

## Finding sacred moments on Cape Breton Island

*The Prelude by Selma Doucet:*

*In mid May I received a request from Janice Robie representing the diocese, requesting support from my area North of Cape Smokey for a pre-ordination retreat for a candidate from Pittsburg, Pa. He wished to camp at Meat Cove in Cape Breton (but did request accommodations, if possible) and someone to do the daily offices with him, some meditation, a Eucharist, etc, etc. I offered the accommodations and then sent the request to Rev. Carolyn Sharp, our rector at Ingonish and Neil's Harbour and the rest is the story that follows in Tommy's own words..... quite a saga.*

BY TOMMY THOMPSON  
CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION

**"Nothing short of thankful."**

These words, lyrics to one of my favorite songs by my favorite band, The Avett Brothers, come to mind as I reflect on my recent pre-ordination retreat which I

spent in the beautiful province of Nova Scotia (with one day in Prince Edward Island).

I am a bit of an "outside of the box" kind of person. So, when our Commission on Ministry told me they would like me to take a retreat before my ordination as a transitional deacon, I was thinking a little differently than one might imagine when one thinks of a pre-ordination retreat.

For many the natural inclination is to call a monastery and book a few days there for quiet, contemplation, prayer, fellowship, and so forth. And the monastery does appeal to me, but, as I said, I'm an odd duck. As I began to pray about the kind of pre ordination retreat I should take, I kept being reminded of the wonderful stories I've heard from other motorcycle riders who had taken the pilgrimage to the



... Continued on page 5 Photo: Some of the striped bass caught in Cape Breton

## Sunday school alive and well in Mahone Bay!

BY STEVE FORAN

As Thanksgiving is upon us it is time to express our gratitude. This picture is of the 2016 St. James Anglican Sunday School in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. While the church is the backbone of this great program, Tom Ernst is definitely the heart. As Sunday school coordinator, he provides a welcoming environment for the religious community's children. Tom, along with his wife Beth, have given and continue to give their knowledge, support, time and faith to the Sunday school program generously. With his leadership, we are proud to boast a current enrollment of over 50 children. The classes start at primary and go all the way to a senior class consisting of teenagers and young adults. Along with the religious curriculum, Tom always welcomes open discussion and



includes life lessons to help guide the older students. Tom's dedication and commitment to St. James has

inspired many generations of students and fellow teachers to follow in his dedicated path. From the Sunday school and

Parish,  
Thank you Tom.

Photo: The 2016 Sunday school students and teachers at St. James' Anglican Church, Mahone Bay, NS.



# COLUMNIST

## The Laying on of Hands, the First Eucharist

We had the joy and privilege of seeing our new rector ordained into the Priesthood of Christ's Church. It was such a special day in the life of our parish and in the life of the community at large. But the one who was the most affected was, of course, Jason. We had been preparing for this day for many weeks here By the Bog. We had restored the church bell to its rightful place in the steeple. The choir had been working on special music with extra work on the hymn "Come Holy Ghost", the hymn that they would sing with the Bishop. Jason wanted to list it in the bulletin as "Veni, Creator Spiritus" but his wife Miranda talked him out of that saying folks would think he was too "high church". Miranda has a levelling effect on Jason... He does tend to get very excited and over ambitious at times.

The Altar Guild had sent the white hangings and vestments out to be dry cleaned, the brass was shined to within an inch of its life as my dear mother used to say, and vacuums and Swiffers had been flying in both chance and nave at St. Bart's. We were ready!

Jason and the bishop had selected October 18th, the Feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist, to be the day of the ordination. That date fell on a Tuesday and an evening service worked out well for all



ST. BART'S BY THE BOG

Sarah Neish

concerned.

The retired clergy in our parish family had a quiet day with Jason the day before the service and shared some of their own memories of Ordination. I think it was 'high and mighty' Jim who said that this particular feast day would remain a special time in Jason's life forever, ranking right up there with his wedding day and the birth of his children. It would be a day when he would always want to celebrate the Eucharist and give thanks to God for the gift of ministry.

On a cool Tuesday evening the faithful of St. Bart's By the Bog filled the church. Many of the local clergy from other parishes came to share in the "Laying on of Hands". The Baptist minister from down

the road was there and the United Church congregation and the Roman Catholic Church were represented. St. Bart's had never seen so many ministers gathered under its roof! The local volunteer Firefighters were present in their uniforms and we could see them smile and nudge one another as Benny Smith rang the church bell to tell the world that our Jason was soon to become a Priest.

Irene James and the choir did themselves with a special anthem and they supported the Bishop as he sang the Veni Creator as he referred to it! One of Jason's college professors preached. Not many of us understood much of the sermon; a bit too academic was my Orin's feeling on the subject! Baby Charlie slept through most of the service in his Granny's arms and Miranda beamed with pride and love the whole time.

Of course the Ladies Guild missed the final hymn because we had to rush over to the Hall and get ready for the reception to follow. "Twas ever thus" was our Ladies Guild President's statement as she unwrapped the plates of sandwiches and squares for the feast.

It was indeed a very special evening in our life as a parish. We gave Father J gifts and hugs and a big slab of chocolate cake, his favourite

we've learned!

Even more special to me personally was the small service the next morning when Jason, Father J celebrated the Eucharist for the first time. It was the first of a weekly midweek Eucharist he planned to establish at St. Bart's. There were about 15 of us there, those of us who could be there, those of us who knew the significance of this service for Jason. His Mom and Dad were there, his in-laws, his wife and son; his two retired clergy parishioners, his Church Wardens, Benny Smith and a few others who wanted to be there for him. And me.

He was very nervous but 'high and mighty' Jim stepped in to 'serve' for him. There will be many, dare I say thousands more times when Father Jason celebrates the Holy Mysteries but I am sure he will remember this time for the rest of his life; and so will we.

Life soon returned to normal in The Bog, the Cranberries ripened and were harvested, the Fall Bazaar was planned and held and our Rector could be seen in his parish with his people, picking berries, at the Altar every Sunday and Wednesday mornings, walking his wee son along the road before bedtime. Life goes on at St. Bart's.

I'll keep you posted.  
Aunt Madge



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THE PARISH OF ██████████ AND ██████████ WITH ██████████, ██████████, ██████████ AND ██████████

- WE ARE LOOKING FOR A PERSON OF PRAYER WITH GOOD PREACHING AND PASTORAL SKILLS
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- THERE IS SCOPE FOR ENCOURAGING LAY PARTICIPATION
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## GUEST COLUMNIST

# Thanks, Chief!



Dennis Beaumont Shaw  
1922-2016

*Paul Kent writes "November 11, Remembrance Day simply won't be the same this year. Dennis Shaw, patriarch of our family died this spring after nearly 94 years of faithful witness to the futility of war. The following tribute, written by his son, Robert in 2004 is as pertinent today as it was when first conceived. We miss him greatly."*

**M**y eyes welled up and my chin trembled on several occasions this past Sunday while listening to an 82 year-old veteran of WWII share his experiences during that period in history. He was nervously delivering a sermon at his church joined by Legion comrades and an eclectic group of parishioners of all ages.

His message was not to forget, a tough sell to many of his audience who likely weren't old enough to have been offered something to remember, me among them. It's hard for most of us to put into perspective but it was fifty-nine years ago that the Second World War ended. That leaves most of the surviving vets in their late 70s and 80s, or older. Unfortunately there are fewer and fewer of them left to share their stories; stories that have moulded our culture, mostly for the better thank God.

That old vet remarkably managed to inject humour into his tales of suffering and misery. He said that was an element of the human psyche that enabled most of that era to survive and probably more importantly, recover from the travesties of war. It was a simple blessing at a time when most needed.

He shared a vivid picture of what life for two years was like for him on the island of Malta in 1942-43, very likely the most bombed island of WWII. A tiny, but highly strategic, island located smack in the middle of the shipping lanes of the Mediterranean Sea held and never surrendered by the British or Maltese. The island survived multiple blanket bombings day after day for over two years. Malta's residents, military and civilian, were being starved to death as they gallantly defended the little rock so important to that theatre of conflict.

Once a day the service men would line up for a bread ration, one piece per man, one piece per day. The vet said it tested his wisdom to make that slice of bread last twenty four hours. If you consumed it all at once you had the balance of the day to face the hunger pains until the following morning. That lesson was learned more than once the hard way he said. But a bigger and more painful lesson lay before him.

In the midst of the torture of hunger he lost discipline, pillaging a farmer's field where he sat and gorged on grapes. The following weeks saw him in a dysentery ward at the nearby military hospital. Not the most courageous circumstance to find yourself

under medical care. Today the old vet finds a simple pleasure in food that my generation can't possibly appreciate. That vet is repulsed by waste and the greed we sometimes display all the while taking a meal for granted. It caused me to think.

The veteran was British at the time. A long way from home, in his early twenties, likely confused and ill-informed of what the war meant in global political terms. That didn't really matter very much as it was a fight to survive if you were on the island of Malta. The true essence of what the war meant likely wouldn't set in for several years.

He said the biggest blessing that war and his naval service bestowed upon him was his draft by the Royal Navy to the Royal Canadian Navy. We needed experienced seamen at that time to crew ships and train Canadians who would later serve aboard our aircraft carriers, HMCS Magnificent followed by HMCS Bonaventure. He fell in love with Canada and met the love of his life while stationed in Halifax, a girl from Bedford who he married while in full naval dress. He parented a family, all but one that still live in Halifax, all proud of their veteran father. His grandchildren, as well, are aware of his years of distinguished military service.

He spoke so proudly of democracy, the less than perfect way we install governments of our own choice. He spoke passionately of the freedom to practice his religion of choice and to enjoy the endless bounty of the great nation of Canada. As a young man he saw the world, literally, and stands by the notion he now lives in the best country on the face of the earth. He says that he's a Canadian by choice, more than most Canadians can say. I sensed his pride, I agree with him, he is more proud of his country than most Canadians and he deserves that special feeling, he earned it.

That old veteran wants young people to know what we have and how it came to be. He wants us to think of the horrors of war and to exhaust all options before we choose that course of action again in the future. He wants his Legion comrades to measure the success of Remembrance Day poppy drives not on poppy sales and revenues but how many young people learn why we have a day dedicated to those lost in conflict and those that bravely defended our way of life.

That vet is my father. I'm a proud son and a better Canadian because of him. Thank you for your sacrifice and thanks for the many more like you.

*Submitted by the family of Dennis Beaumont Shaw 1922-2016.  
Written by his son, Robert C. (Bob) Shaw*

#### Editor's note:

Paul Kent was asked to write a column for the November issue of *The Diocesan Times*, specifically with a theme of remembrance. Here is his contribution in memory of his late father-in-law, Dennis Shaw.



## "I have never read the Bible in its entirety"

by Dr. John Roddam

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, beloved 19th C. "Prince of Preachers," was the Billy Graham of his day. He had a large church in London that came to be known as The Metropolitan Tabernacle. This great church served a broad spectrum of the city.

On one occasion, Spurgeon was called to visit an elderly member of his congregation. She was known as a godly woman of prayer. When the pastor visited this dear lady, he found her at the point of death, suffering from malnutrition and disease. It took Spurgeon a few moments to adjust to the light of the oil lamp in the one room, earthen-floored home.

At once, his eye caught a framed picture. He took the

lamp closer to get a better view and gasped... Turning to the stricken, emaciated figure, he asked, "Do you know what this is?" The gentle woman responded, "This was a retirement gift from the family I served for over 40 years." Spurgeon replied, "Do you know what it says?" The weakened saint hesitated and in an embarrassed tone said, "I have no idea what it says... I cannot read! It was so beautiful, I had it framed and it has hung in that place for many years."

Spurgeon's eyes widened in shock. He gently explained that the "picture" was, in fact a beautifully woven cheque for thousands of pounds sterling. A grateful family had given this faithful nanny enough money whereby she could

purchase her own home and have servants to serve her in her old age.

Instead, she was languishing in poverty and sickness, ignorant of the blessing that was only a few feet away! Spurgeon told this story many times over during the years of his world-wide ministry. He used it as an illustration of how believers are ignorant of the promises and blessings written in God's Word, the Holy Bible. As a result, Christians are weak, malnourished, and dying!

The Church of England not only led the larger Body of Christ by founding missionary societies but the Bible Society, promoting the distribution and study of scripture was also founded by Anglican leaders. Sadly, in this 21st Century era, the Anglican

Church in Canada ranks close to the bottom of Christian Denominations in Biblical literacy.

The Two Books of Homilies from the reign of Elizabeth I are a synopsis of Reformed Catholic Theology and practice, read widely throughout the 16th C. Church. The first chapter is entitled, "A Fruitful Exhortation To The Reading And Knowledge Of Holy Scripture." The Bible is the bedrock of the Faith once delivered to the Saints. Our tradition stands in the forefront historically in the advancement of personal Bible study.

In my parishes, I offered a gentle "dare" called the Roddam Challenge. I would encourage parishioners to

read through the Bible each year. Certificates were given to those who had completed the task at the parish annual meeting with great celebration.

Personal Bible Study Plans are available online (See the daily devotionals available through [www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com)) or through the Canadian Bible Society or a Christian Bookstore. One may even obtain a Bible set out in 365 daily readings!

One dear life-long Anglican and head of the Altar Guild opined, "I have never read the Bible in its entirety before. It took 20 minutes a day to read through the Bible in a year. That's the least I can do for my Lord!" How about you?

God Bless! John+



# It's time to talk about how we talk about marriage...

Archdeacon Sandra Fyfe,  
Rector, Parish of Horton

Whenever a couple gets married there are lots of tough questions to be asked, but usually as the priest I'm the one asking them. This past summer, however, the tables were turned. At their very first appointment to talk about getting married, a couple began by asking ME about the church's position on same-gender marriage. I should be clear that they weren't seeking marriage as a same-gender couple (they are not a same-gender couple). Yet the church's position mattered greatly to them.

I had a few options, the obvious being to simply say "we don't allow it" or to engage the questions. I chose the latter. So we talked...a lot! And I shared with them an abbreviated version of where we are as a church and how we got here. As we continued to meet, we started talking about the marriage ceremony and the options before them. They went home to consider those options. When they returned there were more questions – did the marriage



liturgy have to refer to men and women specifically? Could we look at a way to be more inclusive? They weren't asking to change the references to husband and wife or to change the vows they would make to take one another as husband or wife. That's what they would be, husband and wife. That was their reality. But they recognized that it wasn't everyone's reality. And while it's easy to be dismissive of encounters like this, suggesting that people just want the church to be what it wants the church to be, that wasn't what our conversations were like at all. This couple cared deeply about the language we would be using for their marriage

ceremony and the impact it would have on those gathered to celebrate it with them.

By the time this couple was married, General Synod had passed first reading of a resolution to change the Marriage Canon to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples. As one of the members of General Synod from this diocese, I know firsthand how incredibly difficult those conversations were. Some bishops decided to move ahead with marriage liturgies for same-gender couples to enable that to happen in their dioceses in advance of the second reading of this resolution in 2019. Others wanted to consult more

broadly within their dioceses before deciding on a course of action. Still others rejected the decision outright.

What became clear to me through all of this is that we need to be talking openly about marriage, and not just with same-gender couples who might be seeking marriage in the church, but with everyone getting married. And we need to be working now to revise our marriage rites for all kinds of couples. We need language that speaks to the present reality of marriage and the church's evolving understanding of it. This isn't merely an attempt to be relevant or to attract the disenfranchised, but to live the ethos of Anglican liturgy, *lex orandi, lex credendi*: "the law of prayer is the law of belief." Or, as some have said, "if you want to know what an Anglican believes, listen to how they pray."

When I was married almost 20 years ago, I had my own concerns about the language of the marriage liturgy. After discussion with our diocesan bishop, we were given permission to use one of the marriage rites from the New Zealand (Anglican) Prayer

Book. Like this couple, we wanted our marriage ceremony to be rooted in language that spoke deeply to us about what marriage means. We wanted to make vows that spoke to our intention to spend the rest of our lives together, trusting God to help us do that and stating, as this couple did as well, that "whatever life may bring, I will love and care for you always." We were not trying to get around the Christian understanding of marriage, but to embrace it in words that resonated deeply with us in our time. That is my hope for every couple I meet with as they prepare for Christian marriage in the Anglican tradition.

As we enter into dialogue in this diocese about same-gender marriage, I hope we can do so with courage and confidence. I would hate for us to take our cue from that mumbled prayer from The Red Green Show (which I have rephrased here): "We are the church, but we can change...if we have to...I guess." Instead, may we be ready to engage the tough questions of a searching generation that, much like us, wants desperately to believe what they pray.



Photo: Thanksgiving dinner at Phoenix House with case workers and youth from the shelter.

## Ministry in action again

BY DON BRUSHETT

Group reunion members from Lower Sackville who are all Cursillistas (members of the Cursillo Movement) share a desire to give back some of the blessings they have been given. Meeting every Friday evening to talk about their walk with Christ they are called to action.

The group regularly supports Phoenix House. Phoenix House is a non-profit, community based organization offering at-risk and homeless youth the opportunity to break the cycle of homelessness. The youth at the shelter are in need of love and shelter. This

past Thanksgiving weekend members of the group went on site at the shelter to provide a full Thanksgiving dinner to the youth and staff. It has been a privilege to serve the youth over the past number of years.

The joy and smiles we see in their faces keeps us motivated to keep serving. Recently while at a barbeque at the shelter we met a young man who had been at the shelter four years ago who has turned his life around. He said he remembered us and from a Thanksgiving dinner while he was at the shelter. He was able to call some of us by name reminding us that our action does matter.



## Lay Readers confer on PEI

The Lay Readers of NS & PEI held their annual fall conference at the Belcourt Centre PEI on the 16th to 18th Sept 2016.

Allie Colp, Youth and Family Coordinator, was the facilitator for the weekend; Rev. Darlene was the spiritual leader for the weekend. The weekend was very informative and fun filled.

With Allie's help, the lay readers learned how to interact with the different age groups in the church. Also to recognize what the church has to offer people who come into the church, to be hospitable and to try and find out what the new parishioner is looking for in a church.



Photo: NS & PEI Lay Readers with conference facilitator, Allie Colp, and spiritual leader, Rev. Darlene Jewers.

### ... Sacred from front page

lovely island of Cape Breton to ride the Cabot Trail. That's exactly what I needed after such a busy season being a full time student at Virginia Theological Seminary while also serving full-time at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Fort Washington, PA as the Director of Christian Formation (not to mention being a husband and a dad to a 15 year old and 11 year old!). I imagined the mountains and the ocean, fishing, lobster, Anglican sisters and brothers that I would meet and pray and break bread with, and began to dream about my retreat.

I called my bishop and got his blessing to do this as my pre-ordination retreat. Then, I reached out to your bishop and a few others I found on your diocesan web site. My request was to have prayer, Eucharist, and maybe if someone would open their home to me for a night or two I wouldn't have to camp every night (as the forecast for most nights was to be a low of 4-5 degrees Celsius!). God then smiled down upon me as my email ended up in the inbox of The Rev. Carolyn Sharp. She reached out to me and offered to be my retreat director. Not only would she arrange for me to have someone to pray morning and evening prayer with, but she would also make sure I received the Eucharist, had a place to stay whenever I needed it, and even had my share of lobster!

After some correspondence with Carolyn, I decided I would leave my camping gear behind and simply rest in the hospitality of God's people in Cape Breton. And boy did God love on me through them. I found out that parishioners of St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Neil's Harbour, Selma and Gordie

Doucet, would be hosting me at their beautiful home in South Harbour. I have never been so graciously welcomed! I am still in awe of the hospitality I received from the Doucets who exemplify what it means to care for the stranger who appears in your midst. They loved me like family and showed me the face of Christ in so many wonderful ways.

One story that I will never forget is on that first Sunday that I was there. We enjoyed Morning Prayer with the folks at St. Andrew's and then the Eucharist at St. John's in Ingonish. Following the Eucharist, we had brunch at St. Andrew's and then went site seeing at Meat Cove on a perfect 20 degree day where I was able to take wonderful photos of the beautiful landscapes. When we returned to the Doucet's home, they prepared a wonderful dinner of turkey, stuffing, vegetables, potatoes and gravy, the whole nine yards. It felt like thanksgiving! Just as we finished dinner and were sitting having meaningful conversation, I said I hoped two things would happen while there in Cape Breton (besides riding the Cabot Trail clockwise and counter clockwise, which I thoroughly enjoyed):

1. I want to see a moose and
2. I want to catch some fish in the South Harbour.

Not long after I had said this, Selma looked over into the harbour and saw a fish jump. She turned to tell me to look at the jumping fish and then she saw a moose! We walked out on the deck and took pictures and videos of my moose. It allowed us to get so close! My day was made! That moose came back just about every day that I was there. Gordie told Selma, "Okay, go back and tie that moose back up!" We laughed so much! Since the moose



Photo: Ordination candidate Tommy Thompson enjoying a feed of fresh caught fish in Cape Breton.

came so quickly and since we saw the fish jump in the water, I decided to test my luck and go out and fish in the harbour. Before going out to fish, I looked at Selma and Gordie and said, "I am going to catch tomorrow's dinner to repay you for the wonderful dinner you have prepared for me tonight" (of course I said this half joking, realizing that I have never fished these waters and likely would not catch anything).

When I was still in Pennsylvania, I visited Cabela's and prayerfully discerned the perfect fishing lure to bring with me to Canada. Well, I believe the Lord had something to do with that! I caught two big,

beautiful trout. The moose had already made my day, but when I brought the two trout to Gordie to show him that I had indeed caught tomorrow night's dinner, the look on his face was the new moment that made my day! I then went back outside and caught a couple nice size stripe bass. I ended catching a total of 12-13 fish during my stay with the Doucets. How God smiled down on me during this retreat!

I could share more stories, but I think this one gets at the heart of the trip. God was present, God's people were welcoming, and I left Canada renewed, ready for the newness of ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. I cannot

thank you enough for showing such radical hospitality to me through letting me share in your prayer and worship life, at your dinner tables, in your living rooms for coffee and tea, and in the beautiful creation that you wake up to each and every day. Rev. Carolyn, your discerning heart and bright mind helped me with so much of my own discernment. From the bottom of my heart, thank you, my new Canadian friends! My family and I hope to visit again sometime. You are a living sacrament of the radical hospitality of the Triune God. I will never forget you.

Your brother in Christ,  
Tommy Thompson



# It's A New Day!

## Asking the right questions

**M**ORE THAN 100 lay and clergy leaders gathered in Western Shore recently to hear messages of hope and abundance for local churches, especially rural ones. Keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Cameron Harder shared inspiring, fresh perspectives on how congregations can view themselves as agents of transformation in their communities. At the Vital Church Maritimes 2016 conference, held Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, Professor Harder provided theological foundations and a sound argument for new ministry life in churches.

He started off the first of his four talks helping participants to recognize that we often have "unintentional blindness" or "tunnel vision," when we focus on what is going wrong in our churches. Sometimes while we look for other things (solutions to problems) we miss opportunities to build on our strengths and better deploy our assets. For example, Dr. Harder said that most people in our Canadian population are not anti-faith. Non-church people today have religious-based questions, they are willing to engage in conversations about spiritual things, and they are open to acknowledging moments of grace.

In order to engage people in discussion about things of faith, we are required to see the world through new eyes. The Lutheran professor of systematic theology encourages Christians to shift our story-telling, from that focused on the terrible tragedies and troubles of the world, to where God is at work during those difficult times. He said one of our main responsibilities is to "notice

and name God at work among us."

Dr. Harder, from Saskatoon, said congregation members frequently miss all the abundance we have in our churches because we are focused on "the big three" – money, buildings and clergy. If parishes carefully considered all of the other assets (besides the big three), they would discover a "treasure trove of resources,...the scope of the wealth God has given us." These include members' talents, strengths and relationships.

Referring to the mutually-supportive relationship in the Trinity, the professor unpacked references from scripture, showing how the promises of God are primarily given to communities. It is through the "healing, faith-building work of communities" that we are saved, he said. Dr. Harder explained that Christian congregations are essential to neighbourhoods in the following ways:

1. **Churches have sacred methods** to publicly attend to the needs of the community. Rituals around important celebrations and sorrows can offer grace-filled gifts to local citizens. One example is the church-sponsored prayer pilgrimage that was hosted in the neighbourhood streets after the rail disaster in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, in 2013.
2. **Congregations can acknowledge life passages** in poignant ways. This includes not only the birth of a child, marriages and funerals, but also starting and graduating school, seeking to heal the



Photo: Dr. Harder teaching at the Vital Church Maritimes Conference

brokenness of a divorce and celebrating the joy of a recent retirement.

3. **Christians also respond to needs** that other governments and agencies miss. People on the margins and those who have fallen through the cracks of 'the system' can be ministered to in powerful ways.
4. **Churches are places of grace.** Congregation members understand mistakes and weaknesses, and our desperate need for God's grace. Christian communities live and profess that all people are precious and invaluable to the Creator, regardless of their achievements, wealth and social status.
5. **Parishes, especially in rural areas, provide a home base** or a community hub for others to gather. In some places it is one of the only public spaces remaining where people can come together.

One of Professor Harder's main teachings was centered on what is called 'appreciative inquiry.' This is a way of seeing the world positively, and how

the Holy Spirit is at work. "God has a quiet, sustaining presence," Dr. Harder said. "Often we don't notice what God is up to."

The appreciative inquiry approach involves asking questions about what is life-giving in a Christian community. It is about asking what is good in a congregation. He said, "In every church some things work well, because God is there! God is active." Harder added, "The way we see ourselves is the way we tend to act. If we focus on ourselves as a problem, then we tend to act like one."

So if church leaders and members focus on naming and claiming the positives, then they can build on their existing health and present points of vitality. Some possible appreciative inquiry questions for congregations to ask themselves could be: What is your best encounter with God at your church? What is the best experience of loving your neighbour at your church? And what are your faith community's core values?

Dr. Harder writes, "A community that believes

that God is on its side, a community that has chronicled the history of God's work in its midst, a community that has taken stock of its resources is a community that knows it is capable of choosing a future different from its present, no matter what the trend." He said, "That confidence brings a tremendous freedom."



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."



Photo: Participants engaged in the Vital Church Maritimes conference.



# Stories of the Saints



Allie Colp

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1*

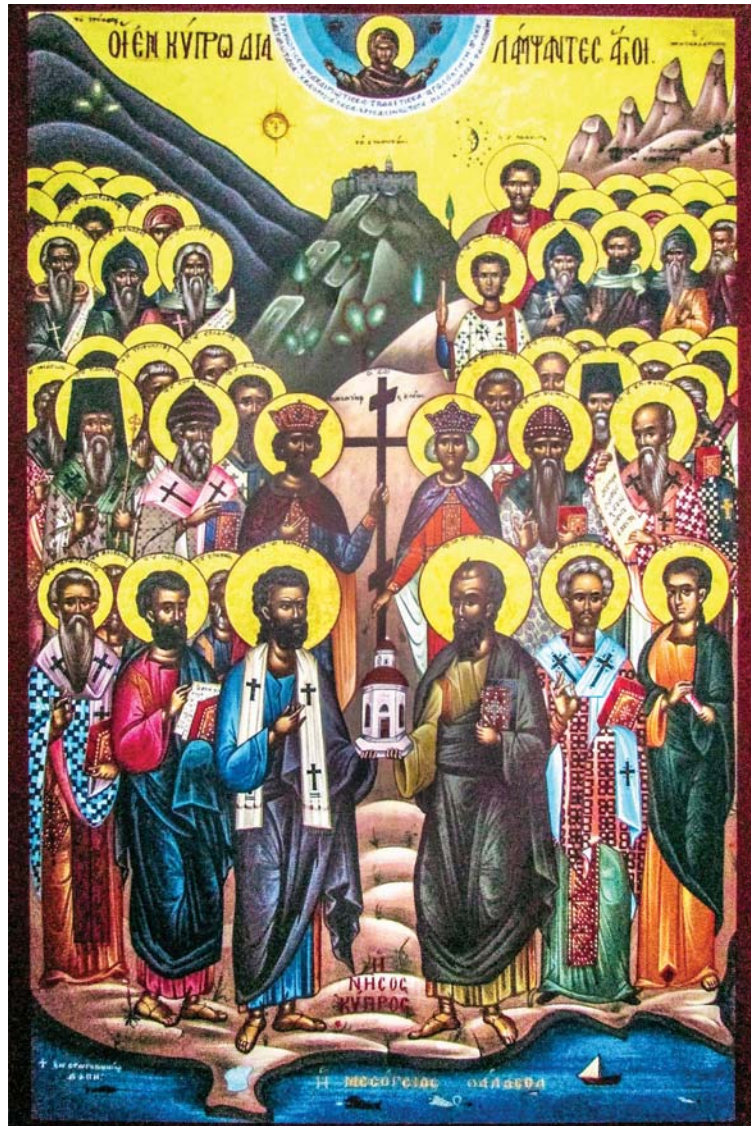
November starts off with a celebration of this great cloud of witness, these saints who we remember, honour and celebrate on All Saints Day. That cloud of witness is rich with stories. Stories are powerful things; they are a powerful way to connect with people of all ages and across cultures. The stories of saints in particular are full of possibilities to wonder about,

things to inspire us, ideas to explore, and things that we can learn from not just on All Saints Day, but throughout the year.

In finding creative ways to share and explore these stories, people of all ages can learn together, and continue to grow in their faith as we learn from the lives of the saints. When a story is opened up and people are invited in, no matter how old you are or how much you know about the church, everyone can enter in. The stories of the saints are full of powerful witness, intriguing mystery, big adventures, bold actions, miracles, imperfections, mistakes, people who struggled and didn't always have it all together, and unbelievably strong faith.

As we explore these stories, saints become more than just people from the past held up high on an unachievable pedestal. People can recognize pieces of themselves in the saints, and in that can remember that a saint is someone who strived to draw near to and to be like God. Just like us.

*Photo: Icon depicting some of the many saints.*



## Caring through cards

Caring comes through in a card – the simple joy of being remembered.

One wintry day in March, my mother asked me to run out to the mailbox to bring in the mail. The mail car had just driven by and the driver honked his horn. I never knew exactly whether those little horn noises were to let us know that the mail was here, or if they were a little gesture of communication meaning, have a great day!

I hated going to the mailbox, especially in the winter. It seemed like a lot of work for a little kid, just to bring in the mail for everyone else. But this one trip was special. I took each item out, one by one, and saw a bright yellow card with my name on it. I quickly ran back in the house holding my card tightly in my arms. I fell into our rocking chair, and sat staring at this shiny, yellow card – all for me. My first

birthday card ever - from my brother Jim.

That was when I was 10 years old. I never forgot the glossy yellow envelope, the sound the paper made when I tore it open. But, most of all, I never forgot how it made me feel inside – that special feeling of being remembered.

I'm much older now and consider myself blessed to be a member of the Friends of St. Margaret – which finds its home at St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church in Halifax. Our Friends of St. Margaret is made up of parishioners who want to emulate the good deeds of St. Margaret herself.

I have always believed that each church community should be caring for their own parishioners through in-reach before we can successfully look after others in our communities through

outreach. They both go hand in hand – and are equally important in our mission of the Friends of St. Margaret.

We started talking about in-reach – and soon agreed that a Caring-Card Ministry was our first plan into looking after our parishioners. We needed someone to step up and take on this important task of organizing birthday dates, liaising with our parish priest to ensure we knew who was sick, if someone passed away, or if someone was ill. This was a big task and we know that everyone has busy lives. Joanna Hazeldine raised her hand that day, and never looked back.

During the first month of this program, a parishioner called me to say that they had been in the parish for 45 years, and never received a birthday card. She said it made her feel extra special and that she appreciated all that we do. It

wasn't just the card that was special – it was the simple joy of being remembered. This card ministry has brought our church community together, and many are now even purchasing boxes of cards for us to use. They are always appreciated.

**No matter what age we are, young and old - we all want to be remembered – it makes us feel special.**

Personal communication makes all the difference in caring relationships. There will always be new forms of communications to use, yet sending personal cards that can be touched, held and cherished forever make people feel special. Caring will always mean more than 140 characters.

In addition to the Caring-Card Ministry, the Friends of St. Margaret also remember the incarcerated through the

PeaceTree Outreach, offer an annual Italian Dinner night free for all parishioners, provide Breakfast with Santa and volunteer for St. Georges Soup Kitchen.

In receiving a personal card, you have been remembered, because you matter to someone.

Faye LeBlanc  
Chair, Friends of St. Margaret  
St. Margaret of Scotland  
Church

**The Friends of St. Margaret have one fundraiser to support our programs. The 3rd Annual John Gracie Christmas is coming up on December 11th at the Bella Rose Arts Centre. This year, we are excited to have the Halifax Boys Honour Choir joining us. Tickets can be purchased by calling 902-457-3239 or online at [bellaroseartcentre.com](http://bellaroseartcentre.com)**

# MISSION (is) POSSIBLE:

## Diocesan stories of people responding to God's call

### “Music in Milton”

by Rev. Lisa G. Vaughn

It's been said that, “Music is a bridge between earth and heaven.” It is also a bridge for newcomers to explore the holy in the midst of a Christian congregation.

Leaders in St. John's, Milton Church, on Prince Edward Island, are busy building musical bridges. Every few weeks, the rector, the Rev'd. Ralph Moore, and a team of committed parishioners host some type of special music during the Sunday worship. They have a 'house band' called the “Just-For-Fun Band,” made up of 12 to 14 musicians. A variety of instruments are featured in the group, including acoustic guitars, bass guitar, mandolin, ukuleles, etc.

Some weeks Sunday worship is more traditional with the

Book of Common Prayer and hymns played on the organ. Other weeks it is a mixture of Book of Alternative Services liturgies, or sometimes it is just a simple “prayer and praise” type service. Recently a summer worship time was held outside in the open air.

“Every Sunday is different,” said Rev. Ralph. “The congregation really enjoys the music aspect of giving thanks.”

Two main organizers at St. John's are Connie MacDonald and Allison Coles. They choose the music, including at least one prayerfully reflective “band-only” piece.

The church in Milton also regularly hosts musical guests including the Roman Catholic Youth Choir from the local basilica, a four-piece Gospel band, harpists and special guitarists. Rev. Ralph says the congregation is very open to a variety of worship styles and music genres. “They love it!”



Photo: The Just-For-Fun Band on Thanksgiving Sunday playing at St. John's, Milton, PEI.

he said.

The Just-For-Fun band also goes on the road. They share their musical gifts in local nursing homes, at Céilidhs (in 'small halls'), and at other churches, like St. George's, Montague's memorial hymn singing.

Building on this congregation's strengths, this missional musical bridge has been growing over the last four years or so. Attendance at St. John's is steady at about 52 people per Sunday. It is promoted through a large road sign with moveable letters, plus an e-mail list of almost 40

people.

“We're showing people that there are a variety of ways to give thanks and praise the Lord,” said Rev. Ralph. “They are a country church that enjoys music, so why not give thanks in this way to an ever-giving, gracious God?”

## MORE: Regional Mission Schools

Want MORE for your church? God wants MORE for you too. MORE brings together “It's About the World” and feedback from delegates to Diocesan Synod 2015. It offers an exciting opportunity for us to be MORE, and MORE the people and Church that God wants for us to be – mission-focused and moving strongly in every community of our Diocese. MORE is based on God's desire to give the world MORE of what it really needs – hope, love, and freedom. MORE is not a program, but a way of seeing ourselves and our church transformed so we can

grow! God's plan is that the church should and can grow. “MORE” runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Session #1 is entitled Missional Possible. Lay and Clergy are encouraged to attend these FREE learning events. Lunch is provided. “MORE” Mission Schools are planned for: Cape Breton Region - Nov. 5, 2016 in St. George's Hall, Nepean St., Sydney. Deadline to register – Nov. 2 Other Regions T.B.A. soon! TO REGISTER: Contact Kathy Saunders (902) 420-0717 or ksaunders@nspeidiocese.ca

## STAY IN THE LOOP!



Want to know about to all the latest events, activities, resources and news in our Diocese? Subscribe to a free, weekly e-newsletter called “The Anglican Net News.” This e-mail lands in your Inbox only once a week and is chock full of important

notices, programs, fundraiser events, and much more! To subscribe send your request to netnews@nspeidiocese.ca. For submissions to the ANN, the deadline is Tuesday (same e-mail address). Join our Facebook page.

Search for “Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island” and then click “Like.” Ongoing activities, photos, prayer requests, news and inspirational images are shared regularly.





# Prepare the way of the Lord:

a mission resource for God's kingdom-building, right where you are

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

Greetings to all of you in the  
name of Christ the King!

## A STUDY RESOURCE FOR MISSION ACTION IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

For the past three years, our  
Mission Team has organized a  
Church on Tap Book Study,  
which was originally inspired  
by the Fresh Expressions  
presentation given by Ryan  
Sim at our Diocesan Synod  
in 2013. The book study has  
become a highlight of each  
year for the parish. No matter  
the subject, it always guides  
us to consider the heart of our  
mission as followers of Jesus,  
planted together by God to  
serve the building up of God's  
kingdom in Beaver Bank.  
What better a time to share  
this resource with you than at  
our celebration of the Reign of  
Christ before Advent, as our  
Lord mightily calls, through  
the power of His love, to do  
nothing less than change the  
world?

## QUESTION: AS GOD'S KINGDOM BUILDERS, HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY SEE US?

When we carried out the  
Community Engagement  
Phase of our Mission Action  
Plan, our purpose was to gain  
deeper clarity about how  
the community sees us as  
church. By the conclusion  
of our interviews, it became  
abundantly clear that we are  
viewed (very positively!) as  
THE "Neighbourhood  
Church", a spiritual centre  
and gathering place at the  
heart of Beaver Bank. We  
also learned (quite happily!)  
that community leaders and  
organizations want to work  
in partnership with us to  
fulfill the needs of the people  
of Beaver Bank in new and  
creative ways. With this fresh  
understanding, we decided to  
find a book for our study that  
would help us take all that  
we learned, unpack it, and  
further discern a way forward  
in response to our Lord's



Rev. Cathy Lee  
Cunningham

kingdom-building call.  
We chose *The New Parish: How  
Neighborhood Churches  
Are Transforming Mission,  
Discipleship and Community*  
by Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens  
and Dwight J. Friesen. Paul  
Sparks "helps groups seeking  
to understand the transition  
toward more local forms of  
everyday ecclesial life." Tim  
Soerens works with "change  
makers in both non-profit  
and business sectors". Finally,  
Dwight Friesen is "associate  
professor of practical theology  
at The Seattle School of  
Theology and Psychology",  
and author of *Kingdom  
Connected*. Together, "they  
lead The Parish Collective,  
a network of neighborhood  
churches, missional  
communities and other groups  
of Christ-followers desiring  
renewal in their parish."  
Visit the website: [www.  
parishcollective.org](http://www.parishcollective.org)

## THE NEW PARISH: AN OVERVIEW

The book is organized into  
nine chapters, which our  
group studied over ten weeks,  
including: Naming the Crisis  
We All Create; How the  
Church Lost Its Place; Ending  
Techniques for Renewal That  
Perpetuate Fragmentation;  
How Worship Beyond the  
Gathering Reconfigures the  
Church; Finding the Church  
in All of Life; Adapting to  
the Spirit's Movement;  
Growing Stability Within  
Your Place; Connecting the  
Church Across Places; Living  
a Life Worth Following; and

Presence in a Post-Everything  
Future. It also includes a  
wonderful list of recommended  
resources for further  
exploration.

One of the real strengths of  
the book is that it provides  
a built-in structure for small  
group study. Each chapter  
includes: a Prayer for the  
New Parish; a list of questions  
to support Conversations  
for the New Parish; and a  
list of suggested Postures  
and Practices for the New  
Parish. These added resources  
at the end of each chapter  
allow for the easy sharing of  
leadership of the study among  
participants and mean that  
less work needs to go into the  
preparation of extra resources  
to support the study. We found  
that the book itself provides  
everything you need. All that  
is necessary is the creation  
of a timeline for the study  
that works for your group,  
objectives and context.  
If some members of your  
parish might be reluctant to  
sign up for the study because  
they can't go to every session,  
we found that the book has  
worked well for us where we've  
had people who can only  
attend for a certain number  
of evenings. Regardless, the  
contents of the book allows  
each participant to easily  
prepare from week to week.

## A WORD OF CAUTION FOR TEAMS USING THE BOOK

We found that the book is  
both inspirational and deeply  
challenging, naming the  
realities of engaging mission in  
our local neighbourhood and  
begging us to identify, confront  
and transform limiting beliefs  
and behaviours that might  
be holding us back, to break  
open the transformational  
possibilities that come by  
taking risks beyond our own  
desires.

Our mission team and study  
group shares deep trust build  
trust and the innate ability  
to work through differences  
of opinion in a healthy way,  
and it is a great asset. We also  
have a Relational Covenant,  
which we pray together before  
our meetings. If you don't  
have one already, I suggest



getting a covenant in place  
that outlines what everyone in  
the group agrees to so that all  
participants will feel safe and  
heard. Include (in detail) how  
you will deal compassionately  
with participants who move  
outside of the covenant  
agreement when hot button  
issues or difficult discussion  
arises, and make a common  
agreement as to how you will  
gently call that person (or  
those persons) back, without  
diminishing their dignity. You  
can find more information  
about forming your Relational  
Covenant on my website. I'll  
also be offering an e-course  
on Relational Covenant  
Formation through the  
Vocapeace School for World-  
Changing in 2017.

## TAKE CARE: SafeR CHURCH CONSIDERATIONS

As we explore Fresh  
Expressions of Church and  
those explorations lead us  
to the local pub, we need to  
make certain that everyone  
arrives safely home and that

no one drinks and drives.  
Have designated drivers and  
meet all safety requirements.  
Make sure that proper  
insurance is in place for those  
drivers. I once consulted with  
a Presbyterian Church in the  
United States that always  
sent me on my journey home  
with a circle of "Prayers for  
Traveling Mercies". It's nice to  
incorporate such a prayer into  
the end of each session!

Happy God's Kingdom-  
Building! Happy Reign of  
Christ the King!

## MORE RESOURCES FOR YOU!

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vocapeace.com](http://www.vocapeace.com), to join the  
growing global community  
of subscribers! You'll also  
receive my weekly multimedia  
newsletter, a practical and  
spiritual toolkit to help you learn,  
lead and rise to build a better  
world, right where God has  
planted you to serve.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Mel Malton  
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the Parish of Aylesford  
/ Berwick effective  
October 1st, 2016.

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# Teach us to pray: Every stitch a prayer

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

"I'M AN OLD WOMAN," said Sister Laura, "and I can't always keep my thoughts from wandering. So before I begin to work, I ask God to accept that work as a prayer for a specific purpose. For instance, I've asked our Lord to accept the knitting of this sweater as a prayer for the child who will eventually receive it. Then, as I knit, no matter where my mind is, every stitch is a prayer." from *The Anglican Digest*, Advent 1982

I have always had a love for fabric – for the feel of it, for the visual impact of it, but most especially for the



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

Singer machine as she sewed, planning our next stitching effort. I'd pick up the scraps as they fell, carefully fold them (no matter how small) and

squirrel them away until just the right project came to mind. The whirring of the motor signalled a new creation being birthed and even now as I sit at my own, albeit quieter machine, that same sense of anticipation and potential – and sheer joy – remains.

William Congreve, the English poet and playwright, wrote "Music hath charms to soothe a savage

breast, to soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak." In those times when life gets too complicated and duties too numerous,

and I begin to get on my own nerves, I know that what will soothe or unwind the knotted-ness in me is to "make" something, to create something – not necessarily something useful or practical, but to bring something to life.

I have long been curious to know where that impetus to create comes from. Julia Cameron, author of the wildly popular "The Artist's Way" series, believes "creativity is just part of our spiritual DNA . . . essentially when you're really in the moment of making something -- whether you're singing or acting or painting or writing -- you have an experience of something moving through you. And people have that when they get involved with sewing an apron or making curtains or writing a letter." It seems "making" something is essential to our humanity.

Sandra Detrixhe, author of "Zen and the Art of Needlecraft", and Louise Silk who wrote "The Quilting Path" also share this curiosity about creativity. While some of their reflections are a tad heady, much of the material in these two volumes is stimulating and affirming of the penchant in many of us to create. Each author generously shares snippets of her own life, finding spiritual connections to their creative work. And each writer, one a homemaker and the other a professional fabric artist, explores the premise that we are "born" to create. Best of all, both books include sections on sewing techniques and patterns to inspire projects.



Photo: Embroidered felt mandala by Frances Drolet-Smith

I've recently discovered there is a slow stitching "movement" and a body of literature which reflects on the process as a spiritual exercise. Slow stitching is a kind of meditative practice in which every stitch is a prayer. An informative conversation about the benefits of hand stitching can be found in Claire Wellesley-Smith's recently published "Slow Stitch: Mindful and Contemplative Textile Art". Those of you who knit prayer shawls may resonate with the rhythm of prayer woven into the healing wraps you create. I've known for a long time that creating something with my hands has

a nourishing, even healing, effect. The embroidered and felt mandala pieces I've been stitching lately are not only pleasing to my eye; they are also pleasing to my heart and carry in them the prayers that reside there.

The prayerful act of stitching is an organic response to the innate desire to create and, I believe, comes as a profoundly grateful response to the Source of our creativity, the God who loved us into being. The prayer of our heart is made visible by the work of our hands and bestows on our creation a purpose – it becomes a prayer itself.

**"The prayer of our heart made visible by the work of our hands"**

possibilities I see woven into it. My mother was an ardent sewer and I spent many hours hovering around her green

## What's cooking?

Photo:  
Diocesan Youth Conference planners are hard at work cooking up new ideas for the upcoming DYC. Nathan, Judy (with granddaughter), Allie and 'Big House' (Mark) are trying out new recipes for success in the kitchen. Looks like they might need a bit of help!





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## Christmas with John Gracie

The tradition continues...

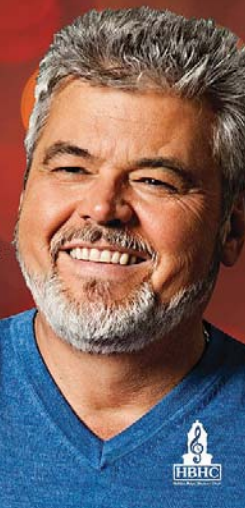
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In support of the Friends of St. Margaret.

### November Clues

- ACROSS:**
- 1 – Large amount of computer memory (7)
  - 5 – “Now there was a disciple in Damascus named \_\_\_\_\_” man involved in the conversion of Saul (Acts 9:10) (7)
  - 9 – November Church festival, \_\_\_\_\_ Day (3, 6)
  - 10 – Belongs to them (5)
  - 11 – Beginnings (6)
  - 12 – Born (8)
  - 14 – Made by human skill (10)
  - 16 – Non-metric unit of land area (4)
  - 18 – “Here is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.” sacrificial being (John 1:29) (4)
  - 19 – “I will heal their \_\_\_\_\_” treachery (Hosea 14:4) (10)
  - 22 – Pamphlets (8)
  - 23 – Achieve (6)
  - 26 – Inappropriate (5)
  - 27 – “These Jews were more \_\_\_\_\_ (to the Gospel)” willing to listen (Acts 17:11) (9)
  - 28 – Implements for hand harvesting grass, grain, etc. (7)
  - 29 – “The Jews were entrusted with the \_\_\_\_\_ of God” divine communications (Rom. 3:2) (7)

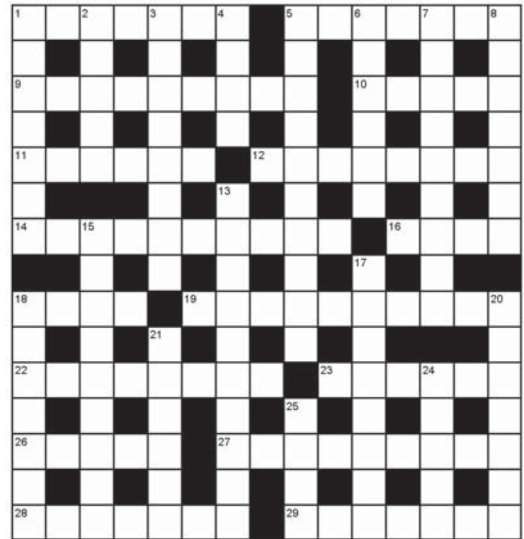
- DOWN:**
- 1 – Type of breakfast cereal (1)
  - 2 – Covers with gold leaf (5)
  - 3 – “In vain you \_\_\_\_\_ yourself” make attractive (Jer. 4:30) (8)
  - 4 – “O Lord, who may abide in your \_\_\_\_\_?” canvas shelter (Ps. 15:1) (4)
  - 5 – “Whoever, therefore eats ... or drinks ... in an unworthy manner will be \_\_\_\_\_ ... to the Lord” responsible (1Cor. 11:27) (10)
  - 6 – “Let us love ... in truth and \_\_\_\_\_” deed (1John 3:18) (6)
  - 7 – Exactly the same (9)
  - 8 – Odd (7)
  - 13 – “He interpreted to them all the things about himself in all the \_\_\_\_\_” Biblical writings (Luke 24:27) (10)
  - 15 – “For what can be seen is \_\_\_\_\_” not permanent (2Cor. 4:18) (9)
  - 17 – Deeply flawed society (8)
  - 18 – “Those who enter God’s rest also cease from their \_\_\_\_\_” work, British spelling (Heb. 4:10) (7)
  - 20 – New England baseball team (7)
  - 21 – Blemish (6)
  - 24 – Character in the play “The Tempest” (5)
  - 25 – Reflected sound (4)

## Bible Crossword

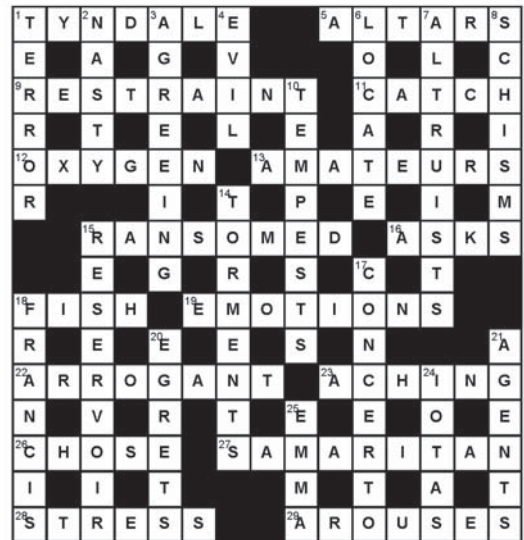
by Maureen Yeats



### November Puzzle



### October Solution




## Dinner Theatre Plays

by Heather D. Veinotte, Playwrite

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[prayerbooksocietynspei@gmail.com](mailto:prayerbooksocietynspei@gmail.com)

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

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## VIEW FROM THE DEACON'S BENCH

# The Diaconate – the church's icon of Christ's service

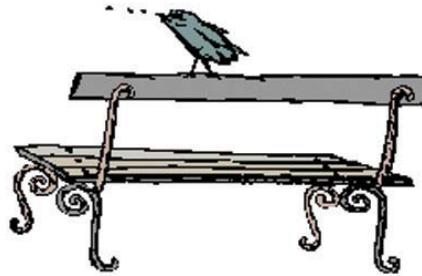
## The Iona Report – the third and final installment

"THE ORDER OF DEACON is of New Testament and Apostolic origin. The Book of Acts contains what has traditionally been seen as the institution of the diaconate in the selection and appointment of "the seven" through prayer and the laying on of hands for service and distribution of food among widows in the community. The letter of Paul to the Philippians and to Timothy refer to deacons alongside bishops in the life of the emerging Church. Deacons became important figures in the administrative life of the Church, often acting as the chief administrating officer to bishops and in particular in overseeing the temporalities of the Church."

"In the Middle Ages the use and influence of the office of Deacon was diminished as many of the roles and functions of the deacons were taken over by the presbyters or members of the minor orders (e.g. lectors or acolytes). During the English Reformation, the

major orders of bishop, priest and deacon were retained while the minor orders were eliminated. Unlike the Eastern Churches, which preserved the Order of Deacon. The diaconate continued in the West as a transitional order in preparation for the priesthood. While Anglicanism claimed to continue the historic threefold orders of the Church Catholic, it was not until the 20th Century that it gave serious consideration to the development of the diaconate as a permanent and distinctive Order of ministry."

"The redevelopment of the Diaconate has recalled the Church to a fuller and more vital expression of its ministry as agents of mercy, healing and justice in the world, especially among those living at the margins of systems and society, restoring the image of Christ who came "to bring good news to the poor". Women and men called to this ministry of sacramental presence in the world, serve as a reminder to the People of God that all are likewise called to follow



Christ's example of diakonia."

**"Ordination as a deacon is an affirmation by the church that an individual is being called to this distinctive ministry of service and agency, gifted and equipped to inspire and mobilize others into ministries of service, healing and justice.**

They become sacramental signs of the presence of Christ in places of need and risk and vulnerability, in the faces of

strangers and friends alike."

"The diaconate has biblical and apostolic origins that predate the presbyterate. The essence of diakonia has continued throughout history and across denominational lines in different forms but with a consistent thread of identity that combines notions of both authority and marginality, of both service and agency, especially arising from the edges of systems and institutions. The paradoxical position of deacons at the edge and centre of the church's leadership can be seen in their role of service in response to needs within and beyond the local community, as Christian educators, welcoming "outsiders" (strangers, seekers, newcomers, candidates for baptism) bringing them into the faith community, and as caregivers, especially to those who are isolated from community life by illness, poverty, or injustice."

"Ministries of service are being done by God's people whether or not there are deacons, just

as ministries of oversight, teaching, and unity are being done whether or not there are bishops. But a full and vital diaconate along with a full and vital priesthood and episcopate gives completeness to our common life in Christ."

"Ordination to the diaconate is recognition by the community that a person is gifted, called, and prepared for a distinctive, sacramental ministry. Diaconal ordination is not an honour bestowed on faithful laity but is consecration to a distinctive ministry. Formation, education, and training are necessary both in preparation, and for lifelong growth in ministry. The competencies that are proposed in this report are intended to be a guide for the church to discern the gifts of a person called to the diaconate, and equip and form them with the knowledge and skills they will need to minister effectively."

The Community of Deacons in this diocese will be working with proposed points set out in this report, to develop a model of discernment and education for future deacons in the diocese. We shall keep you posted

*1 Committee of Faith and Ministry, Anglican Church of Canada. The Iona Report, Final Report of the Task Force on the Diaconate, Anglican Church of Canada, 2016.*

# DEACONS

*leading through serving*

## 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARK'S HALIFAX

**Saturday, Dec. 3**  
Sherry Reception Church  
Tour, Dinner, Entertainment  
(by Ticket only)

**Sunday, Dec. 4**  
2p.m. Anniversary Service  
with Bishop Sue Moxley to  
preach, Reception to follow.

For Tickets and details  
Email - stmarkshalifax@bellaliant.com  
Or call 902-454-0207



## And finally ...

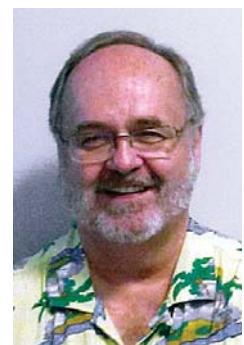
Building relationships is an essential part of building community. And seeing how we differ is just important as celebrating our sameness.

When we learn about each other, we can understand and accept more easily.

I was pondering on just how far we've come over the past few decades. And how much time and effort was spent 'tilting at windmills' instead of building bridges.

When we are entrenched in our positions, it limits our growth and ability to move forward.

As an educator, I am going to China next February and March to teach at Beijing University. The newspaper will get produced from there. But more importantly, I hope to build relationships with an open mind and an open heart. I am excited to see how much we differ and how much I can learn.



Paul Sherwood  
Editor