



**Guiding Light:
A ministry of love
in a time of grief**
- Page 3



**Synod
recap:**
Pages 10 & 11

A pink snapdragon
- Page 20



THE DIOCESAN TIMES



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SEPTEMBER 2025 A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Giving back in Crapaud - Church Mouse Thrift Shop's impact on community and charity

"Bee" not afraid



Eric Wilson and Marion Miller, wardens of
St. John's Anglican Church © Blaine Auld



Rev. Cathy Pharo © Blaine Auld

BY JENNIFER
ANANDANAYAGAM

Anyone who's managed to venture behind St. John's Anglican Church in Crapaud, P.E.I., would know of the Church Mouse Thrift Shop, a fundraising venture that attracts many visitors every Saturday.

For Marion Miller, 75, parishioner and senior warden of the church, the thrift shop was an undertaking she said yes to after retirement.

"I was a business owner of a restaurant for 45 years and sold it and retired several years ago," said Miller.

When the then priest-in-charge, Rev. Margaret Collins asked Miller if she'd take over the operations of the thrift shop, she saw an opportunity for a fresh challenge. She has been running the operations ever since and works with a great group of volunteers and co-chairs.

Church Mouse Thrift Shop is more than just a thrift shop. It's a place for conversation, fellowship and advice too.

Priest-in-Charge, Rev. Cathy Pharo said that inviting Saturday thrift store visitors

to explore the interior of the church sparks conversations.

On a Saturday not long ago, a woman visiting the Island after being away recounted memories of her childhood where she sat in the front pew with her aunt, added Rev. Pharo.

"Seeing the pew triggered memories which were followed by one story after another," recalled the priest. "This is not unusual."

"Another regular visitor to the thrift shop stopped in to talk about things going on in his life."

"Our Thrift Shop volunteers know the community and are adept at engaging people. Even children have come into the church, stood in the pulpit, spoke into the microphone and responded with wisdom as I asked them what's the best advice they could give their friends and classmates. These are the best sermons ever," said Rev. Pharo.

Over the years, the store has supported many causes and it continues to do so even now, according to Miller. The Outreach Centre (a homeless shelter), Salvation Army,

Englewood School, Mission To Seafarers, Lennon House, Zonta, food banks, local residents, community connections, newcomers to Canada and the church's steeple fundraiser are some examples.

The thrift store provides children's winter coats for the Salvation Army and allocates funds for playground equipment and bursaries for Englewood School.

Goods and funds from the thrift store are allocated depending on the needs that arise.

"If the request is for financial support, then the request will be brought to the parish council to be approved," said Miller.

Miller explained that the shop was originally operated by the Anglican Church Women (ACW), which raised funds to support a foster child.

"After many years of operation, the ACW could no longer do the job with age and deaths of members being the biggest problem. It was too much for the handful of ladies left," said Miller.

Cont. on page 4

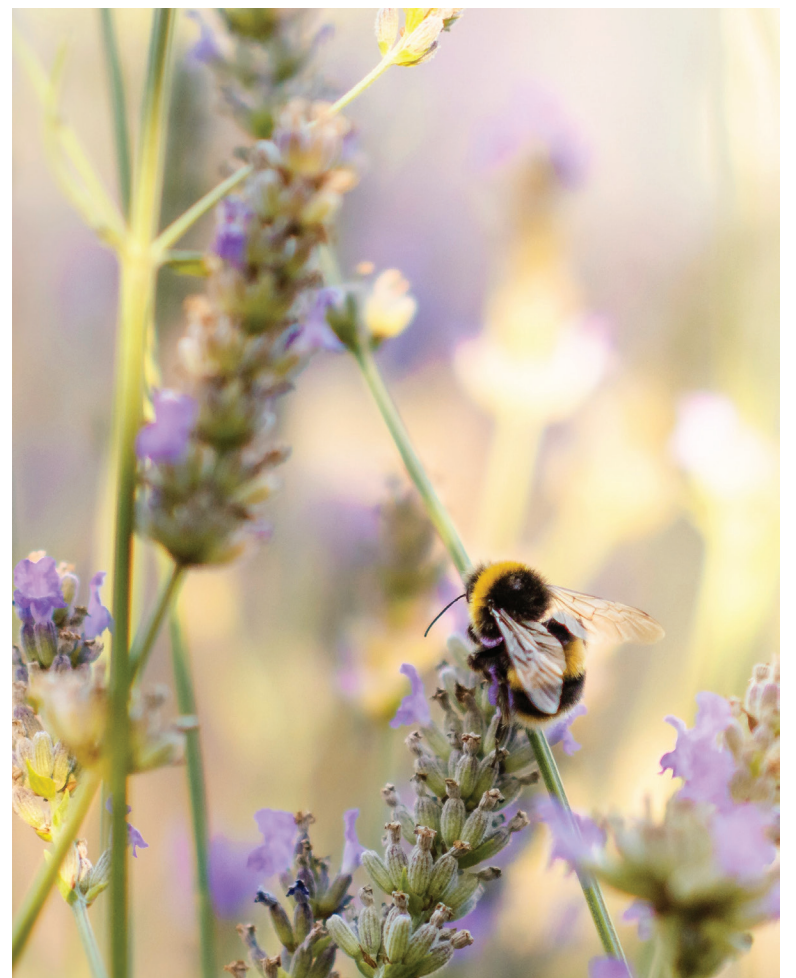


Photo by Jamie Street on Unsplash

While at Synod 2025 this year in Antigonish, our theme was hope. Rt. Rev. Deon Johnson pointed out that hope comes with an element of fear. We were taught that the Bible teaches us to take courage and ultimately a commandment and promise from God, "Be Not Afraid!" God has our backs and will not fail us.

On the way to Morrison Hall for our last brunch together on Sunday, we were all a bit early and so our line had stopped outside the doors. At one point in the line, we were standing near an azalea bush in full bloom. As a beekeeper myself, I was so excited to see three or four bumblebees busily working the blossoms. They were so close to us and so large and easy to see, I could not help but start to expound to my line mates on the beauty of bumblebees.

These were not just ordinary bumblebees. These were queen bumblebees!

*"If there's a bustle in your
hedgerow*

Don't be alarmed now

*It's just a spring clean for the
May queen*

*Yes, there are two paths you
can go by*

But in the long run

*There's still time to change the
road you're on*

And it makes me wonder"

If you are of my generation, you will recognize these lines from Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven," written by Jimmy Page and Robert Plant.

The reference to the May queen harkens to May Day celebrations in parts of the Commonwealth and hints at the Fairy Queen of Irish mythology. Without going too far down that rabbit hole, I tend to think of these things as coming from our collective confused interpretations of nature.

Cont. on page 17

Pray as you can

BY HEATHER CARTER
DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE
ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF
PRAYER

Maybe not yet, but it's coming; renewed energy, reconnecting with people after summer's absences, regrouping for study, prayer and action. September is coming – how will we listen for God's voice?

I was reading Stephen Reynolds' "For All the Saints," looking at the entries for September, and came across the legend of Joachim and Anne – an elderly couple, reproached by their neighbours for lack of children. Anne lamented to the Lord, who granted her a daughter. Anne and Joachim dedicated their daughter Mary to the Lord and the Lord God graced Mary, and in time she became the mother of Jesus.

Many years ago, a story in Reader's Digest magazine told the tale of an unknown lady who spent many weeks or even months spending her lunch hours providing companionship and reading to an ill child named Anne Sullivan and many years later, this same Anne became the teacher who freed deaf and blind Helen Keller from her life of isolation.

Whether we are a saint like the Blessed Virgin Mary, legendary parents like Anne and Joachim or unnamed helpers to those in need, we are all God's beloved. Our Lord has asked us to be who we were created to be and to share our innermost concerns with God.



Photo by Joshua J. Cotten on Unsplash

God uses our prayers and our actions in ways we may not always comprehend or even be aware of.

Both of these stories involve one thread from a person's life. How many other threads were woven into the fabric of those lives? How many threads could be taken from our own lives and are we aware of how God weaves them? Take a moment and think of a time in your life when you became aware that your word or action impacted others.

"Each one of us matters, has a role to play and makes a difference. Each one of us must take responsibility for our own lives, and above all, show respect and love for living things around us, especially each other." So says Jane Goodall, the primatologist and conservationist in her book "A Reason for Hope, A Spiritual

Journey."

September brings us the Season of Creation, the restarting of prayer groups, bible study, formation groups, music ministry, outreach, mission, fellowship and so much more. Where do we notice God's invitation? How will we embody Christ's compassion in a hurting world?

Richard Rohr, founder of the Centre for Contemplation and Action, says, "There is a deep relationship between the inner revolution of prayer and the transformation of social structures and social consciousness."

Charles R. Ringma, author and Professor Emeritus from Regent College, Vancouver, in an article "Contemplation in a World of Action," says, "When we seek the face of God, God will always draw

us back to his concerns for the world. Involved in the concerns of the world, we are always called back to be nurtured and loved and sent out again."

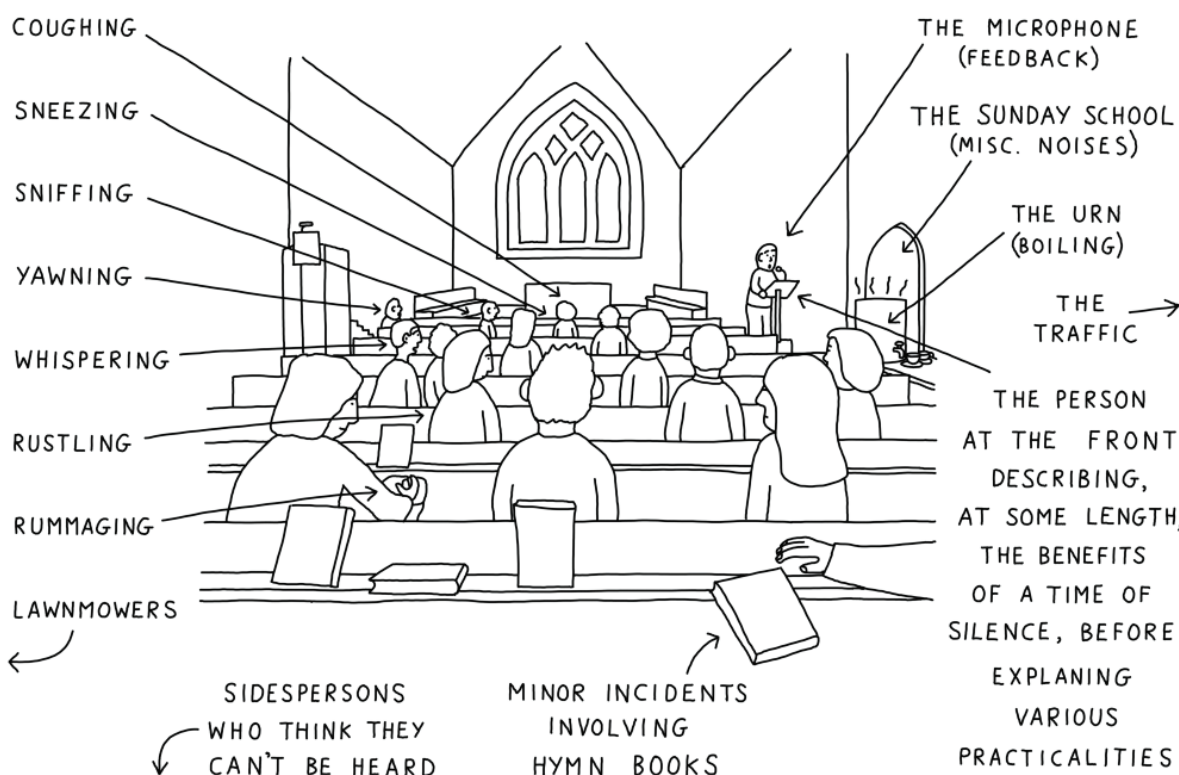
While looking forward to renewed involvement in prayer and action, we can pray "Here I Am, Lord". This prayer keeps the focus on God's compassion – in times of joy, encouraging us to help others – in times of lamentation, opening our hearts to become more aware of the steadfast love of God.

You can reach Heather Carter via prayeraroundthediocese@gmail.com

Stay tuned: Prayer Around the Diocese will be updated mid to late September with fall offerings across the diocese, in person and on Zoom.

A TIME OF SILENCE

PLEASE IGNORE ALL DISTRACTIONS



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Guiding Light: A ministry of love in a time of grief

BY JENNIFER
ANANDANAYAGAM

When someone dies, loved ones are often left with the challenging duties that come with putting together a funeral service. There are hymns to be chosen, readings to be distributed and the entire proceedings to be thought about.

Lauralee Kennedy and Joy Josey from the parish of Tangier are well aware of these intricacies. Not only have they dealt with the loss of loved ones themselves, but they have also stepped in to fill a void in the area of church funeral services and graveside committals in the community.

Kennedy and Josey, a retired nurse and self-employed hairdresser, respectively, are two people among many who followed the Guiding Light workshops on funeral ministry that were held in 10 locations around N.S. and P.E.I. Kennedy is a lay worship leader and Josey is a licensed lay minister.

Facilitated by Rev'd. Dr. Debra Burseson and Rev'd. Canon Lisa Vaughn, these workshops are free and open to all licensed lay ministers, any lay person who desires to know more or be a part of a funeral team and any clergy seeking a refresher session.

"We followed a model that has been going on here in the more rural part of the Eastern Shore," explained Josey. "They have been doing graveside committals and church funerals with their laity, [and] as our need grew and we did not have a full-time Anglican minister living in this area that was devoted to things like our funerals, we started to pick up the slack."

Kennedy and Josey are joined by Brent Boutilier, yet another licensed lay minister, who works with the RCMP in Dartmouth. Brent is available on weekends or for evening funeral visitation prayers. They are either contacted by the local funeral director or the grieving family members whenever a funeral comes up.

Kennedy grew up in Tangier and graduated from high school in 1974, after which she became a Licensed Practical Nurse. She retired in 2011 after 37 years in nursing and returned to Tangier, where she became involved with her church, Holy Trinity, and the parish of Tangier. She wears many hats – from church to



Photo by Brett Jordan on Unsplash



From left: Lauralee Kennedy, Brent Boutilier and Joy Josey

parish to diocesan levels.

Josey grew up on the Eastern Shore as well, albeit a little further in the parish of Port Dufferin. After marrying a local to the parish of Tangier, the family settled in Spry Bay. She started off as a lay reader and moved on to become a lay worship leader. As the needs of the church grew, Josey felt a call to move into the licensed lay ministry.

A ministry of love in a time of grief

A lot of planning and work go into a funeral service and graveside committal. It typically takes anywhere from two to four days to organize.

Getting permission from Archdeacon Katherine Bourbonniere, putting together an order of service, making sure there are people to do the readings, and choosing and

vetting hymns are some of the duties Kennedy and Josey handle.

If the family doesn't know what they want for scripture readings, Kennedy and Josey choose for them.

They also piggyback on each other if there are no readers. "If she does not have anyone, I'll show up. If I do not have anyone, she shows up and readings get handled," shared Josey.

When it comes to preparing the order of service, it is a lot of writing and erasing, according to Josey.

"Sometimes families change their minds ... Readers decide they do not want to read. So we try to keep it a little generic and not put hard and fast names in when we are doing our leaflet."

Both Kennedy and Josey find meaning in what they do. Not only are they filling a

Kennedy and Josey, a retired nurse and self-employed hairdresser, respectively, are two people among many who followed the Guiding Light workshops on funeral ministry that were held in 10 locations around N.S. and P.E.I.

need in a community, but they are also making sure that the people they know and care for get a personal touch in these proceedings.

Doing these graveside committals and church funeral services has been spiritually fulfilling for Kennedy.

"I know what I felt and what I needed when each of my parents died," shared the lay worship leader. "I try to give that or something similar to the families."

If church-going parents were the ones who died, one might be working with children who are not necessarily church goers, per Kennedy.

"That is where I find it is more meaningful, because then I can assist them through that."

From suggesting hymns and readings to working with a very particular song because family members remember it from their childhood, Kennedy finds all of it rewarding.

It can be a frustrating time for them, per Kennedy. "Because they want what they think their parents want, but

they do not know what that is."

Josey shared that the work they do is also a way of bridging the gap when it comes to helping grieving family and friends navigate those last arrangements when they themselves don't live in the community.

"They have moved away while their parents [were] still here. They do not feel the same connection as those who are local. I find [that] bringing them back to the community is very meaningful to me," shared Josey.

When inside the church for a service, both Kennedy and Josey go about making friends and family feel comfortable. People are made to feel like they can come as they are, sit where they please, and feel as though the space within the four walls is their second home.

"Having lost both my parents, I like having the ability to give the families more control," added Josey.

Things have changed a lot since the times when families would wait for the minister to take care of everything, while they just showed up.

Being able to offer the families the option of personalizing the proceedings is one marked difference.

"The family can have as much involvement in the funeral service as they want. When I was growing up, there was none of that," shared Kennedy.

It helps that both Kennedy and Josey, more often than not, personally know the deceased and their family members.

"I think it means something more to the family if [the] somebody who's leading the service [is someone] that they know," shared Kennedy.

Being able to recount true and pertinent things about the person who has died creates a sense of intimacy.

Unsurprisingly, Kennedy and Josey's ministry does not end after the singing of the final funeral hymn.

There is a continuing sense of community that lingers on for a while afterward.

"That is traditional here in the eastern [part of] rural Nova Scotia," shared Josey. "People want to get together. It is a sad occasion that becomes lighter as the day goes on."

Self-awareness vs. self-blindness

BY BRYAN HAGERMAN RCT
ST PAUL'S CHURCH, HALIFAX
OUTREACH COUNSELLOR
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My dog Mango has a routine. Every morning when I get up, she hears me, finds me and stands still in front of me and waits for something. We both know what it is. I will not have my coffee until she is satisfied. No, it is not food, a walk or water. It is a kiss on the forehead and a little rub of her ears.

Mango is a high-energy Duck Toller, who is very determined and stubborn. The rub and kiss on the forehead are a must; they are how she begins her day. So, does Mango have self awareness? Is she sentient? Well, yes, in part. She is aware, she senses, she sees, hears and touches, but it is not the awareness we humans have. She does not express feelings. She does not plan her day. She understands hunger and thirst, and has basic instincts. But can she think at some level, and make decisions? Yes, and yet no!

Mango loves the water; she thrives on fetching. In watching her, I realize that a lot of what she does – her behaviours – are instinctive. She wasn't taught, it was an inner, unlearned and built-in behaviour in her DNA. She left her group of puppies at eight weeks. If I observed a hundred Duck Tollers who grew up without a parent, I would see the same behaviour.

We humans are, however, separate from others in the animal kingdom in that we are capable of full self-awareness. We can be taught, we under-



Photo by Ashley Batz on Unsplash



Bryan Hagerman

stand our thoughts, our feelings, behaviours and values, and how each of these affects others. However, some humans, many humans, although they have these characteristics, are not very self aware. They do not have an easy ability to find the nuance in what others have said, they cannot read body language, cannot grasp how to interact correctly in social situations, have difficulty listening and are low on validation and empathy. Some of these people have good reasons for this. They may have

a lack of capacity or a disorder that precludes it. But this is not most of us. We can learn self-awareness.

There are five senses: touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. We are all aware of these. But to be emotionally aware, of ourselves and of the other, is crucial in life. This is another ability not unlike our senses and arguably equally important.

What is self awareness?

According to Steven Warley: "It's the details you pick up from your perception of the world. It's your consciousness actively gathering and processing information from your environment. It's how you experience life. I like to think of 'awareness' as what you notice in life. It's about paying attention."

Paying attention! Think on that. I think of it as paying attention in the present, to both the inner and outer world simultaneously. In order

to pay attention in the present, our emotions and rational brain must be, in the moment, free of future distractions and aware of present ones. How often do we not hear the other when our mind is somewhere else?

The inner world contains our reasoning and emotional functions. Descartes said: "I think, therefore I am," meaning, we are sentient people. In our inner world, we plan, think, feel and have a human awareness unlike the dandelion or eagle. It is here that we can apply sanity to our lives. Someone said we are sane when we keep our emotional and rational brain in tension. One does not allow the other to go awry, to take over. When that happens, we are either inappropriate rationally or emotionally. We are, for a short time, controlled by either one or the other.

The outer world is where we practise the inner world awareness. I am tired or stressed

out, and when I am, I can be irritable, short and impatient. However, because I know I am tired, stressed and irritable, I choose to take control of the emotions that feed that irritability. I take precautions. The rational brain is now controlling the possibility of an emotional outburst. This will take determination, inner patience and will. I am self-aware, and practising that capability in a way that is helpful, healthy and positive for others.

Or I choose to be self-blind. I don't connect my tiredness to irritability and temper, and I am rude, angry and unpleasant to be around. People walk on eggshells around me.

I am certain that Jesus battled with his inner world. Why? Because He was a human. And yet He never gave in. He depended upon His cognitive abilities to control himself, and He would have asked God, His Heavenly Father, to help Him.

We can also prepare others for our inner world struggle. I can say to my loved one, "I'm not at my best today. I am struggling, tired, stressed or going through a bad time." That is not to put them on notice or to say when I blow up, it's justified. No! We are saying, "Be yourself. Do not change anything. My inner world is my struggle, not yours. Continue to be who you are! Do not be controlled by my moods."

Self-awareness is crucial for good relationships. It's a great strength.

Giving back in Crapaud ...

Cont. from page 1

After the challenges were communicated to the parish, a few others stepped in to help out, namely Connie MacKinnon and Heather and Jack Saunders.

Many upgrades followed, including a paint job and the addition of shelving and clothing racks. The store was reopened after the revamp, according to Miller.

However, "life gets in the way" as always, said Miller. "With people moving, aging out, and family responsibilities taking priority . . . that's when I was asked to help out."

While the store's core purpose did not change after Miller took over, the scope of



Congregation members celebrating the work on the steeple, which was completed with the help of income from the thrift shop.

the project expanded.

There was an environmental focus of saving goods and clothing from landfill and making them available to

people who could reuse them. There was also the added purpose of the store being a means of customers saving money.

The latter objective of the

thrift store was particularly useful during the pandemic, according to Miller. "People did not have work or income during the lockdowns that happened over the next few years."

"The thrift shop has grown to be a very important part of our church and community," said Miller.

Volunteers at the store even visit people's apartments to help clear out things if they are moving or if someone has died, according to Miller.

"Persons or families do not need or cannot use all the items, but do not want to throw them out. Some need physical assistance [and] emotional and mental support

[while] dealing with the task [of] attachments [and] memories."

The store's Facebook page is updated almost every week with pictures of new items.

Miller looks at it as a way of looking after people's treasures until they are able to find new homes for them.

"Over the past years, our priests in charge, Rev. Margaret and Rev. Cathy, have often [and] been at the shop on Saturdays to help [and to] talk [with] and greet our customers, many who come weekly."

They have made spiritual and personal connections with the shoppers too, according to Miller.

It's not a joke . . .

BY CYNTHIA PILICHOS FOR
ANGLICANS POWERING
POTENTIAL

I am sure that most readers have experienced a friend or family member forwarding to their email inbox a series of sayings, cartoons, jokes, etc. from the internet that are meant to elicit a smile, even a laugh, often with the encouragement to continue the forwarding of this material to others for their “joke(s) of the day fix.” Spread the humour, so to speak.

However, having not received such an inbox feature for several years, I was surprised to see such an entry recently. To add to my wonderment, the entry was from a totally unexpected source, someone who had never forwarded that sort of material previously, and who I felt was an unlikely candidate to do so ever. A subsequent email from this surprise sender indicated that his wife had not found the content humorous, as it “diminishes women” in her view. She was right, but understated in her assessment – fully half of the “jokes” perpetuated gender stereotypes that were more than diminishing of women, they were demeaning of them.

It may seem to be a stretch to draw the connection between “jokes” based on demeaning stereotypes, especially demeaning gender stereotypes, and the epidemic level of gender-based violence (GBV) in our country, but GBV flourishes in a climate that devalues women and presents this devaluing as humour, and therefore, OK. We allow the perpetrator of the so-called jokes to determine their acceptability. The one on the receiving end of the stereotyped “put downs,”



Photo by Le Vu on Unsplash



when feeling the affront and expressing that concern, is characterized as someone who just “can’t take a joke.” Let’s be clear: demeaning stereotypes are not a joke!

Much of the striving for full gender equity, especially the eradication of gender-based violence (GBV), which Canada is committed to (the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence -2022), seems an impossible goal to achieve. Yet, it is not for lack of data to this end; rather, it is insufficient political will, combined with insufficient sustained investment, both of which would be required to implement solutions. There is

significant evidence and direction available in a long list of reports, commissions and inquiries – each offering clear and consistent recommendations.

The Mass Casualty Commission of the province of Nova Scotia (2023) revealed how systemic failures, particularly around gender-based violence, contributed to the devastating events of April 2020. The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019) outlined the state violence and colonial systems that continue to endanger Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The Renfrew County Inquest (2022) and many others have reinforced the same conclusions.

Even though Canada is facing fiscal challenges, now is not the time to scale back funding for this GBV epidemic-level crisis. Canada must remain a country that not only con-

demns gender-based violence but recommits to eradicating it. Without bold investment and deep structural change, we will continue to see the toll of this violence rise. Let your MP know that eradicating gender-based violence is a national priority and funding needs to reflect that desired outcome.

In October 2024, Nova Scotia became the first province to formally declare intimate partner violence (IPV) an epidemic. Since then, ten Nova Scotians have lost their lives to IPV. This crisis is escalating – not only in Nova Scotia, but across the country. While public and political acknowledgment has grown, the level of investment and structural reform has not matched the scale of the crisis. Advocate for this investment and structural reform with your MP: Canada must renew its commitments to addressing gender-based violence in a meaningful, well-funded, and systemic way.

As for those online “jokes” I spoke of, the sender and I had an interesting e-mail exchange in which we agreed we could do better, that it was well within our power to increase our awareness of how we unknowingly contribute to reinforcing the patriarchy that is such an embedded feature of society, by the simple, seemingly benign click of a mouse. The sender to me indicated that the initiator, to him, of the “jokes” was an ardent feminist, at which I responded that this reality proved my point – we are all implicated in perpetuating the misogyny and sexism in ways that we are blind to, in ways that seem innocuous, but are not. We can do better: we have it within our power to do better, so let’s do better!

The email sender and I agreed that perpetuating any stereotypes under the guise of humour benefits no one. While the “big ticket” items of GBV appear daunting, we felt that a starting point for us could be a pact that we not engage in so-called humour that reinforces harmful stereotypes of any kind, either as a deliverer or a receiver of these “jokes”. This may seem a very small step in the larger picture of the GBV crisis, but Anglicans Powering Potential suggest it is significant. Violence is not just manifested physically; it can take many forms and can leave bruises that are not visible to the human eye. Any form of violence is decidedly not a joke. Let’s recommit to challenging violence of every kind, according to the 4th Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion worldwide. Amen to that!

Choral season for Coastal Voices Men’s Choir

Coastal Voices Men’s Choir (CVMC) finished off their choral season with two concerts on the weekend of May 24 and 25. The first on Saturday evening was at Calvin United Church in Lawrencetown with approximately 70 attending and then the following afternoon at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Sheet Harbour with 40 attending. The theme of the concerts was ‘Singing Sons of the Shore.’

The repertoire of the Coastal Voices in 2023 is eclectic. Members enjoy folk songs from a variety of cultures, popular songs, sacred favourites and classical gems. A strong effort



is made to select repertoire that will have a wide appeal to both audience and members.

The concerts featured the choir performing 17 selections as well as individual numbers sung by choir members. The

audience was enthusiastic, appreciative and very responsive.

Coastal Voices Men’s Choir was formed in 2010 when some members of Musical Friends, a soprano, alto, tenor and bass (SATB) choir,

wanted more opportunity to sing when the Musical Friends season ended. Musical Friends had been operating for over 25 years, which demonstrated a strong interest in a community choir.

The season of CVMC runs from January through May. The choir practises on Thursday evenings in Musquodoboit Harbour. The members come from all along the Eastern Shore, currently from Ship Harbour to Dartmouth.

The choir continues to grow musically with the direction of Ross Thompson, Artistic Director, and John Plant, Accompanist.

They are supported by an active board of directors.

Ross Thompson had a career in music education in the Valley area and has directed and developed a number of choirs in Nova Scotia.

John Plant is an accomplished composer with an extensive resume and a career at McGill University.

CVMC is a non-auditioned men’s choir, and all are welcome regardless of choral experience. Anyone interested should contact the Artistic Director, Ross Thompson, at artisticdirector@coastalvoices.ca

Our finest gifts

BY REV. MARIAN
LUCAS-JEfferies
COORDINATOR, DIOCESAN
ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

Dear Diocese,

As I sat behind my laptop, about to sip from my first caffeine of the day, a message popped up on the screen. Someone had posted a picture of a street-side church sign that read: “Live your life well so we don’t have to lie at your funeral.”

At my age, from time to time, I wonder what kind of legacy I will leave behind. Will I be known as a kind, caring person? The kind of person who was positive and built people up? A “good Christian” who loved God and the people around me? I wonder if I will have lived up to the song, “They will know we are Christians by our love”? During this, the Season of Creation, will I be known as someone who has tread the earth softly and cared for God’s creation? Who will they say I was? Will they have to lie at my funeral? It might sound a bit egocentric, but I do wonder what people will think and say about me.

These thoughts were raised once again after my latest visit to the Parish of French Village’s Green Burial site week, a reminder of my mortality, and they have been reinforced by the fast-approaching celebration of a brand-new feast day, Feast of the Creator. The Feast of the Creator is followed by a month of reflection and con-



Photo by Beth Jnr on Unsplash



sideration on the impact we are having on the planet.

The Green Burial site at St Paul’s Church, one of the four churches overlooking St. Margaret’s Bay, in the Parish of French Village, has come a long way since Ray, Harry and I sat at a kitchen table, and they shared a dream.

Since that time, Louisa has

offered her energy and skills, summer students have been hired, people who are specialists in their field have offered their knowledge, the word has spread, and slowly but surely, the project has moved ahead.

It had been a few years since I had been out to the site, and was I ever impressed!

We should all be as inspiring as this parish has been. And one of the motivators should be the celebration in our respective parishes of the Feast of the Creator and the Season of Creation.

September 1, 2025 (or a Sunday close to that date), is a history-making moment. For the very first time, that is the day we celebrate, following the adoption of this special day at General Synod this summer

and in most Christian faith traditions globally. BTW: The Pope recently launched the promotion of a new liturgy for the celebration a few weeks ago that all the media picked up and shared.

The celebration of the new Feast Day should move us spiritually to put ourselves into the equation, making us more aware of how we understand the universe and all that is in it (including people) as sacred and treat them as such.

As humans, we have a tendency to be a tad egocentric when it comes to understanding God’s love and who our neighbours are. Most of us understand that God’s love is unconditional, but more often than not, we hear about how that love is directed specifically at us. Humans don’t

always think about how the same God that created us also created the rest of the planet, even to the point of adopting the belief that creation was made for us to use, control and even subdue, in any way we choose.

In Mi’kmaq culture, the tradition is to give thanks to the Creator daily for every blade of grass, every plant and every animal in detail. Everything matters.

We read in the Bible that God created the heavens and the earth, but, in my humble opinion, how that took place, how long ago that was and how long it took might not be as important in the story of creation in Genesis as the lines “and God said, it is good!” Those lines are boldly proclaimed by the Creator every step of the way. The sky is good. The water is good. The plants and trees are good. The fish, birds and animals are good. And even humans are intrinsically good. Because we are all part of creation.

In Genesis, using an eco-centric instead of egocentric approach, we read a story about the beauty of creation, the creator God, God’s joy in it and we were given a responsibility, to care for the earth and each other so we can share in the abundance, passing on a healthy environment so it will be there for generations to come.

Blessed Feast of the Creator!

Proud Anglicans at Halifax Pride Parade, July 19



A HYMN FOR HOLY ANGELS St. Michael and All Angels – September 29

Adapted from the Episcopal Church Hymnal 1940 Companion

BY THE REV. JOHN K. MORRELL
YE HOLY ANGELS
BRIGHT – #323 – Common
Praise Hymnal 1998

**Author: Richard Baxter
(1615-1691)**

Educated at Wroxeter School in England, he did not attend university. He did study theology and was ordained in the Church of England. He was not a supporter of Cromwell’s assumption of supreme power. He was condemned to prison in 1685 but was released after two years.

The text comes from the first part of a 16-stanza hymn which Richard Baxter ap-

pended to his Poor Man’s Family Book in 1672. He said, “It is written with a request to Landlords and Rich Men to give to their Tenants and poor Neighbours, either this or some fitter book.”

Music: John Darwall (1731-1789)

A graduate of Oxford, he was ordained in the Church of England and served his entire ministry at St. Matthew’s Parish Church in Walsall. He composed three volumes of tunes in four parts for all 150 Psalms. Several were published, of which only this tune survives. It was composed by John Darwell for Psalm 148, “Ye boundless realms of joy.”

Resound the Glory

St. Mark's is on a mission to preserve a piece of Canadian musical history and build community with its organ restoration project

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

It's not just an organ, it's an instrument that brings a community of people together, according to the parishioners of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Halifax, who are trying to raise funds to restore their 104-year-old organ.

At present, the instrument is not entirely functional. In fact, if nothing is done soon, it could become completely unusable.

"Resound the Glory" was one of the church's latest fundraising events for the organ. It featured the Scotia Brass in concert, conducted by Rod MacGillibray, with MC Olga Milosovech and featured a performance on the organ by Michael Coburn. It took place on June 19, 2025.

Value beyond its history

The organ was built in 1921 by the Casavant brothers of Casavant Frères, a Canadian organ-building company in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, which has been building pipe organs since 1879. Joseph Casavant was the first organ builder. Joseph-Claver and Samuel-Marie Casavant were his sons.

Even though the company eventually branched into sourcing some of its components from other markets, including the U.S., the 104-year-old masterpiece within the walls of St. Mark's is unique in that it contains 100 per cent Canadian parts, according to Steve Beeler, Chair, Buildings Reuse and Redevelopment Committee.

"The actual organ itself cost between \$5000-\$5500 to construct and install, which was a lot of money in 1921 just prior to the Depression," explained Beeler.

"As a comparison, the entire building that we're sitting in today cost \$65,000 in 1921 so 10 per cent of the cost of the construction of the entire church went into the construction of the organ."

The value of the organ, however, cannot be told in numbers alone. The instrument has been and could continue to be a great source of joy, community and fellowship for St. Mark's parishioners and the wider community that surrounds the church.

Rev. Dianne C. Parker, Chair



The organ has two major components, the swell, which is in a box and the great.

of the Organ Restoration Fund, shared that the restoration of the organ is going to be a catalyst for bigger things.

"We have so many people in the North-End who are from other countries. This is a gathering place to come to a concert or a recital. They don't necessarily have to come to a worship service. There will be other events around the organ. It'll be a place for people to meet one another, for strangers to become neighbours," said Rev. Parker.

It was obvious that each of these passionate individuals had felt the universal power of music.

Nothing can quite lift the human condition the way music can, according to Beeler.

There's something that awakens the soul when people who've never met one another before come together to sing a hymn or song together, ex-

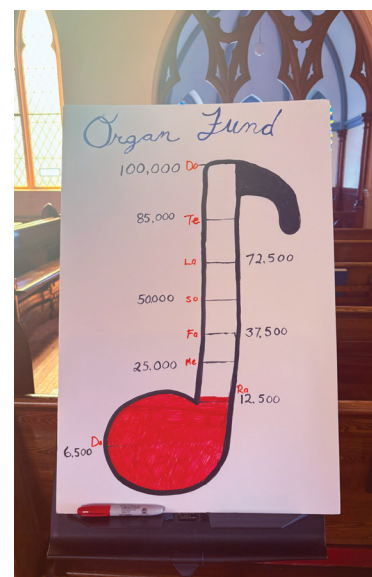


plained Rev. Vivien Hannon, Assistant Priest, St. Mark's Anglican Church.

"By the time you get to the last verse, everyone feels [a] together[ness]. It's something that happens in the moment," said Rev. Hannon.

The restoration process

"As it's currently constructed, because of the technology of the time, it's not the heat that causes challenges or the cold. It's the humidity," explained Beeler.



The organ fund as at July 6, 2025

There are times when the organist has come in and started playing the instrument only to get a cipher, a situation where a pipe continues to sound even after the key is released, according to Beeler. Then there are other times when he won't be able to get any sound out of it.

The instrument is functioning on technology that has probably been around since the 1700s, added Beeler.

"This organ has not been adjusted. It still works on pneumatic pressure. When the organist presses the key, the key sends an air pulse down a tube and opens or closes a pipe, and then the pipe speaks." There are over 1000 pipes in the organ.

Colin Walsh of Acadia Pipe Organs, who has been giving the organ TLC over the years, is the one who's going to be doing the restoration.

Part of the revamp is going to focus on electrifying some

parts. A lot of the original tubing is lead which makes for somewhat of a safety concern, added Beeler.

"We're going to do a tasteful restoration, and try to do some electrification to the organ. If we put it back to the way it was exactly in 1921, we'd be using that technology and those parts and we'd suffer the same fate in about another 100 years," explained Beeler.

The organ has two major components, the swell, which is in a box and the great. "The tubing around the swell has been redone. The pipes have been cleaned."

However, this work which was done in 2017 or 2018 means that the tubing around the swell is where they should be while the other parts aren't.

"So they create a lot of pressure on the great, because they are sending a full, intense pulse. And the other parts aren't up to snuff anymore."

Part of the restoration is also going to be focused on redoing the console.

Beeler thinks that the instrument is going to be a marvel to restore. "There are so many organs that don't get the love, care and attention they deserve."

Replacing the organ with an electric organ would cost the church \$80,000. The restoration cost is estimated to be \$100,000.

It's not just about bringing something so old back to life. It's about preserving an important part of Canadian history.

And by seeking to preserve this piece of musical history, the parishioners of the church are dreaming big dreams for the wider community.

Beeler thinks that music plays a role in why people come to church. "Music is a big part of drawing people into the community because it's so universal. It doesn't know anything about race or class. It means the same to everybody," said Beeler.

The church has raised \$14,830.98 since the fundraising efforts began in June this year.

For more information on the organ restoration project:
Phone: 902-454-0207
Fax: 902-404-3212
Email: stmarkshfx@gmail.com

Celebrating Jane Austen's 250th birth anniversary

Austen scholar Sarah Emsley discusses Austen's connection to N.S., and "The Austens"

BY JENNIFER
ANANDANAYAGAM

My first introduction to Jane Austen came in high school, when we were tasked with reading "Pride and Prejudice". The long and elegant sentence structure, coupled with the book's irony and wit, took time to grow on me. But when they did, there was no going back.

It is no wonder, then, that I sought out a chat with Jane Austen scholar, researcher and author, Sarah Emsley, who has been a part of various Jane Austen-themed events in Nova Scotia this year, to coincide with the late author's 250th birth anniversary. One was the Jane Austen 250th Birthday Tea in June, held at St. Paul's Church in Halifax.

What's even more special is Austen's connection to Nova Scotia, which Emsley was kind enough to educate me on. According to Emsley, Austen's younger brother, Captain Charles Austen, spent some time in Halifax when he was serving on the North American station of the Royal Navy. He was stationed here with his wife Fanny and their young family at some point during Jane Austen's lifetime (1775 – 1817).

The couple's first daughter, Cassandra Esten Austen, was baptized at St. Paul's Church in Halifax on October 6, 1809.

"Jane herself never left England, but she learned a great deal from the experiences of her well-travelled brothers and their families, which served as inspiration for her naval novels 'Mansfield Park' and 'Persuasion'," explained Emsley.

There's more.

"Many years after Jane's early death in 1817 at the age of 41, her older brother Francis came to Halifax as Commander-in-Chief of what was by then known as the North American and West Indies station," shared Emsley. "He brought with him several members of his family, including his brother Charles's son, Captain Charles John Austen, Jr., who fell in love with a young woman from Halifax named Sophia Emma Deblois. They were married at St. Paul's on September 6, 1848. While Francis and his family were in Halifax, they lived in Admiralty House, which is now the Naval Museum of Halifax."

Emsley's love for Jane Aus-



St. Paul's parishioners and family members at the Jane Austen Tea in June



Sarah Emsley © Nicola Davison

ten is a long-standing one. Although she'd read a couple of her books as a teenager, she didn't fall in love with her work until she was in graduate school at Dalhousie, reading the beloved "Sense and Sensibility".

"I remember carrying the paperback with me everywhere – near the end, I found it so suspenseful that I read as fast as I could, desperate to learn the fate of the two heroines, Elinor and Marianne Dashwood," recalled Emsley.

As time went on, Emsley's fascination only grew. Her PhD thesis was on Austen's novels in relation to the classical and theological traditions of the virtues.

"My dissertation was published as a book, 'Jane Austen's Philosophy of the Virtues' (Palgrave, 2005), and for a few years I taught classes on Austen in the Writing Program at Harvard University."

It was when she was invited to speak in Halifax at the Jane Austen Society (U.K.) conference organized by Patrick Stokes in 2005, that she learned for the first time about her beloved author's family connections to Nova Scotia.

This discovery eventually led to Emsley penning her debut book, titled "The Austens," which is scheduled to be launched in October this year.

Following are some excerpts from my interview with Emsley, where we discuss Emsley's new

book, and Austen's Anglican faith and how it influenced her writing.

What did the Anglican Christian faith look like in Jane Austen's time?

Jane Austen would have been well aware of tensions in the Church of England between "High Church" and "Low Church" groups and between the established church and Dissenters such as Methodists and Evangelicals. Although she admired Thomas Sherlock's High Anglican sermons, her own faith was fairly mainstream, probably "Low Church" or latitudinarian.

Austen satirized some members of the clergy for being pompous and self-satisfied (Mr. Collins in "Pride and Prejudice" and Mr. Elton in "Emma," for example), but she also made the heroes of three of her six novels clergymen (Edward Ferrars in "Sense and Sensibility," Edmund Bertram in "Mansfield Park," and Henry Tilney in "Northanger Abbey").

Churches and worship services in Jane Austen's England were, in general, very plain. In the words of historian Irene Collins, the Georgian church was "architecturally plain to the point of austerity," and "if such churches appealed to any emotion at all, it was to a sense of taste, propriety and proportion."

Even though Austen's novels aren't overtly preachy or religious, it is thought that her Anglican faith influenced her work -- particularly in her characters, plots and the moral universe she created. Would you agree?

Yes, Jane Austen's Anglican faith was a strong influence on her work. As the daughter of a Church of England clergyman, she grew up immersed in the language of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer and probably participated in

daily prayers in the parsonage at Steventon. Although she rarely writes specifically about religion or faith, her novels show that she believed it possible for people to change and improve, and literary historians have suggested she may have been in sympathy with the latitudinarian theology that was common among Anglicans of her time.

Gary Kelly, for example, writes that the structure of Austen's novels "is consistent with an Anglican reading of human history as a form of romance journey in which an omniscient yet benevolent deity presides over a historical plot of human error, fall, and redemption by both free will and grace, and which instructs the reader to hope for and aspire to redemption." Kelly goes so far as to describe Austen as the creator of a particular kind of "Anglican romance."

You've talked a little bit about Austen's lesser-known prayers. Can you shed some light on these and how they give us an insight into her faith?

Three prayers composed by Jane Austen survive. Cassy Austen, the niece who was baptized at St. Paul's Church, Halifax in 1809, inherited the manuscripts of the prayers from her Aunt Cassandra, Jane's sister. Cassandra had written "Prayers composed by my ever dear sister Jane" on the first manuscript. They are – not surprisingly – not as well known as her six famous novels, but they are well worth reading. They were likely composed to be read aloud in the company of other members of the household at the end of the day. For example, in the first prayer, Austen asks, "May we now, and on each return of night, consider how the past day has been spent by us, what have been our prevailing thoughts, words and actions during it, and how far we can acquit ourselves of evil." All three prayers express a sense of gratitude for blessings and ask for mercy and compassion for all those who suffer.

Readers of Austen's "Emma" will recall the key moment at which the heroine realizes she has been cruel to her neighbour and friend Miss Bates and begins to feel that she must make amends for her behaviour. This scene is just one example of Jane Austen's deep and abiding interest in

human behaviour and in the process of reflection, repentance and atonement. Austen's novels aren't lectures or sermons on how we ought to behave, yet both her novels and her prayers show she was keen to examine how people treat each other, how we choose to live our lives each day, and the extent to which we might be capable of change.

Tell me about your book, "The Austens".

My debut novel, "The Austens," will be published by Pottery Press on September 15, 2025. I've brought to life the friendship between Jane Austen and her sister-in-law Fanny Austen, who lived for a while here in Halifax with her naval captain husband, Charles. While Jane was in England, writing and revising "Sense and Sensibility" and "Pride and Prejudice" and the other novels that would eventually make her famous, Fanny was sailing between Bermuda and Nova Scotia and then to England with her husband and their young daughters.

In my novel, Jane chooses to write fiction instead of marrying for money and thereby selling her body and soul, while Fanny chooses to marry for love. But they live in a world that is hostile to art and love, and even to the idea of a woman making a choice about any aspect of her life, and the tensions that arise between Jane and Fanny threaten their friendship.

My novel picks up themes from my previous work on marriage poetry, happy endings, the history of St. Paul's, and ethical questions in the novels of Jane Austen. I'm interested in what happens after the wedding day has ended and the celebrations are over, whether that's in the context of a poem about marriage or a novel by Jane Austen – or in real life. Her novels famously end with happy marriages, and, like many of her readers, I can't help but wonder, what comes next? I think Jane understood the appeal of romance and happy endings, but I think she was also fully aware of the complexities of married life and the challenges of motherhood.

Emsley's "The Austens" will be launched on October 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax. All are welcome.

What’s old can be made new again

BY MONICA EBSARY

Cultures around the world are alive with unique traditions. Diversity in our communities and in our country creates connection. Through the years, my family has enjoyed attending festivals and Mawio’mi celebrations, derived from a Mi’kmaq word for a formal gathering that brings people together through ceremony, storytelling, drumming and dance.

We sample wonderful foods and learn about the cuisine, listen to the music and celebrate with dancing. Meeting people where they are broadens our world. Even if language may be a barrier, sharing traditions helps bridge our humanity.

Change is a constant with the passage of time and life events. It is often traditions that reunite us with family and friends. Think of the volume of holiday travel at Thanksgiving or Christmas in North America.

I reflected on the word “tradition” as I wrote this column for September. Traditions, whether they are old, revived or brand new, make wonderful memories for all of us. The Cambridge Dictionary defines “tradition” as “a belief, principle or way of acting that people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of these beliefs, etc., in a particular society or group.”

For many generations, Stir-Up Sunday was observed by Catholic and Anglican churches on the last Sunday before Advent.

The traditional collect reads; “Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Many parishes fundraise for church expenses or to raise monies for a specific charity.

I remember reading an article in 1987 in a New England magazine about Trinity Church Plum Pudding and Stir-Up Sunday in an Episcopal Church in the United States. The story caught my attention for several reasons. It brought the church family of all ages together, and the wider community was welcomed too. It was a tradition before Advent in anticipation of the Christmas season.

The article included the history of the stir up plum



pudding with The Church of England. With a leap of faith, I wrote to the person mentioned in the article – the one who was coordinating the Stir-Up Sunday events at Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island. Shortly afterward, I received a beautiful handwritten note from Mrs. Ponvert, which I still cherish. Her handwriting is more like calligraphy. I would like to share her words with you.

“December 1, 1987

Dear Mrs. Ebsary,

Your letter reached me a day or two ago and I hope I may be able to answer to some extent your inquiries.

I am in charge of the Stirring at Trinity Church this year. I am enclosing a very dated copy of a news article of the Stirring at Trinity; and yet, it may be helpful. The recipe on the back makes about nine pints of pudding uncooked.

A few days before the sale of the pudding – this year it is to be the third Sunday of Advent after the last service – a group of parish women prepare the pudding in large vats and package it uncooked in pint containers. Judging by our sales last year, we will make seven times the recipe. We leave a bit of the pudding unpackaged and put it in a bowl. This is what gets stirred at the Stirring. The rest is sold as packaged, and I’m hoping the profit this year will go to our missionaries in Brazil. At the time of the Stirring, we also have cookies, coffee and tea, and

gather around a piano to sing Advent hymns and a few Christmas carols. We feel the Stirring is more of a preparation rather than a celebration and wish to keep this event in the Advent sensibilities. Also, this year, our decorations will be purple with an Advent wreath. I would like to quote from an article of several years ago from our church bulletin.

“The stirring is actually an old English parish custom in which the faithful would bring part of the Fall harvest of fruits and nuts to a common pot at the entrance of the parish church. Each week, the pot would grow more full and each week the contents would be preserved by spirits other than those Holy. Come late Advent, and all would gather for a general stirring and distribution of the pudding for the Christmas feast.”

We have learned by making the pudding all at once that the quality is consistent. If I can be of further help please let me know.

Sincerely,

A. Ponvert”

Churches may wish to revive this tradition this year or in years to come. I will share the original recipe and instructions in the October issue and explain how the folklore of ‘widdershins’ is part of the story.

Our first parish was in Lantz-Dutch Settlement, N.S. As the years pass by, it is the people you remember and the special times together in ministry. We successfully sold plum puddings for several years for fundraising, and it was a lot of fun!

This is in memory of Mrs. Ponvert, and with gratitude that she shared this unique tradition with me 38 years ago!



Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash

For All the Saints, August – September, 2025

BY THE REV. JOHN K. MORRELL

Excerpted from Stephen Reynolds’ “For All The Saints”.

August 30 – Robert McDonald, Priest in the Western Arctic, D. 1913

Today, we honour the memory of Robert McDonald, an Anglican priest who ministered in the western Arctic from 1862 until his retirement 40 years later. He based himself at Fort McPherson, a trading post in the Yukon, and journeyed westwards into Alaska, ministering to the various Kutchin tribes who inhabited that region. His greatest achievement as a missionary and pastor was to train and support native ministers. He regarded himself more as a resource for their work than as a master clergyman who had to keep all authority in his own hands. He also proved to be a serious ethnographer, with several ground-breaking studies of native life and language to his credit.

McDonald was part Ojibwe through his mother, and because of this “mixed blood” background, his superiors in the Church Missionary Society treated him as a second-class priest. Their reports on work in the Arctic always referred to “the European missionaries – and Archdeacon McDonald.” He knew of this prejudice and deeply resented it, but he never let it affect his love of Christ or deter him from the work of helping native people come to feel the same love. And that is why we remember him today – because he was an Anglican priest whose devotion to the gospel surmounted prejudice for the sake of enabling the native people of the Arctic to become full partners in the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

September 30 – Jerome, Saint and Teacher of the Faith, D. 420 AD

Jerome was a fourth-century monk who produced the standard Latin version of the Scriptures known as the Vulgate. By his own commentaries on the text, he had a lasting influence on the Church’s

interpretation of the Bible.

Jerome was born in Italy around the year 340 AD and was baptized as a young man. His upbringing led him to expect the best of himself, and he set his heart on spiritual perfection. His first experiment in monastic life ended in scandal; we do not know what it was about, except that it forced him to leave his home. He then tried his vocation as a hermit in Palestine, but found that he could not endure the physical hardship it required. He eventually returned to Italy, where he became secretary to the Bishop of Rome (the Pope Damasus). Proficient in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, he began his lifelong work of editing and improving earlier Latin translations of Scripture. The Latin text of the Bible was called the Vulgate, which means “the Bible in Common Speech.”

In the meantime, Jerome again moved to Palestine and settled in Bethlehem, where he gathered and ruled over a community of monks and also a community of devout women. Here, he wrote his commentaries on Scripture, which were to remain standard reference works in the Church for over a thousand years. He died in Bethlehem in the year 420 AD. Jerome could exercise great charm in personal encounters, and some of this charm is reflected in his letters. But he was also a vain, pugnacious and jealous man who could not endure someone else being thought his equal; and his jealousy (as much as his concern for orthodox teaching) led him to disparage and finally destroy the reputations of several former friends. By common consent, he is the most unlikeable person ever called a saint by the Church – and yet the Church recognizes that God may nourish the faithful by means of even the least promising instruments. So, we do not dwell on the flaws of Jerome but give thanks for the fruit of his labours as translator and scholar, because we see in them a true work of God’s grace.

Synod recap: What did you re



Display at Synod

BY JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

The 152nd Session of Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, which was held from Friday, May 23 to Sunday May 25, 2025, in the Main Arena at St. Francis Xavier University, Varsity Drive in Antigonish N.S. was thought to be one of the most inspiring, if not the most inspiring, to date.

Participants came away feeling rejuvenated and filled with hope, which also happened to be the theme for the proceedings – “Therefore we have hope”.

The Right Reverend Deon K. Johnson was the keynote speaker. He is the 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri.

We spoke with some clergy and parishioners who attended and asked them what they walked away with in May. Here's what they shared.

“For me, it's difficult to narrow my experience at Synod to one single moment or an inspiring message. I can't mention one thing without another.

Bishop Sandra and Finance Controller Lawrence Roche pledged to embody a servant heart in all dealings with par-



The Right Reverend Deon K. Johnson and The Right Reverend Sandra Fyfe

ishes. Their statement, made standing together, seemed to raise the bar high when it came to the spirit of Synod.

Speaking to the 16 resolutions before the house, speakers in support of or against the motions were respectful of one another, polite, kind and orderly.

I could not speak of moments and of inspiration without mentioning keynote speaker, The Right Reverend Deon Johnson, Bishop of Missouri. Pure joy! He had us laughing in the aisles and crying in the pews.

He is completely blunt in his unrelenting hope for the church and in sharing his relentless faith. It was a privilege to have listened to him, spoken with him and praised God with him. My one all-encompassing experi-

ence of this weekend – pretty amazing! This was my third Synod. There's an expression: ‘Third time's the charm.’ Yes it was.” – **Jan Cox, Warden and Synod Delegate, Parish of St. Mary's, Summerside and St. John's, St. Eleanor's, Prince Edward Island**

“Hearing about hope translated into gospel action in our diocese was the most inspiring message I heard at this year's Synod. When trust in truth and institutions is daily under assault by dishonest politicians and the malign use of technology, it would be easy to lose both hope and our own anchor to reality.

Bishop Sandra's message was that she has hope because of the responses she sees from members of our church to social and spiritual needs where they live, work and worship. A diocesan bishop generally has a good handle on what's happening in their diocese, so to hear her sounding not only hopeful but actually upbeat was a real spiritual tonic.

The responses to the resolutions on Canon 35 (parish government) and affirming members of the 2SLGBTQ1A+ community were also inspiring. They

show a thoughtfully evolving church where doctrine doesn't stifle the gospel message at the expense of reason, nor are canons unable to respond to the practical needs of everyday church life.” – **Jonni Turner, Parish of Petite Riviere representative at synod**

“This was a thoughtful Synod: the care and attention to orientation of delegates, and the preparedness of first-timers and youth delegates were marks of respect, inclusiveness and a genuine commitment to hospitality. The synod staff – quiet, humble, efficient – assured all aspects focused on supporting full democratic participation and respect for all views.

My biggest takeaways:

This was a spiritual event; I felt that the Holy Spirit was with us and we were doing God's work: daunting and beautiful and inspiring all at the same time.

Highlights: hard to beat the camaraderie at each of the tables of eight delegates, including a youth delegate. The engagement, preparedness, and meaningful contributions of the youth delegates made everyone at Synod proud to have their articulate input – more Hope for the future.

The Right Reverend Deon K. Johnson was a brilliant choice as keynote [speaker] and guiding presence for our exploration of hope. With great good humour and clearly a deep faith, he challenged us, again and again, to trust in God's love of us, to live lives that serve others, and to know that we are enough – God loves us regardless.

He cautioned against living with a mindset of “lack” – we have enough, we are enough and He will provide – Trust in the Lord for he is good.

The recurring theme of “it's not 1950 anymore, and we are not going back” challenged our fears in these changing times – don't pare back – be bold - move, and grow as if you really trust in the Lord.

Ripples and Waves – Community



BY ALLIE COLP

The Community Roots Day Camp Program was back on the road again this summer for our sixth year, with camps happening in seven communities

throughout our diocese.

Our theme for this summer was Ripples and Waves. Each day of camp, our campers learned and wondered about stories of our faith that were centred around water, and participated in activities throughout the day to explore the themes in all sorts of ways. Over and over again in each week of camp, our staff and volunteers saw campers engage deeply in those stories of our faith, joyfully create unique works of art, discover and explore new ideas in science experiments, and make unexpected connections while having fun playing games.

In case you aren't familiar with our program, Community Roots is designed to do two things – first, to encourage children to grow in their faith, or to learn about Christianity for the first time, and second, to develop leadership capacity in communities so that meaningful, local ministry can

continue to happen there for children and youth.

Our staff team this year was made up of two wonderful Program Architects, Kim Kaozi and Sarah Melanson, who put together an entire curriculum for a full week of day camp, trained volunteers, and then worked with those volunteers to facilitate camps.

Our summer staff work alongside incredibly dedicated and generous volunteers in each of the communities that hold camps. It takes a whole lot of people to pull this ministry off, and to serve kids and families through this program: people who are at camp all day every day, folks who were in charge of a barbecue or bringing popsicles to a closing celebration, those who popped in for bits of camp here and there, offered a community connection, dropped off cookies, made a financial donation, or anything else in between.

All of those people come together to share the love of God with kids in their communities. We started this program in the summer of 2018, thinking that

turn home with?



Display at Synod

Finally, a singular experience: our opening Eucharist in the St. FX Chapel – lofty ceiling, seating for 400 and a pipe organ give you the scale of the place. Put 350 Anglicans who know a thing or two about singing strong and clear, in a place like this and the sound was truly magnificent – like the roof was lifting off – goosebumps and tears, and joy, and reverence. Never to be forgotten.” – **Patrick J Donahoe, Licensed Lay Minister at St. Luke’s Anglican Church in Dartmouth and lay delegate from St. Luke’s Parish, Dartmouth**

“There was a felt shift from our last diocesan synod. A lot of careful intentionality went into shaping this synod to include more discussion and collaboration, [to make it] more Christ-centred, and [to] create opportunities for inclusion.

Ironically being so far from the city, I felt that the synod goers had a much deeper sense of community with one another at this synod than at our last one in downtown Halifax; as parishes chose to take meals together, to walk Antigonish main street during breaks together, and take opportunities to share stories, to pray and be together more so than we had when we had the conveniences of the city at our fingertips. Synod 2023 was themed on ‘Joy’ and we needed that – to look for joy during the years

immediately following the pandemic.

It seems fitting now that our new theme is ‘Therefore we have hope’ – that we would set our eyes on all the reasons for hope we have in our communities. Not despite adversity, but hope that is informed by the challenges we’ve faced, the real suffering that God has walked alongside us through, as we look forward and listen to what God might be inviting us into next.” – **Leah Marshall, synod support staff member**

“One impression that stayed with me was how much I enjoyed the site. St. FX campus and town, with their historic connection to the Catholic church, felt particularly apt for a synod gathering. Earlier synods at Dalhousie did not provide the same contemplative and peaceful atmosphere. And the food was particularly well done. It felt more like a retreat and seemed to draw people closer together.

At the synod itself, I was moved by not just the denunciation of anti-DEI, anti-“woke,” anti LGBTQ+ rhetoric that has become so endemic, but even more so by the positive, affirming language spoken at and by the gathering, particularly by our keynote speaker. His contribution was inspiring: humane, humble and really quite brilliant. For me, a wonderful surprise.” – **Geoff Turnbull, Christ Church, Dartmouth**

y Roots 2025



we could just give it a try and see what happened, and in all of the years since then, all of the people who have been part of our camps have been sharing God’s love, helping kids to know that there are people in their community who care about them, and building the kingdom of God together, and we look forward to continuing to do so in the years to come.



“Songs of the Sea”

a new album by Capella Regalis Men and Boys Choir



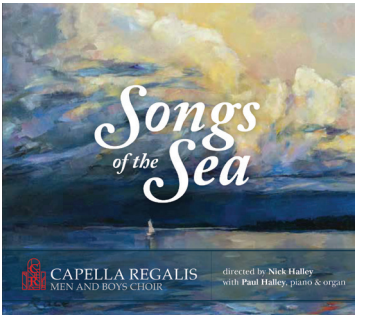
Capella Regalis Men and Boys Choir takes a deep dive into the musical heritage of their Maritime home with a new album and contemporary composers

Directed by Nick Halley, “Songs of the Sea” features new arrangements of traditional folk songs by Grammy-award-winning Nova Scotian, Paul Halley and others.

Capella Regalis Choirs, based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, is proud to announce the release of their latest CD, “Songs of the Sea,” featuring choral works inspired by the sea performed by Capella Regalis Men and Boys Choir under the direction of Nick Halley.

This new album from one of Canada’s premier choral ensembles presents both traditional and contemporary pieces arranged for choir, piano, organ, and percussion, with new arrangements by multi-Grammy Award-winning composer Paul Halley and Capella Regalis founder and artistic director Nick Halley, which were written especially for this recording project. The roster of performers on this CD is multi-generational, including young singers from age seven up to professional musicians aged 70, making for a uniquely meaningful exploration of Maritime song traditions carried through the generations.

“Being a Maritime choir, it seemed only right to do a sea songs recording. What I hadn’t fully anticipated was just how right it would feel, with this particular group singing these particular songs,” says Nick Halley, the choir’s founder and a multi-instrumentalist. “The whole process was a joy, from start to finish: choosing the songs from our wonderfully rich maritime heritage, hearing my father Paul’s arrangements take shape, working up my own arrangement of ‘Skye Boat Song,’ watching the choristers fall in love with each tune – poetic and melodic



gems, with their evocations of seafaring scenes past and truly present to us here – and ultimately getting to record them with the brilliant John Adams in the control room. What a privilege.”

“Songs of the Sea” includes new takes on Maritime classics like “Farewell to Nova Scotia” and Cape Bretoner Allister MacGillivray’s, “Away from the Roll of the Sea,” alongside traditional folk songs from Scotland and England such as “Skye Boat Song” and “Blow the Wind Southerly”. The selections reflect the deep ties of people and communities to the sea, drawing on themes of naval and fishing expeditions, historical events and folklore. For instance, “Petty Harbour Bait Skiff” tells the story of a tragic 1852 boat sinking in Newfoundland, while “The Grey Selchie” recounts a legend from the Orkney Islands about a shapeshifting creature who is a man on land and a seal in the sea.

The album was recorded in Halifax’s historic, stone All Saints Cathedral by John D. S. Adams (Stonehouse Sound).

Released on June 6, 2025, “Songs of the Sea” is now available on all major streaming platforms, including Apple Music, Spotify, and YouTube Music. The physical CD, which includes a 20-page album booklet complete with archival photos from the Nova Scotia Archives and liner notes by Executive Producer Vanessa Halley, is available through Capella Regalis’s online shop. Visit capellareglais.com/audio for details.

Alongside Hope's "Wild Ride" lights the way to safe births in Mozambique and Madagascar

BY JACQUELINE TINGLE,
COMMUNICATIONS AND
MARKETING OFFICER, ALONG-
SIDE HOPE, WITH FILES FROM
LUCINDA CONGOLO,
MOZAMBIQUE
COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR
WE CARE SOLAR

Alongside Hope's 2025 Wild Ride aims to raise funds to equip eight rural health clinics with life-saving renewable energy. And thanks to a generous donor, all gifts will be matched, doubling the impact.

At Muripotana Health Centre in Nampula, midwife Ancha Amido Abdala used to begin every night shift in darkness: no lights, no power, and no possibility of admitting patients after dark. In 2022, that changed when Alongside Hope and partner EHALE installed a Solar Suitcase – a wall-mounted box powered by solar panels. Inside, it holds LED lights, a fetal Doppler,

headlamps, phone chargers and a thermometer.

Abdala says it made an immediate difference. "There was no way to handle medical materials in the dark," she recalls.

"I gave birth at night," said one new mother. "I felt very happy because I could see what the nurse was doing." In districts with installations, night-time births rose by about 17 per cent, and more than 80,000 babies have been safely delivered since 2016, thanks to the installation of 80 Solar Suitcases across the province.

Now in 2025, the Wild Ride aims to raise \$52,000 – enough for eight more solar suitcases. The Wild Ride is part of a larger initiative to provide 35 Solar Suitcases in Mozambique and 14 Solar Suitcases in Madagascar. This fundraiser has inspired creative efforts across Canada to support the

cause.

Bishop Lynne McNaughton of the Diocese of Kootenay is walking 200 km and hosting a public walk in Kelowna. Also in Kootenay, Andrew Stephens-Rennie is walking 450 km in Rossland. At St. Timothy's in 100 Mile House, Shelby Byer is organizing a 100-mile parish walk, while Joy Gothard of Kamloops' St. Paul's Cathedral is e-biking 200 km and planning a walk in Sun Peaks. Their efforts follow the lead of Bishop Clara Plamondon of the Territory of the People, who is creating 50 prayer flags representing prayers and learning about the supported countries.

Inspired by Betty Davidson of Yukon, who crochets baby blankets each year, participants are combining prayer, art, and action. Davidson, once medevaced during childbirth, is committed to helping

others have safe deliveries.

In Thunder Bay, Jasmine Sandham is organizing a six-hour "art bee" and group walk in memory of her sister's high-risk birth. St. Paul's joins eight other parishes walking in honour of Archbishop Anne Germond.

In Niagara, Archdeacon Bill Mous is cycling 85 km to raise \$6,500 – enough for one Solar Suitcase – honouring the care midwives gave his family. On the East Coast, the Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador team is hiking and kayaking, including a 200 km kayak by Christine Lynch.

These efforts help midwives like Abdala, who says the Solar Suitcase not only improves care and safety, like enabling life-saving newborn resuscitation, but also builds trust in her work. Even clinics with some electricity benefit from reliable solar backup.

These efforts will make a big difference for midwives like Abdala. She explains that even during suturing, the room is bright enough to explain and demonstrate each step to women and their companions.

That visibility builds trust. "At first, community members didn't always respect me," Abdala says. "But when they saw what I could do with the Solar Suitcase, attitudes changed. Now, almost everyone respects my work."

How to Help

Walk, cycle, bake – any activity helps raise funds for solar energy in clinics in Mozambique and Madagascar. Every donation is matched, doubling the impact. Register or donate at alongsidehope.org/wild-ride. **Questions? Contact Kim Umbach at kumbach@alongsidehope.org**

HOPE FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

A fundraiser for refugees and special projects titled "Hope For New Beginnings" is scheduled for October 24, 2025 at the Cathedral Church of All Saints. Doors will open at 6.30 p.m. and the concert will start at 7 p.m. Tickets are being pre-sold at \$50 and Box Office hours are after Sunday worship. Extended hours will begin on

September 17, Wednesday and Friday from 12:45 -1:45 p.m. inside the purple awning entrance. There will also be a cash bar and jewellery table at the venue. Free parking is available at the VG lot off College Street. **For more inquiries, email: margy.rawdon@bellaliant.net**

Letters to the Editor

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



Email: diocesantimes@gmail.com

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Grasshoppers

BY MICHELLE BULL

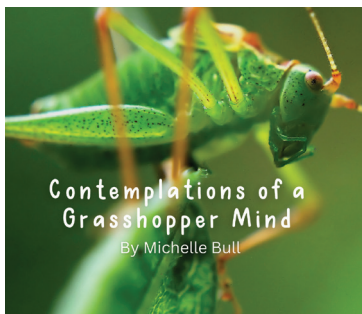
I walk down the road near my cottage on a hot August afternoon. The sun is beating down, making heat shimmers on the road and on the cove. I feel its heat through my thin shirt, through my hat and on my feet as my sandals stir up the dust on the hot gravel shoulder.

In the trees, the cicadas sing their love songs; heat bugs, we call them. Overhead, the turkey vultures sail patiently. I can hear voices across the water from the wharf, and birds in the roadside trees. An occasional car speeds by. A lovely hot August day.

As I walk, grasshoppers whirr up before me, leaping to escape the giant feet coming towards them. Some of them land on the pavement, a dangerous place. Some land in the ditch, a whole jungle of tangled grass and roses and wildflowers. Some of them bounce off my stomach. Nasty surprise. Some land ahead of me and have to leap again in a moment, when I catch up to them.

My thoughts are like that. This column is going to be like that, which is one of the reasons for its name. You'll never know where it's going next. The other, since enquiring minds need to know, is a private joke arising from the "Kung Fu" series of my youth.

My prayer is a bit like that, too. I start out praying for peace in the Middle East and my mind leaps off to my Jew-



ish friend, and I wonder how he's doing, and say a prayer for him. Since he's also gay, I start thinking about a gay man I used to correspond with in Uganda. He was on the run for his life, since being gay is a capital crime in Uganda. I pray for him and his friends. Then I think how glad I am to live in Canada, and say a prayer for our country and its leaders. And that reminds me of my

friend Mark . . . Yeah, that's how disciplined my prayers are, even when I'm reading my list of people to pray for out loud.

So then I think it's a pity I'm so undisciplined in my prayer time and I wonder if I'll ever actually learn to focus. Only it occurs to me that perhaps, just perhaps, the Spirit is leading me to pray for those people and situations. Maybe I'm not being undisciplined, just open and attentive. Perhaps that's wishful thinking. Or maybe not.

One of the Brothers of St. John the Evangelist said that prayer is not about us calling God's attention to some person or situation God has for-

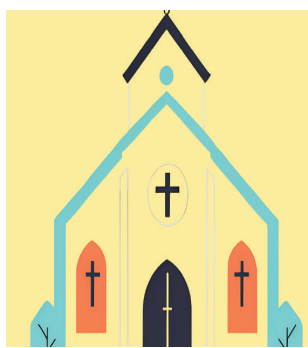
gotten about, or drawing God in to act in a situation when God is not acting. Rather, it's God's Spirit drawing us in to assist in God's ongoing work of healing and transforming. God is sharing the work with us, letting us help, as a parent lets a child help in their work. I like this.

In retirement, I'm finally beginning to understand the concept of resting in God. Perhaps it's because I'm slightly less busy or less responsible. Perhaps it's the effect of long Covid, which has made it harder to keep track of more than one or two things at once. But I'm finding it easier to rest in God. Even in the midst of to-do lists.

It's a bit like walking down that road. (Have you ever noticed that clergy can turn absolutely anything into an object lesson?). My mind is like the grasshoppers, jumping all over the place, sometimes into dangerous situations, sometimes into wonderful new places to explore, sometimes into brick walls, sometimes repeating the same things over and over again, perhaps hoping for different results. And my verbal prayers are like that, too. All over the map.

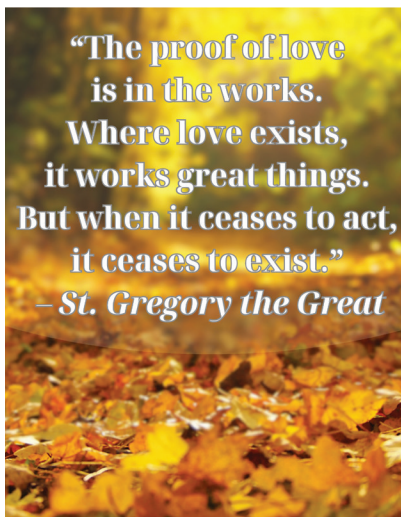
And yet, the sun shines down on me, even beats down on me. I feel the warmth of it constantly. I'm aware of being enfolded in the warmth. Sometimes I revel in it, and remember winter days and parkas, and heave a thankful sigh of contentment. Sometimes, if I'm honest, I find it a bit much and wish a cloud would cover it. But that's what I'm talking about. The sun is a constant presence there, and I'm constantly aware of it, even though the grasshopper mind is all over the place.

That's what resting in God is like. I may be thinking about the turkey vultures or the cicadas or feeling a grasshopper's thump against my stomach, but the sun is there and I feel it. God is there, in the midst of the chaos of my life, and I'm learning to notice and rest in God, enjoy the pleasure and freedom it gives. Bask in the rays of God's presence.



PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS

Do you have pictures or details of events you'd like to see published in *The Diocesan Times*? Email us at diocesantimes@gmail.com



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St. Andrew's Annual Car Show

St. Andrew's Church, Timberlea had their annual car show on Saturday, June 21, and it was another successful event. Mother Nature served up ideal weather conditions and car owners and visitors from the community and beyond enjoyed a wonderful day.

Car enthusiasts shared their love of vintage, classic, muscle cars and motorcycles and helped raise funds for the good works of St. Andrew's Anglican Church.



SWAG's acts of kindness shine in North-End Halifax

"Go out into the world and preach the gospel to all creation." – Mark 16:15

And that is exactly what the SWAG of St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church in north-end Halifax is doing. SWAG, an acronym for Surprise the World Action Group, was formed after the group read and studied the book, 'Surprise the World!' by Michael Frost. The group is facilitated by Naniya Trevors.

As you walk up the walkway of St. Margaret of Scotland Church, you will see a large 8-by-10-foot banner designed by Dale Moffat, one of the SWAG members. It boldly proclaims "All Belong Here," supported by colourful graphics using the colours of the rainbow. This was one of SWAG's first projects, and they have been "swagging" ever since.

On the property, you will also see an array of benches built and strategically placed by SWAG members. For example, there is one bench at the end of the driveway to the hall so people leaving the hall will have a place to sit while waiting for a ride, and also for members of the community who are walking up the hill and need to sit down for a rest. A dish of water sits under the bench for canine friends.

For people entering St. Margaret of Scotland Church

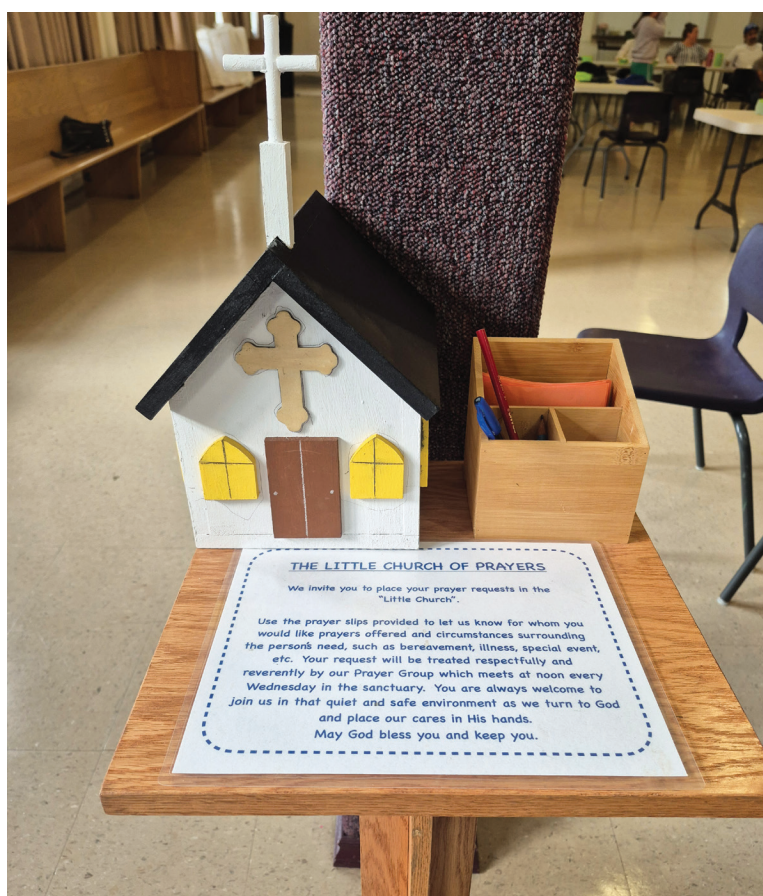


"All Belong Here" signage on the walkway of St. Margaret of Scotland Church, designed by Dale Moffat



Table set up for the clothing swap by the dedicated members of SWAG

Hall, there is a replica of a church on a stand called, 'The Little House of Prayer'. Beside it are pens and paper so people can place a prayer request in the church. These requests are



Prayer requests are accepted at any time. "The Little Church" was built by William Mason.

then turned over to the weekly Wednesday prayer group.

In November 2024, on St. Margaret of Scotland Day, while the congregation enjoyed a delicious meal of Scottish stew and other Scottish delicacies, members of SWAG surprised three families in need in the community by delivering takeout meals to them. SWAG has also surprised pregnant women in the community with gift baskets of baby goodies for the newborn.

On Easter Day 2025, this group held its second Easter Egg Hunt for the community. Thanks to the generous donations of Easter candy and plastic eggs from the congregation, the group was able to fill and hide 700 plastic eggs. (Of course, they were supervised while hiding the eggs by the community crowd, 'Carl Thomas', who decided not to wait for the start of the hunt and opened some of the eggs and buried the candy in the

community garden beds on the property). The participants were asked to meet in the hall and were surprised when they were offered hot and cold drinks, finger food and hot cross buns. At 12:15 p.m., the ribbon was cut, and the hunt began. In total, about 40 children took part.

On Saturday, May 31, SWAG was "swagging" again. This was the day of its first free clothing swap and barbeque. Of course, since it was a rainy day, burgers and hot dogs were cooked on a grill inside. Hot and cold drinks as well as muffins were also served. What a wonderful feeling to see so many people shopping and then sitting down and enjoying something to eat and socializing. It was a huge success. Parents and children were happy to be able to walk out with bags of new-to-us clothes which saved them much-needed pennies. Clothing left from the swap was taken to centres in the community that give to those in need. Again, a big thank you to the congregation for their donation of clothing.

So, what's next for SWAG? Somewhere, somebody will get a surprise. It may be you!

Sent in by Nancy Lee Mason, a warden at the church

What if?

BY CLAUDIA ZINCK

Learning rarely comes easily to grandma. It can be fascinating, rewarding, even a little addictive, but it never is “easy”.

DEN's (Diocesan Environment Network) grandma (that's me!) wants more folks to get their hands in the dirt. Gardening is fresh air, exercise, and even a social time. Gardening removes stress, something that seems to be a bit too much these days.

A lot of today's population wasn't raised with spring planting and fall harvests. They simply don't know how to grow a garden.

They didn't get treats for weeding the beans. They never picked strawberries for a church shortcake social. They didn't grow corn for a late-summer teenage corn boil. They didn't earn cash for working a hayfield, just to buy a shiny new transistor radio (yes, that dates me, but you get the idea).

We have a generation that missed out on gardening and the rewards that came with it.

When we offer planting



kits, we often hear, “Oh, I don't know how to garden.” I tell them, “You don't need to! Everything's in the bag: just put the seeds in the soil,

water it and give it some sun. That's it.” Suddenly, I get an, “Okay... I'll try!” (as if gardening requires knowledge of rocket science.)

Community gardens are the next step. And with it comes the next question: How do I water my garden without a water tap? Do I have to bring bottles?” Enter my favourite topic – fog fences.

An authority on the subject is Dr. Robert Schemenauer from Fog Quest. Always willing to help the newbie, he answered my questions in a detailed email. According to Dr. Schemenauer, we need a spot away from trees that has both wind and fog. I'd been trying to collect gallons of water from small fog fences and learned that was a bit ambitious. We don't need gallons of water.

With a well-mulched garden, a little fog and wind in the morning could keep plants watered without lifting a jug. Imagine a self-watering garden box in the middle of a field!

Grandma had thought out several places to put the new and improved fog fence this year. The rectory grounds may have a new minister who might not appreciate visitors checking the water each day. The old ball field needed “permission” to allow any new

structure to be set up. This site didn't have wind. That site didn't get a lot of fog.

So, how do we make it happen? We wing it.

With post spikes kindly donated by Brian Mosher, a small grant from the Aspoto-gan Heritage Trust and helping hands from Robert Harris, we've built a prototype. We built it on top of an existing community garden box.

Is it perfect? Who knows! Will it work? We're about to find out.

What if it did work? It wouldn't need to gather a lot of water, just a bit each day. What if the possibilities could change community gardens near and far? What if, all of a sudden, there are more gardeners than community garden boxes?

Stay tuned to DEN e-news for updates on grandma's latest gardening experiments this summer, because growing green thumbs might just be easier than we thought or imagined.

Visit nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/diocesan-environment-network

A Jane Austen-themed tea party for Say Yes! to Bryony House Kids

Country dances, delicately-patterned tea cups and Regency-era dresses were the order of the afternoon on Friday, June 20 at St. Luke's Anglican Church in Dartmouth. The tea party was a fundraising campaign for Say Yes! to Bryony House Kids.

Licensed Lay Minister, Patrick Donahoe gave a brief talk that brought together the church's celebration of the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth with the plight of women today.

“This is the third year that St. Luke's has been accepted to run a Say Yes to Kids! campaign through the Anglican Foundation of Canada,” shared Donahoe. “This is a central part of our mission beyond the church – and a no-brainer because Bryony House shelter is our next-door neighbour.”

The event was well-received, according to Donahoe, with over 50 persons in attendance. “The impetus behind the Jane Austen Tea for Bryony House was to provide an alternative way for people to contribute to the 2025 campaign.”

Lori MacInnis, Counseling Supervisor at Bryony House



shared that she is honoured to be a part of a church community who have been exemplary in their efforts to “shine a light on the plight of some children



and youth in our communities and to offer meaningful support and financial aid to those who may benefit.”

MacInnis continued: “The

issue of intimate partner violence is not always easy to discuss as it's difficult to hear how, especially children and youth, are impacted in multiple ways, some irretrievably so.”

“The guests listened intently to my talk with compassion and interest. I believe that every person in attendance got the message of the important and unique work that Bryony House does in our support of women and children fleeing abuse, and have made an admirable commitment to continue our valuable partnership.”

“Since Bryony House has developed a relationship with St. Luke's, including Patrick Donahoe, Pastor Matthew, and the parishioners, it has been one of great respect, gratitude and appreciation. It is our fervent hope that this wonderful and blessed relationship will continue for years to come,” said MacInnis.

Photos © Jennifer Anandanayagam



Welcoming Rev. Will Ferrey to St. Francis by the Lakes

A message from the parish: “It is with great joy that we welcomed our new Rector, Rev. Will Ferrey, to St. Francis by the Lakes, on his first Sunday Service on July 20. We look forward to beginning this new chapter in our parish life, walking together in faith and service, and being inspired by Rev. Will's leadership and pastoral care. We are truly blessed to have Rev. Will, Allie, Simeon and Owen join our parish family. *‘I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.’ – Jeremiah 3:15* May God bless Rev. Will as he begins his ministry among us, and may we, as a parish family, grow together in Christ's love.”

Soup and Smiles: St. Timothy's outreach warms the community

In 2024, St. Timothy's Hatchet Lake, applied for a Growth for New Ministries grant. We had seen this outreach in other parishes and felt it was a good fit for us. We dreamed of gathering with our neighbouring congregations to hold an ecumenical soup outreach monthly for those in our communities who are lonely, unwell or homebound.

Our parish is along Prospect Road, which is not a village or even a large community; it is a string of subdivisions and small communities starting in Goodwood stretching to Shad Bay. Terence Bay is the only real community which is seven kilometres down the Terence Bay Road, off Prospect Road. Therefore, there isn't a cohesive community feel as there would be in a village or large community.

With the Growth for New Ministries grant, we purchased supplies to start. We gather monthly with folks from the United and Roman Catho-



The folks have added some fun and safety to this outreach. Rev Cate Ratcliffe, who is an amazing knitter, knit us some cute cozies for the jars as they can be pretty hot when we hand them over.

lic congregations to make the soup. Each congregation takes a turn hosting. We get to know each other better as we peel and chop. While the soup bubbles and then cools, we sit together with tea, coffee and snacks to share what is happening in each other's congregations, and, of course, to discuss the latest news and events. We hold this ministry in prayer as we head out to de-

liver soup, a roll and cookies, along with a friendly note.

While drawing closer to our Christian neighbours is wonderful and has brought our community closer, it is meeting the folks at the door that is the brightest blessing to be had. So many are filled with joy as they answer our knock. Their smiles, sincere thanks and appreciation are humbling and soul-filling. They always



This is Julia, one of the wonderful people we deliver our soup lunch to monthly. She always greets us with a smile and a big thank you.

have their cleaned mason jar and lid ready to trade for the new bottle of warm soup. This, to us, is what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. We thank the diocese for supporting new ministries far and wide with the Growth for New Ministries grant.

Sent by Dawn Purcell, St. Timothy's Hatchet Lake



Liturgical colours for the month of September

BY THE REV JOHN K. MORRELL

Adapted from the Episcopal Church Calendar 2025

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"As God has flooded the earth and sky with colour, so the Church has sensed the symbolic use of colour in its worship. As dominating colours in nature change with the seasons of the year, so in the Church Year there is a change in the colours of the Eucharistic vestments."

Paraments (altar, lectern and pulpit hangings) change colours to serve as reminders of the importance of church feasts and holy days as we observe our liturgical seasons.

GREEN – the colour of living things and of God's creation, is used throughout the Sundays and Days after Pentecost until Advent Sunday.

WHITE – For special memorial and commemorations including: Nativity of the Virgin Mary (Sept. 8), Founders, Benefactors and Missionaries of the Anglican Church of Canada (Sept. 18), St. Michael and All Angels (Sept. 29) and St. Jerome (Sept. 30). The colour white symbolizes joy, purity and truth.

RED – For Holy Cross Day (Sept. 14), and St. Matthew (Sept. 22). Red is the colour of fire and blood.

VIOLET – Symbolic of penitence and expectation. Used for Ember Days four times a year, when we pray for those who are preparing to enter the ministry. We ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide them in their studies and in learning more about people. Autumn Ember Day occurs after Holy Cross Day on Wednesday, Sept. 17.

Extending the good news beyond church walls

BY ANDREW SHERIN

In this issue, I want to introduce readers to Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ). In 1982, CPJ was formed to continue the decades-long work of the Committee for Justice and Liberty Foundation "to do serious, biblically faithful big-picture analysis" of social policy and public funding.

"Our (CPJ's) mission is to promote public justice in Canada by shaping key public policy debates through research and analysis, publishing, and public dialogue. CPJ encourages citizens, leaders in society and governments to support policies and practices which reflect God's call for love, justice, and the flourishing of Creation" (From cpj.ca). Public justice is the political dimension of loving one's neighbour, caring for creation and achieving the common good. CPJ is focusing on three key areas: climate justice, the eradication of poverty and refugee rights. The Face of Poverty Consultation has collaborated with CPJ for several years on poverty eradication issues and campaigns, most recently on the federal government's legislation and regulations for the Canada Disability Benefit CDB (see CDB article in the DT June issue).

CPJ annually publishes Poverty Trends, a report

on the status of poverty in Canada. The 2024 report entitled Finding our Place in Systemic Change stated "that several measures of poverty in Canada are moving in the wrong direction. Intersecting and deep-set inequitable structures and practices make poverty persistent". It is available online at <https://cpj.ca/report/poverty-trends-2024/>. Poverty Trends 2024 reported poverty rates in N.S. at 13.1 per cent (market-based measure) and 19.8 per cent (low-income measure) and in P.E.I. 9.8 per cent (market-based measure) and 16.3 per cent (low-income measure). Food insecurity rates were reported at about 28 per cent for both provinces and core housing needs at 12.9 per cent (N.S.) and 6.5 per cent (P.E.I.).

The Market Basket Measure (MBM) establishes poverty thresholds based on the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other items for a family of four that reflects a modest, basic standard of living. A family with a disposable income below the appropriate MBM threshold for the size of the family and the region where they live is deemed to be living in poverty. The Low Income Measure (LIM) is a relative measure of low income used in Canada to assess the

financial threshold below which individuals or families are considered to be in low-income situations. It is calculated based on the median adjusted after-tax income of private households.

In answering the question, "What can we do about poverty in Canada?" Poverty Trends 2024 makes several recommendations on income support, including a guaranteed basic income, public funding for infrastructure and services (e.g. affordable housing), regulatory controls and accountability and transparency.

Poverty Trends 2024 introduces the Climate Action Venn Diagram by Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, New York University (<https://www.ayanaelizabeth.com/>), also applicable to poverty eradication, to help you make a decision on what action you can take: The action best suited for you is defined by intersection of the answers to three questions: What brings you joy, satisfaction? What needs to be done? What are you good at? It would seem appropriate to add, "What is the Spirit moving you to do?"

Natalie Appleyard, CPJ's Socio-Economic Policy Analyst, commented during CPJ's webinar reporting on their Federal Election Tour, that she found "people feeling frustrated with the political discourse

and frustrated, with a sense of cynicism and not knowing where to begin. Connecting with like-minded people can be a real antidote to loneliness and despair and not knowing where to begin." She found many people and organizations doing good work all across the country, so there are many opportunities to contribute.

Another CPJ resource that might be of interest to readers is the participatory workshop resource Living Justice: A Gospel Response to Poverty (found at <https://cpj.ca/living-justice-a-gospel-response-to-poverty/>). It contains separate sections on material, emotional, community and spiritual poverty.

You can become a member of Citizens for Public Justice and receive their newsletter and announcements of campaigns at cpj.ca

Readers can also participate in a local CPJ-aligned group, the Face of Poverty Consultation (FACE), part of the Diocesan Fairness for Basic Needs Ministry by writing to Andy Sherin at nspeijustice@gmail.com. FACE meets virtually on the first Monday of the month. FACE will mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty with a webinar on October 17. Watch NetNews for an announcement.

Ex Cathedra returns

BY CYNTHIA PILICHOS FOR THE CATHEDRAL’S NEEDLEPOINT PROJECT TEAM

There is an exciting project underway at the Cathedral Church of All Saints that is yielding new insights on a weekly basis. It is a project whose roots go back more than 40 years, one that involved many parishes in our diocese in the 1980s/90s: the stitching of more than 100 beautiful needlepoint kneelers and cushions.

The current project, more than 40 years later, is the plan to produce a book of text and photos to honour this artistry and the many stitchers in our diocese who made it possible. It is a story of amazing faith and love. The current project team consists of five Cathedral members, and for the summer of 2025, two additional members, funded through special summer job programs, to assist with research, writing and public relations. We feel that God is with us as we proceed through the many steps to bring this ambitious publication project to fruition.

We want to share features of our journey with The Diocesan Times readers, so the plan is to bring back the column, Ex Cathedra, of 15 years ago, when the Cathedral celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2010.



“From the chair” is the literal meaning of the Latin term “ex cathedra,” and it references the fact that the cathedral is the head church of the diocese and, therefore, the seat or throne (cathedra in Latin) of the bishop. The beautiful woodwork of the chancel in the Cathedral Church of All Saints in Halifax has yielded a true throne-like chair for our diocesan bishop and the

inspiration for the design of that kneeler and cushion in resplendent purple. While many centuries separate us from the medieval times of the early cathedrals, some of the sense of that historic era can be captured when one looks at the bishop’s throne, with kneeler and cushion, especially if the bishop is enthroned thereupon in full regalia of cope and mitre.



This display case was made to hold some of the kneelers that are not as needed for kneeling as was the case 40 or so years ago. The beautifully carved litany desk is in front of the display case with its kneeler.



However, there is another meaning for the term “ex cathedra”. It has the sense of an utterance authoritatively delivered. Going back to the earliest times of cathedrals, the

bishop, seated on his throne in his cathedral, would exert his authority on matters of faith. We know the pronouns he/his were the only ones to be used in those days (and even until recent times).

While current technologies allow the bishop’s utterances to be delivered in quite a different manner and in ways quite removed from her/his chair in real time and place, the authority of Bishop Sandra Fyfe is upheld and reaffirmed in a number of ways, not the least being the occasion of an ordination in the Cathedral when the ordinands promise, in real time and place, to “respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of their bishop.”

Just as the Cathedral, in 2010, took a little liberty with the term “ex cathedra” and, using the Oxford dictionary meaning of an utterance delivered (not necessarily authoritatively!), launched a column, Ex Cathedra in the Diocesan Times to share stories of the many 100th anniversary celebrations, the current Cathedral Needlepoint Project team wants to return to that title to share highlights of its project of honouring an amazing story of faith and love.

“Bee” not afraid

Cont. from page 1

“What is that bustle in the hedgerow? Oh it is just a fairy queen doing her spring Queen!” said with a badly imitated Irish accent.

To me, that fairy queen or May queen is the wonderful queen bumblebee. I would like to share with you a little about this wonderful creation of God.

The bumblebee or the Genus Bombus is one of 39 genera of bees in Eastern Canada. These genera include over 409 known species here in the Maritimes. These include about 27 species of bumblebees.

They are among the many native pollinators of Atlantic Canada.

Apis Mellifera or the honeybee that we beekeepers look after, is one species with several races and was introduced by Europeans to North America. Although there are some indigenous references to bees and bumblebees, I have found no pre-European linguistic support for honey-

bees or honey ... and it makes me wonder if they were ever in North America.

Bumblebees are native to North America and are especially efficient in pollinating. For blossoms like those of blueberries, they use “buzz pollination,” where they grab the blossom and vibrate rapidly, creating a cloud of pollen which lands on their body hairs and of course, pollinates the blossom. They then comb their hair with their legs and gather the pollen into the baskets on their legs. Nectar and pollen are required to feed the babies in both bumblebees and honeybees.

The queen bumblebee that we see in spring is a single pregnant mother. All alone in that great wild world. After her virgin mating flight in late summer, she became pregnant and then found a warm, fluffy place in your basement or in a rock wall and hibernated through the winter all by herself.

She is more tolerant of the cold and so emerges in the

spring when it is only about four degrees Celsius outside and visits the first flowers of spring. Unlike honeybees, which specialize in gathering either nectar or pollen, she gathers both. Once she has collected enough, she goes back to her chosen nest site (the bustle in the hedgerow?), eats the pollen and some nectar, exudes wax flakes, fashions her first wax cell and lays her first fertilized egg. She does this until she has laid about 30 eggs. We don’t know if she goes out and forages for more pollen and nectar, but once the eggs begin to hatch, she must stay with the brood to feed them and keep them warm. Bumblebee wax melts at a much lower temperature than honeybee wax, so she must pick a site that never gets above 33 degrees Celsius. Usually, she finds this abode among the rocks or in a cool foundation, or in a crawl space.

Once the babies go through metamorphosis and emerge to become young adults, they will go out and forage and

the queen will stay home and continue to lay eggs. She can continue to do this until all her eggs are laid, fertilized and later unfertilized. Sometimes as many as 300 progeny. The last few fertilized eggs are reared as replacement queens. The subsequent unfertilized eggs will develop into haploid Males or Drones. The honeybee drones do not forage, but the bumblebee drones will gather nectar and pollen and bring this back to the hive. Neither species of drones sting. So, in the case of bumblebees, we can use them to pollinate in greenhouses safely for the human workers there, if we only put the drones in the greenhouse.

Bumblebee queens will usually last 1-3 seasons, just long enough to produce the next generation of queens.

When we teach beekeeping to aspiring beekeepers, we teach them about all the bee genera, so that we can observe and monitor the impact of our beekeeping on the environment. We also encourage educating the public and relo-

cating any problem bumblebee nests, along with gathering honeybee swarms.

I am so amazed by these wonderful single mothers who start all alone and raise these wonderful creatures of God. Do they venture forth on their own with God’s scripture as their strength? Do they have to deal with fear of the unknown future?

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” – Isaiah 41:10

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9

Bee Not Afraid!
Your brother in Christ,
Cyril Welsh
Warden (and beekeeper)
St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, North Sydney, N.S.

'It is an end of an era' Historic Christ Church in Guysborough deconsecrated

BY COREY LEBLANC

GUYSBOROUGH – Evelyn Jamieson has celebrated many milestones in her life while sitting in the pews of her beloved Christ Church, with the most recent – one more bittersweet – coming on Sunday afternoon in the historic landmark.

"It is an end of an era," she said in a phone interview with the Journal, a couple of hours after a deconsecration service led by the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. Bishop, Sandra Fyfe.

Jamieson's family roots run deeply in Christ Church. She was baptized and married there; her three children received the baptismal rite as well.

She offered that the transition didn't develop overnight, considering there has been a "small congregation for a long time." Like many churches of all faiths and denominations, Christ Church has faced not only the challenges of dwindling numbers but also an aging building and increasing costs.

"It is a sign of the times," Jamieson offered, adding that the church had been "rarely



used" over the past couple of decades.

She noted, in reflecting on the declining worshipper numbers, "I am probably the only one left," explaining many from her age group no longer live in the area, while older parishioners have passed away. "It is a relief, in a way," Jamieson said of the transition, describing it as a "sense of closure."

Led by presider Bishop Sandra Fyfe, the deconsecration service – carrying out the transition of the historic building from sacred to secular use – marked an end to an almost 200-year era. Christ Church was consecrated in 1826.

"Let us offer our thanks for God's work through this building and those who have worshipped here," Fyfe said during the proceedings.

During the act of deconsecration, she offered, "To many of you, this building has been hallowed by cherished memories, and we know that some will suffer a sense of loss at its deconsecration. We pray that all will be comforted by the knowledge that the presence of God is not tied to any place or building, and that the life of this community of faith endures."

Fyfe ended the momentous service with a blessing.

A rich history

Describing Christ Church as a "cornerstone of the community," Guysborough Historical Society President Chris Cook told the Journal that it was the first church of any denomination in what would become Guysborough, which would remain the case for 25 years.

"It is sad to see it go," he said, explaining how Christ Church and its incarnations has served and brought together people of all colours, creeds and nationalities.

Records show that the first Christ Church Anglican was built by Black Loyalists in 1790, although Historic Places Canada indicates that a Black

pioneer of the community – Hannah Lining – was reported to have been baptized there in 1786. A sign on the front of the building has the same date, which could indicate the potential year of its erection.

As the Guysborough Historical Society archives indicate, a fierce gale felled the original building in 1811. One year later – in the summer of 1812 – the frame of the new church was erected in 1812, and the building consecrated on Sept. 16, 1826. As noted by the Nova Scotia Archives, the third Christ Church – widely recognized for its Gothic architecture – was built on the same spot in 1877-78, nearly 100 years after the first Christ Anglican.

Adjacent to the now deconsecrated building is Christ Church Anglican Cemetery, which serves as the resting place for an estimated more than 700 people, such as several of Guysborough's 18th-century pioneers, along with most of its founding fathers, including Thomas (King) Cutler, Colonel Joseph Marshall, Patrick Patton and Robert Hartshornes.

"Many influential people," Cook said of the many historic

"leaders" in the cemetery.

Noting the continuing growth of "historical tourism" in Guysborough, he explained that the "beginning of their journey" for visitors often starts with Christ Church and its cemetery.

"They want to walk the ground where their forefathers did," Cook added.

He pointed out that the Guysborough Historical Society has erected panels that list the names of those who rest in the cemetery, describing that information as a "very good reference point" for those tracing their lineage.

"We have also had several items gifted to us," Cook said, which he added help the society "maintain and preserve its history," chronicling its "instrumental role" in the development of what is now Guysborough.

He added, "We do everything we can to honour, respect and work to preserve it."

This article was originally published in the Guysborough Journal on May 7, 2025. Reprinted with permission (guysboroughjournal.ca).

Photo © Evelyn Jamieson

A life-changing experience – The Companions Program

BY GWEDHEN NICHOLAS

Greetings. My name is Gwedhen Nicholas, and I am participating in a second year of the Companions Program which is run by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine in Toronto. In June of 2024, when my cohort was to complete the 2023/24 program, the sisters found they had no applications for the 2024/25 year, whereupon my cohort unanimously agreed we would like to continue together for another year. My decision to participate in these two years has been the best thing I could have done. I have found them to be both inspiring and interesting and I have grown immensely.

It is led by supportive, encouraging and knowledgeable women of whom I have become very fond. Shannon Epp coordinates. The Reverend Sue House, Sr. Elizabeth, Sr. Constance Joanna and various guests have taught us much. I think the

other Companions would agree with me when I write about what a great program it is. Since the pandemic, it has been offered online as well as in person, which has been such a blessing. I care for my mother and I could not have taken part at the convent.

The program has been the consummation of an awakening and healing for me, which began about 20 years ago. At that time, I was filled with shame and guilt and I was very shut down and barely spoke or participated in life. Gradually and over the years, through much journalling, prayer, retreats at the convent, the support and love of family, friends, my church family and psychiatric/medicinal help, I have become a different person. I would not, however, have become the confident and happy and guilt and shame-free person I am, without this little community that has been formed over the last couple

of years. In the past, I rarely spoke in a group setting, not because I was shy but because my thoughts did not flow. I was very frustrated because I could feel within myself that I had good thoughts to share and I longed to share them. I wanted to have meaningful conversations with others. The words would just not come, however, and the inward chains which held me mute continued to bind me.

At the beginning of the program in 2023, I still found it quite hard to share with the others what I was feeling and thinking and I had to make a real effort to communicate. Everyone was very kind, patient and supportive, and I found myself at ease in a very real way. The time given to me to articulate my ideas soon gave me a newfound confidence and filled me with joy. My thoughts and ideas began to spring into my mind and out my mouth with no constraint. This is the result of the

Saturday afternoon classes and the end of class Vespers, which we all take turns leading. I can not stress strongly enough how much being a Companion has benefited me in this regard.

I am now a free person, able to be myself not only with this community but also in day-to-day life. I no longer feel like a child who must look up to even those quite younger than myself. I no longer feel inferior, the result of life experiences. I can now laugh and enjoy the great pleasure of sharing myself with others, both for their sake as well as my own. I am finally able to give instead of continually being given to. What an enormous joy and privilege. I am able to look after my mother in a way that would have been impossible just a couple of years ago. The freedom is immense.

Another aspect of the program is that we each meet individually, once a month, with the coordinator, Shannon. She is a wonderful person, full of

enthusiasm and interest. I look forward eagerly to my times with her, as she is a kindred spirit. We discuss how things are in our lives and if there are things to discuss concerning the program, the opportunity is there.

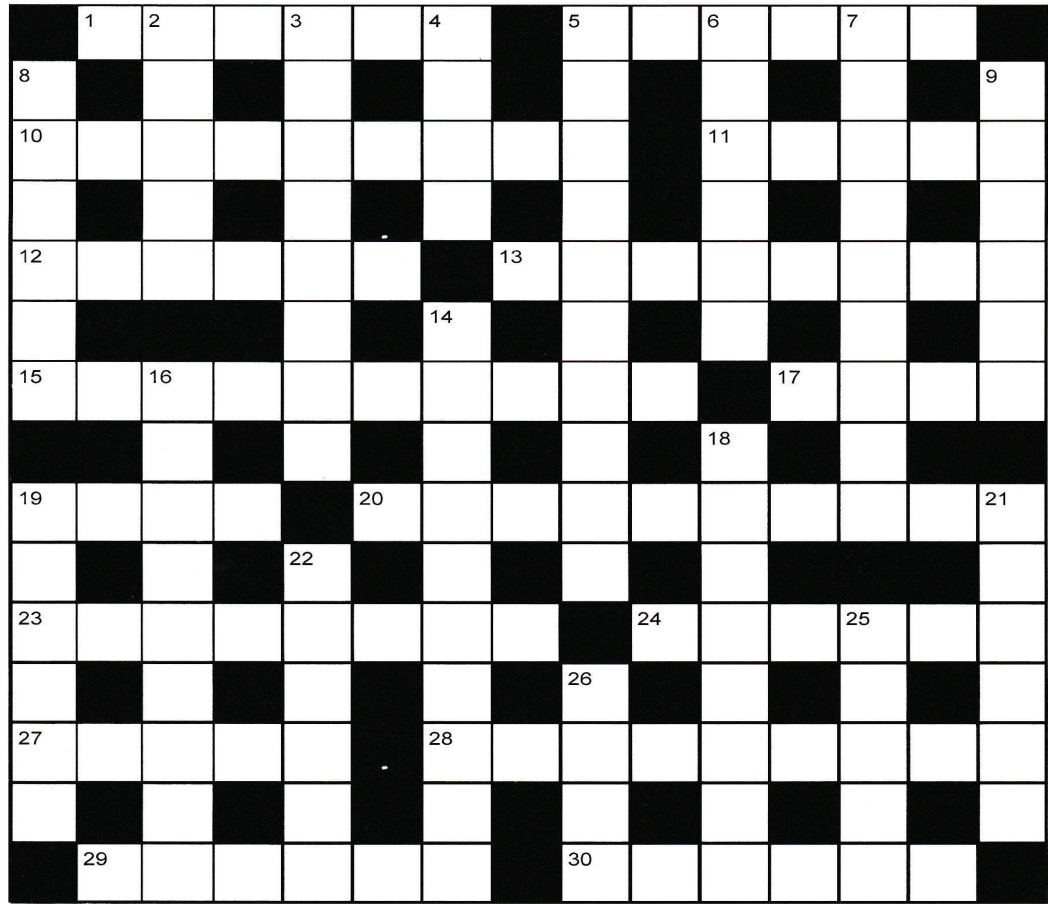
I have enjoyed coming to know both my fellow Companions and those who have led us. I have come to love and respect them all. Each one has her own unique and special personality, thought process and experience to bring to the classes and monthly meetings, where we share how things are going and join in prayer. I have learned a lot from each one.

The members of my cohort are truly my companions now, and I pray that this may continue. I hope also that the 2025/26 cohort may find the Companions Program as challenging and life-changing as I have.

September Bible Crossword

BY MAUREEN YEATS

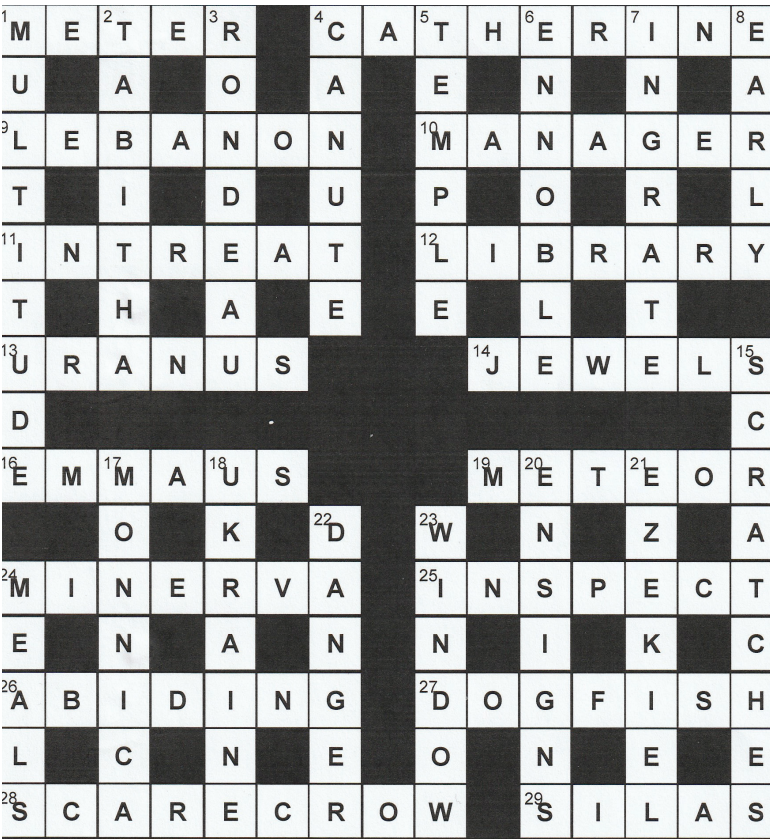




September 2025 Puzzle Clues

- ACROSS:
- ACROSS:
- 1- Decrees (6)
- 5- Baptismal oil (6)
- 10- Occupation of Paul (see Acts 18:3) (9)
- 11- Hiding place (5)
- 12- A mighty hunter (see Gen.10:8-9) (6)
- 13- Happening every second year (8)
- 15- Last book in the New Testament (10)
- 17- Not soft or yielding (4)
- 19- A usually warm month (4)
- 20- Jealous displeasure (10)
- 23- Card game (8)
- 24- Building where horses are kept (6)
- 27- Nonirritating (5)
- 28- Pulsation of the heart (9)
- 29- Town in ancient Judaea (6)
- 30- Dwell (6)
- DOWN:
- 2- Fabric used for jeans (6)
- 3- Usually (8)
- 4- Japanese rice wine (4)
- 5- Predators (10)
- 6- Not long past (6)
- 7- "I will _____ to you" (Ps. 54:6) offer something of value (9)
- 8- One who makes amends for his sins (6)
- 9- Uproar and confusion (6)
- 14- "I will _____ the weak" (Ezek. 34:16) make stronger (10)
- 16- " _____ me, O God" (Ps. 43:1) clear from suspicion (9)
- 18- "I will observe your _____" (Ps.119:8) laws (8)
- 19- Sir Derek _____, British actor in "I, Claudius" (6)
- 21- "The _____ is broken" (Isa. 33:8) formal agreement (6)
- 22- One who remains in a place (6)
- 25- Food made with flour, water and sometimes yeast (5)
- 26- Free from bias (4)

June Puzzle Answers




Anglicans Powering Potential

Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Anglicans Powering Potential (APP) of the Diocese of NS and PEI, under the overarching 4th Mark of Mission for Anglicans: *to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and to pursue peace and reconciliation*, encourage and remind us that no matter the size of the nail, or our ability, even in a small way, we can help to disable the Wheel(s) of Injustice.



"We are not simply to bandage the wounds of the victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spike in the wheel itself"
Dietrich Bonhoeffer.



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A pink snapdragon

BY ANGELA RUSH

It's mid-July, and we are in a heat wave here in Ontario. We wake to a hot, humid start to our day. Watering gardens and making sure both plant and person stay hydrated. Garden centres are busy, as for some reason, some folks like to garden in the heat. Not me; gardens and I don't mix well. I do, however, love flowers and pretty garden ornaments. While searching for some new solar lights, I wandered to the perennial section at our local garden centre to see what I might find to fill a few spots. Snapdragons, I always loved them, and they return yearly. Also, they reminded me of my sweet friend who passed away several years ago. I would love to share this story with you.

It was a very cold December afternoon. The ground had a light dusting of snow on it; our breath could be seen as we spoke softly to each other. Some friends and I had gathered around a tiny greenhouse in the backyard of one of my dearest friends. We were as frozen in our stance as the ground was frozen beneath our feet.

Why were the 10 of us gathered around a greenhouse, you might ask? Well, we were saying goodbye to one of my oldest and dearest friends. I won't share her name here, but what I do want to share is how her passing came to be. As her husband came to each of us with a ladle, we had the choice to scoop a few of her ashes or have him pass by. The choice was ours. I scooped.

After having suffered for nearly four years, my friend chose to have a physician-assisted passing. None of us knew about this until after she had gone. It was so very strange and gave me such an eerie feeling that her death didn't happen; it was chosen. She was able to choose when, with the aid of a physician, to end her time. I am grateful that she isn't suffering, but it stirred up some emotions.



Photo by Cheung Yin on Unsplash

Should such an option exist for us?

Having lost my own daughter and having had to watch her suffer so much, I sometimes wondered, if the option existed years ago, would my daughter have chosen this method also?

So there I stood, ladle in hand, about to sprinkle the ashes of my sweet friend around the greenhouse; emotions flooded my being. I kept asking myself one question over and over. "Was it the right thing to do?" I don't know.

This sweet friend of mine was more Christ-like than any-

one I have ever met.

I felt the deep pain that her husband was in as he handed me that ladle of her ashes. So as I sprinkled some of her ashes, I was struck by a simple vision that I knew came from both heaven itself and the spirit of my friend.

In the corner of the tiny greenhouse was a single pink snapdragon that had blossomed from the frozen ground. Jesus does do the impossible, and in that moment in the freezing cold, a flower had grown. Now this wasn't a heated greenhouse, it was a tiny one of Plexiglas that was as cold inside it, as we were

outside. It sat on the ground, the same ground that we stood upon, and it was on that ground that the tiny miracle answered my questions.

Her husband pointed out the flower, and with tears, he said, "She is with us in spirit as she lives with the Lord."

God is in control; the physician assisting is merely a tool.

It was God who gave my friend the strength to journey home peacefully. He chose the time and moment she was able to make this very difficult decision. She would have sought out God in every aspect through this journey. She likely turned to him more in

making this decision than ever before in her life. She was a woman of faith and spirit and would never have taken this life of hers for granted. She always gave to others freely without expectation. Knowing the heart of my friend, I know how difficult it would have been for her to choose to leave her husband and family. Her passing was courageous. It was not wrong nor was it an escape.

Whether it is right or wrong is not for us to question. We are to be who we are no matter how any passing occurs.

A rigidness in me left that moment I saw the flower.

We are to continue to love and support each other through the grieving and to treat this type of passing as we would any other.

I learnt from the tiny flower that in all things, seek God. Life does blossom again.

I think of her often, just as I think of my daughter, my father and my brother. Here on this planet we call Earth, our home, we celebrate a birthday specific to each person. I think in heaven that death day perhaps becomes their new birthday as they celebrate their arrival in that final resting place where we will all meet again someday. Two worlds separated by that passage of passing on. We here on earth are left in a state of grief with emotions so mixed and mingled with sadness, sorrow and pain. In heaven, I imagine a celebration takes place with each arrival. Welcome home, you are loved. With so much joy on one side and so much sadness on the other, I have also discovered something quite interesting.

Love is the flipside of grief. How much you hurt is the direct mirror of how much love you felt for that person. It is impossible to grieve something you didn't love.



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