



Iconic week at King's chapel



Photo: Visiting Iconographer Symeon van Donkelaar (second from left) is a well known artist and Iconographer from Kitchener, Ontario whose public works grace St. John's Anglican

Church in Elora, Ontario. His exhibit, *Local Colour Saints*, was recently shown here in the Craig Gallery. He gave a five day workshop from Feb. 15th-19th at the King's College Chapel

to twelve participants. His workshop included instructing them in the ancient craft of Icon writing, from making a palette out of local pigments collected from rocks and soils in Nova

Scotia, to applying gold leaf to the Halo.

The twelve participants and Symeon are shown in front of the altar where their completed icons were displayed.

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L.A.R.C. welcomes newest family

LARC (Lunenburg and Area Refugee Committee)

BY MICHAEL MITCHELL
RECTOR, ST. JOHN'S, LUNENBURG

LARC is a community coalition with St. John's Anglican, Zion Lutheran, Central United, St. Andrews Presbyterian, The Rotary Club and citizens at large. The parish of St. John's, Lunenburg welcomed their refugee family at the airport in early March. The parishioners are coming to know their special family and it is a

great joy and blessing for all. Yesterday the parish put on a clothes Café, where they gathered clothing, toys and other items for them; rather than us choosing for them, the family were greeted with a delightful brunch, a meet and greet of the steering committee and town clergy and then having them choose from a wide range of clothing, toys and other supplies.

Photo: Family members (Dad and Mom) Ahmad and Fatmeh Ayash with children Turki, Mohammed, Zeckareya, Sedra and Ali.



COLUMNIST

A new table and a shared cup of coffee

A rather small “U-Haul” pulled into the rectory yard a few weeks ago and our new family began the job of moving into their home. The rectory is a rather large house as many rectories in our diocese tend to be; large and old and full of rooms waiting to be filled with furniture.

Jason and Miranda arrived with their few possessions in that “U-Haul”, the bits and bobs that they had in their student apartment at university.

When spread out in their new house they seemed to disappear. There was a brand new crib, still in the box, and a change table, again still waiting to be put together but the rest of their worldly goods had seen better days. It consisted of what every one of us has sent our own children off with, the extra chairs and a table that had been in the basement, the beds that had been in their own rooms at home and all of the dishes, pots and pans that we had hidden at the back of our cupboards. I speak only for myself in this as I think back to when our own ‘chicks’ left home for the first time.

Orin and some other men from the parish dropped in



ST. BART’S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

to see if there was need for a few strong hands and backs. They found Benny Smith busy putting the crib together. The change table was already up and ready for action.

Orin came home and said that strong backs were not what was needed, motherly arms might be more appreciated; that and some extra furniture for the rectory! Miranda was overwhelmed by the move and the exhaustion and the advanced state of her ‘condition’...Orin’s word, not mine.

A few well-placed phone calls to Guild members brought out all that is good and precious about our small community. First thing that happened was the arrival of a coffee pot full of hot coffee and a plate of fresh muffins. Mugs and plates were there too along with cream and sugar and a few tea bags if tea was the beverage of choice. Muriel Willard, the Guild president and one of the best organizers in The Bog came in with a large writing tablet under her arm and her husband in tow with a rocking chair in his arms. She and Miranda sat down, mother to be in the rocker, to share some coffee and a muffin and to do an inventory of what could be used by way of furnishings for the house. Jason seemed to be embarrassed at the need to call for help but Muriel assured him that “this is what we do here, so get used to it”; then she sent him off with her husband to pick up a large kitchen table that was in their sunporch and would fit nicely in the rectory.

There is one thing we have here by The Bog and that is lots of trucks and also lots of extra furniture in our own extra old houses. Most of us are

delighted that a new home can be found for family ‘almost treasures’. You know the type of thing that has had a life with us and still has lots of use left in it, but has been replaced. Muriel and Miranda became good friends over that first shared ‘cuppa’. They walked through the house and measured for some new curtains for a few windows that faced the road. Benny had moved back to his own house but he promised to keep an eye on these two “kids” as he called them.

By the time the two women had finished the inventory list, someone had come in the back door and left a large chicken casserole, homemade biscuits and a chocolate cake on the counter. Jason and Muriel’s ‘fella’ were back with the table and our new incumbent and his wife were beginning to think that St. Bart’s By The Bog might just be the best place God could have found for them to begin their life as pastor and partner in his vineyard.

I’ll keep you posted,
Aunt Madge



THE DIOCESAN TIMES

VOLUME 71 NUMBER 4

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www.nspediocese.ca/page/diocesan-times.aspx

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Published monthly except in July and August by The Diocesan Times Publishing Company.

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.

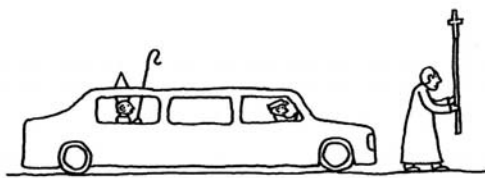
All material subject to editing.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

The first week of the month preceding the month of publication: e.g., the deadline for the February edition is the first week of January.

THE BISHOP'S VISIT

THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE



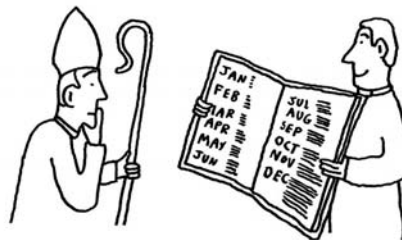
PREPARING THE WAY



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\$20 per year
Single copies: \$2

ARCHBISHOP'S MESSAGE

A voice from the past



Archbishop Arthur and Elizabeth Peters

BY ARCHBISHOP ARTHUR PETERS (RETIRED)

Dear readers, our ever persuasive editor prevailed upon me to make a written contribution to an edition of *The Diocesan Times*, so here it is – “a blast from the past”.

Most invariably one of the questions I receive is “What are you doing in retirement?” These retirement years have been ones of great adventure for Elizabeth and me. We have been blessed with reasonably good health and have had the freedom to spend time with and enjoy the members of our family. Retirement years also give us the privilege to leisurely pursue our respective hobbies and to engage in travel both abroad as well as locally. It is about this last privilege – travelling locally – that I want to share with you a few comments.

We live in a beautiful part of our country – one which encompasses a rich variety of scenic splendor. Our diocese, containing the civil provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, is a treasure to behold. Our travels about, both while working and now in retirement, have given us immense enjoyment and has awakened in us the Christian view of creation. I believe that view causes us to reflect upon at least four fundamental Christian truths.

First of all, God's will is behind creation. The psalmist puts it this way in Psalm 24, “The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and all who dwell therein”. Creation is the product of God's goodness. God created, redeemed and sustains it. It is wonderful and beautiful and sometimes terrible. Creation in all its complexities, is only bearable when we realize that God comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Thus through Jesus we can call God Father and can proclaim “This is my Father's world”.

Secondly, we can declare that humankind is made in God's image. We are creatures entirely dependent on God as is the

rest of the universe. There is, however, a very significant difference. We have been given a share in the freedom of God and we are capable of fellowship with God.

A third truth which is both a tremendous privilege as well as a responsibility, is that we are co-workers with God. Humankind is meant to be in co-operation with God. The newest baptismal promise which was authorized by General Synod in 2013 puts this truth in these words: “Will you strive to safeguard God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?” In response we promise “I will, with God's help”.

A fourth truth that follows from all of the above is that we are stewards of God's creation. The challenge of the use of our natural resources is not an easy one. One side of the debate says we must not exploit these natural resources; while the other side says – but this particular project will mean jobs for hundreds of people. It is really an intense debate and there is much to be said on both sides. Nevertheless the truth remains we are stewards of God's creation and we must exercise our stewardship with caution.

Because of our belief that this is our Father's world as well as our being God's co-workers and stewards therefore we have responsibility for our world and all the people in it. That responsibility, while shared with the rest of humankind, is one which each of us can exercise in the place where we now happen to be. Through participation in agencies like our Primate's World Relief and Development Fund we are able to reach out to help in meaningful ways those in far off areas of our world who are hungry, helpless and homeless. Then as well through local community groups and organizations we can do likewise towards local concern and needs.

Someone made the observation that God's creative goodness can be seen in action through God's people. Therefore our challenge is to be faithful to the One who calls us. May we respond “I will, with God's help.”

Where is the Church working in North America?



Rev. Dr. John Roddam

The North American Church is in crisis – especially mainline traditions! The simple pastoral model appeared sufficient through the 1950's and 1960's when most people attended the Church. However, in more recent decades, mainline churches that depended on biological growth began to decline sharply. Biological growth centers on the membership remaining stable or increasing in number as they give birth and their children continue in the life of the Church. Current members can get a reality check by asking the question – “How many of my children and/or grandchildren are active in the life of the Church?”... precious few!

This dynamic, combined by the growing secularism in our culture, has resulted in a profound loss of members. There was a 40% decline in membership in the Anglican Church of Canada between 1960 and 2000. There was a

further 40% decline between 2000 and 2010! We are in free-fall!

The largest Methodist, Presbyterian, and Pentecostal Churches in the world are in Seoul, South Korea. Mainline, Evangelical and Charismatic Churches have grown. They have experienced growth through a simple aphorism, “Pray & Obey.” The amazing prayer movement in this country stems from Anglican Missionary Father Archer Torrey, grandson of famous 19th C. Evangelical scholar R.A. Torrey and founder of the Jesus Abbey! The basis for this tremendous growth is listening prayer where Jesus directs His Church.

Where is the Church working in North America?

One Canadian faith community that has experienced profound growth is Southland Church, Steinbach, Manitoba (<http://mysouthland.com>). This Church (Evangelical Free

background) has grown from about 100 to 4,000 in a rural town of 13,500 in SE Manitoba. There has been significant interest in this church that has centered its life in prayer. The Lord has led them to stunning growth. Jesus said, “I will build my Church...” (Matthew 16:18) He knows how to build His Church. The Southland Leadership is simply listening and obeying the Living God!

Southland Church has a vision to see the Canadian Church renewed. See: Church Renewal (<http://churchrenewal.com>) They sponsor conferences in January, May, and October each year. The next conference dates are Friday May 27th to Monday 30th, 2016. Southland has spent \$300,000 to offer follow-up for clergy with practical mentoring, helping senior pastors establish a foundation of prayer and growth in their churches – all for free!

If you have the time and can get to Winnipeg, MB (on Air Miles!), folks from Steinbach will pick you up and house & feed you through the weekend event at no charge... then they'll get you back to the Winnipeg Airport!! The registration cost is \$139 (CAN). This is doable for our NS/PEI Parish clergy and lay leaders. I attended last October. It was AWESOME!!

BEWARE: This will change your prayer life and lead to significant personal spiritual growth AND enlargement of your parish numerically!

Throughout Church History the key to growth is leadership development. The same is true in all dimensions of society – business, media, etc.

Southland is bending over backwards to make the principles of spiritual renewal available to the Canadian Church. All one needs to do is show up!

Feedback on John's articles is welcome - email john_rodham@hotmail.com and copy to diocesantimes@gmail.com also!

Food security: at home and around the world

2016 Lenten Focus at St. Luke's Parish Hubbards

BY CAROL SIMMS &
BILL MAC DONALD
ST. LUKE'S PWRDF
COMMITTEE

For the past few years, the Anglican Parish of St. Luke's, which includes the Congregations of St. Mark's Mill Cove, and St. Luke's Hubbards, have chosen a Lenten theme, helping to focus Worship Liturgies, programs and prayers during this season of self-reflection.

The theme we selected for Lent~2016 is:

"Food Security At Home and Abroad", chosen because its dual-focus offers the potential to look both:

* "Inward or Locally", and

* "Outward or "Worldwide"

This program began on Sunday February 7th, 2016 with an adaptation of the World Food Day Service (incorporating resources from PWRDF, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and The Book of Alternative Services).

As our 2016 program commenced, we were fortunate to have Chris Pharo, Diocesan Representative for PWRDF as our guest speaker. Chris' presentation included a Power Point review of his March 2015 mission to Cuba. It captured the attention of everyone by casting new light on a country many of the Congregation had seen (as tourists) but from a vastly different prospective. During

the social time that followed, it was evident from the questions directed to Chris, that his presentation was well received.

Other elements included in our 2016 Lenten Program:

* A talk by a representative from our local Food Bank

* A boat has been moved into our "Winter Church" space, and we hope to fill it to overflowing with food for the Food Bank before Palm Sunday

* Perpetual Book Sale with proceeds to PWRDF

* Sale of handmade pins & magnets with proceeds to PWRDF.



Photo: Chris Pharo- Diocesan PWRDF Representative speaking to St. Luke's Winter Church on February 7th, 2016

Highlights of Diocesan Council Meeting

Diocesan Council met on 19 & 20 February 2016. Council received reports from diocesan staff and the chairs of the VSSTs (Vision, Strategy and Support Teams): Youth and Family Ministry (Debbie Fice for Cydney Proctor); Healthy Parishes (Tanya Moxley), Healthy Leadership (Cynthia Pilichos); Financial Management and Development (Rev Carl Fraser); and Human Resources (Jamie Cochran); and Mission Outreach and Social Justice (MOST) (chair is currently vacant).

Dr. Ken Rockwood of the QE11 spoke on the need for an increased spiritual care program at the hospital. A small group have looked at feasibility of fund raising for an endowment fund for a second hospital chaplain; there appears to be support for such a project. Accordingly, a small task group was formed to develop a written proposal for the hospital chaplaincy endowment project; they are to report back to Diocesan Council at the June 2016



meeting.

Bishop Ron introduced the Diocesan Innovation Group. This group gave very inspiring presentations at our last Synod (May 2015). After reviewing the many comments received from Synod delegates, they realized that education within the diocese is required. To this end, the Group are developing five educational modules which will focus on 'What is God's mission' and 'How do we implement that mission.' Council members participated in a condensed version of module one and provided feedback. It is expected that module one will be available Fall 2016.

The Bishop's Report. Bishop Ron spoke of his recent activities, including leading a retreat in Newfoundland and attending a Lutheran Pastors Retreat. The new shared chaplain contract with King's College is being discussed. Our representation at General Synod has decreased by four this year, due to the new formula used to determine the number of delegates. The House of Bishops' meet shortly to discuss the Marriage Commission Report that will go to General Synod.

Hospital Chaplaincy Report. The members of the Physician Assisted Death (PAD) Task Group were identified; Rev Keirsten Wells indicated they have held their first meeting. Massive amounts of information is being gathered and will be shared with Council members.

Parish Vitality Coordinator. Rev Lisa Vaughn outlined two discernment processes she has developed to assist parish leaders. She also

shared a 'good news' story which highlighted the "Why" of mission.

Anglican Foundation Grant Applications. Three applications were received; two of which were recommended by Anglican Foundation Screening Committee. Council approved the two applications for onward submission to the Anglican Foundation.

Youth & Family Ministry VSST. Debbie Fice spoke of the Emerge weekend (19 & 20 Feb 2016) and the plans for CLAY, which is being held in PEI in August. She also spoke of Mothers Union and its Parents Supporting Parents program and its facilitators training session being held in April 2016.

Mission Outreach and Social Justice (MOST). In the absence of a chair for MOST, Bishop Ron spoke on the refugee situation. The Diocese has signed a sponsorship agreement with eight parishes. In addition, a number of parishes are involved with community

groups or organizations. Lots of people are highly invested in the refugee project.

Financial Management and Development. Rev Carl Fraser reported that the Diocese could have a surplus for 2015; this is primarily due to the late hiring of two staff positions and the higher than expected compliance rate. After considerable discussion of what to do with this surplus, it was decided that the surplus allotment will be returned to parishes (hopefully for mission), based proportionately on the percentage of allotment paid. The expense surplus will be set aside for the hospital chaplaincy endowment and the refugee sponsorship agreements; should either of these not go forward, the funds will be reallocated by Diocesan Council.

Building Healthy Parishes. Tanya Moxley circulated the brochure for the Vital Maritimes 2016 Conference being held on 29 - 30 September & 1 October 2016.

What will we do... when the doors of the 'Upper Room' are locked for fear of an uncertain future?

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

Warm Easter greetings, in the name of our Risen Lord Jesus!

STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD: A MODERN- DAY UPPER ROOM STORY

As I write this article, we are more than half way through our Lenten journey. When you receive it, we will be entering the first week of our Easter celebration, contemplating the Upper Room. My theological imagination is in two places: contemplating the challenging, joyful unfolding of the public ministry of Jesus among those who so desperately needed healing and love in their lives; and anticipating the suffering that Jesus will endure during the last week of His earthly life, because He was fearless in bringing that love and healing. On the other side of both contemplations lies the call to let go of the past and rise with Jesus, to go out and transform the suffering, unjust, broken places of the world by sharing the Good News.

Several years ago, I worked with a congregation located in the inner part of a large city. They were suffering from a long-term conflict that had escalated out of control, to a congregation-wide division over money, mission and leadership. Many long-time members had withdrawn offerings and/or left the congregation altogether. Of those who left, many kept themselves "in the loop" by calling those who remained, to rehash their grievances and keep abreast of the situation, which caused even more upset.

Sunday attendance had dropped from several hundred to less than a hundred. The once-vibrant Sunday school had only a few children and teachers left. Their ordained leader was contemplating leaving after less than two years in the position. Every Church Council meeting was filled with yelling, out-of-control arguments, followed by



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

"meetings after the meetings" in the parking lot or on the phone. Some members were holding secret meetings in their homes to discuss strategy. Thoughtless, reactionary e-mails were flying back and forth. Sides were well-defined and taken. Factions were formed. One side or the other had to "win". Church closure was not out of the realm of possibility.

It all started two years prior, because of a small disagreement over how to allocate limited funds for mission and exactly what that mission should be in a changing inner city neighbourhood where the worship traditions of the church were no longer speaking to a new generation. So, on top of everything else, the Worship Wars ensued. Just about everyone was blaming it on the new cleric, who had no training in conflict resolution and was actually unintentionally making things worse, by bunkering in and staying in his office every day. Sound hopeless? Sound familiar?

If it sounds familiar, whether your parish is there, has been there or might be headed there, and you are now more frightened than the disciples were in the Upper Room after Jesus' crucifixion, the story isn't finished.

THE END OF ONE OLD STORY, THE BEGINNING OF A BRAND NEW ONE

You'll be happy to know that after a two-year long process of deep sharing - rooted in their

agreement to speak the truth in love, suspend judgement and truly listen to one another - the congregation was able to resolve their differences. Not only were they able to make agreements for moving forward in peace, but they finally crafted a vibrant new mission that continues to thrive and serve the inner city today.

No matter what side any individual was on, everyone wanted to "unlock the door", do the hard work of reconciliation and forge a path forward to courage, compassion, and clarity of purpose for a renewed mission. It all began with the recognition that in order to move forward, they needed to have real, honest, compassionate conversations. To understand one another, yes, but - most of all - to make peace with the past and let it go. They discovered that the root of all the conflict came back to one thing that held them unwittingly hostage and lay at the root of all their disagreements: not taking the time to move through the grief caused by the loss of the glory days. Once they did that, their desire to relive the past was healed and freed them, which opened the now unlocked door to a whole new future of possibility.

Every time the locked doors of the unresolved differences of congregational life stand before us, a choice must be made:

Will we stay on this side of the threshold, keeping the door - the passageway to God's mission- locked, with only our memories of the past and the people on our side of the argument to hold on to? Or, will we unlock the door and bravely cross over the threshold to build a bridge together, into an uncertain future, where - while we might be hurt at times by others - we will find new and creative ways to bring the love and healing power of the Good News to the world, knowing that He is with us?

NOW, OVER TO US: UNLOCKING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT WHAT MATTERS MOST

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What conversations do we need to have in our parishes, where we truly listen to one another without judgement? Where do we need to build bridges to one another, so that we can get unstuck, unlock the door together and boldly move forward boldly in faith with our Risen Lord?

Let's start to talk about it together, with some tried-and-true compassionate conversation skills. Beginning this fall, as we move closer to our next Diocesan Synod, I will be offering several regional workshops throughout the Diocese (one on the mainland, one in Cape Breton and one in P.E.I.), using the Charter for Compassion as our guide. You'll learn the "101" basics of how to harness the positive energy of our differences of opinion to discover what matters most and find common ground that builds a bridge of compassion out to the world in Jesus' name. I'll be announcing the locations, dates and details in the May issue, so you can get it on your calendar well in advance!

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH and A FREE E-BOOK FOR YOU! The new website for my consulting practice, The Vocapeace Institute, launches April 23rd, 2016! It's a sacred digital space where you'll find all kinds of spiritual, practical and worship resources, book reviews, and useful links, as well as my weekly blog. Some of you have already visited and signed up to receive my weekly multimedia toolkit and my new e-book, THE VOCAPEACE WAY, which I'm giving away on launch day. If you haven't done so already, please go to www.vocapeace.com to join the growing global community of subscribers! Once you sign up, you'll be taken to a special page I've made for you on all things compassion, to help get you started with compassionate conversation and thinking now.

It's A New Day! Heaven's Kitchen

BY REV. LISA G. VAUGHN

Potluck. Surely this is one of the most frequently used (and loved) words in our Anglican lexicon.

It is safe to say that we do food well in our churches. Whether it is our soup luncheons, ladies' teas, bake sales, men's breakfasts, baked bean suppers or coffee hour after Sunday worship, Anglicans definitely have culinary gifts.

Perhaps it is our love of communion, when we gather around the Holy Table and share in the blessed bread and wine. The partaking of food together is spiritually and socially meaningful. We cannot accurately describe this mystery, but somehow, some way the "real presence of Christ" is amongst us as we break bread together.

The ministry of food in the wider work of mission is an

authentic personal bonds.

Applying culinary skills in mission-oriented ministry works especially well with non-Church people because it is grounded in radical hospitality. It is an attractive thing when a Christian invites a new person to share food in an atmosphere that is highly respectful, generous and caring. No strings. No pressure. Just gracious service. This is one way to live out what Theodore Roosevelt wisely said, "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."

Some churches are already doing food-related mission work. For example, meals and baked goods are dropped off at the homes of families who are mourning the death of a loved one, or when someone is laid-up by surgery.

One of the key principles in working to build relationships with newcomers is to offer the food free of charge.

**Food ministry
in the wider work
of mission is an
unrealized strength
for most of our
congregations**

unrealized strength for most of our congregations. Over and above our fundraiser events, this is the intentional creating of Christian community using parishioners' gifts in cooking. The preparing, serving and communing over a meal creates opportunities to build

Radical Christian hospitality is about giving sacrificially like Christ. Here are a few other ideas to help consider culinary mission initiatives in your own context:

- Barbeque hotdogs and give away cans of pop at the local soccer field every Saturday morning. Include a note



with an encouraging scripture verse, along with "Compliments of St. _____'s Anglican Church."

- Each week, identify a local business and drop off a dozen homemade muffins. Attach a greeting card that says your congregation is praying for the staff and for their enterprise to thrive.
- Keep an eye out for new residents moving into your neighbourhood (monitor real estate websites). Deliver a welcome wagon-type basket filled with pretty cupcakes and pamphlets about community amenities, including your church activities.
- Set up a sandwich and juice booth in a busy park on Fridays to connect with workers on their lunch hour. Include a handbill with a joke and your contact information. (Who can't use a free lunch and humour on Friday afternoon?)

Some congregations host special events and invite newcomers to

share favourite treats. For example, ice cream sundaes on Sunday on the lawn, be your own "Cake Boss" cake decorating class, pizza and games nights for teens, and old-fashioned church picnics. Meal preparation courses and grocery budgeting programs can also help connect with groups like college students and people on social assistance.

One inspiring group of Christian leaders in the UK tapped into their baking skills and planted a new congregation. Somewhere Else Methodist Church in Liverpool, England, gathers in an upper room, above a bookstore in a busy urban area. Central to their identity and activity is the staff of life.

"Bread is created, shaped, proved and baked three times a week by whoever shows up," said The Rev'd. Barbara Glasson. "What is most remarkable is that 'whoever' also seems to have turned into a community that wants to pray, worship and read the Scriptures."

The group of up to 40 people per gathering stands shoulder to shoulder making bread at the tables. They tell

stories, laugh and share who they are in this welcoming church. A sense of gratitude and benevolence emerges each week.

"Making one loaf for ourselves ... and one loaf to give away, there is a spirit of generosity evoked by bread," Rev. Barbara said. "Sometimes some of the bakers have never been able to make and give a gift before."

Somewhere Else sounds like the early church. "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." (Acts 2:46,47).

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."

The Diocesan Times annual appeal

The Diocesan Times has published the news and views of our diocese for the past 70 years.

During that time, it reported on changes, topical news stories and announcements throughout Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Last month, the very first edition of The Diocesan Times was available as a PDF download from the diocesan web site.



Paul Sherwood

Editor

This month we're launching our annual appeal campaign. We need your continued support of our diocesan newspaper.

We have four sources of financial support: a grant from diocesan council, our faithful advertisers, a shared campaign with the Anglican Journal's annual appeal and most importantly, your donation to our annual appeal.

Your continued support not

only allows us to print the news and stories from our diocese but it also tells us that you are committed to the newspaper in its printed and electronic versions. There are many times when there are too many stories or photos to include in our print version and those stories and photos and videos get posted to our online Facebook site at:

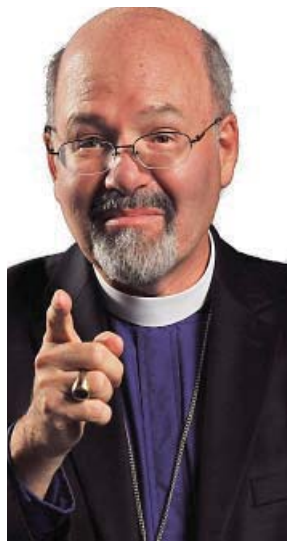
www.facebook.com/diostimes

We're counting on you so we can continue to share your stories and good news.

Please show your support by using the included envelope in this month's paper.

Thank you.
Paul

PS This is the first 16 page Diocesan Times newspaper. Many thanks to all who offered their photos and stories.



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It's farewell but not good-bye

BY REV. MARIAN LUCAS-JEFFERIES

*Farewell to Nova Scotia, the sea-bound coast,
Let your mountains dark and dreary be
When I'm far away, on the briny ocean tossed,
Will you ever heave a sigh or a wish for me?*

Actually, I'm only next door in the wilds of New Brunswick as The Rev. Canon David Reid used to say when I was a theological student under his supervision at the Church of St. Andrew in Cole Harbour. David instructed me to never, never, NEVER go to New Brunswick without taking a compass. Even in downtown Fredericton you can get lost he would joke. New Brunswick is nothing but trees.

At the time, I had landed in Halifax straight out of the New



Brunswick woods. Public Landing is a tiny place on the banks of the St. John River. I'm now "retired" and hiding out there (Shhhh... don't tell anyone). The plan had been to go back to the woods and catch my breath after a decade of full time parish ministry.

*The sun was setting in the West
The birds were singing on every tree
All nature seemed to be at rest
But, alas, there was no rest for me.*

As the saying goes, God laughs while we are busy making plans. Standing in the foyer of Convocation Hall at Mount Allison University less than a month into retirement, about to make my way into the lecture hall to hear Naomi Klein speak about the environment (one of my passions) I received an Email. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is an ecumenical organization (we are a member) that works to "End Hunger". They wanted to know if I would travel to Laos and northern India to visit partnership projects.

The drums do beat and the horns do alarm

My captain calls; I must obey

My first trip to a developing country was with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) in the winter of 1999. That trip was a critical part of my call to ministry. So it might be appropriate that I end full time parish ministry and discern God's call to my next phase of ministry by travelling with CFGB to Asia in the winter of 2016.

Paul Sherwood, the editor of this paper, concerned that I might be bored during retirement used his spiritual gift, manipulation, and coerced me into writing about CFGB and this trip to Asia. As he put it, you have until the end of the week to get the first article in.

I imagine myself as a sort of Muppet in a television program that aired a number of years

ago called Fraggles, about a community of creatures who lived deep below the surface of the earth. Matt was an explorer who sent postcards home recounting his adventures in "Outer Space" (the surface of the world).

Given my priestly calling, my "postcards" to you might be from both Outer and Inner Space. After all, God is the compass that we should always carry. With God at our backs, we are never lost and always headed in the right direction during the adventure we call life.

...it's early in the morning I am bound far away

But it's not farewell to Nova Scotia. We'll be in touch.

All in a day's pay

How does the minimum wage vary across the world, and what can you buy for a day's work?



How is income calculated?

Based on a family of four, with two working parents each earning minimum wage



The daily essentials

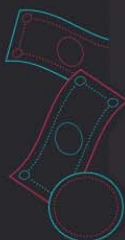
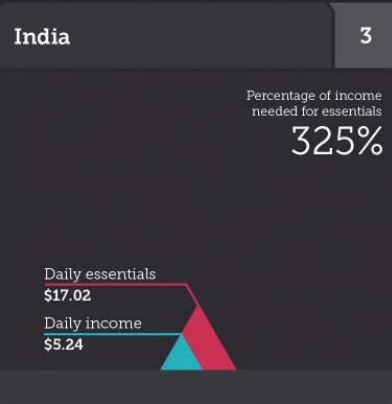
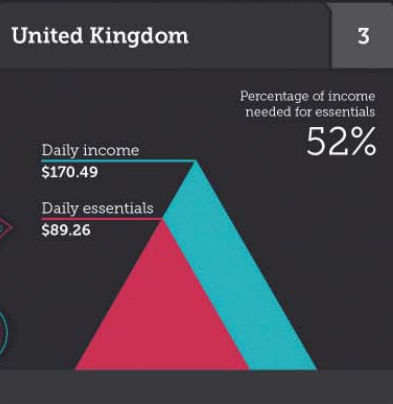
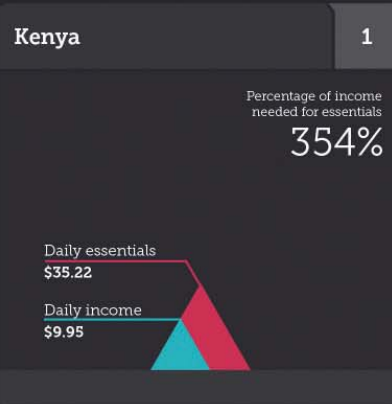


In the money

Based on income needed for essentials

Going broke

Based on income needed for essentials



Working full time, earning minimum wage and barely making it!

Many people around the world still struggle to put food on the table despite being in full-time employment. The debate over what amount is "enough" for a minimum wage is hotly contested. In some countries our data reveals the minimum isn't enough to survive. Exactly where might surprise you.

BBC Capital, together with IIB Studio, looked at 10 countries to see just how far a day's wage will stretch. The results are shown here. These calculations were based on a family of four, with two full time workers earning minimum wage — just enough calories to meet the Institute of Medicine's guidelines — average rent and basic bills like utilities are accounted for, the disparities are astounding.

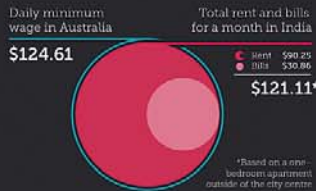
We have huge disparities within our own boundaries for those who struggle to get by and those who live quite comfortably. How we use and share our wealth defines us as a people - and sometimes the definition is not flattering.

From the BBC web site:
www.bbc.com/capital/story/20151215-the-best-and-worst-places-for-people-on-minimum-wage
 Used by permission of BBC.



The inequality of purchasing power

A day's wage in Australia would cover a month's rent and bills in India...



...but a day's wage in India will not even cover a cappuccino in Australia



Putting it in perspective



* Food essentials based on a basket of basic foods (1.25kg of white rice, eight eggs, one loaf of white bread, 200g cheese, 500g chicken, 500g tomatoes, 500g oranges and one lettuce)

Winter Church is good for the BOTTOM LINE!



Photo: Parishioners at St. Lukes in their 'winter church' location hold a discussion after Sunday service in February.

BY REV. LAURIE OMSTEAD
PARISH OF ST. LUKE'S, HUBBARDS

St. Luke's, Hubbards, held "Winter Church" downstairs in the Parish Hall for the first nine weeks of 2014. (St. Mark's, Mill Cove, continued to have services of Holy Eucharist on the First and Third Sundays at 9am.) In addition to saving money on furnace fuel bills, it was felt that "Winter Church" had a lot to do with "Saving Grace"!

The concentric ring set-up which included the portable altar, the lectionary-focused activity tables which were set up on the periphery of the space, along with having a variety of local musicians lead music, created a feeling of "Intergenerational Messy Church" or of a "Kitchen-Party Eucharist". "Coffee, Tea, and C" hospitality was offered at the conclusion of every Sunday service, thanks be to God, for the weekly combinations

of Outreach and ACW volunteers. "Winter Church" (2014) was such a success that our Parish Council decided to bring the entire Parish Congregation together to try "Winter Church" Phase Two. Both Church sanctuaries (St. Mark's and St. Luke's) were closed after Christmas 2014 services and were reopened on Easter Sunday, April 5th, 2015. There was one service at 10:45am each week from December 28th, 2014, through and including the Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday, March 29th, 2015.

We knew that we would save money on oil (especially at St. Mark's where there are no pipes to freeze)... We were also hoping and praying that the "Winter Church" concept or "model" would enable the Parish to keep its two historic churches open indefinitely. And, even

with the record-breaking amounts of snowfall, we only missed two of our Sunday "Winter Church" services: one on February 15th, and the other on March 15th ~ a remarkable accomplishment!

Then, (talk about "resurrection"), we reopened our two historic churches on Easter Sunday morning!

This year, the concept of "Winter Church" was a "no-brainer".

Everyone, even the most skeptical amongst us, is on board with the benefits of "Winter Church" in our Parish.

We've "ironed out the wrinkles" and all of our liturgies (including the hymns) are on Powerpoint.

Now, we are "Saving Oil, Saving Paper, and Saving Grace"! TBTG!!



Winter Church 'Ministry Team' photo: Front row Rev. Laurie Omstead, Rector, Judy McCreath, Scripture Reader, Shelly Hubley, Lay Reader-In-Training
Back row Cherry Workman, Postulant to the Priesthood, Jerry Cavanaugh, Parish Warden and Lay Reader-In-Training, Catherin Chandler, Parish Warden, Bill Mac Donald, Postulant to the Diaconate.



The Canadian Lutheran Anglican
Youth Gathering
Charlottetown, PEI
August 17-21, 2016

Not for sale - CLAY 2016

BY ALLIE COLP

Plans for CLAY are continuing to come together, and we are still looking for volunteers. There are many different roles for volunteers at the gathering, from ones that involve being there for as much as the whole gathering or being there for as little as few hours. There is lots of energy and excitement building across the country for CLAY. Hundreds of young people from all over and from close to home are raising money and getting excited to gather in Charlottetown this August. We'll need ushers to help

guide participants to large group gatherings where they will hear from an inspiring keynote speaker, nurses to help ensure that everyone has a healthy and fun time, info desk people to make sure everyone knows what's going on, folks to help put together a beach party to help people from coast to coast enjoy some of PEI's famous red sand, and lots more. It's going to be lots of fun - for the participants and the volunteers. If you're interested in finding out more, email localarrangements2016@gmail.com.

Emerging young adult ministry



Photo: Group photo of the weekend participants

BY ALLIE COLP

On the weekend of February 19-21, 8 young adults gathered for a weekend of relaxation, conversation, and fun. With a goal of exploring what ministry for, with and by young adults could be, Emerge was built around open space for discussion of whatever topics those gathered thought was important.

The weekend took place at Windhorse Farm in Wentzells Lake, Nova Scotia. Being in a beautiful place, with time to get outside and explore, solidified the sense of being

on a retreat. The gathered community cooked and ate meals together, worshipped, played games, had serious and light-hearted discussions, and enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with other Anglicans who are at a similar place in their life.

Ministry designed especially for young adults is often a rare thing, and it can be hard to even know where to begin.. The discussions at Emerge were filled with hope as different ideas were shared, explored, and celebrated, and may be a starting point for moving forward with this ministry.

Have you ever thought about a river in terms of the imagery of God?

By REV. BERT CHESTNUT

I read an article recently by Richard Rohr that made reference to the river of God. I had a difficult time getting that image out of my head so I decided to use it instead. If we think of God the Father as the source of the river, even the source of all rivers, then we are assured that the source is boundless. Then I thought of the Holy Spirit as the flow of the river. At times in our lives the flow is restricted, dammed up, altered or overflowing. What a beautiful image for those of us who are connected to water in one way or another, which in our diocese is pretty much all of us. If God is the source and the Holy Spirit is the flow, then Jesus Christ could be the embodiment of the flow - that which we call water (H₂O) as the physical presence of the source and the flow.

How we react to the flow and the river of God has little to do with how we perceive God; instead, it is how we react to God, given the situations we find ourselves involved in. Without the love of God we would be unable to respond. After all, it is love that we all so desperately seek, whether that love is for another, or in response to the love in



which God so generously engulfs us. It quickly becomes obvious that we cannot or are unable to show love if we have not experienced love. God first loved us because we were in need of his love and we needed a model of pure perfect love. God is faithful to each of us in our own unique way. That love and that source of love (the river itself) is fathomless, unending, incapable of not being.

How does that look within the context of the river? In Genesis 2:10-14, there is mention of a river that flowed 'out' of Eden. What a lovely image to picture in your mind's eye.

God created the garden and watered it, but the flow went out of the land of perfection into a wilderness beyond the Garden. Scripture talks about rivers that split off of the original flow into great rivers which encircled the whole land. It is interesting this river was not given a name but only the four (4) rivers that it was divided into. Could it be that because this water source came from God in a place of perfection, and love, there was no name for it until after it left God's presence and the garden. How often do we miss the source and instead are only able to name that which is a smaller part of the source. The flow of God's

love is so great that we are unable to conceptualise a love that great; instead we recognise only the part of that love that comes into contact with us.

I love the image of the river ... unending, unceasing, ever present and nurturing. And I love the idea that Jesus Christ, who saves us from ourselves, represents the physicality of the water. Because of the great love of the Father, the source, we are able to 'touch' that love only through the 'physicalness' of Jesus. The same Jesus who reflected the father's love toward us in his great act of incarnation, death and resurrection. He died so that we could have our sins atoned once and finally and have a human example placed before us to model our lives after; like children, we emulate that which is modelled for us.

And finally, the flow itself - the Holy Spirit, the helper. How does that reflect within our own lives? The river we are engulfed in will encounter white water, rocks, course changes and restrictions in the flow. These things happen to us in a very real and human way. It is reflected in blessings, hurts, deep despair and sometimes detours away from

the actual flow, back into an eddy. While we are still loved and in contact with the physical Jesus, we are unaware of the movement of the Spirit. So what happens to us? We stagnate and become a 'church' (SUNDAY?) Christian who gets hung up on process and procedure instead of results and obedience. And then some 'life' event comes along to knock us out of the eddy and back into the flow. Then we once again recognise that we were part of the flow, but somehow found our selves in the backwaters of the river, unable to help ourselves or anyone else.

On a personal note, I experienced this first hand; I needed to deal with old hurts and pains, to be cleansed within before being placed back into the river's nurturing flow, to move on, to grow and prepare for a better, greater life of joy, love and service.

We could explore many more wonderful directions and site so many situations that reflect both the flow of the river, God's River and the human condition. But we need to respond to the love of God, our source, ever teaching, ever present, to always be reflected within us and to those around us.

Bishop Ron presents Faithful Servant Award

Photo: Bishop Ron Cutler presented a Faithful Servant Award to Martin Lewis at St. John the Evangelist in Middle Sackville on February 7 in recognition of his many years of service to the parish, region and diocese. Bishop Ron was in the parish during his scheduled visitation. Martin Lewis's award ceremony was attended by his family and friends. The parish presented him with a cake after the service.



MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan stories of people responding to God's call

Woodside Wonder

By Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

The percolator machine at St. Alban's "The Open Door" community is always brewing.

"Some days we make as many as nine pots of coffee," said Dartmouth rector, Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith.

Twice a month on Thursdays, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., members of this urban congregation welcome up to 40 people to a time of friendship and refreshments. Started in March 2014, The Open Door mission-oriented initiative came about when one local parishioner mentioned that he would enjoy having a place to meet people and chat over coffee.

Rev. Frances and a few volunteers took up the challenge and started this community drop-in time in the Church Hall, which is



Photo: One of the many helping hands at St. Alban's Open Door time.

located on Pleasant Street, in the Woodside area. St. Alban's has the Nova Scotia Hospital, Dartmouth General, The Mount Hope Centre and the Nova Scotia Community College as their neighbours, so there is a great deal of vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

"The Open Door is not just coffee and a place to meet," said Rev. Frances. "Our goal was to make contact with new people and build relationships."

"It's not just about handing out food, but actually hearing people's stories," said the priest.

A team of nine people oversee the friendship ministry, acting as hosts for their neighbourhood guests. The "staff" provide listening ears, caring hands and hearts, and excel in their gifts of hospitality. The Open Door features comfortable seats, hot and cold drinks, as well as snacks. Sometimes there is live music and during holidays, like Christmas and Easter, they throw parties.

People who attend Open Door see the side-walk sandwich board sign and wander in, are invited by a friend or attend through the Nova Scotia Hospital, where a regular notice is shared with staff and patients. Since starting the new gathering St. Alban's congregation gained seven new parishioners.

The church has also been the recipient of several grants to purchase supplies



Photo: Community members sharing a coffee time during The Open Door time at St. Alban's.

and equipment. The local community health board, Bell Aliant Pioneers, Imperial Oil and the Diocese have supported this initiative.

A hooked rug "welcome" mat is an on-going project at The Open Door. One woman volunteer organizes and teaches guests about the craft. Then the members take turns putting in a few loops.

In the early days of forming this new community venture there were some reservations within St. Alban's leadership about opening the front door to anyone. Rev. Frances says that question disappeared when the drop-in time became so popular and meaningful to their neighbours, and because there were no problems. "They are learning about their baptismal vow to 'respect the dignity of every human being.' They recognize that we're all in this together."

People who frequent The Open Door appreciate the Christian atmosphere too. Rev. Frances said, "We think Jesus was here one day."

On a warm afternoon when the door was propped open, a mysterious in-line skater arrived. The helmet-wearing man rolled in amongst the crowded room, stayed a few minutes and then left. A short while later he returned, bringing another man with them. The skater left, but the new visitor remained and asked the minister for a Bible. "She'll get one for you," said one lady. "They know Jesus here."

The next day that visitor was reported missing from the Nova Scotia Hospital.

The volunteers were astonished, wondering if the mysterious wheeled man was a guide for the troubled patient.

One woman said, "Yeah, I think Jesus came in on his skates."



VCM 2016: Accommodation Reservations

This year's Vital Church Maritimes Conference takes place at Atlantica Oak Island Resort & Conference Centre in Western Shore, NS. Room reservations are now being received for this learning and discerning gathering set for Sept. 29 - Oct. 1. This gorgeous retreat setting features outside patios, spa, fitness centre, tennis court, pool, fireside lounge and much more. Accommodations include a full hot breakfast and feature options with oceanfront and landside guestrooms, as well as two-bedroom oceanfront chalets. See: www.atlanticaoakisland.com or phone 1-800-565-5075. Guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Cameron



Harder, from Lutheran Theological Seminary, in Saskatoon, and author of "Discovering the Other: Asset-based Approaches for Building Community Together." Diocesan Conference registration will be open soon.



It's About the World - The Next Level

Watch for details about our travelling Mission School called "MORE", coming to a region near you!

S. M. I. L. E. for Refugees: welcome to Sherbrooke

By KRISTIN MacKENZIE

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. (MT 25:30).

In the summer of 2015 news of the Syrian refugee crisis shook our nation and called attention to the need for refugee sponsorship. In response to this a group of people in our small community on the Eastern Shore stepped up to take action. The group is comprised of representatives from several churches, all members of the ecumenical Christian community that is so vibrant here in Sherbrooke and surrounding area. What we lack in size we more than make up for with heart, and as the new Anglican rector I have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity and compassion demonstrated.

I was invited to join the organizing group after attending an information session. At that stage the group was just entering the application process, and we had no way of knowing that in March we would welcome a Congolese family into our lives. We call our group S.M.I.L.E. which stands for St. Mary's (the name of our municipality) Improving Life Experiences. Our hope is the work

we have begun in uniting people for this project will continue on to future endeavors. The inspiration behind our name is that there will always be opportunities to improve lives, and this refugee sponsorship was just the beginning of a long journey.

When we received the list of refugees seeking sponsorship we faced the sobering reality that this crisis extends much further than the Middle East. We read through several profiles, prayed on each one, and found the best fit for our community was a family of five located in a camp in Tanzania. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees there are 15.1 million refugees throughout the world, the highest number in twenty years.

The family we have been called to care for has two young parents with three children, ages 7, 4, and 2. We knew very little about them based on the profile provided. The parents met in the refugee camp and their children were born there, so we know they have been waiting at least seven years for sponsorship.

Through a process that involved a great deal of discussion, prayer, and some tears, we felt certain that

God had been preparing us to receive this family.

Since that point we have been building awareness and raising funds. At Christmas we offered locally made ornaments in the shape of Africa as a gift to those that donated, and there have been fundraising concerts and many donations from local businesses. We were also blessed to receive a generous donation from our diocese.

With the arrival of Makene, Akill, Ekyoci, Bawili, and Gerome this month, we are just beginning a new chapter. Our time now is focused on helping them adjust to Canada, beginning school, beginning jobs, beginning a new life. We will take this on with the same enthusiasm we did when this project was just an idea last summer. And in the words of one of our group leaders, we will show them all the love we have to give.

For more information or to make a donation to the S.M.I.L.E. Refugee Project, email smilerefugeeproject@gmail.com. You can follow the group's progress on their Facebook page: S.M.I.L.E. Refugee Project.

St. John's Church: Peggy's Cove Prayer Centre



Photo: St. John's iconic church at Peggy's Cove.

Prayer can make a world of difference

By ANDREW COOKE

Peggy's Cove is forefront in Canada tourism as a "must see" in Nova Scotia. At the heart of Peggy's Cove is the lighthouse and a picture perfect harbour which has been the subject of countless photographers. The cove is visited by tens of thousands of people every year. As one visits the cove, the skyline is dominated by yet one more feature, St. John's Anglican Church with its spire reaching up to the sky, itself, a beautiful heritage property.

In recent years, and until 2015, visitors were only able to look at the outside of this beautiful old Church except during services held every other week from May to October. With only 35 residents living in the cove the parish sought to find a new vision for this church set high on the hill above and overlooking the cove.

The parishioners of the Anglican Parish of St. Peter's Church in Hackett's Cove, of which St. John's is a part, decided to try to connect with some of these visitors. At first we opened the church for two to three hours every Tuesday and within a few short weeks more volunteers came forward to take on this task. On any one day within the summer, 5 to 70 visitors came in either to photograph the interior with the two William deGarthe murals dominating the front of the church or to sit to reflect and to pray.

This need for many visitors wanting to sit to reflect, or to pray has become the new vision for St. John's. The volunteers working in the Church, saw the opportunity to expand the ministry of the parish to tourists who, so far, have come from over 30 countries all over the world.

Prayer request cards are now made available upon entering the church should any visitor desire to leave a prayer request. Prayers are kept confidential to a dedicated few that are part of the prayer circle within the parish, and should any visitor care to leave an email address the parish will keep in touch with them. Currently it is estimated that about ten percent of visitors leave a prayer request.

This initiative has not just given new purpose to a church that only has a few parishioners remaining from the immediate area but, for a number of parish members, it has become an opportunity for lay ministry with a potential for reaching out to the far corners of the world. We hope the hours the church is open for the summer of 2016 can be extended if more volunteers come forward. If you are interested to help develop this ministry to facilitate a deeper and more spiritual experience for our visitors, please contact the coordinator, Roger Bureau at: peggyscoveprayercenter@gmail.com



Photo: Parish members welcoming their new arrivals at the Halifax airport on Mar 10th.

Teach us to pray: prayer changes people, prayer changes me

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



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

At a particularly dry period in my spiritual life, I wrote to a friend, who happened to be a monk, to tell him I was finding it a struggle to pray. I explained that I was too distracted, too busy, too tired to concentrate or to form the necessary words, and that my prayer time had become a lonely chore. He wrote back: "Welcome to the I.F.I.D.T.P. Club", an acronym he coined for the "I Find It Difficult To Pray Club". He shared some of his own quandaries with prayer. Being part of a religious community, who many people think of as "professional pray-ers" had not guaranteed him ease in prayer. If anything, the perception that given his vocation he was "good" at prayer only compounded the problem. He then learned not to be so hard on himself; that the pearl of prayer was not in his perfection at it, but in his faithfulness to the action of praying – even when "nothing" appeared to be happening. His candid response was enormously helpful. It was a lesson in prayer I have needed to re-learn a few times in my life.

In 1996 my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and quite apart from its devastating effect on her I was totally unprepared for how

the changes it effected in her would impact me. I literally had no words to either pray or say, and found myself in a kind of spiritual desert where I felt incredibly alone and abandoned by God. The words I searched for in others' prayers said nothing to me; I felt I had nothing to say to God. As a priest in the church, I was aware that, like my friend the monk, I was perceived as someone who could pray-on-demand. Once again, I found myself in big trouble.

Then a friend introduced me to Christian Meditation. I attended a retreat, learned "how" to meditate and I joined a local group. I was so weary at the time – spiritually, as well as physically. I was working full-time, had two small children but I somehow managed to get myself to meditation every Monday night. My fellow Meditators

told me some years later that they were pretty sure I had slept through the first six months of our weekly meetings! Despite all this, I persevered with the daily practice. The amazing realization that dawned on me was that God had not abandoned me in the desert at all; that just as I was longing for God, God was longing for me, and was very much present with me – even in the desert. I didn't need to "do" anything, much less say anything. "Just show up and let God love you," one Meditator told me. In a very real and distinct way, as George Herbert wrote, "Love bade me welcome".

The Anglican priest and poet George Herbert played the lute, a delicate stringed instrument which constantly needs tuning because it keeps going out-of-tune. Herbert compares us to musical instruments, writing that we all go out-of-tune with God. I have found that Meditation enables the fine tuning to take place, again and again.

Christian Meditation, recovered for us by the work of a Benedictine monk, John Main, is an ancient form of silent, interior prayer. To help us be still, attentive and present to Christ's company, we use a prayer word, a mantra, "Maranatha", which is repeated throughout the time of the meditation. Sometimes people wonder what "happens"



artwork © Karla Domacher

during meditation. John Main writes, "Not much happens really, not much that is measurable that is, but what becomes increasingly important is what happens between meditation periods." In keeping with Herbert's instrument metaphor, it is the silence between the notes that makes the music.

The pearl of prayer was not in our perfection at it, but is in our faithfulness to the action of praying – even when "nothing" appears to be happening. John Main instructs us not to evaluate our mediation time, deeming it "good" or "not so good". It has no cumulative effect on our prayer – we don't get extra points for praying "well". It is

the holy habit of "showing up" for prayer, of our faithfulness to our prayer practice that changes us. It is our faithfulness to the practice of prayer that opens us to Christ and by extension, opens us to others as we seek to see, love and serve Christ in them.

For Christian Meditation groups meeting in Nova Scotia:
www.wccm-canada.ca/#!/nova-scotia/co2

For Christian Meditation groups meeting in PEI:
www.wccm-canada.ca/#!/prince_edward_island/ce5v

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Colin Nicolle to be ordained transitional deacon and Rev. Nicholas Hatt to the priesthood on Friday, June 24 (Feast of St. John the Baptist) at the Cathedral Church of All Saints.

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April Clues

ACROSS:

- 1 – "(Zechariah) asked for a writing _____" pad of paper (Luke 1:63) (6)
- 5 – Modern name of Bombay (6)
- 10 – A state in northeast India (5)
- 11 – "The darkness has brought on _____" inability to see (1 John 2:11) (9)
- 12 – Seamen (8)
- 13 – "They shall take some of the blood and put it on ... the _____" horizontal support over a door (Exod. 12:7) (6)
- 15 – Flower often seen in churches at Easter (4)
- 16 – Founders of a people, for example Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (10)
- 19 – "As long as there is jealousy and _____ among you" argument (1 Cor. 3:3) (10)
- 20 – Travelled very quickly (4)
- 23 – To dress (6)
- 25 – Suspends a meeting (8)
- 27 – "We had to _____ and rejoice" observe with festivities (Luke 15:32) (9)
- 28 – Depart (5)
- 29 – Glass bottles for wine, water, oil, etc. (6)
- 30 – Shellfish with legs (6)

DOWN:

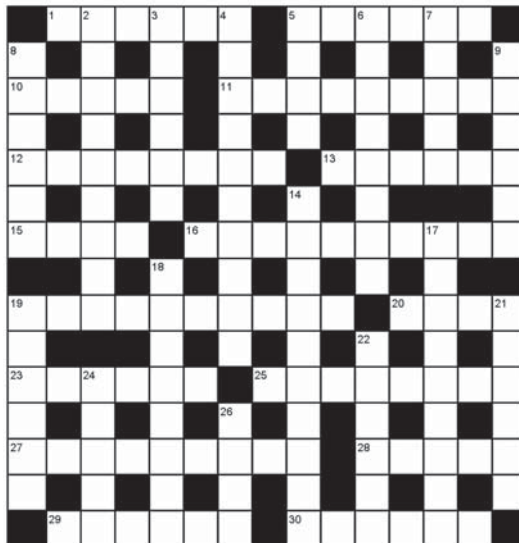
- 2 – Country in the Pacific Ocean (9)
- 3 – "_____ like a virgin dressed in sackcloth" mourn (Joel 1:8) (6)
- 4 – Dedicated tent where the Ark of the Covenant was kept (Exod. 26:40) (10)
- 5 – "A _____ when she succeeds her mistress" female servant (Prov.30:23) (4)
- 6 – Sixteenth-century part song (8)
- 7 – "Be _____ at all times" vigilantly attentive (Luke 21:36) (5)
- 8 – Animal with hair or fur (6)
- 9 – Biblical poetry (6)
- 14 – Sinners (10)
- 17 – "(Jesus) left Nazareth and made his home in _____" a city in Palestine (Matt. 4:13) (9)
- 18 – Likely to occur (8)
- 19 – "Many waters cannot _____ love" extinguish (Song of Sol. 8:7) (6)
- 21 – Plates, cups, etc. (6)
- 22 – Something worn around the neck (6)
- 24 – "Now the _____ of this world will be driven out" sovereign (John 12:31) (5)
- 26 – Trees that grow from acorns (4)

Bible Crossword

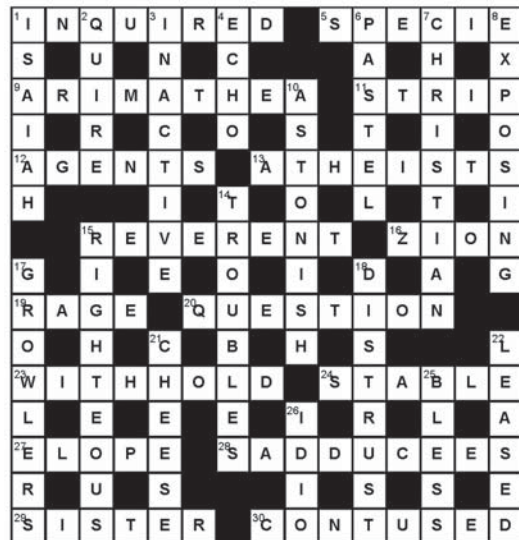
by Maureen Yeats



April Puzzle



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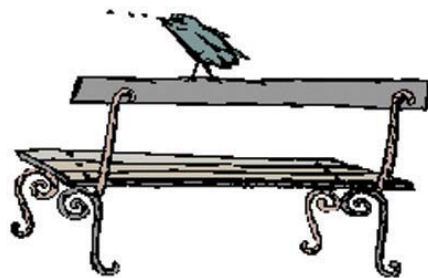
PROUDLY CANADIAN

Retreat reflections

BY HEATHER MACEachern

As I write this I am two weeks back from a retreat and not quite willing to get on the treadmill again, so I thank my brother and sister deacons for pulling up my slackness at the Cathedral. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church defines the word 'retreat' "as a period of days spent in silence and occupied with meditation and other religious exercises."

I was given this retreat as a gift of love and what a wonderful gift! I flew to Barbados and taken to a four hundred+ year old seminary pretty much in the middle of nowhere. The hardest part of this retreat was just saying "thank you" and receiving the gift as it was given. It made me think about the many gifts we are given



The view from the Deacon's Bench

over the years and what we do with them. Some we use until they are worn out and hit the recycling bin, some we put away and forget and some we re-gift (we all know we do) and some we share.

How does one share a silent retreat? Well, to begin I shall fess up, I was silent except for meals and it was during that time I received some wonderful gifts. There are eighteen students currently learning to be future priests

at the school, the majority of who are in their 20's or early 30s. Their day starts at 5:45 am and ends (formally) at 9:30 pm. They have full days to say the least, and in spite of their full schedules they found time to minister to me in many ways. The men often broke into song for no particular reason then their joy in the Lord and the women felt a need to look after my health as I received many mosquito bites to which I had a rather nasty reaction.

So they shared in my retreat but how do I share the beauty of the retreat with others?

Isn't this an age old question? It occurred to me that God gives us many gifts and what do we do with them? Do we wear them out? Do we put them on the shelf or do we re-gift them?

It seems to me re-gifting isn't such a bad idea. By re-gifting I mean passing along the gift by enabling others to see the wonder of giving gifts. Giving gifts by way of outreach: helping each other in daily life- perhaps Jesus was the first re-gifter.....

I have much more thinking to do about my retreat but I can recommend a retreat to everyone. It does not have to be elaborate-just some time (maybe a day) in a corner of a garden, a chapel in a church, your favorite chair, anywhere that you can be alone and focus and meditate and spend time with God; it surely will be not only a gift to yourself but likely a gift to those around you as you are refreshed and revitalized.

How to care for and get the best from your deacon

BY ARCHDEACON MARK SLUSS

What is a Deacon?

You'll find an abundance of misconceptions in the general public. Deacons of the Episcopal Church often find themselves explaining exactly what a deacon is. In some church denominations, a deacon is not an ordained order, but an honorific title for lay church elders.

Simply put: a deacon in an apostolic succession church (such as our Episcopal Church) is an ordained order, set apart for ministry in the diocese, not to a particular parish.

How the Deacon fits in the church

Deacons serve under the bishop with a dotted line relationship to the parish rector or priest-in-charge.

Many deacons are bivocational, and we have seen an increase in bivocational priests in this diocese as well. Bivocational means that the ordained person often holds a full time job outside of the church. It is important to understand that deacons (and some bivocational priests) are non-stipendiary, which means that they are not paid by their congregation for ministry, unlike full time priests.

Within the liturgy, the deacon stands as a symbol of the servant Christ. We proclaim the Gospel, we bid the prayers, we stand as Christ to proclaim the confession for

the community, we prepare the table in order to make a holy space for the Eucharist to occur, and finally, we send forth the congregation to continue their ministry to the world.

The deacon's life is not a job or a vestment we put on; it is a way of life.

We are set apart to specifically care for the poor, the sick and the friendless (from our ordination vows). Deacons serve in that threshold area, interpreting the needs of the community to the church, and interpreting the church to world. That mission is what defines our way of living, it is what frames our ministry. Our eyes are always open to how the church can fulfill God's mission to the poor in our world. The diaconate is simply our way of living, it is who we are.

A Deacon's duties

Within the Diocese of Missouri, there is a common misconception of what a deacon's duties should entail.

The deacon in our church and diocese is called to be a leader, along with the priest, to teach and guide a congregation to live out the full mission of their baptismal covenant. Realize that as a leader of the congregation, meetings should be scheduled to accommodate the deacon's bivocational schedule (i.e. do not schedule staff meetings or worship committee meetings during regular business hours

when the deacon would be scheduled to work their regular secular job). If your gatherings and meetings require a deacon to use their vacation time to attend meetings for the congregation, that is an abuse of a deacon.

Deacons are not a super servant, taking on the responsibilities that the parish priest or lay persons do not feel comfortable or like to do. The deacon is to lead and make possible for lay persons to fully live into their baptismal covenant, equipping them to minister alongside the priest, to the church and to the surrounding community.

The deacon is NOT to DO outreach for the congregation. That is something that most congregations believe. They use the deacon as cheap labor (because they are not paid) to be the parish outreach program. Doing so negates the call to ministry for the baptized. It gives them an excuse to sit back and not do ministry. A task should not be assigned to the deacon because the congregation or priests do not want to do it.

I was approached by a congregation who wanted a deacon assigned to them. Before proceeding, I met with their leaders to find out why they wanted a deacon. The members of this parish wanted a deacon to do all pastoral care visits, to teach Sunday school, to serve at the liturgy, to preach and to work at and coordinate their outreach

programs. I shared that I did not think expecting a deacon to perform all of those functions was realistic.

The deacon's life is not a job or a vestment we put on; it is a way of life.

A deacon's role is to lead; the laity could do those ministries themselves. The outreach endeavors of a parish should be led and carried out by the laity. The deacon can help with any assistance in scheduling, facilities, and gathering any resources that the church community needs to do the ministry, but should not DO the outreach for the congregation.

Eucharistic visitors could be trained by the deacon. Sunday school can and should be taught by the laity. And lay persons can lead some worship services and serve as acolytes and servers in the Eucharist in order to assist the priest in worship. The diocese has


a lay preaching license that can be obtained so that the lay persons who are gifted at preaching can provide the homily to the congregation. These are the types of work that the deacon does to empower the laity to do these types of ministries.

To ensure that the priest and the vestries understand what the duties and expectations of the deacon are, we encourage, and the bishop expects, for all new deacons to work with their priest to create a letter of agreement. This would identify some of the expectations resulting from a relationship with a deacon and the congregation, for example how much time is the deacon expected to spend working for the congregation (10 hours per week?), expectations in attending vestry meetings, how continuing education funds are used, funding of a discretionary account for the deacon, vacation and time off, reimbursement of fees for memberships, books, and periodicals, mileage reimbursement and registrations for diocesan retreats and convention. This way everyone understands what the deacon will do, so that unrealized, undefined expectations will not cause misunderstanding and animosity.

Remembering these points of care respects and strengthens, both the deacon's and the laity's ministries for the local congregation, for the diocese, and for the church worldwide.

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(for all those stories we couldn't fit into the regular print edition of the newspaper)



Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island

*A Pastoral Letter To the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island
with respect to
The Communication from the House of Bishops - February 29th, 2016*

Dear Friends,

Sometime has been spent at each meeting of the House of Bishops since the General Synod meeting of 2013, to look at the pastoral implications of the resolution that would come to General Synod in 2016 to change Canon 21 (On Marriage in the Church). We felt it was important to have these conversations in our role as chief pastors. We have also looked at what we needed in order to have a full discussion around this proposed change of doctrine. A part of this discussion has been a presentation of "The Report of the Commission on the Marriage Canon". It is fair to say that the full range of views on this topic can be found amongst the members of the House of Bishops. The meeting last week concentrated on the charge given to bishops at their episcopal ordination to 'guard the faith, unity and discipline of the church' and an exploration of the theology of marriage. I was deeply appreciative of the flow of the worship that framed our days and for the prayers offered by so many. I can only speak for myself in saying that this was indeed a time of discernment of the leading of the Spirit. The conversations and debates were largely measured and conducted in an attitude of charity but they were intense and passionate. At the conclusion of our time it was evident that there was and is a very deep divide in the House of Bishops on the proposal to change Canon 21 to permit the marriage of same sex couples. I am sorry to say that we failed to reach a point of consensus or any clear sense of a 'third way' that the Report of the Commission on the Marriage Canon calls for. For that I can only apologize.

The 'house' of Bishops becomes the 'order' of Bishops when General Synod is in session. It has no more of a veto over actions of the General Synod than the order of clergy or the order of laity does. However, it is the only one of the three 'orders' that meets on an ongoing basis. The House of Bishops could have remained silent on the state of its deliberations, however, it seemed for the sake of transparency, that we needed to communicate to the church and especially to the Council of

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General Synod about the current state of our discussion on this issue. COGS has the responsibility of preparing for General Synod, including the presentation of a motion in accordance with resolution C003 from General Synod 2013. The communication from the House of Bishops will not (cannot) stop the presentation of the resolution to change the Marriage Canon.

The 2004 General Synod passed a resolution that we "...Affirm that the Anglican Church is a church for all the baptized and is committed to taking such actions as are necessary to maintain and serve our fellowship and unity in Christ, and request the House of Bishops to continue its work on the provision of adequate episcopal oversight and pastoral care for all, regardless of the perspective from which they view the blessing of committed same sex relationships" and that we "Affirm the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships".

Our diocese at our 2011 Synod requested the Bishop(s) to create a guideline which would include a rite for the blessing of same sex civil marriages. The guideline in response to this motion is 1.1.24 (A Pastoral and Liturgical Guideline for Civilly Married Same Sex Couples). It is my sense that our diocese is attempting to live into these statements with the greatest degree of pastoral generosity.

When I was ordained a bishop, I was also asked: "As a chief priest and pastor, will you encourage and support all baptized people in their gifts and ministries, nourish them from the riches of God's grace, pray for them without ceasing, and celebrate with them the sacraments of our redemption?" (BAS p. 637) I answered "I will, in the name of Christ, the shepherd and bishop of our souls." I pray that I can in fact do just that with *all baptized people*, and it grieves me that at this time some of the baptized are still being excluded from the full life of the church.

Please continue to uphold in your prayers, the members of the Council of General Synod and our delegates the meeting of General Synod this July.

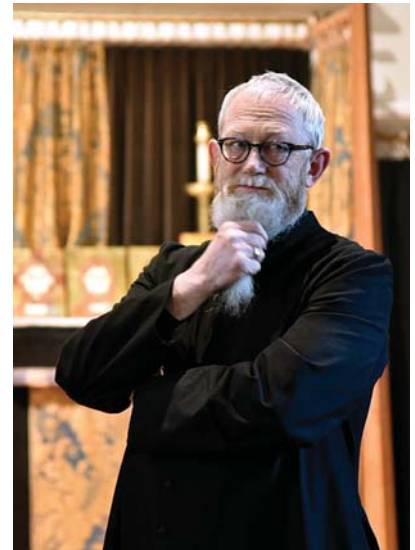
In Hope,



The Rt. Rev. Ron Cutler
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