

THE DIOCESAN TIMES



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APRIL 2021 A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island



Photo: Mickie Stanford with his Lenten banner.

Lent in a box

By MARIANNE STANFORD
PARENT TO MICKIE, AGE 9
PARISH OF FRENCH VILLAGE,
NS

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced many challenges into the lives of the faithful, and one of the most challenging has been how to keep youth engaged in their church communities in the days of virtual services and physical disconnection from the community members they typically see when they go to church. This is particularly hard during the Lenten season.

An innovative approach taken here in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island has been “Lent in a Box” or an interactive set of do it yourself at home activities that take a family through the Lenten season. My 9-year-old son Mickie and I have been doing these activities at home.

On Shrove Tuesday, we created an “Alleluia” banner, colorful and cheery which we used to discuss the upcoming joy of Easter and the journey we were about to take together. We then hid the banner away to be brought out again at Easter. We also prepared out Prayer tree, a collection of branches we collected outside to which we tie colored yarn, signifying our prayers during the season, for ourselves and others. We perform an activity each week, and it has been a simple yet effective way to discuss and engage my son in this Holy season.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to engage in our own special worship at home, while remaining engaged with our Faith Family.



YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Many of our parishes are struggling to pay their bills during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please remember to send in your contributions, even if buildings are temporarily closed. Thank you!



A bright idea from PWRDF

We're bringing clean solar electricity to **51 health clinics** in Mozambique, to support safe labour and birth.

Learn more in the April Anglican Journal or visit pwrdf.org/solarsuitcases2021

COLUMNIST



THE DIOCESAN TIMES

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The need for hugs By the Bog

The Rector came for a visit! In normal times this would not be noteworthy but this year it is for sure. We have had lots of contact with Jason over the phone and at a distance as he walked by the house with his two kids in tow. He is a firm believer in physical activity and has his two wee ones out for walks most days. He also has taken up jogging as part of his recovery journey following the broken leg incident (as he likes to call it!)



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

We admire his ambition and energy from the front yard and give the kids a big wave whenever we see them. Jogging has never been a "thing" here. Too much hard-physical work associated with everyday life By the Bog to make us feel the need for running for pleasure!

At one time most families had active farms with cattle and pigs, chickens, even a few ducks. Most folks my age grew up doing chores around the property before they left for school and later before supper. It was a way of life that kids these days only read about. We had no need for structured

exercise, daily life kept most folks fit!

But I digress; Jason came up the driveway with a mission in his head and his heart and he needed to talk it over with the Warden. Now I need to confess that when my Orin puts on his 'Warden's hat' he has one eye on me and seems to appreciate any advice I might offer. It has always been this way; we are a team and at times we act as good buffers for

the wild scheming the other has fallen for.

This time Jason wanted to begin planning for a summer of open-air services at St. Bart's. Services that would encourage our parish family to venture out more and (at a safe social distance) begin the long road back to what we once took for granted. Remember? When we walked up the path to the front door of our church, greeted friends with hugs and handshakes, not a wave of a hand but physical contact! Jason said we all needed more contact! We all needed hugs! And I think he is right! So how can we as a parish offer hugs to our community in this age of isolation?

The thinking of the Rector and the Church Warden was to hold services on the front lawn at St. Bart's. Orin thought he could build a steady platform for a small electric keyboard with power coming from the church. It could be moved inside easily and I was sure Irene James would be more than happy to take her place at the organ

once again. We could have music! We could sing hymns and smile as our hearts were lifted by the sounds of praise. We talked about moving some of the pews outside for the warm months, giving folks a spot to sit if they didn't have a folding lawn chair at hand. Tarps could protect them from rain if needed. "No continuing problems" as my dear Papa always said.

Jason, ever the Evangelist talked about being a 'presence' in the community, a witness to the life of the church here By the Bog! To the power of the loving arms of Jesus around our shoulders.

By the time that visit was over the Rector, the warden and the warden's wife were filled with enthusiasm and hope. I just pray that this can be passed on to the Parish and we see the churchyard filled with prayer and music and smiles; and, God willing, soon lots of hugs!

I'll keep you posted,
Aunt Madge

OCCASIONAL ATTENDERS

EXAMPLES OF 'TWICE A YEAR' CHURCHGOERS

WE ONLY GO AT CHRISTMAS AND EASTER - FOR THE KIDS MAINLY



WE GO WHEN IT IS A PARADE SERVICE - MOTHER'S DAY AND REMEMBRANCE USUALLY



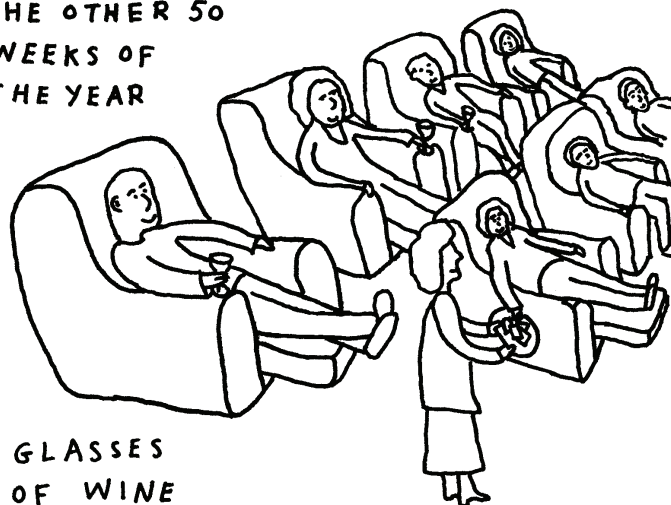
WE TEND TO GO ON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY AND THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY - I DON'T KNOW WHY REALLY - IT'S JUST A HABIT WE'VE GOT INTO



HOW TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO COME TO CHURCH A BIT MORE OFTEN

TELL THEM ABOUT THE GREAT TIMES WE HAVE DURING SERVICES FOR THE OTHER 50 WEEKS OF THE YEAR

WE REPLACE THE PEWS WITH RECLINING ARMCHAIRS



GLASSES OF WINE ARE SERVED

AND THE MONEY IS GIVEN OUT RATHER THAN BEING COLLECTED IN

BISHOP'S COLUMN

Walking away from resurrection



Bishop Sandra Fyfe
Diocese of Nova Scotia and
Prince Edward Island

The Easter story about the Road to Emmaus has always puzzled me. You probably remember it. It's the day of the resurrection and the women have returned from the tomb to share the news that Jesus is not there, but has risen. Yet, Luke tells us: "these words seemed to them an idle tale." Peter rushed to the tomb to see for himself. In other gospel accounts we're told that many of the disciples hid away in fear. I can only imagine that all of them were confused and disoriented, wondering if this could be true and, if so, what it might mean.

I suspect this is the case for Cleopas and his fellow traveller. They're obviously saddened by the news of Jesus' crucifixion and death. They share with a stranger on the road not only the account of his death, but also how their hopes that he was the one who would save their people died with him. They also tell the stranger about what happened earlier that day, how the women returned from the tomb after finding it empty. Like the other disciples they, too, have heard that Jesus has been raised from the dead. So if that's the case, why are they walking away from Jerusalem and from the hope that resurrection offers?

This is the point in the story when the stranger reveals to them what the Scriptures have to say about these things. They urge him to stay with them, and the stranger takes bread, blesses it, breaks it and gives it to them. It is then, Luke tells us, that "their eyes were opened." That same hour, they returned to Jerusalem to tell the others what they had seen.

While this story puzzles me, it also reassures me. I take comfort that even though these two disciples are walking away from resurrection, they can't walk away from Jesus. Even though they're skeptical, or fearful, and maybe even cynical about these "idle tales" they've

heard, that doesn't stop Jesus from meeting them. He is there, listening to them as they share their grief and sorrow, their shattered hopes and disappointment. Yet, Jesus isn't there only to comfort and console; he's also there to provoke and challenge. Maybe he's also there to suggest to these two men that there is another way (perhaps only one way) to deal with

the pain and disillusionment they're experiencing, and that is to face it head on. I suspect it was his presence with them – and a sense that he would be with them – that gave them the courage to do just that: to begin the long journey back to Jerusalem to face whatever the future might bring.

That's probably what the people in Luke's time needed to hear as they faced persecution and threat. In fact, some believe that the Emmaus Road story was added later to remind the early church that Jesus was still with them. They didn't need to go looking for him, and it was okay if they still had doubts and fears. Even if they were walking away from the promise of resurrection and new life, Jesus would meet them anyway and provide strength and courage to help them face the future head on.

Maybe this is what we need to hear as well, especially as we endure wave after wave of pandemic and do our best to adapt to changing restrictions and realities. There has been grief and loss and uncertainty and fear and it's okay if we're still struggling or we're not quite ready to face it all just yet. It's okay if we're still walking away from the Jerusalem moments of our lives – those experiences of pain and suffering that we cannot lay down right now, even if new life awaits. And it's okay if we're still a little skeptical about it all, or uncertain, or even cynical. Christ will walk with us anyway, as a companion on the journey. He will listen to our laments, but he'll also challenge our assumptions and give us the courage we need to change course and walk towards those new possibilities.

We may not be ready yet for new life and all that this might bring, and that's okay too. We have the rest of these 40 days of Easter (50 if we count all the way to Pentecost) to let go of the sorrows and griefs and fears and disappointments that weigh us down – and for some of us, that might take more than 40 or 50 days on the calendar. It might be even more weeks or months. But, in time, if we are seeking healing and wholeness, we will have to lay them down. And when we do, our hearts will be ready to experience the gift of Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit. This is the Spirit that Jesus breathed on his disciples, the Spirit that gives us life and hope, the Spirit that lives within us. So, may we move into these Easter days and weeks ready to receive what they have to offer. And as we walk into an uncertain future, may we trust that Christ is always at our side.

+Sandra

In fact, some believe that the Emmaus Road story was added later to remind the early church that Jesus was still with them.

They didn't need to go looking for him, and it was okay if they still had doubts and fears.

The naming of the women is significant



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

Despite numerous differences in the accounts of the crucifixion, one of the consistencies is the presence of the women. The women who had been a part of the ministry of Jesus for so long are named at this harrowing event.

The naming of the women is significant; for the societal norm at the time was to ascribe authority to the male connected with the woman (father, husband, son). For a woman to be named indicated a strong presence, a profound impact, a significant influence on the actions being described.

And influential is a good description for the women at the cross: these are women who have followed Jesus; they have learned from him; they

have financed his ministry; they have cared for him and his followers. They have tended to the needs of Jesus and his friends; and now at Golgotha, they bear witness the cruelty of the cross. It is their named presence that speaks of the relationship that they shared with Jesus, as friends and companions and followers.

"Woman, this is your Son." From the cross, Jesus reached out to his mother to ensure she would be cared for and protected in a society that did not respect her gender; and he instilled in the disciple the opportunity to continue a ministry of respect and relationship.

At the burial, with the

disciples all fled, the women gathered despite their grief to offer what they could at the time: a proper burial and vigil – literally paying their respects with the rites and prayers.

It is no wonder, then, that three days later, that the first people to be witnesses to the resurrected Christ are, in fact, the women. This was not a coincidence, but an intentional revelation to the women that they were to be included, named, and celebrated in the Good News of the Risen Lord.

So, as we embrace Easter 2021 with new hope and renewal for our world, let us embrace the opportunities for renewed energy towards gender equality. Let us

name the women who have bolstered our faith; the women who have witnessed our spiritual growth; the women who fuel our desire for the Risen Life in Christ. Let us be the church that embraces the call of Jesus to empower all people to live the fullness of life to which our faith proclaims.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



NEWS FROM AWAY

Dear diocese,

Through the magic of technology some of you were there when the Diocesan Environment Network (DEN) recently hosted a session on energy efficiency in church buildings at one of our weekly on line gatherings.

As many of you know, every Thursday evening we begin with a short reflection. This past week, I wanted to kick it off with something that would be spiritually engaging and set the stage for a conversation about being functional, greening church buildings.

It is my habit to begin sermon/reflection prep by reviewing sermons from previous years, in this case sermons for Lent 3, then delve into other research. In the end, each week's reflection or sermon is most often completely different than anything I said in years

past and the preparation is always a journey that is more of a surprise to me than anyone else. Why?

Circumstances change and needs change.

In the midst of preparation last week, I realized that we were going to be gathering that particular evening to talk about buildings. Buildings that have barely been used this twelve months. Buildings we miss.

Yet, we still gather. We have adapted to the circumstances because it is the community, the people, who are most important. A year or so ago an incredible number of parishes quickly, almost instantly, found innovative ways of sticking together. And as a result of the pandemic, our virtual life on the internet superhighway was born.

Throughout the pandemic, like the tide flowing in and out, we adapted to the ebb

and flow of gathering online, then tentatively gathering face to face (or mask to mask) in the "usual" fashion albeit in unusual times. We also had to learn, as communities of faith, how to manage our time together in buildings. Doing a new, socially distanced dance in buildings, in times past, that we had felt so comfortable in.

Today, protocol has become critically important. Our new normal. Wear your mask. Keep your distance. Sanitize, sanitize, sanitize... Change or re-arrange the environment so we can be together, whether it be face to face or in front of a screen.

Congratulations! In spite of the church's reputation for not accepting change, we have proven that we can be adaptable. That we can keep each other and ourselves safe in times of crisis.

It make we wonder, knowing that by nature

we are pack animals and that coming together in a common "home" is so important, if, like the disciples who had to quickly deal with change, following the Messiah, feeling the comfort of his and each other's presence, suffering the shock of changed circumstances, but sticking together, then experiencing the Resurrection, change, change, change... we might, just might, be ready to make the changes necessary to respond to the other crisis, climate change? Something that will affect generations to come?

The changes necessary involve those buildings we love and have been so committed to gather in. Having seen how our parishes can adapt to the pandemic, I believe that we can also adapt to the climate crisis.

As we prepare for the next leg of the journey, the end

of our imposed separation, this is the time to develop and implement a plan for the buildings we gather to ensure a future for the church that includes a better normal.

So, I pose the question: What would a better normal look like for your church building?

The answer might be found on videos posted on the DEN You Tube channel that can be accessed under DEN: Videos through our webpage <https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/diocesan-environment-network>.

And you might want to check out the new Application for Funding for Renewable Energy Project on our diocese website: <https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/pages/administration-policies>

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

Empathy and pain

The big burly ex convict came into the office and sat down rather tentatively. He had never been in therapy before and this was a mandated visit. In the pre screening for the session he had admitted that he was responsible for the actions that had gotten him into his legal jeopardy and he was able to express that. He had physically assaulted his wife. That was an important step that he had to take in order for him to see a therapist. It would be the first step towards her healing, his, and theirs. And in the screening session he was most definitely sincere. In the middle of the first session he was asked whether or not he understood the emotional pain of the one he had attacked. It was not, "how do you feel, but how do you think she felt?" After several clarifications he was finally understood the following question; "Are you able to get into the shoe of the one you hurt physically and feel how she felt?" Sitting there silently for several minutes a big tear soon welled up in one eye and began to roll down his face. Yes, he



Bryan Hagerman

understood, and was able to slowly and emphatically understand how the one he had assaulted felt like, feels like. In further discussions he was able to articulate those feelings even better. That was the painful part, very painful for him. Perhaps the most internal pain he had ever felt in his life. The tear although a visual of his understanding was not as necessary as was the ability to emotionally get into the skin, the emotion of the one he had hurt, and to understand and communicate it. That awareness created his pain.

That would be a crucial point which would lead him towards his own emotional healing.

Feelings of empathy can create pain. When we emphasize, we are getting into the inner most emotional space of the other. We feel their feeling, and then we are able to articulate an empathic response.

Daniel Goleman, author of the best selling and now classic book, Emotional Intelligence simply defines empathy as "the ability to know how another feels." (p 96) Again, to experience how another feels can be painful.

Exercising empathy is an ability, a capacity we can all create within. It begins with self awareness. Goleman writes, "the more open we are to our own emotions, the more skilled we will be in reading feelings" (p96) It could be argued that the most self aware, the most empathic are those who have known, who know emotional pain and feel it in others. This makes for a good listener. Good listeners

create a safe emotional space around them.

Being aware, having EQ, is one thing. In feeling another's feelings we take a courageous risk. In doing so we go beyond where the dragons lie. It is difficult because on this excursion into another's emotions we discover their pain. Who wants to go there? It's not unlike a rescue mission into a burning building, or caring for a loved one in a hospice, or helping someone up who has fallen and who is bruised and bleeding. We are willing to do the physical thing, but what about the emotional rescue? It creates pain because its painful. We feel it, we communicate it back either verbally or with body language. And there is empathic language. We show empathy:

- by acknowledging another's pain, how they feel, how you feel,
- by showing gratitude that the person opened up,
- by showing an interest,

- by being encouraging,
- by being supportive.

This is not empathy: "Everything happens for a reason," "This too shall pass, "Just look on the bright side," "God has a plan," "I know how you feel."

Here are some key empathic phrases "I can't imagine what you must be going through," "I'm sorry you are going through this," "This must be hard to talk about," "Thanks for opening up to me." "What has this been like for you?" We can also express empathy in a soft gentle tone, and in facial expressions that model how we feel.

Empathy is an emotional art form. And anyone can learn. Anyone! Jesus was the most empathic human to ever live. He felt the other's pain. He feels ours today. He feel's yours now.

Dr Bryan Hagerman
WWW.bryanhagerman.ca
St Paul's Church Outreach Counsellor.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer - April 2021

EASTERN SHORE REGION

April 04

Ecum Secum, Nova Scotia
Archdeacon Marilyn Newport, Priest-in-Charge
St. Barnabas', Ecum Secum
St. John's, Necum Teuch
St. Paul's, Ecum Secum West

Shared Ministry of the Anglican Parishes of Musquodoboit & Ship Harbour

Rev. Andrew Mortimer and Janet

Rev. Marilyn Murphy, Associate Parish Priest
St. Thomas', Musquodoboit Harbour
St. James', Head of Jeddore

Ship Harbour, Nova Scotia

St. Stephen's, Ship Harbour
St. Matthew's, Owl's Head
St. John's, Oyster Pond
St. James', Upper Lakeville

Port Dufferin, Nova Scotia

Rev. Gary Barr, and Gayle
St. James', Port Dufferin
St. Mary's, Harrigan Cove
St. Margaret's, Sober Island
St. Andrew's, Watt Section

April 11

Seaforth, Nova Scotia

Rev. Evelyn Knorr
Rev. Fred Grainger, Associate Parish Priest
St. James', Seaforth
St. Mark's, Porter's Lake
St. Augustine's, Lake Echo
St. Barnabas', Head of Chezretcook

April 18

Tangier, Nova Scotia

Rev. Tricia Ingram, Priest-in-Charge, and Dave Holy Trinity, Tangier
St. James', Spry Bay
St. Andrew's, Spry Harbour
St. Thomas', Mooseland
St. Paul's, Mushaboom
St. Peter's, Murphy Cove St.
Michael's and All Angels, Sheet Harbour

Retired Clergy of Eastern Shore Region:

Rev. Pamela Bishop and Bill
Rev. Kathleen Knott
Rev. Katherine Tait
Rev. Tricia Ingram and Dave

Widows of Eastern Shore Region:

Mrs. Bernice Logan
Mrs. Sandra Wagner

DARTMOUTH REGION

April 25

Christ Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Rev. Kyle Wagner and Julie
Rev. Bonnie Baird, Pastoral Visitor

St. Andrew's, Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia

Rev. Katherine Bourbonniere and Brian
Rev. Walter Beazley, Associate Parish Priest, and Brenda
Rev. Gary Giles, Associate Parish Priest, and Dawn-Marie

Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia

Rev. Cate Ratcliffe
St. Peter's, Eastern Passage
Christ Church, Cow Bay

Rev. Cecil Hebb

Rev. Hebb was born July 19, 1928, in Bridgewater, NS, and passed away February 18, 2021 in South Shore Regional Hospital, Bridgewater.

Rev. Cecil Hebb graduated from Bridgewater High School in 1947 and entered the University of King's College, Halifax, N.S. in the fall of 1947. As a student, he served in Inverness, P.E.I., a mission of the Parish of Port Hill, P.E.I., during the summers of 1950 and 1951. Rev. Hebb received a Bachelor

of Arts degree from Dalhousie University in 1950, a Bachelor of Sacred Letters (B.S.Litt.) degree from King's College in 1953 and was ordained Deacon in King's College Chapel March 25, 1953.

Appointments: Rector of the Parish of Pugwash/Wallace, June 1953; Ordained Priest St. George's Church, Pugwash, June 4, 1954; Rector of the Parish of Ship Harbour, N.S., September 1957; Rector of the Parish of Hubbards, N.S. in June 1963; Rector of the

Parish of St. James', Pictou, N.S., August 1970; and Rector of the Parish of Annapolis/Granville, N.S., December 1981.

Rev. Hebb's retirement became effective in April 1990 when he took up residence in New Glasgow and became a parishioner of St. George's Parish, where he was an Honorary Assistant Priest.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Gerald Ernest "Gerry" Nelson

Age 91, of Dartmouth, died peacefully February 17, 2021, in Parkland at the Lakes, surrounded by family.

Born in Tangier, on September 17, 1929, he was a son of the Rev. Ernest Albert Nelson and Marjorie Olive (Mason) Nelson. Gerry received his early education in the one-room (later two-room) school in Tangier. For Grade 12 he attended King's College School in Windsor. He attended the University of King's College, Dalhousie University, and Nova Scotia Technical College. As an electrical engineer, he served in the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME) of the Canadian Armed Forces, during which time he spent a year with the first UNEF Peacekeeping Group in Egypt. Following his time in the Armed Forces, he worked at EMI Cosser Ltd., taught at NSIT for several years, then became Chief Examination Officer for all certified occupations with the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, including the Red Seal Program.

He was a dedicated Christian in the Anglican tradition,

serving as a Lay Reader, choir member, Eucharistic Minister, Synod delegate, and was a member of various Diocesan and Provincial committees.

Additional volunteer work included over 25 years on the Board of Directors of Dartmouth Community (East Coast) Credit Union (serving 2 years as president) and many years on the Dartmouth Community Concert Association Board of Directors until June, 2020, receiving an Honorary Life Membership. He was also an active member of Mensa Canada, serving for many years as branch treasurer and Proctor for the local area.

Gerry was not only a loving husband and father, but was also a gentleman who made friends easily and could talk to anyone because he loved people. He was once referred to as a sea of calm and patience no matter what storms were raging around. Those qualities also endeared him to his grandchildren who loved to hear his stories of the 'olden' days, such as seeing the Hindenburg pass over Tangier on its final flight or of how his mother and grandmother survived the Halifax Explosion. Being handy at

so many things caused his son-in-law to say Gerry could "fix anything with only stale bread and peanut butter." He was also known for cooking up a great breakfast whenever family was visiting. Of course, we'll always remember the Parmesan cheese incident of 2001! Gerry will be greatly missed by his wife of 60 years, Ethel (Conrad) Nelson; daughters, Dawn (David) Skene, Elizabeth (Steve) Court, and Anne (David) McLeod; grandchildren, Paul and Brian Skene, Charlotte and Evan Court, and Rebecca, Sarah, and Nathan McLeod; sister, Irene Nelson; brother, Sherman Mason; sisters-in-law, June Poole and Linda Knechtel; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents; and his stepfather, Clyde Mason.

Celebration of Life will take place at a later date. Memorial donations may be made to the Primate's World Relief & Development Fund (PWRDF) https://pwrdf.org/Online_condolences_may_be_made_by_visiting_www.atlanticfuneralhomes.com/Dartmouth_Chapel.

Remembering the life lived

At a recent meeting of The Diocesan Times Management Board, it was decided to make obituaries available in the church newspaper. Readers are encouraged to email in the obituary to:

diocesantimes@gmail.com

for print in the next available issue of The Diocesan Times. Some essential and traditional elements of an obituary are:

- Announce the death
- Share their life story:
 - Date and place of birth, marriage, and death
 - Hometown, places lived
 - Schools attended, degrees earned
 - Places of employment and positions held
 - Military service and rank
 - Membership in organizations
 - Place of worship
 - Hobbies or special interests
 - List family members

- Include funeral / memorial information
- Add charity information
- Select a photo

However, some of the most beautiful obituaries are ones that don't follow the standard formula. Whatever style of obituary you choose to write, include as many of these key obituary details as you can.

Faithful Servant stories

At a recent meeting of The Diocesan Times Management Board, it was decided to ask for Faithful Servant stories to share in the church newspaper. Readers are encouraged to send in stories of faithful servants in their parish by email to:

diocesantimes@gmail.com

Consider some of the characteristic traits of Faithfulness:

Commitment: an act of heart and mind, of dedicating one's self to something. In the biblical sense it is dedicating one's

self to the Lord.

Love: to grip our hearts and minds to move us to stay our course.

Longsuffering: to put up with for a long time. This shows in dealing with challenging people and circumstances.

Patience: a calm temperament which bears evil without murmuring or discontent; the act or quality of waiting long for justice; perseverance, consistency in labor; the quality of bearing offenses and injuries without anger,

revenge, or retaliation.

Endurance: a continuing on under pain or distress without yielding to the pressures.

Steadfastness: having a fixed, established, constant, resolute constitution (what you're made of); not fickle or wavering

The one quality helps to continue serving and living for the Lord, is the quality of faithfulness. So please recognize those faithful servants in your parish and share their story in The Diocesan Times.

MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

Diocesan stories of people responding to God's call



Photo: Talk and Tea gathering at the Church Brewing Company pub in Wolfville.

Something to talk about

By REV. CANON LISA G. VAUGHN

A good gab session over a steaming cup of tea is par for the course for Maritimers. Now what comes natural for us is being taken to a new missional level in the town of Wolfville.

Patsy Clothier started hosting *Talk & Tea* last September in a pub, fittingly called The Church Brewing Company. She and three others from the congregation, St. John's (Parish of Horton), each invite a friend or two to a weekday afternoon gathering.

"The manager, Brandon, reserves the Sanctuary for us," Patsy said. "We all sit around

a large table with our beverage and for the first half hour we just chat. Then a wee talk is made on respecting one another and giving everyone a voice." Next, they bring out questions, using Faith Sharing Cards.

"The cards are placed face down on the table and each person picks one. If they don't like it, they can exchange it with someone, which has been creating quite a bit of laughter!" she explained. "Then the answers begin with great conversation and interest."

Patsy, a participant in The Connectors TWO, our diocesan missional leadership learning cohort, first brought

the idea to her peer group. "I mentioned that I would like to hold a *Talk & Tea*, but didn't know where to hold it. As everyone shared their thoughts, a lot of ideas came to light and the idea of the Church Pub came from someone in the group." She said, "I took the group's advice and looked into it. I was amazed at the encouragement to hold the *Talk & Tea* there, given to me by the Pub's manager."

The missional lay leader's main goal for this ministry is to create a relaxed, safe environment for people to explore Christian spirituality. Patsy cited an article by John Bowen in *Green Shoots Out of Dry Ground*, where she read

Faith Sharing Cards Sample Questions:

- Describe a turning point in your life.
- Tell us about the time you first became aware of God.
- Name a person who has significantly influenced your life. How?
- Share an experience when you were filled with gratitude.
- If God could give you any spiritual gift or ability, what would you ask for and why?
- Where is a holy place for you and what in particular makes it holy?
- Share about a time when you gave a gift in which you received more than you gave.

**To download and print a pdf of Faith Sharing Question, visit www.nspeidiocese.ca*

that "mission is God's idea and God is love." Another author, Michael Frost, sparked her imagination. "The wee book, *Surprise the World*, tells us to bless, eat, drink, listen and learn," she said. "Therefore, I feel sharing a cup of tea anywhere would be doing His work as we love, bless, drink tea, listen and learn with the people who attend our *Talk*

& Tea times, and will want to come back."

Attendance changes somewhat from gathering to gathering, but about half of those who come are not actively connected to a faith community.

"They partake in all conversations and seem to enjoy the questions, giving very good answers," said Patsy. "Interest is indicative from the laughter and positive comments made during and after the *Talk & Tea* times. Also, the people attending for the first time, want to return."

Patsy says guests come to the gatherings at The Church Brewing Company for a variety of reasons. "They are in search of connection, where they can feel good about themselves and their relationship with others, have fun, enjoy company, 'sup' together, make friends, laugh, and I hope to ask faith-related-questions in time." She said, "They seem hungry for a new way to worship, for conversation with genuine listening, to feel a sense of belonging and perhaps renew their enthusiasm for their own faith."

For now, Patsy plans to continue *Talk & Tea*. "The dream is to have more people every time we meet," she said. "And, to further the Kingdom of Heaven for Him who loves us!"

Christmas is long over...



By MARY STONE

Christmas is long over but as of March 6 my Christmas Cactus hadn't realize this.... it has been budding and blooming since November. My 6 year old areca palm plant, for the very first time, suddenly started to bloom this year – branches of teeny yellow balls. It even looks like my little white poinsettia is going to bloom again. And my beautiful orchid is sporting some gorgeous flowers once

more. What are my plants trying to tell me....

Is it that I have been super conscientious about watering, feeding and caring for them this year and they are rewarding me for my care? Some gardeners will say that plants bloom when they are stressed, maybe they are feeling the stress of the pandemic. Whatever the reason, they bring me joy and a feeling of hopefulness. Beauty is all around.

There is another beauty that I have been experiencing lately. Over the past few months I have been privileged to attend COVID 19 Zoom meetings with Mothers' Union members from many parts of the world. I am slowly getting to recognize them via this online platform – Themsbie and Matito from South Africa, Anne from Australia, Georgianna from Liberia, Jessica from

South Sudan, Joan from New Zealand, Jocelyn from East Africa, Abi, Rob, Naomi and Jeanette from Mary Sumner House in the UK, Sophie from Kenya, Marianna from Argentina, Lena from Guyana, and more. It is a mini United Nations on Zoom!

In years past most of these people would meet every three years in the UK and recently, in Rwanda in 2019. Now, partially thanks to the onset of COVID 19, people from all parts of the world are meeting and sharing regularly on line – getting to know each other and drawing closer as an organization. One part that I particularly love about these Zoom sessions is when someone says a prayer in their own language... it is like music and with such feeling!

Each of these meetings, beginning at 6:30 in the morning (!), focuses on the

work of Mothers' Union around the world.

The focus of the first session I attended was how Mothers' Union branches were bringing attention to Gender Based Violence in their countries and dioceses. One thing that is apparent is that domestic violence and gender-based violence are worldwide issues. We can never stop bringing light to this and creating a deeper awareness.

At another session, two representatives from WHO (World Health Organization) spoke about the issues with the pandemic and the spread of COVID 19. The concerns are the same around the world, but it was interesting to note the lack of information and understanding that some countries have. They were most thankful to hear information from these qualified persons and planned

to take this information back to their communities.

The most recent session was focused on the Mothers' Union Church and Community Mobilization program and what dioceses around the world are accomplishing. Many of the countries have already begun projects under names such as Awaken, Eagle, and Metamorphosis. You can see a theme in these names – they are projects that help stimulate communities to action and bring about positive change.

As we move into the season of Easter, may we realize that hope and beauty are all around us as exhibited by the plants, people and programs that we encounter.

The winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come... Song of Solomon 2:11-12



Survive, thrive, lead: on being called to the side of

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

Paraclete: Two Definitions

1. "The translation of the Greek term meaning 'called to the side of' and hence 'advocate'...As the Fourth Gospel (John) makes clear, the Paraclete is the Holy Spirit... who continues the work of Jesus himself."

- Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, 1996, p. 806

2. "The word, 'paraclete' is one of those rich Greek words that are difficult to translate completely. A Paraclete is someone who defends and comforts and speaks up for and helps a weak person. So, the word 'paraclete' can be translated as 'advocate', as well as 'Comforter', 'consoler' or 'helper'...."

- Jean Vanier, Drawn Into the Mystery of Jesus Through the Gospel of John, p. 260

BEING CALLED TO THE SIDE OF

As I write this article, today marks day 39 of my Dad's admission to the hospital. A fall at home revealed that his heart rate had dropped to 32, which landed him in the ER at the

QEII.

The remedy, a routine surgery to install a pacemaker. However, my Dad has a serious kidney disease and complications following the surgery have taken us on an arduous journey together, one that no one ever wishes to make.

The complications after the surgery left my father unable to speak for himself. I've had to be his voice, to speak for him and to fight for him, to show the countless doctors, nurses, physical therapists and support staff who he is when he's not lying vulnerable, voiceless and helpless in a hospital bed at the tender age of 80. Thankfully, I was ready.

Even still, this has not been an easy task, with fourteen moves (so far) from ICU to IMCU to unit to unit and back again. The journey has required my near-constant presence at the hospital, retelling Dad's medical history and story dozens and dozens of times, every time his medical team has changed, or new specialists have come to consult. All while confronting the very real possibility that he might die. And, I've seen countless other families going

through the same experience, as well as the elders in our midst who have no one to speak for them — this breaks my heart most of all.

When we speak for loved ones in hospital, we are given a name by the staff, and it is one we are no stranger to as followers of Jesus: Advocate. For the sake of one another, we should all be prepared to be one if and when a tragedy strikes.

PROMISE FULFILLED

Yesterday, my Dad finally turned the corner and we now know that he will make a full recovery and be able to come home. And the one thing that carried us through this harrowing time and will carry us through the days ahead is this promise of Jesus fulfilled.

Knowing that God dwells within us, and that because of this unbreakable bond of love we share with Jesus and our Creator, there is nothing that we won't be able to face and move through together.

No matter how debilitating, or terrifying, or exhausting or hopeless things may seem, we always remind ourselves of

these precious words of Jesus in our prayers before parting each night:

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you....On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you."

- John 14: 16-17, 20, NRSV

OUR PRAYER FOR YOU

So, Dad and I now have a prayer for you, as you might also be making a journey such as ours: that you will know the presence of God who carries us, the presence of God within you, the Paraclete who will carry you.

I leave you with one of my favourite reflections on this spiritual truth, written by Jean Vanier — the founder of L'Arche — in his book entitled, Drawn Into the Mystery of Jesus Through the Gospel of John:

"What a beautiful name! God is the one who answers the cry of the weak and those in need.

A mother is a "paraclete" for her child when she answers the cry of her little one, holds and loves him or her. Every time we look after a person in need and answer their cry, we become paracletes... (as) Jesus was a Paraclete for his disciples." (p. 260)

May we all know and feel — deep in our hearts — the power and presence of the Paraclete who dwells within us and carries us when we are weak. And, may we all be ready to be paracletes when we hear the cry of the one who needs us to come to their side and speak when they cannot speak for themselves.

In the May Issue, I'll explore the practical things that you and your family can do together to be prepared for a time such as this.

Photo Credit: @awmleer, Unsplash

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

It's A New Day!

Curiosity compels the Church



Photo: A well-loved Curious George.

BY REV. CANON LISA G. VAUGHN

My all-time favourite stuffy when I was a child was Curious George. The accompanying story books written by Margret and H. A. Rey captivated me as I rejoiced in that little monkey's questioning, adventurous spirit.

In some circles asking questions, being curious might be considered rude or even judgmental. However, in Churchland today, it is absolutely necessary to encourage rigorous queries and open-minded inquisitiveness. This is not to spark anxiety or lay any type of blame. Healthy curiosity is required as we listen to God, discern and flourish in our ministries.

It's interesting to note the frequency and prominence of great questions in the scriptures. In fact, Jesus often posed questions to his audience and followers. Sometimes he even answered a question with another question. Our Lord was modelling and encouraging us to pose the deep, powerfully relevant questions. These are the ones that require far more than an easy answer or a shallow, opinionated response.

Lovett H. Weems, an author and consultant with Lewis Center for Church Leadership, says "Leaders do not need answers. Leaders must have the right questions." He writes, "Leaders spend far too much time trying to figure out the 'right answers' to a range of issues facing congregational life



Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn, Diocesan Parish Vitality Coordinator

while that time would be more profitably used in discerning a few key questions that can change the direction of a church."

Searching and inquiring clarifies our vocational identity and helps us prioritize where God is calling and how we can take action. It is also essential for evaluation and measuring the spiritual fruit that's being borne from our ministry efforts.

Sessions of inquiry and intentional examination with various stakeholders and others also relationally engages people and helps them feel valued. Professor Weems says, "Probing questions honour others and provide additional information for you and those with whom you are engaging. The customary reactions of 'I think' or 'my take on it is' tend to limit options rather than expand them."

As we gradually emerge from COVID-19 lockdown our congregations are prayerfully considering their next steps in this new era. Here are a few questions to explore:

- Why do people need Christ?
- What is the purpose of church?

- How can we describe our missional call?
- Who are we to be in this time and place?
- As ministers by way of our baptism and disciples (apprentices) called to serve the world God loves, how are we actually living this out?
- Given what we have been through as a faith community, what is the difference God is calling us to make now?
- What will it take to lead our parishioners on the journey through grief and loss, rather than around it?
- If we were establishing our congregation's life and ministry from scratch, what do we need to be doing and to what would we be investing our time, energy and money?
- What did COVID reveal about your ministry team, staff and organization?
- What ministries are we engaged in that give life, energy and joy to our people?
- What ministries are draining or are no longer flourishing?
- What is the Spirit doing in our neighbourhood and how can we join in?
- Who are the people in your area who are forgotten, overlooked or underappreciated?
- As you look around your community, what would break Jesus' heart?

- If Christ showed up in your neighbourhood, where would he hang out?

Seeking clarity and deep insight in responding to these questions will be critical as parish leaders make wise decisions about moving forward (now and) post-pandemic. Capture the questions and comments, as well as any surprising learnings. Find ways to share these with congregation members. Sift and pray, then take wise and bold steps to respond to God's promptings to transform and grow your ministry life together.

Naturally being curious means we acknowledge we don't have all the answers. It also signals that we are open-minded and open-hearted to the movement and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We engage in searching and questioning with great humility, a sense of wonder, and eagerness to be faithful to the missional call of God.

"The test for those who ask questions is not whether the questions were asked but rather, has the ministry improved through such listening?", Lovett Weems says. "People will appreciate participation, but they most want to make a difference for God's work in the congregation and the world."

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



Let the music play on

BY REV JOHN MORRELL

With the reopening of the church in the fall, we were blessed to have musicians Jim White and Carol Campbell Smith sing two songs before the service began. With the permission to sing softly through our masks, Organist Faye Jefferson was now able

to accompany hymns - usually only two and two or three verse from each. Occasionally Denise White would also do a solo during the Offering. Rev. John Morrell led Palm Sunday (March 28th) Services at Holy Trinity, Middleton Corners and St. John's. Easter like Christmas at St. John's was by

reservation as seating is still limited by COVID 19 restrictions. Contact Mary Tothill for a place. Other activities like Gospel Nights and Sunday Breakfasts are still on hold until the pandemic relents.

Photo: Jim White and Carol Campbell Smith at the start of Sunday service.

Teach Us to Pray:

the rhyme, and potential reason, of words



Photo: Prayer journal pages

I have always loved words, loved the tempo, nuance, rhyme, and potential reason, sounds make. I've also always loved to write, to play with words. Over the years I've written plenty, some for "work" and at other delicious times, for the pure pleasure of deliberately stringing words together, all attempts to make sense of the world. As a teen, I fancied myself a poet; spending long hours auditioning words for their import and cadence, all for the delight, and perhaps consternation, of others to hear and read.

There's no denying the abundance of verbiage in the world – often more

words than our heads and hearts can hope to hold. But in the privacy of those same heads and hearts, the written word at its finest can propel us to passion, or better yet, compassion. The "right" word launches ingenuity, can compel us for good, and help articulate our deepest longings and our highest aspirations. Words can hearten us to make what a friend once described as "the best possible offering of ourselves".

I've never been able to write "on demand" (just ask my long-suffering editor!). I've never been able to keep a consistent daily diary or journal, though I have several beautiful and largely



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

empty, journals on my shelf. Because words seem to come to me in intermittent waves, I do keep a journal "of sorts", replete with fragments of poems and parts of paragraphs – and yes, some promises too.

I think I can honestly call this a "prayer journal" because in a way, it is a record of my ongoing interaction with God. Reading through, I can trace the experiences and thoughts I, at least at the time, deemed noteworthy. It's like a time-capsule, preserving those encounters, both pivotal and mundane, keeping track of my personal history with God. Similar to the Ignatian "Blessed History"

exercise, it's a kind of spiritual autobiography. Mine is more of a photo album, snapshots of times and places where, like the Psalmist, I have sensed God accompaniment and protection. It's not all rosy though; it also catalogues times of doubt and fear and failing, when I have pleaded: "Keep me, O God, as the apple of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings." (Psalm 17:8)

Many before us have kept a prayer journal, witness Dame Julian's *Showings*, Dag Hammarskjöld's *Markings*, Henri Nouwen's *Gethsemane Diary* or Luci Shaw's *God in the Dark*. These form part of the canon, a long and storied tradition of the prayerful musings of the faithful. Some are literary masterpieces, others, like mine, fragments in a search for God. There is no right way or wrong way to "keep" a prayer journal. What matters is that when you're moved to, just do it!

For many years, I've most regularly written these "bon mots" while on retreat. They are notes of the speaker's words, notes of what the speaker's words provoked in me. There are lines from the hymns sung or words from the prayers

prayed. There are lots of questions – and even a few answers! But what has made even this occasionally incoherent collection particularly precious to me at the moment, is that in these Covid-days of no travel and therefore no retreats, the re-reading of my journal has afforded me manna in the desert, provided water to slake my thirst in the drought, and yes, even given me words for my halting prayers.

I'm thankful for the way, even years later, my prayer journal continues to focus me in these uncertain times. I'm grateful for how it clarifies thoughts and feelings and keeps me honest, with myself – and more especially, with God. Perhaps such a journal could offer similar solace to you – as you examine your own blessed history.

REV. FRANCES DROLET-SMITH
DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE,
THE ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF
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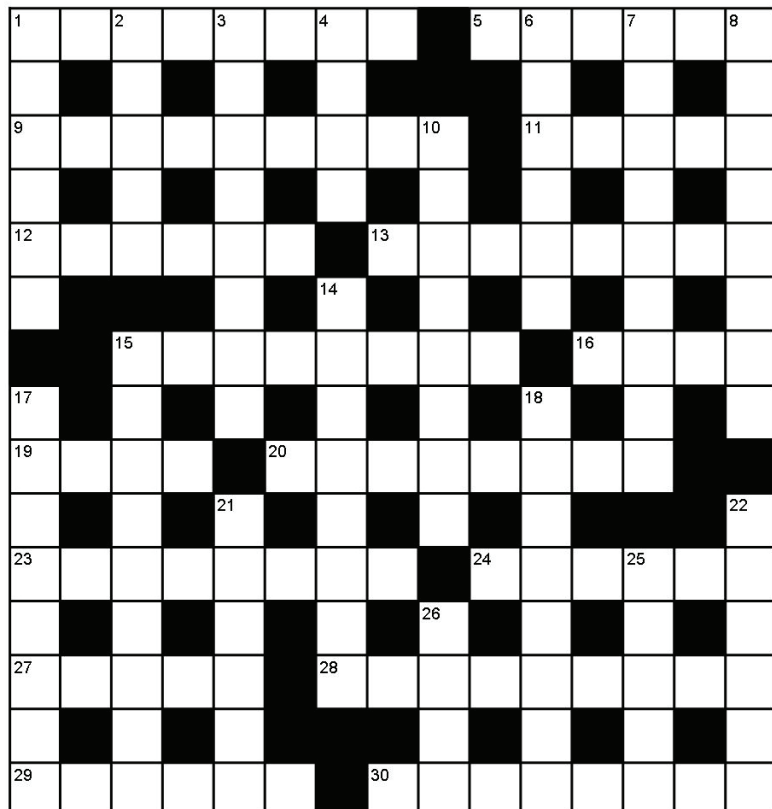
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Bible Crossword

by Maureen Yeats



APRIL Puzzle



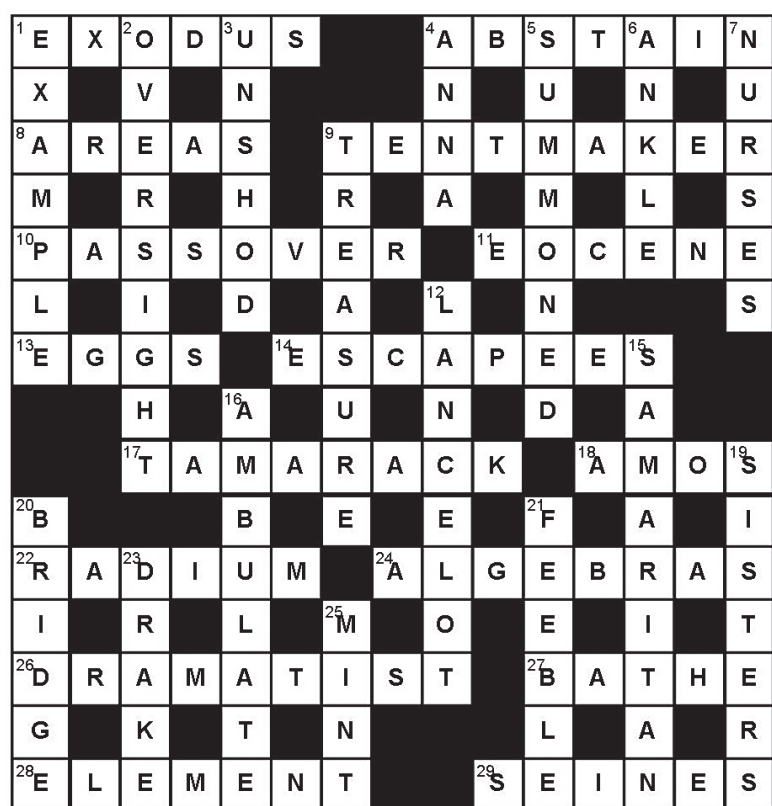
ACROSS:

- 1- Old Testament book (6)
- 4- Refrain from (7)
- 8- Regions (5)
- 9- St. Paul's occupation (see Acts 18) (9)
- 10- Jewish feast first celebrated in Egypt (Exod. 11-13)
- 11- A specific geological time period (6)
- 13- What hens and ducks lay (4)
- 14- Those that get away from prison (8)
- 17- Deciduous conifer also known as hackmatack (8)
- 18- Old Testament minor prophet (4)
- 22- Radioactive element isolated by Mme. Curie (6)
- 24- Certain branches of mathematics (8)
- 26- Playwright (9)
- 27- Wash with water (5)
- 28- One of over 100 that make up all matter (7)
- 29- Type of fishing nets (6)

DOWN:

- 1- "For I have set you an ____." model (John 13:15)
- 2- Supervision (9)
- 3- Barefoot (6)
- 4- There was also a prophet, ____ the daughter of Phanuel" (Luke 2:36) (4)
- 5- "Then Jesus ____ his twelve disciples." called (Matt. 10:1) (8)
- 6- Joint between the foot and the leg (5)
- 7- Trained carers, found especially in hospitals (6)
- 9- "For where your ____ is, there your heart will be also." valuable things (Luke 12:34) (8)
- 12- A knight of the Round Table (8)
- 15- Resident of Samaria (9)
- 16- Walk (8)
- 19- Female siblings (7)
- 20- Structure spanning a river (6)
- 21- Physically weak (6)
- 23- Male duck (5)
- 25- Type of candy (4)

MARCH Solution



ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN BOARD

Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island
Do Justice, Love Kindness..... "Walk Humbly with your God"


2020-2021 PROJECT

Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter
Parents Supporting Parents Facilitator Training


The National Project 20/21 has the Anglican Church Women Diocesan Board partnering with the Canadian Mothers' Union to raise funds for the Mothers' Union Supporting Parents Facilitator Training Course in the Council of the North.

Participants from Indigenous Communities with a passion for children and family, once trained as facilitators, will return to their respective communities to engage their local parents in a free forum that encourages the sharing of stories and experiences, while building a lasting support network. *Supporting Parents: Stories That Matter* is an equal opportunity initiative in the Council of the North. **Your support is welcome!**

Please make cheques payable to Anglican Church Women Board, Annual Project noted in memo line. Mail to:



Marjorie Davis, Treasurer
 Anglican Church Women Board
 204 – 111 Pebblecreek Drive, Dartmouth, NS B2W 0L1



The board will be accepting donations for this project until April 2021.

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The value of one; the power of many

CYNTHIA PILICHOS, ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN DIOCESAN BOARD

The past, present, and future are encompassed in the theme for **National Volunteer Week 2021 (April 18 – 24): The Value of One. The Power of Many.** It is felt by Volunteer / Benevoles Canada to be a theme that honours the past, in that 2021 is the 20th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers when Canada selected *The Value of One. The Power of Many.* for National Volunteer Week 2001. With respect to the present, the theme reflects the individual and collective efforts so evident during the pandemic; regarding the future, it sets the tone for re-imagining the next 20 years, as the value of individual action and the power of many enables us to thrive together. So, with the past, present, and future all present in *The Value of One. The Power of Many.*, we can contemplate what this National Volunteer Week 2021 theme means for our women and men in the parishes.

Our parishes could not

function, before, during, or after a pandemic, without the lay ministry of so many. While we often in churchland prefer to use the word “ministry” in place of “volunteerism”, what Volunteer Canada says about volunteerism is relevant for the lay ministry of our parishes, especially with the continuing and sustained emphasis on our parishes being “missional”. It is felt that the theme, *The Value of One. The Power of Many.*, conveys “the awe-inspiring acts of kindness by [so many] individuals AND the magic that happens when we work together towards a common purpose”. Does this not describe our parishes when women and men, individually and collectively: *Do Justice . . . Love Kindness . . . [and] Walk Humbly with [our] God,* the theme from Micah 6:8 for Anglican Church Women 2020/21?

It is worth noting that 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of 3 significant milestones for the non-profit and charitable sector in Canada:

1. The International Year of Volunteers in 2001, as already noted;
2. The launching of the first

Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement; and,
 3. The signing of an Accord between the Government of Canada and the (voluntary) non-profit and charitable sector.

It is further noted by Volunteer Canada that 2021 is a year to equip and position the volunteer/non-profit/charitable sector for the next 20 years, in order “to restore, regroup, rethink, and renovate our . . . place in society, as we all navigate the impact of the pandemic and take action on racism and social injustice.” Does this not speak to our baptismal covenant to “strive for justice and peace among all people . . . respect[ing] the dignity of every human being”?

We have all witnessed what Volunteer Canada has noted, that this past year “saw people supporting family, friends, neighbours, and strangers; people standing up to systemic racism; and people sharing insights on how to create a more just and equitable society.” We acknowledge, along with Volunteer Canada, the value of “the caring and compassion” that has been

shown to one another, and we recognize “the power of people, organizations, and sectors working together . . . to bring about monumental change.”

Volunteer Canada is putting out a rallying cry with National Volunteer Week 2021 – April 18 – 24 and its theme: *The Value of One. The Power of Many.* It is laying the foundation for the next 20 years by:
 1. Keeping the spotlight on the contributions of volunteers, while addressing critical social, economic, and environmental issues;
 2. Adapting and re-launching the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, to better reflect the new landscape in volunteer engagement and emerging trends; and,
 3. Refreshing and re-signing the Accord between the Government of Canada and the (voluntary) non-profit and charitable sector.

As we celebrate the joy and vibrancy of the Easter season 2021, think how your parish can show appreciation for the vitality of its lay ministry during Canada’s National Volunteer Week, April 18 –



24. Did you know that the Anglican Church Women Board has a Certificate of Recognition that can be presented to a deserving individual, or more than one, in your parish? And there is nothing to say that the deserving candidate has to be a woman! These certificates are available @ \$5 each, along with a presentation folder, by contacting the Board: acw.nsboard@gmail.com

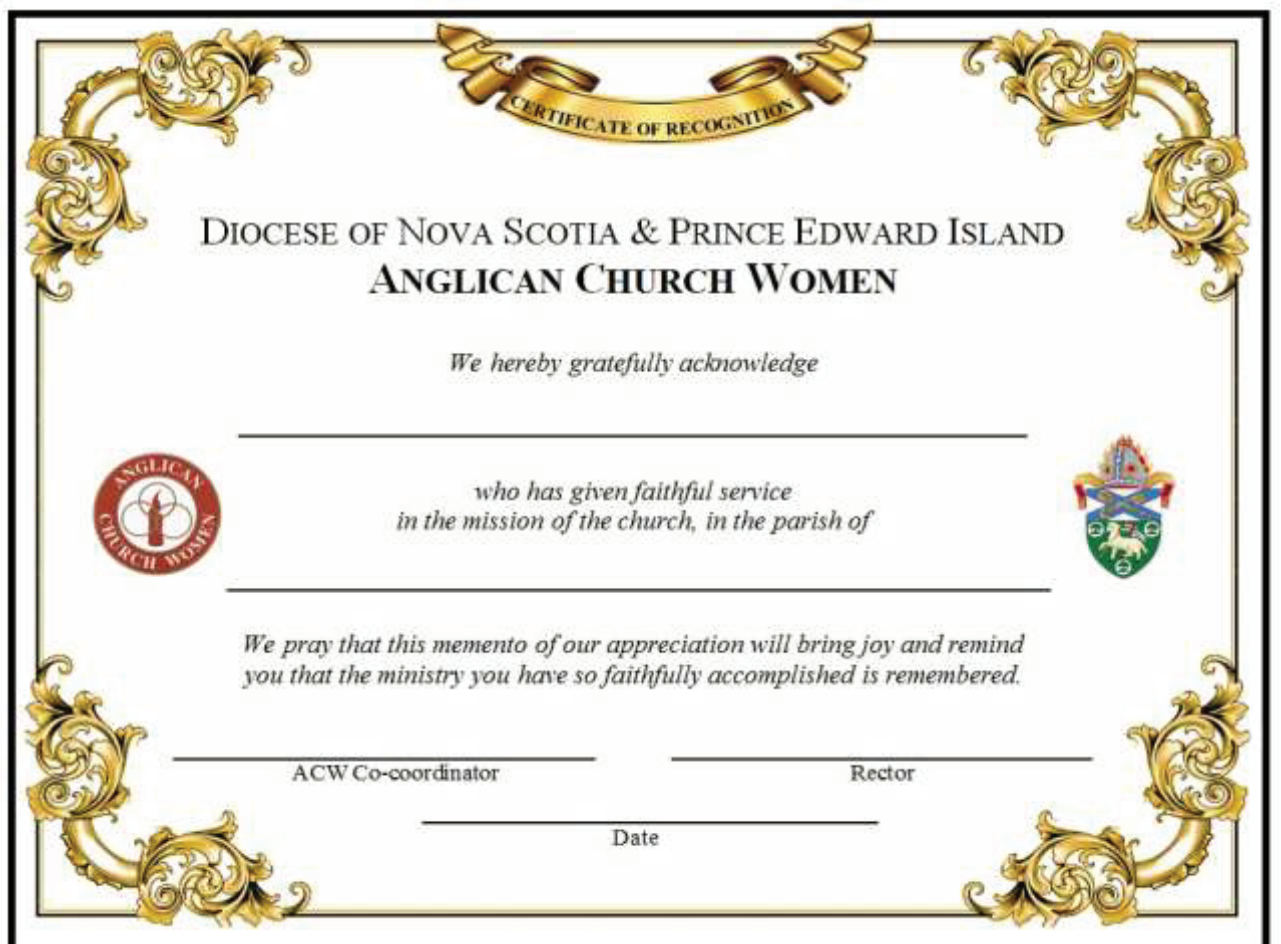
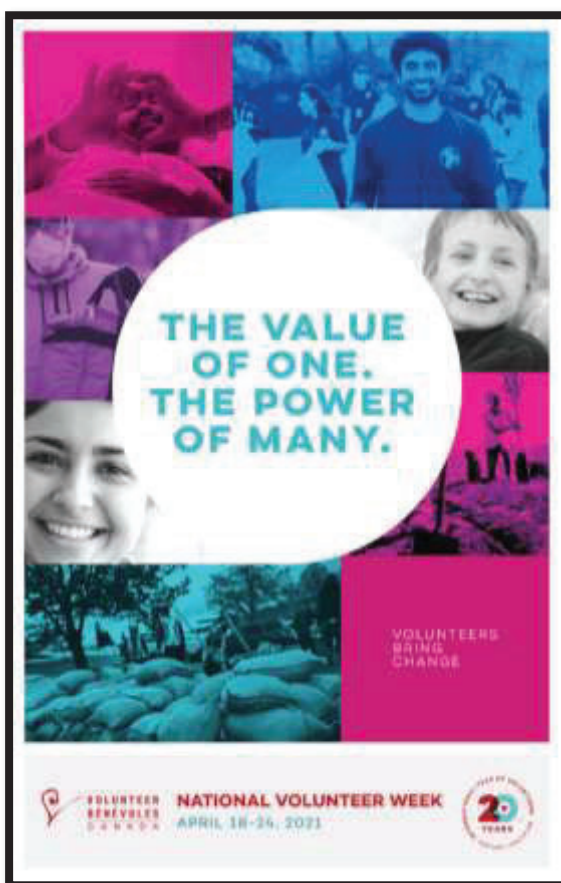
Each and every individual in your parish has value and when these valuable individuals work together to accomplish God’s mission, amazing things happen, just as the *Value of One. The Power of Many.* demonstrates. Happy National Volunteer Week!

ANGELICAN CHURCH WOMEN BOARD, *Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island*

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The pilgrimage is over

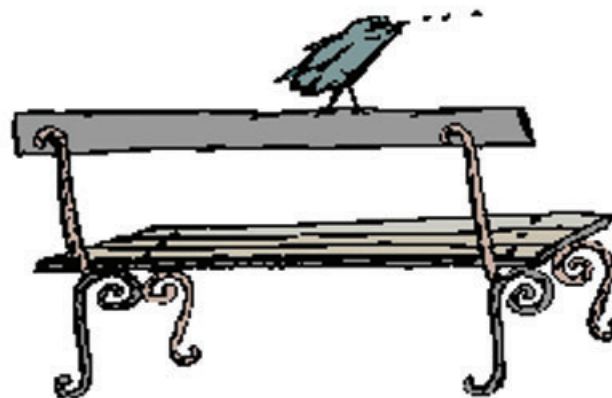


BY DEACON RAY CARTER

Britannica defines pilgrimage as “a journey undertaken for a religious motive. Although some pilgrims have wandered continuously with no fixed destination, pilgrims more commonly seek a specific place that has been sanctified by association with a divinity or other holy personage”.

The specific place the pilgrim was going through lent was the empty sepulchre of Jesus. What other pilgrimages have you made in your life? Perhaps you have hiked the Camino Nova Scotia, or like me, the Camino Santiago, both of which include a church as a destination.

Some pilgrimages include a destination that has been described as a “thin place”. Have you ever heard someone use this term to describe a place? They may have been recounting an inspirational site visited on a pilgrimage or talking about how journeying into creation draws them closer to God. Maybe they were not talking about a physical place at all, but rather a Sacred moment brought on by a spiritual practice or an incident that pierced their soul. St Augustine said “A single tear shed at the remembrance of the Passion of Jesus is worth more than a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or a year of fasting on bread and water. “In any event a thin place is a location



View from the Deacon's Bench

or moment in which our sense of the Sacred is more pronounced, where the space between the transcendent and the commonplace is very narrow. This phrase has apparently been in use for a very long time and apparently has its roots in the mystical world of Celtic Christians, and the Franciscan Richard Rohr has an interesting take on thin places. (<https://cac.org/finding-the-sacred-everywhere-2015-07-06/>)

I am very fortunate because I have experienced the thin places in both kinds, a physical place and through spiritual practice. One of the physical thin places I experienced was Mount LA Verna in Tuscany. This is the place where Saint Francis received the stigmata (wounds of Christ) while on a

forty-day retreat and fast two years before his death. I freely admit that when I visited the Chapel of the Stigmata, built over the spot where the event occurred, the hair on my neck and arms was standing straight up! The closeness of the Divine was palpable!

There are many spiritual practices available to us, some of which work for us as individuals and some which do not. I think there is a lot of individual preference here. The trick is to try as many as possible and hopefully find one that takes you to a thin place. This is a pilgrimage in itself!

Some of the things readily available to us here in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are Christian Meditation (both virtually and in person in

some areas), the Ignation First Spiritual Exercises, the “Pray as You Can” series on zoom which has offered everything from the Anglican Rosary to the Way of the Cross. These are just a few that come to mind, but I am sure there are many, many more in the Diocese. The point is, if you participate in some of these you may very well find one that takes you to the thin places, where the reward is great indeed!

So I guess the pilgrimage is not over, just the one through lent. And we did arrive at a thin place when we arrived at the empty tomb, because the fact that it is empty tells us The Lord Is Risen! How much closer to the Devine can we get than that? Our pilgrimage through life continues and we continue to seek God in all places and events so that we may experience that which is Holy.

In closing, I would like to share some words by the poet Sharlande Sledge who writes:

*the door between the world
and the next is cracked open for
a moment*

*and the light is not all on the
other side.*

God shaped space. Holy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NO SYNOD IN MAY 2021

Owing to continued COVID restrictions, and in consultation with Chancellor James Travers, Bishop Sandra has determined that there will be no regular gathering of Synod in May 2021, and has informed Diocesan Council. Canonically we are required to hold Synod within two years of the last Synod. Since we held an electoral Synod in the fall, no Synod is required until September 2022. The main reason for the decision was the difficulty of holding a Synod with multiple items on the agenda when large in person gatherings may still not be possible. There is no firm date set for the next gathering of Synod. As we see how the pandemic unfolds, we

will have a clearer picture of when we can gather as Synod. It is suggested that parishes continue to elect Synod delegates, just as in normal years with no Synod. If you have questions, please email to bishopsoffice@nspeidiocese.ca.

Rev. Will Ferrey,
Executive Secretary of Synod

Rev. Cathy Pharo appointed priest-in-charge for the parish of Crapaud effective Feb 25th.

Archdeacon Sue Channen appointed priest-in-charge for the parish of New Glasgow effective Feb 16th, 2021

Rev. Deborah Lonergan-Freake appointed priest-in-charge for the parish of Digby effective Feb 16th, 2021

Rev. Canon Lynn Uzans appointed priest-in-charge for the parish of New Ross, effective February 5th. She will continue to serve as assistant priest in the parish of Wilmot.

Mr. Glen Greencorn submitted his resignation as Diocesan Controller and will retire from the diocese effective April 30th, 2021. We are grateful for Glen's guidance and leadership in this role over the past two years and are working to ensure a smooth transition of his responsibilities.

Archdeacon Sue Channen submitted her resignation as rector of the parish of Three Harbours, effective May 31st, 2021, when she will move into retirement.



Photo: Rev John Morrell presents Archdeacon Gordon Redden with his retirement cards.

The Diocesan Human Resources VSST met on Thursday Feb 11th to have its first face-to-face meeting since last March. The majority of the time of gathering was to thank newly retired Executive Archdeacon

Gordon Redden for his long-term presence and guidance to the committee. He was presented with a retirement card and a gift card to La Bistro Restaurant.