may be to consider that we are all "pilgrims on a journey, fellow travelers on the road..." (lyrics from The Servant Song by David Haas). No one has reached the 'correct' destination. Christians naturally invite others to join the quest to discover The Holy.

So, what bits of conversation can we employ to explore themes of faith with our non-church friends? How can we, as Anglicans in a post-modern world, effectively and comfortably approach people to talk about Christianity?

(1) As one wise person said, "The first duty of love is to listen." Offering our full attention to the one in front of us is a gift of grace. We honour their presence,

voice, feelings and opinions as we carefully listen to another of God's beloved.

(2) Ask questions. Generally people enjoy talking about themselves and what they believe. Rarely do people get the opportunity to speak about their spiritual thoughts, questions and longings. Many of us live, work and socialize in environments when talk about religion is discouraged. Here are some possible queries:

- Do you ever sense there is something or someone bigger than this earthly life we live?
- What do you believe about God or a Higher Power?
- Tell me about your faith background.
- Have you ever intentionally explored your insights about spirituality? Your questions about the Divine Mystery? Tell me about that.
- What do you think happens to us when we die? What is your perspective on the idea of a soul?
- Is meditation or prayer a part of your life? What is it like for you?

(3) After listening closely to your friend and as a follow-up in these conversations about spirituality and religion, you may wish to say something like this: "Thank you for sharing what you believe about God and your spiritual journey. I sense you are a 'seeker' of things Divine. Would you like to know a little of my story and how I'm growing to understand my Christian faith and who God is to me?" Then talk about your own path of discipleship growth, being sure to explain that you too are a pilgrim on the same road. You too, are a seeker and that you don't have all the so-called 'right answers' to the questions of life.

(4) As you spend time chatting, look for the touch points where God has been working in that person's life. Help your friend identify and name graced moments. For



Photo: Sharing faith is like "one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread."

- example, the birth of a grandchild, an answered wish/prayer, etc.
- (5) Use ordinary language in your conversations about faith with new people. Be mindful not to use Churchland insider terms that may become a barrier to continuing the conversation. For example, the word 'church', although it is defined as a people gathering (Greek, ecclesia = assembly), it may conjure up images of a pointy-roof building, a dusty, outdated institution or a bureaucracy that insists its adherents live by rigid rules. So instead of asking someone if they "go to church," inquire if they are "connected with a faith community."
- (6) Endeavour to build relationships with non-Christians with deep respect and humility. People are not projects nor merely church members-in-the-making. Refrain from pressuring or badgering. Christ knocked on the door, he did not beat it down. Our role is to radially love, inclusively invite and honestly share about this Lord of Love. Trust the Holy Spirit to do the rest!
- (7) Generally, it is wise to avoid arguments with non-churchgoers about scripture, doctrine, religion, etc. It is extremely rare for anyone to come to faith in Christ when they have lost a heated debate. However, rigorous discussion and exploring the big questions


of life together can help seekers (and us) discover the answers for themselves about God and grace.

- (8) Remember that everyone's approach to faith is unique. People are drawn to God and grow in discipleship in various ways. Be careful not to impress expectations or try to squeeze your new seeker friend into your shoes of faith. Each pilgrim follows in the big, broad footprints of the Saviour, not ours.
- (9) Lastly and most importantly, prayer is the rock foundation of all our missional community connections. We earnestly pray for opportunities to chat about faith topics. We pray (silently) during our conversations with non-Christians. We continue to pray for an awakening in that person after the encounter.

Faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:8). Our responsibility as disciples (apprentices) is simply to love, introduce and demonstrate this abundant life in Christ, The Bread.

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

“The time has come” the Archbishop said, “to talk of many things:”



How do you read The Diocesan Times?

Thank you for your generous financial support over the years. But this year is different. We need to know how you want us to continue producing The Diocesan Times (in print and / or on-line.)

We hope you include a donation but whether you do or not, please return this envelope after checking one of the boxes above.

For a tax receipt, please include this envelope with your parish church offering. Or send it direct (no receipt issued) to our new mailing address:

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Let your voice be heard!

The Council of General Synod (hereafter known as COGS) created the **Anglican Journal & Communications Joint Working Group**; it is tasked with examining the issue of how we communicate across the Church, at both the national and diocesan levels.

An important part of the work being conducted by that working group is to consider options and to make recommendations regarding the future of print publications in the Anglican Church of Canada, at both the national and diocesan levels.

There was an initial report from the working group made to COGS and there will be some surveys done by the working group to gather reaction from the wider Anglican Church membership in Canada.

What was not made clear to COGS or to those asked to fill in a survey is that **if the Anglican Journal no longer is produced in print form then most, if not all, of the diocesan papers will no longer be produced.**

The reason is that the cost of the distribution of the *Anglican Journal* and you diocesan paper is shared by the two which reduces the costs to both. In addition, all the papers are printed at the same printer and the size of that contract results in a lower price than any diocesan paper or the *Anglican Journal* could obtain on its own.

The Anglican Editors Association (hereafter known as AEA) asked last June to be a part of the working group but was refused. It is our opinion that the *Anglican Journal* is widely viewed as an instrument of unity for the Canadian church and helping to fulfill the first Mark of Mission in proclaiming the Good

News. It is vital that it continues to provide Anglicans across the country with inspiration and information from and about both General Synod and the dioceses. Members of the Canadian church need to remain connected to the life of the national church and activities happening throughout the country. This exchange of information inspires both parishes and dioceses with ideas from outside as well as helping to overcome the isolation and congregational nature of some parishes and regions. The Journal also provides an important vehicle for the distribution of the PWRDF tri-annual paper *Under the Sun* and the Christmas Gift Guide.

The Diocesan Times links parishes across our diocese, provides a vehicle for spreading news into each household and is a way for Archbishop Cutler to communicate with parishioners in each and every community.

The AEA is seriously concerned that the readership of our diocesan papers will not get a chance to voice their opinion on the importance of their diocesan paper and the *Anglican Journal* to them. The editors are not in a position to hold a national survey of our readership however **we are inviting you, our readers, to send letters to the editor of our diocesan paper regarding the future of the print editions of The Diocesan Times and the Anglican Journal.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Sherwood, Editor
diocesantimes@gmail.com
 PO Box 8882
 Halifax, NS, B3K 5M5

There are those people who think the printed paper is antiquated and redundant because of the Internet. And there are those people who think this newspaper offers readers value and sometimes even entertainment. But the decision to continue printing our diocesan newspapers rest in large part with you our readers. If you support The Diocesan Times as a newspaper, please return the enclosed envelope and tell us what you think. If you choose to put a donation in that same envelope, we appreciate your support. Mail it or drop it into the collection plate in your parish. Or send a letter or email to the address below and voice your support or concerns. Let us know what YOU want for YOUR paper. Don't leave the decision to an anonymous committee!

Paul Sherwood
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Christian unity achieved!

By DR. DAVID W. T. BRATTSTON
dwbbrattston@hotmail.com

There is no further need for efforts toward Christian unity. The major churches have already attained a sufficient degree of harmony and mutual acceptance to fulfill Jesus's call for unity among Christians in John 10.16 and in His oft-cited prayer in John 17.

Look at mainline denominations, such as the Anglican Church. It has intercommunion agreements, fellowship and joint ventures with other church bodies, and cooperation in local, national, and world council of churches. Any disunity is largely illusory, with the differences being only in nonessentials which other major church bodies are willing to tolerate. In itself, it was an organizational merger of previously separate denominations.

I looked for the meaning of Christian unity as contemplated in the Scriptures, and in the writings of Christians so early they could recall what the Jesus and His first disciples actually did. I aimed to ascertain the meaning of such unity in the practice of the apostles and their first successors, and how "unity" was understood in the next few overlapping generations.

Drawing on Christian sources to the middle of

the third century AD, I discovered that "unity" meant attitudes, qualities of character, or modes of relating to people with whom one is in personal contact. In the Biblical sense, it is a pattern of conducting one-to-one interpersonal relations among Christians that fosters peace, love, and harmony at the neighbourhood level. The Scriptures and church fathers never mentioned merger of organizations or bureaucracies.

My research resulted in a magazine article that investigated and countered allegations that the Christian churches today are too fragmented to fulfill Christ's will. The article has since been published in several magazines in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States, including the Diocesan Times. The article demonstrated that there already was, or could easily be at a moment's notice, Christian unity among major denominations, especially at the local and person-to-person level.

If we substitute the phrase "Christian unity" in its Biblical sense for the "organizational unity" or "structural unity" that fringe denominations and many members of mainline churches mistake it for, believers of every denomination can practice John 17 now, in their daily lives. Even when we narrow down the meaning of Christian unity to structural

or bureaucratic arrangements, there is no longer any sense to regard disunity as a problem, for there exist far too many avenues for churches to cooperate with each other, such as intercommunion agreements, open Communion, unhindered mutual acceptance, joint ventures with other church bodies, and cooperation in local, national, and world council of churches.

True, some church leaders allege that disunity remains, but this may be a mere public relations gesture by some of them. They usually mention it as if it were the only sin of which they are guilty, and hasten to add that they are working hard to overcome it.

In the last hundred years, the tireless efforts of many leaders of major churches and the goodwill of local laity towards their counterparts in other communions have achieved a real, viable, and practical unity through many branches of Christendom, which answers Christ's prayer. Let us honour them or their memories, and concentrate instead on redoubling Christian efforts more towards feeding the hungry masses of the Third World.

How about a "Week of Prayer for Starving Africans"?

St. Mark's honours 100 years

by J.K. Morrell

St. Mark's conducted three major projects in the fall of 2017 to honour the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion. On Sunday, November 5th a Remembrance Memorial Service was held honouring not only those lost in war (a beautiful wreath was presented by the Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia) but also remembering the four Richmond (North end) churches destroyed in the explosion and the over one thousand church members killed or injured. St. Mark's is the last remaining congregation from that time.



Photo: NOV 5 – FOUR WREATHS

DEC 5 BENCH – On Tuesday, December 5th a Memorial bench was dedicated.

DEC 6 CONCERT – The night of December 6th St. Mark's sponsored a Memorial Concert with the North Street Singers and readings about the event by prominent Halifaxians. The Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia gave a meaningful thank you for our active participation in honouring this important anniversary.

Sat. DEC 23 BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS – A children's Birth Day Party of Jesus was held which included a treasure hunt for the manger figures, singing, crafts, cake and ice cream

In July 2016, St. Mark's embarked upon an 18 Celebration Campaign to raise \$ 25,000 towards church lighting upgrades and remodeling our downstairs bathrooms to make them wheelchair accessible. (A wheelchair ramp had been installed

in May, 2016). The campaign began in our 150th anniversary year (2016) and ended in the Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion year (Dec. 2017).



Photo: JAN 7 ROSE WINDOW

We used an outline of our Rose Window and marked it in with coloured markers each Sunday as money was received. By Sunday, December 31st, \$ 25,555 had been received. The coffee hour on January 7th included a Celebration cake and champagne.



Photo: JAN 7 ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE – Members of the Anniversary Committee share in the cutting of the Celebration cake.



Photo: JAN 7TH – JOHN AND HOLLY RODDAM

During the first part of the Celebration of New Ministry for the Rev Dr. John Roddam at St. James, Kentville, a friend, starting with a blank easel painted the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River. The painting incorporated the three ways baptism is done – by immersion, sprinkling of water and calling upon the Holy Spirit.

NOTE _ The Dec 6th coin, one of 100 struck by the city, was presented to St. Mark's by our local District 8 Councillor

St. Marks would like to thank the Halifax Community Grants Committee and the Canadian Foundation of Nova Scotia for their financial contributions to our Halifax Explosion Anniversary Projects.



Photo: Dec 6th Coin

What would love have us do?

By Cathy Lee Cunningham, Part-Time Rector, Church of the Good Shepherd, Beaver Bank & Founder, The Vocapeace Institute



Rev. Cathy Lee Cunningham

Greetings and peace to you, in the name of Jesus, as we come ever near to Holy Week. What better a time to contemplate Karen Armstrong's Twelfth Step to a Compassionate Life: Love Your Enemies?

We must stand together

On January 27th each year, the United Nations observes International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which "commemorates the genocide that resulted in the death of an estimated 6 million Jewish people, 200,000 Romani people, 250,000 mentally and physically disabled people and 9,000 homosexual men by the Nazi regime and its collaborators." (Wikipedia).

This year, during his address at the Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres spoke these prophetic words:

"We must stand together against the normalization of hate. We must stand up to political opportunists who profit by scapegoating and vilification.....Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we are all at risk."

According to this Twelfth Step, there is one critical question to ask ourselves before we react to hatred and take that stand:

"We must stand together against the normalization of hate.

We must stand up against political opportunists who profit by scapegoating and vilification.

Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we are all at risk."

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres at Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony January 20th, 2018

What would LOVE do?

Some of you might be fellow fans of the works of Frederick Buechner, a beloved, ordained American Presbyterian minister, finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1981, author of over thirty books and World War II veteran.

Whether you've heard of him or not, you might still know one of the most widely repeated quotations from his writing: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." (Wishful Thinking, 1973).

Acknowledging the complexities of our human existence - that life is not merely a black and white experience - and referencing Jesus's teaching that "love is the fulfilling of all the law and the prophets", Buechner writes, in *Whistling in the Dark* (1988):

"What would the law of love have you do.....There is no book to look up the answer in. There is only your own heart and whatever by God's grace it has picked up in the way of insight, honesty, courage, humility, and, maybe above everything else, compassion."

As the foundation of this final step on our journey through her book, Armstrong asks: In the face of the Enemy, what would love have you do?

One thing in this life is certain: there will be conflict.

From the battlefield, to the board room, to the family dinner table. In any conflict, someone chooses to level the first blow. Things are done that shouldn't be done and left undone that should be done. And so, such retaliatory cycles begin, back and forth, blow returned for blow. Until someone chooses to stop or a wise third party is able to make a compassionate intervention.

Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rwanda. Darfur. Syria. Rohingya. The Yazidis genocide perpetrated by ISIL. Racism. Human rights violations. Child soldiering. Human trafficking. Gender-

based violence. Bullying. Church conflicts. Food insecurity. Mass shootings. Unjust labour laws. Slavery. Animal cruelty. Climate change. Nuclear proliferation. And the little indignities we hurl at one another in our everyday living. Just to name a few.

This life is certainly not black and white. It is very hard work.

Ideally, I'd have time and space here to explore the wisdom teaching in the Book of Ecclesiastes on "times for", and to write about the Theory of the Just War, and to exegete all of the teachings of Jesus on loving our enemies. In a future series of articles, perhaps! So, I'll stay focused on the step itself.

In the face of these very raw truths about this world the Twelfth Step reminds us that in all our efforts to build a better world - even when war becomes necessary to defeat evils perpetrated by those who have turned their backs on love forever - all our choices will be judged by love and eventually healed by love.

Indeed - especially on a global scale - if we can't get back to loving our neighbour and the whole created order as ourselves, there will be no future for the human race or the planet. Lord Jesus, come soon!

"Only love can overcome hate."

To illustrate this, Armstrong draws from the history of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States:

"Martin Luther King Jr. believed that the highest point of Jesus's life was the moment when he forgave his executioners, when instead of attempting to defeat evil with evil, he was able to prevail over it with good: "Only goodness can drive out evil and only love can overcome hate." Loving our enemies means that we have to accept the necessity, over and over again, of forgiving those who inflict evil and injury on us..... A life that consistently refuses to succumb to the temptation

of hatred has an enduring power of its own." (Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, pp.182-183)

Back to the beginning: The Four Immeasurable Minds

To practice this last step, Armstrong brings us back to the Four Immeasurable Minds of Love meditation that she introduced to us near the beginning of our journey, when we considered empathy:

"During this step, we add one final stage to the meditation on the Immeasurables. After you have directed your friendship, compassion, sympathetic joy, and compassion to yourself, to a person who is neutral to you, and to somebody you dislike, bring to mind an "Enemy" with a capital E, something or someone that seems to threaten your survival and everything you stand for... you may, with good reason, feel deep anger toward the enemy. This is the starting point from which you have to work, so acknowledge your hatred.....Each member of an enemy nation, each adherent of every religious tradition, has his or her own personal history of distress and may be suffering from the situation as much as you." (Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, p.184)

Such is the way to build a bridge of understanding from our own place in the world to that of our enemies. Such is the only path to heal a broken world. Such was and is the Way of Jesus, for ever.

As we practice this very difficult step, may we always remember, that on a Friday afternoon over two thousand years ago, in the face of so many enemies, embodied in the Crucified One, LOVE prevailed and showed us what to do.

I'll see you back here in the April Issue, with my final article in this series, and an introduction to the new initiative that I'm working on through my work at the Vocapeace Institute. May the love of Jesus always surround, heal and guide you, Cathy Lee

A musical invitation

Join music group "Sunrise" and their special guests for an evening of mingling, munchies and music.
Friday, April 20, 2018
6 to 9 p.m. (music starts at 7 p.m.)

St. Thomas Anglican Church
3534 Hwy. #2, Fall River, Nova Scotia
Tickets: \$12.00 in advance or at the door
Call Will Carr 902-860-3734
or Reena Pineo 902-860-2146

SAVE THE DATE!
Vital Church Maritimes 2018
conference is set for
Nov. 8 to Nov. 10
Holiday Inn Truro, NS

Teach us to pray: Pray without ceasing

The recent spate of winter storms in our area has prompted many of us to postpone or outright cancel some services and other parish activities. Cancellations can come with a mixture of relief and disappointment – depending on how invested you are in the event that has been axed. Postponements, however, can be frustrating when trying to coordinate everyone else's busy schedule with your own and to find a new, unhindered time to meet.



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

St. Paul's prescription to "pray without ceasing"? (1 Thessalonians 5:17) His quest sets him wandering, searching for someone to teach him how to master such a seemingly impossible assignment.

At the very heart of The Way of the Pilgrim is the Jesus Prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, Son Of God, have mercy upon me a sinner!" Known in the Orthodox Church as "the prayer of the heart", and dating back to at least the 4th century Egyptian desert, these simple words have been a mainstay for Orthodox Christians. This humble prayer is aided when prayed with a prayer rope in hand. First made by monks for their own use, prayer ropes were later adopted by those outside the monastery. While we may be tempted to think of prayer ropes as an Eastern version of the Rosary, they are not. The subtle differences will be explored in an upcoming article.

Prayer ropes are usually made of wool, sheared from sheep – a reminder that we belong to Christ, the Good Shepherd. While they can be made in different colours, black the colour of mourning, is most commonly used for in prayer we mourn the sins which separate us from God and our neighbour. Some prayer ropes include a tassel which is customarily used to dry the tears shed in sorrow for one's sins. For some, this tassel also symbolizes Heaven, which can only be found through the cross which, in the rope, precedes the tassel.



The person praying says the Jesus Prayer for each knot on the rope. Often the rope is 33 knots long but they come in all different lengths. In The Way of the Pilgrim, the pilgrim said the prayer 2,000, then 6,000, then 12,000 times. Is 12,000 Jesus Prayers better than 2,000? It is not the quantity of the prayers that is important but rather the quality, the love with which the prayer is said and the faithfulness with which it is practiced. The pilgrim prayed much because that was his "heart's desire." Every prayer is an act of love, offered to the Author of Love, who waits expectantly for us and for our acceptance of his Love. Numbers have nothing to do with this kind of devotion or with a living relationship with Jesus.

When our hearts are restless and our minds wandering, the knots on the prayer rope can help us to focus on the words of the prayer. As our thumb and forefinger continuously

move over the knots, our heart continuously cries out its plaintive words. Some years ago now I was gifted a prayer rope by Bishop Henry Hill who devoted much of his life to study and dialogue with the Orthodox community. Its soft, well-worn texture feels reassuring in my hands, and in a way that I do not fully understand, helps move the prayer from my lips to my heart.

Perhaps what is old can be new again. In our on-going quest to draw closer to Christ, I wonder whether the time has come for us to slow the pace, lose the distractions, leave the busyness behind and make a pilgrimage back to praying, without ceasing, the prayer of our hearts.

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

Photo credit: F. Drolet-Smith

At the very heart of The Way of the Pilgrim is the Jesus Prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, Son Of God, have mercy upon me a sinner!"

Ronald Rolheiser, theologian and author once wrote "Distraction is normal in our culture. Contemplativeness, solitude and prayer are not."

When I look at my own life, and listen to the lives of those around me, I am struck by how often I hear the phrase that has become a kind of mantra for many: "I'm so busy!" Perhaps the time for teaching – and practicing – the contemplative arts has never been more pertinent. On the other hand, ever since Eve and Adam left the Garden, it has been our sad refrain.

The Christian classic The Way of a Pilgrim chronicles the journey of an unnamed nineteenth-century Russian peasant. Following the tragic loss of his wife and livelihood, the pilgrim is propelled on a spiritual journey with nothing but a Bible, a prayer rope, and some dried bread, seeking an answer to his profound conundrum: how does one respond authentically to

Weather aside, have you noticed how busy and distracted everyone is lately? Have you noticed how busy and distracted you've become lately? Busyness and distraction have become a way of life. How do we keep all the balls in the air – all the commitments in balance? How do you carve out time to pray when there are so many demands on your time?

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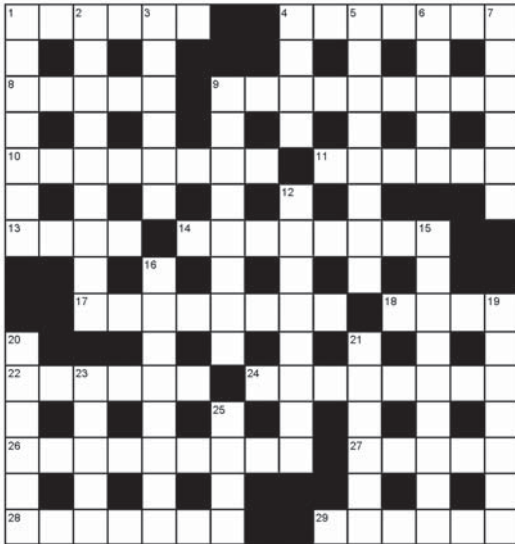
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Bible Crossword

by Maureen Yeats



March Puzzle



March Clues

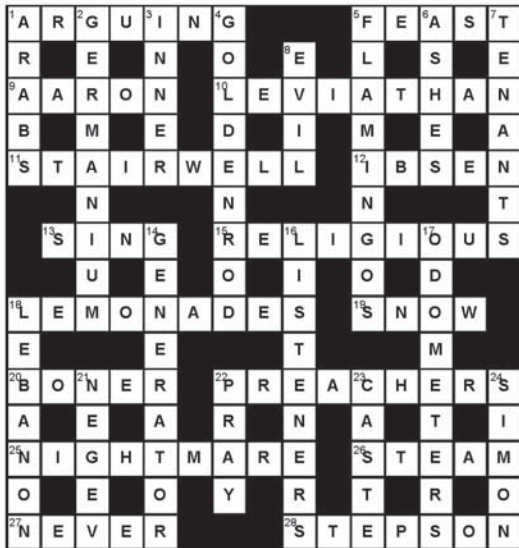
ACROSS:

- 1 – Husband of the Virgin Mary (Matt. 1:19) (6)
- 4 – Admonishes urgently (7)
- 8 – African animal, striped, somewhat horse-like (5)
- 9 – “The hand was sent and this writing was _____ (on the plaster),” engraved (Dan. 5:25) (9)
- 10 – Healing pool in Jerusalem, variant spelling (John 5:2-4) (8)
- 11 – Small rocks (6)
- 13 – Penitential season before Easter (4)
- 14 – The rite of sprinkling people or things with Holy Water (8)
- 17 – Edible snail (8)
- 18 – Ground-dwelling social insects (4)
- 22 – Heads of monasteries (6)
- 24 – Sweet topping for coffee cake (8)
- 26 – “May (God) send you help from the _____,” sacred place (Ps. 20:2) (9)
- 27 – Hurricane or tornado or cyclone, etc. (5)
- 28 – Melodious (7)
- 29 – Apprentice doctor (6)

DOWN:

- 1 – “(Ahab, king of Israel) took as his wife _____,” evil worshipper of Baal (1Kings 16:31) (7)
- 2 – Matter or material (9)
- 3 – Body orbiting around the sun (6)
- 4 – “For my yoke is _____ and my burden is light.” not difficult (Matt. 11:30) (4)
- 5 – Inherited lot or portion (8)
- 6 – Songbird with rusty red breast feathers (5)
- 7 – One who enjoys inflicting pain (6)
- 9 – Trade or manufacture (8)
- 12 – Piously (8)
- 15 – Soft rock formed from sand (9)
- 16 – Rapturous (8)
- 19 – King of Israel, son of David (1Kings 1-2) (7)
- 20 – Money paid to kidnapers to return victim (6)
- 21 – Something to be learned (6)
- 23 – “(The Lord) said to me ‘Mortal, can these _____ live?’ ‘ulnas, femurs, etc.,’ (Ezek. 37:3) (5)
- 25 – Apostle and epistle writer (4)

February Solution



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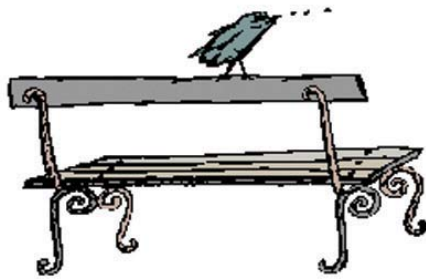


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Working with Deacons



By G.L. YOUNG



The view from the Deacon's Bench

December 2016 I accepted an invitation to facilitate the Community of Deacons in developing an instructional program. The context for our work is the National Church's Iona Report. The report outlines thirty Competencies in seven Areas directed at furthering Diaconal capacity. On November 10, 2017 we presented our progress to date to the full Community. While I hope our efforts will benefit Deacons, I have gained considerable insight into both Church life and the Diaconate.

I thought I knew what Deacons do. I had always seen them as simply liturgical supplements to the Priest;

one step below the Priest and one level above the laity. Sadly this perception of the Diaconate still has traction in the Church. They are often accorded a less than professional status and struggle for recognition. However, the work I have been doing with the Community of Deacons has deepened my appreciation for just how multi-dimensional their ministries are. Manifest in every Deacon in the Community is a willingness and eagerness to embrace the diverse needs of the populations they serve.

The Iona Report is an important step in addressing issues of capacity but it will not, of itself, resolve matters of recognition or status. But then professional status within

the polity of the Church is problematic. For Deacons it may even prove to be a misguided concern. As alluring as terms like "professional" and "status" might be they separate out those who use them for affirmation. For example, a professional musician or sportsperson is separated out from the multitudes who simply love to make music or play a sport. Meanwhile it is in the school concerts and hockey rinks, where the multitudes gather, that these activities find life and expression.

Here the simple act of enjoyment takes precedence. Ironically the more people separate themselves under nomenclatures like "professional" the more

seductive the separation becomes. A preoccupation with status can overshadow both the activity and misshape one's relationship with those who simply like doing it. Surely such an attitude would be counterproductive to Diaconal ministry.

Deacons are impressively "of the world". Most are employed or have retired from secular jobs. Ostensibly they have put aside their claims of professional status to serve God through the Church. Functionally, personally and through their ministry Deacons are drawn to identify with ordinary people. Their ministries are molded by people they serve. They are the closest thing any Ecclesiastical structure has to the practical affirmation of everyday Christian living. Deacons are expected to embody characteristics and dispositional behaviours that bring the Christian message within practical reach of the people. The Iona Report anticipates this and outlines the context for its development.

The Areas and Competencies outlined in the Iona Report focus on building capacities that both deepen and diversify Diaconal ministry. A Deacon's ability to connect with the people will not be lost on the laity or the community at

Ironically, the more people separate themselves under nomenclatures like "professional", the more seductive the separation becomes.

large. If Bishops and Priests are astute as to the future of the Church they will encourage and support this process. In the meantime Deacons need to embrace what the Iona Report is offering. But they can already claim the authority of their encounter with the Risen Lord as Paul and the Apostles had to do. Like Jesus, they should simply be comfortable among the people. The objective is to build capacity, not to attain status. In the context of Christian ministry introducing words like "status" or "professional" creates a dangerous oxymoron.

Meet our newest columnist ... from Fredericton!

Meet the Stewardship Officer for the Diocese of Fredericton who will be contributing a column starting with the next issue.

Mike Briggs began work in January 2016 filling the position of Stewardship Officer which had been vacant since the election of Archdeacon David Edwards as Bishop of Fredericton in 2014. He is also a Parochial Layreader serving the parishes of St Andrew, Sunny Brae, St Mary Hillsborough and St Philip Moncton (APSM) under the guidance of Rev David Alston, Deacon in Charge.

Mike and his wife Judy are retired from paid work but keep busy with volunteer work and singing in the choir at St Philip and attend Choir School each year and help to organize the Moncton Deanery Service of Lessons and Carols each year. He is treasurer of St Philips and is chair of the joint APSM Finance and



Mike Briggs,
Stewardship Officer
Diocese of Fredericton

Admin committee. Mike is also a member of the Diocesan Finance Committee and a member of the Diocesan Stewardship Team so is well versed in some of the financial challenges facing the Anglican Church in Atlantic Canada. He is a member of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners.

Mike was born in England and moved to the British Channel Island of Jersey while young and completed his schooling there and went on to work for 14 years for a major UK bank where he picked up a working knowledge of personal trusts as Jersey is an offshore tax center. Mike moved to Canada in 1984 to marry his fiancée, Judy, at St Philip. He worked for Scotia Bank for 5 years finishing as a branch manager, he then worked for an insurance company for 3 years where he acquired knowledge of estate planning. After an 11 year period of head of IT for a trucking company he moved to Moncton where his wife grew up. They ran their own business which they sold in 2013 and then retired.

Mike and Bishop David started a dialogue in late 2015 and after some discussion he accepted the position of Stewardship Officer in late 2015 to be effective Jan 1, 2016.

Mike has had an interest in Stewardship for some time and believes there are opportunities and has already met with the clergy in some Deaneries and one parish and has further clergy meetings scheduled to promote stewardship. He contributes a column to the NB Anglican on different aspects of stewardship every issue. He believes most parishioners are generous and just need to be asked in the right way to contribute of their time talent and treasure. As Anglicans we are sometimes reticent to talk about money or volunteering and it is his belief that we have a tremendous resource in our members that is untapped.

Mike has met with most of the New Brunswick clergy and at a recent conference in Chateaugay organized by the National Office he met with some Nova Scotia clergy and during the course of their talks he found no-one was writing regularly on Stewardship.

He takes inspiration from the generous donation of Dorothy Wilkes and her uncle that will further the work of the Anglican Church in New Brunswick. It is a confirmation of words from the funeral service: "We bring nothing into this world, and it is certain we take nothing from it." Dorothy and her uncle will live on in their generous bequest.

Mike is guided by 1 Chronicles 29: 10, 11, 14 and also by 1 Timothy 6: 17 - 19. We are all given gifts by God and it is up to us to use these gifts wisely and he thinks of it as the 3 Ts talent, time and treasures. Part of treasures is things and Mike has a BCP that was given to a Great Uncle to celebrate his confirmation in 1896.

He can be reached by email at stewardship@anglican.nb.ca

Ed. note: Mike's first column will appear in the April edition of The Diocesan Times.