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# THE NEW BRUNSWICK ANGLICAN



A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

MARCH 2026

SERVING THE DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON



## THE CATHEDRAL'S HELPING HANDS

▶ MISSION IN MOTION: community

KIRSTEN MCKNIGHT PHOTO

**PHILIP LEE, RICHARD CROWE, JEN ENGLIS, AND KATHY MCBRIDE** prepare fruit and other goodies for the Monday Morning Outreach at Christ Church Cathedral. A large crew of volunteers lends a hand each month in a myriad of ways to help those in need. Jen, seen in the photo, is a student at NBCC who needed to log volunteer hours for a course. Not only did she continue coming after she fulfilled that commitment, she brought friends to help as well. The Monday Morning Outreach has continued despite losing their leader, Doug Milander, last summer. Read the story on page 8.

## Save the dates!

Saturday, April 18  
Special Session of Synod to discuss the  
future of Christ Church Cathedral.

Saturday, Nov. 7  
Regular Session of Synod.

Watch for further details, locations and Greater Chapter meeting dates:  
[nb.anglican.ca/synod/sessions/](http://nb.anglican.ca/synod/sessions/)



**DIOCESAN NEWS**

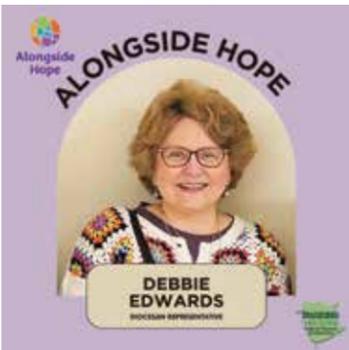


SUBMITTED PHOTOS



- **DEBBIE EDWARDS** enjoys a sample of local eggs. The chickens were gifted to residents, and provide both eggs and meat for protein, and residents are able to sell excess eggs, resulting in income. They are understandably very proud of their chickens.
- Nawuyan Lemard works in her kitchen garden. She was one of many to receive drought-resistant seeds to grow vegetables in Northern Kenya. She can now feed her family. She was very proud to show the visitors her crops.
- A rocket stove and egg incubator. This machine allows for much easier cooking, and for the regeneration of chickens.

# Good memories of Kenya



**Alongside Hope: Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world**

As I begin to write this article in late January, I am reminded that it has been almost one year since I flew to Kenya, as part of an Alongside Hope delegation, to visit some of our partners and projects.

As you might remember, I was unfortunately taken quite ill while there, in that beautiful east African country.

However, in the year since, I find my thoughts return time after time, not to the fact that I had to be hospitalized, but to the wonderful experience it was to visit partners, despite becoming unwell.

Once more I want to acknowledge the wonderful, loving care and support members of our partner CWS, (Church World Service), extended to me

when I had to be admitted to hospital.

They literally never left my side — from the time the ambulance picked me up until I was well enough to be dropped off at the airport for the flight home.

I say all this to once more underscore the significant and vital relationship Alongside Hope has with all our many partners worldwide.

However, I have another story to share as well. I have a profound memory of just how grateful the people in the villages we visited were for the gifts they were given.

It is so easy for us to give money towards a particular need, say chickens or donkeys, but then almost forget that we have done so because we don't actually see what it means to the recipients.

I want to say that I have seen and heard just how significantly our donations make a difference.

I was invited by a lady called Nawuyan Lemard to view her kitchen garden.

She was one of many who have received drought resistant seeds to grow vegetables in Northern Kenya.

She can feed her family. She was so proud to show us her crops.

Another joy I witnessed was how delighted people are to receive and raise chickens.

They can both sell the eggs

and enjoy them as a good source of protein.

One group we visited was thrilled to show us their egg incubator, which benefitted the entire village.

Eggs and chickens seem so ordinary to us, but can be life changing for those who never had them before.

The final example I want to highlight is rocket stoves.

Rocket stoves are game-changing because their design allows the stove to burn all day using very little fuel.

In other words, they are time and energy saving devices, which means the women using them have better results for less effort.

Again, we were invited into several houses, "come and see my rocket stove;" they were so proud to be able to show us!

Thank you for your ongoing support of the work worldwide of Alongside Hope.

Please remember that I would love to hear about fundraising projects.

I am available to come to your parish and share current information about the work of this wonderful Anglican organization.

Contact me at [deborahcollicott@gmail.com](mailto:deborahcollicott@gmail.com).

*Debbie Edwards is the diocesan representative for Alongside Hope, formerly PWRDF.*

Letters to the editor

We welcome them!  
Send yours to [gmcknight@diofton.ca](mailto:gmcknight@diofton.ca)

**DEADLINE** for news and photos for the April edition of the New Brunswick Anglican is **March 1**. Send submissions to [gmcknight@diofton.ca](mailto:gmcknight@diofton.ca)

**THE NEW BRUNSWICK ANGLICAN**

[www.anglican.nb.ca](http://www.anglican.nb.ca)

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# The benefits of Lent

As I was sitting down to write this, someone suggested that I write about the benefits of Lent.

After my intended witty response, "Oh! You mean weight loss?" I began to think about the subject.

Lent is intended as a season of reflection and spiritual discipline. While I was away in England before Christmas, I attended worship in the church where I grew up.

Sometimes someone will say something that you should have known for years, and maybe even do know, but because it is a different voice it is more impactful.

During his Christmas Eve sermon, Andy, the vicar, said that we need to try to see the world through the eyes of Jesus.

I have been thinking about this ever since.

During Lent we are reminded that Jesus suffered for the whole of creation and in particular to bring about reconciliation between God and humanity.

As we think about this, it



points to suffering not being pointless, but rather having a benefit.

Jesus did not welcome suffering, in fact he asked to be released from it, yet he was able to say to God, "Not my will but yours be done."

What Jesus seemed to be able to see was hope through suffering. His humanity made him want to push it away, but he saw something more.

The prospect of suffering led him to confirm his unity with the Father. Can it be that our suffering benefits us in a similar way?

If it does not achieve some-

thing, then suffering is as pointless as many would claim.

To look through the eyes of Jesus is to look through the eyes of God.

Throughout Matthew's Gospel, we are told that when Jesus looked at the crowds, in other words those excluded by the religious authorities, he had compassion on them.

As we reflect on the cross, we see the depth of compassion acted out in self-giving love. The benefit of looking deeply into the cross is to understand this truth as it applies to all.

Another Lenten benefit is that it asks us to recalibrate our faith in the light of practice.

It is the practice of seeing the world through the eyes of Jesus, and through doing that, asking what we can do differently.

An incident I have been thinking about comes from something that happened to me.

In the fall, I was visiting one of our churches. It was a cold day and as I left the building through the back door, I saw a woman sitting on the step.

She was clearly unhoused, surrounded by all her worldly goods.

We chatted for a few minutes, and she told me something of her story. I wished her well and left.

Even at the time I felt the inadequacy of my response to her.

In January I was speaking with one of the church wardens and he said that the lady had died in the street.

I was shocked, but also it has led me to reflect as to how Jesus would have seen that situation and what he might have done.

I often say that we as the Church are to be those who engage in the "cure of souls."

My challenge is that I did nothing that day.

David Edwards is  
Diocesan Bishop of Fredericton.

## Some thoughts on joy

Joy and happiness are considered synonyms, but they are not the same.

A quick web search uncovered a lot of descriptions of both. I liked this one:

Joy and happiness are distinct emotional states, with joy being a deeper, more enduring feeling often linked to meaning and purpose, while happiness is typically a temporary emotional response to external circumstances.

Jesus spoke of joy on several occasions. When teaching his disciples about the need to obey his commands and to love each other, he said, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:11)

Jesus still shares his joy with all who follow him.

He also linked joy with prayer, "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." (John 16:24)

I find it interesting that on both occasions, Jesus spoke of joy being made complete. All people have the capacity for joy



because we are all made in God's image.

But having Jesus in our lives enhances that capacity. Without Jesus, we miss out on the fullness of joy that only he can give.

Joy is also a fruit of the Spirit. When we cooperate with the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, he produces joy in our hearts.

The opposite also holds true.

When we resist the Spirit, our hearts grow cold and we gradually drift away from God.

As a result, we lose the joy of our salvation.

In Hebrews 12:2, we are told to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

"For the joy set before him he

endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

What joy did Jesus anticipate as he died on the cross?

I think it was perhaps twofold: the joy of fulfilling his purpose, which was to accomplish salvation for all who would believe in him; and the joy of returning to his Father.

These two things, purpose and presence, may be keys to our joy as well. As the definition above states, joy is often linked to meaning and purpose.

We find joy in doing what God created us to do. For example, a teacher may experience great joy in teaching, while a nurse finds joy in caring for others.

Some thrive in jobs that involve interaction with people. Others prefer serving in the background.

Of course, not everyone gets to follow their passion. Many must work at things that aren't all that fulfilling.

The drudgery of a joyless life is hard to bear.

But real joy doesn't depend on our circumstances. As believ-

ers, we can experience joy in simply understanding that whatever we do in life, we can do it as to the Lord, for his glory.

Above all, we can experience joy in knowing that Jesus loves us and is with us in every circumstance of our lives.

It is his presence that makes the difference and gives us the emotional and psychological strength to meet life's challenges.

Joy has been a touchstone in my life. When I start to lose joy, I feel spiritually dry, and worship and prayer become burdens that weigh me down.

When that happens, I realize that I need to go back to the basics of fixing my eyes on Jesus and not on myself or my circumstances.

He is the source of my joy!

*Nancy Stephens, originally from Blackville, served with OMF International for over 30 years, including 12 years as a missionary in Thailand. Now retired, she resides in Fredericton and worships in the Parish of Douglas and Nashwaaksis.*

## PRINCIPAL ENGAGEMENTS

**March 1**  
**St. John the Evangelist,**  
**Fredericton**

**March 8**  
**St. Margaret's,**  
**Parish of Musquash**

**March 10-26**  
**Greater Chapter**  
**Meetings across the**  
**Diocese**

**March 14**  
**Diocesan Lenten**  
**Quiet Day**  
**Christ Church Cathedral**

**March 15**  
**Parishes of Central**  
**Kings and Upham,**  
**combined service,**  
**St. Peter's, Upham**

**March 20-22**  
**Christ Church,**  
**Parish of Pennfield**

**March 26**  
**Renewal of Vows,**  
**Christ Church**  
**Cathedral,**  
**Fredericton**

**March 28-29**  
**Parish of Restigouche**  
**St. Andrew,**  
**Robinsonville;**  
**Christ Church,**  
**Campbellton**

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

# Bell stolen from St. Peter's church

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

An historic bell that sat outside St. Peter's Anglican Church on Woodstock Road in Fredericton was stolen, probably on Dec. 29.

"I saw it on Sunday (Dec. 28)," said Bob Matthews, parish treasurer and sexton. "It was very cold. The chain was broken and I thought the wind was to blame."

Bob planned to return the next morning to fix it, but by then, it was gone.

He canvassed the neighbourhood and discovered a truck had been in the church yard on Christmas Day, seen by the tenant in the rectory and the people who live on the farm across the road.

"I think he cut it on Christmas Day and realized he couldn't take it," said Bob, adding its weight would have prevented anyone from simply picking it up.

Bob also discovered that the floodlights illuminating the front of the church were destroyed, making the theft easier to conceal.

The Fredericton Police Force called Bob a few days later and sent a photo of what they'd found in a nearby ditch — the bell destroyed beyond repair.

"The police think it was smashed with a sledgehammer. I don't think it can be restored, he said."

As of press time, the police were still investigating and they have retained the bell's remnants as evidence. The parish will be considering a few options on how to move forward.

As the story unfolds, the *NB Anglican* will have a follow-up article.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

**TOP PHOTO SHOWS** the bell as it has sat for decades. **Middle photo shows** the frame only. **Bottom photo shows** what the police found — a destroyed bell in a ditch days after the theft was reported.



## TRINITY FUNDRAISING

**DURING THE FALL OF 2025,** several events were held at Trinity Church in Saint John with the aim of not only providing meaningful social activity, but also of drawing further attention to the ongoing project of the restoration of the Kempe Great East Window, a truly national treasure that needs immediate attention to ensure it will be intact for generations to come.

A committee headed by Jacqueline Oland is behind the fundraising efforts, and to date, about half of the \$350,000 needed has been raised.

The sale of chicken pot pies, a bus tour of Christmas lights in the city, and a carol singing were events held last fall.

At top, David Goss garnishes chicken pot pies for the oven. Middle photo shows Tim Blackmore leading Carols by Candlelight in the Bennett Room in December. Bottom photo shows people gathered for the pot pie fundraiser in October.



DAVID GOSS PHOTOS



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MISSION & OUTREACH

# 'This is who we want to be'

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

At a clergy conference around 2014, the Rev. Mike Caines got some advice that changed his church's life.

"Reggie McNeal was the speaker. He said Christianity is a street movement. We need to be out in the community.

"He suggested we go to the local school, and ask the principal, 'what can we do for you?'"

"So I did."

He went off to Grand Bay Primary and learned that the principal and her husband cooked a Christmas meal for the students, but the couple was getting older and she would soon retire.

So that Christmas, the children were bussed down to The Church of the Resurrection in Grand Bay-Westfield, where they enjoyed a turkey dinner.

Mike developed a puppet show to entertain the kids, and there were lots of Christmas songs sung.

"They loved that as much as the meal," said Mike.

Mike said grace and asked God to bless the children, and they loved that too, he said.

The word spread, and soon, Morna Heights school wanted in. Then the question of a spring meal surfaced, so the parish put on two meals at Christmas and two near Easter.

The meals have evolved through the 10 years, with one school closed, another added, the inclusion of the teaching and support staff and bus drivers, and the addition of Foodland grocery staff, town council and RCMP as volunteers.

"So now it's a big team effort, with community support," said Mike. "Even the parents come and serve."

Mike has seen the value of these lunches for an entire decade.

"I see kids in the community who know my name because of these lunches," he said. "The kids in Grade 5 are quite sad. They are very aware that it's the last one for them.

"The ethos is the kids all get a meal, but the teachers are off to the side at fancy tables and they get a special dessert. The staff feels appreciated."

**MENU CHANGE**

The evolution of the lunches has also meant a change in the menu.

"We found a lot of waste with the turkey dinner," said Paula Noonan, the chef behind this effort. "We found the kids love ham and homemade macaroni and cheese, so that's what we give them."

She also found they enjoy cucumbers and mini croissants, so she added them.

But for the adults in the room, it's a full turkey dinner at Christmas and a ham dinner at Easter.

Paula goes out of her way to make their dinner special, with apple crisp or carrot cake for dessert. The kids get, and love, ice cream instead.

Each dinner feeds about 150 people — adults, students and volunteers.

"It's turned into a real nice thing," said Paula. "The kids are excited to come, and it's nice to see the church full of kids."

It's a lot of work, "but once the children are here, it's such a blessing," said Paula.

Sometimes in return, the kids sing a thank you song, or follow up with thank you cards.

One of the more immediate outcomes is a sanctuary filled with the laughing voices of children. One of the long-term outcomes is that the kids have a positive experience in a church.

"Many know the Sunrise Play Park, but few have been on the other side, so they're getting to know our church," said Mike.

The parish's core values include children as a priority, and the lunches demonstrate that commitment.

"It's at the centre of who we are and what we want to be," said Mike. "This is one of the best things we do to connect with the community. You just can't beat it."



MISSION IN MOTION: children



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

**"ZACK" AND THE REV. MIKE CAINES** entertain the students during their seasonal lunches at The Church of the Resurrection.

Volunteers serve the meal, which includes the much-loved homemade macaroni and cheese for the students.

The bus arrives with kids eager for their special meal.

Staff from Foodland have been helping serve for several years.

The volunteers enjoy a well-deserved dinner after the main meal is done and the children have returned to school.



## CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

# Synod Commons explores Cathedral's future

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

Archbishop David Edwards was the speaker at the Jan. 20 Synod Commons episode. The topic was the same one on the minds and hearts of many Anglicans in the diocese — the future of Christ Church Cathedral — given its heavy restoration requirements — and the April 18 special session of synod to discuss it.

About 40 people — clergy and laity — tuned in to the online presentation, a recording of which can be found on the Diocesan Synod YouTube channel ([nb.anglican.ca/events/the-synod-commons](https://nb.anglican.ca/events/the-synod-commons)).

The Archbishop began with some history of the Cathedral, and the Diocese's first bishop, John Medley, who arrived in Fredericton in June 1845 to lead the new diocese.

By October that year, the cornerstone for Christ Church Cathedral had been laid. It opened in August 1853, making it 173 years old this year.

It is obvious from Medley's booklet "Elementary Remarks on Church Architecture, 1841" that he took design very seriously.

"He viewed church architecture as a science," said David.

At one point he was in the Parish of Kingston, consecrating a church in Long Reach, and had this to say:

"You need to decide if you're building a barn or a church. And this is a barn."

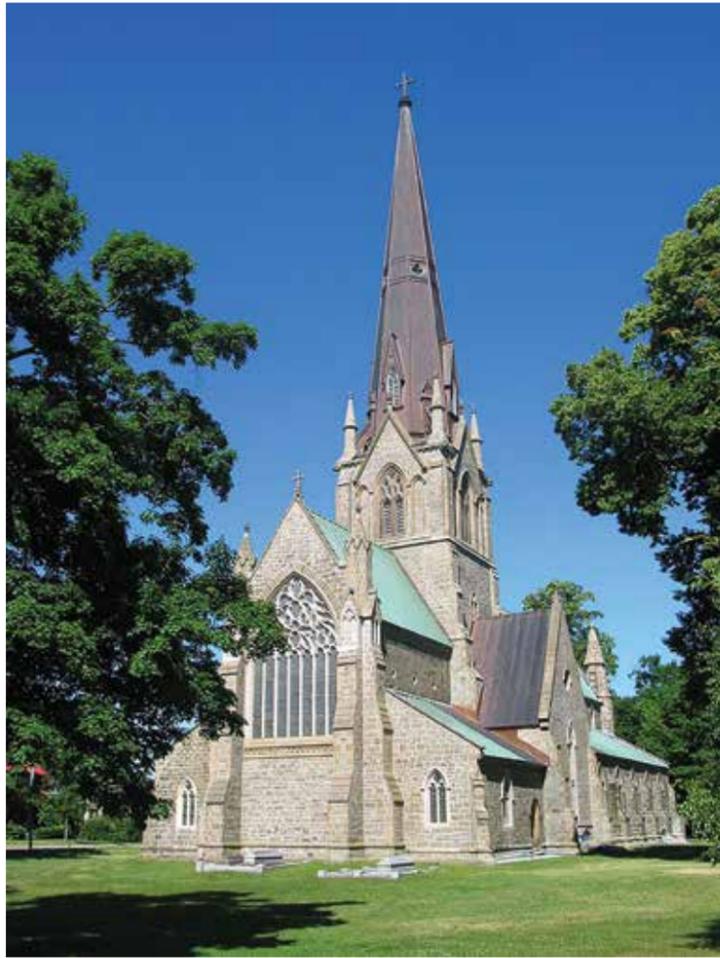
## SIGNIFICANCE

David outlined the purpose of a cathedral. It is where the bishop's chair is located; it is the mother church of the diocese; and it is an example of liturgical excellence for the diocese.

"The Cathedral is a National Historic Site," said David. "It is the first truly neo-gothic building in North America... It's the first of its kind, and it's where all neo-gothic buildings in North America get their neo-gothic-ness from. That's an important component to this."

## INFORMATION SO FAR

Heritage Standing Inc. did a survey of the Cathedral in 2018-19 to study the state of the building and the cost of restoration. The figure was \$10 million. Recently, an update has revealed a new price: \$23.5 million, which is in 2030 dollars, and includes extra costs like HST, engineering oversight and a \$6 million endowment fund so it can be



**CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL** has stood on Brunswick Street for more than 172 years, but its condition is up for debate as weather and time take their toll. A special session of Diocesan Synod will be held April 18 to discuss the issue.

maintained.

"When I saw the \$23.5 million, I was shocked. It is a big number," said David.

Source Alliance, a New Brunswick fundraising firm, did a study on how to move forward financially, and proposed three options:

1. The status quo: keep the building functioning until it's no longer safe.
2. Try to raise restoration money from Anglicans.
3. Developing a long-term vision for the Cathedral. In particular, this would include forming a foundation that would take ownership of the building in order to access government money not normally available to religious organizations. The congregation would still worship there.

In meetings in 2023 and 2024, the Cathedral congregation discussed these options and reluctantly determined the third option to be the best way forward.

"A charitable foundation has been formed to take ownership of the building, but it's not been enacted yet because we're now in a position where we have a better idea of what's possible.

"We know what the congregation said, but we now need this wider consultation," said David,

referring to the special session of Diocesan Synod in April to discuss the matter.

One other issue has been settled, that being ownership of the property between Brunswick Street and the river, and from the Beaverbrook Art Gallery property almost to the walking bridge.

"The Cathedral and the greenspace to the river are confirmed as being under the ownership of the Bishop of Fredericton," said David.

## IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

"We have to take into account the views of the congregation," said David, adding the Cathedral has a much wider role than that of a parish church.

Consultations will take place, in the form of Greater Chapter meetings, throughout March.

"Normally Greater Chapter meetings are restricted to synod delegates — clergy, laity, alternates — and a few other people," said David. "But these are open to all Anglicans."

The April 18 special synod is being held to debate the issue and give the archbishop advice.

"A motion for debate will be crafted, based on the Greater Chapter meetings, and open for debate at Diocesan Synod," he said.

The reason for the estimate's 2030 date is, if option three is selected, "that foundation is sitting there in order that something can happen pretty straight away," said David. "But being able to put shovels in the ground is at least three years from that decision."

## Q & A

Archbishop David took questions from the online audience. The Rev. Chris Ketch noted his belief that a lot of Anglicans in the diocese don't have a sense of what the Cathedral is, and trying to reach them with relevant information might be difficult.

Canon Chris VanBuskirk asked about the nature of the proposed restoration.

David gave a list of the main issues: the 1911 roof, clerestory windows, the stained-glass tracing, electrical, and the millions of dollars needed for scaffolding.

The Rev. Christopher Tapera asked about the pros and cons of a foundation. The pro is access to funding; the con is a cathedral that is no longer the property of the Diocese of Fredericton or the Bishop of Fredericton.

Christopher noted that enacting a foundation might be setting a precedent for parishes to follow the same route.

"They'd still need the permission of the bishop and Synod to do that," said David.

David Reevey of Rothesay asked about fundraising \$23.5 million.

"The initial step would be to

employ professional fundraisers," said David. "They know the best ways to do this."

Canon Albert Snelgrove asked about the bishop's chair and if it could be relocated.

"Yes, I guess. What that would do is make that building the cathedral," said David. "The reason the cathedral is the cathedral is because it has the cathedra — the bishop's chair. To a degree, the bishop could do that, place it in any consecrated building."

Susan Jack had the final question: what if the foundation cannot raise enough money?

"There is an exit strategy," said David. "We could take the cathedral property back. If we decided we didn't want it, it would be offered to the City of Fredericton. If the City didn't want it, the foundation would put a "for sale" sign on it."

The foundation's membership, at this interim stage, includes the Bishop of Fredericton, Secretary of Synod, Treasurer of Synod, the chancellor and a city councillor. Different members would be added, including representation from the Cathedral.

More information on the special session of Diocesan Synod, on April 18, including background documents, can be found at [anglican.nb.ca/synod2026](https://anglican.nb.ca/synod2026)

**A REMINDER:** All Anglicans are invited and encouraged to attend their local Greater Chapter meeting.

## GREATER CHAPTER MEETINGS

**Chatham** - March 24 @ 6 p.m., St. George's, Bathurst

**Fredericton** - March 11 evening, Christ Church Cathedral

**Kingston and the Kennebecasis** - March 26 @ 7 p.m., St. Paul's, Hampton

**Moncton** - March 19 @ 7 p.m., St. John the Baptist, Riverview

**Saint John** - March 12 @ 6 p.m., location TBA

**St. Andrews** - March 18, time and location TBA

**Woodstock** - March 10 @ 6 p.m., St. Luke's, Woodstock

**Read eNews or visit the diocesan website, [nb.anglican.ca/pages/140th-session-april-2026](https://nb.anglican.ca/pages/140th-session-april-2026), for updates on your Greater Chapter meeting.**

**CHRISTMAS IN WOODSTOCK**

**MISSION IN MOTION: community**



**CHRISTMAS WITH THE BEATLES**



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

**THE "CHRISTMAS WITH THE BEATLES"** event in St Luke's Woodstock was held Dec. 20. A packed church full of excited attendees watched with glee as the cast unpacked the story of the birth of Jesus.

Over 250 attended, AND in excess of \$1,700 was raised for the parishes' outreach work. People were involved from across the two parishes (Richmond and Woodstock) and the town community.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**

- The donkeys (Cindy Derkson and Jocelyn Wetmore) go on strike!
- Our stalwart crew: Alyson Wetmore, Norm and Cathy Acott and Colin Craig (not shown).
- St. Luke's Choir and friends led the singing.
- The production was supported by our very own Fab Five Band (Gloria Yachyshen, keyboard; LA Henry, bass guitar; Richard Wetmore and Richard Ryan, acoustic; and Dave Williams, drums)
- The innkeeper and spouse (Lesley Anthony and Amanda Lightbody) are left wondering if this birth will change anything.

*Bethlehem baby, laid in a manger, no room for his mother or him. Refugee family, out on the road running scared before he turned two.*

*All the lonely people, He knows what you go through.*



## MONDAY MORNING OUTREACH

## Cathedral's Monday Morning Outreach continues after significant loss

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

The columbarium that holds the ashes of Doug Milander references a bible verse.

It's not just any verse, it's a big one — the one that defines many mission and outreach efforts — and it defined Doug as well.

*Matthew 25:40*

*Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*

"He lived by that scripture," said Ann Deveau, his wife of almost 47 years. "He felt very strongly about it. It was the guidepost for his life. It was baked into him."

Helping others truly was Doug's passion. A journalist at CBC and at the Daily Gleaner, he filled his retirement with various acts of service to others.

It's no surprise, since his Nebraska family was a caregiving one. His dad was a social worker, his mom a teacher, his brother a pastor.

Doug began his adult life with a journalism degree and a draft notice.

Not wanting any part of the Vietnam War, he slipped across the border to Manitoba, where he worked as a weekly reporter, photographer and editor.

After several years, he wanted a change, came to the Maritimes for a vacation and decided New Brunswick would be his new home.

"He became a proud Canadian citizen and never regretted his principled decision to oppose the war," said his obituary.

In Fredericton, he led the Christ Church Cathedral Monday Morning Outreach for 20 years, and when he died last July, the volunteers and the guests were devastated.

But the volunteers have managed to soldier on, providing sustenance and friendship to 70-80 people on the last Monday of each month at Cathedral Memorial Hall.

Ann had always been at Doug's side at Outreach, first baking and making sandwiches at home while still working, and for the past 13



KIRSTEN MCKNIGHT PHOTOS



JEN ENGLIS PHOTO

### MISSION IN MOTION: community

**FROM LEFT: DOUG MILANDER** was the steady presence and leader behind the Christ Church Cathedral Monday Morning Outreach until his death in July 2025; Jen Englis, Brad McKnight, Charlotte McKnight, Kirsten McKnight, Kathy McBride, and Ann Deveau. Jen is a community college student who needed volunteer work for course credit. She enjoyed it and returned again later, always bringing friends to help; Doug, right, with a guest and friend, Arthur Linton; Doug's columbarium inscription with his favourite scriptures; Carol Ann Melvin from the Cathedral, and volunteers from New Maryland United Church: Linda Watson, Janet Merrill, and the Rev. Kelly Burke, ready to hand out Christmas bags and treat packages; the Rev. Kelly Burke from New Maryland United Church, and Helen Liang oversee the clothing rack.



ANN DEVEAU PHOTO



years, organizing it with Doug.

While she could have used Doug's passing as a completely understandable reason for stepping back and letting someone else lead, that was not going to happen.

"It never even occurred to me at all," she said. "I wanted to keep it up in Doug's memory. And the need is still there."

So she continues in the role of outreach coordinator.

#### THE BEGINNINGS

It was 20 years ago that retired Bishop Bill Hockin, then the dean, devised a plan to give Tim Hortons cards to people who came to the deanery or the Cathedral looking for help.

Wayne Phillips, a Cathedral parishioner at the time, sought to organize something a bit more substantial, so he began the Monday Morning Outreach, reasoning a Monday morning event would brighten the guests' day and week. He put out coffee, and then snacks. And Doug joined him to help out.

By the time Ann was on board in retirement, Outreach had evolved to offer live music, plenty of food, used clothing and

household items, gift cards, a bible study and the services of the parish nurse.

"When it was going every week, it was a hopping place," said Susan Colpitts-Judd, a volunteer at Outreach. "It was a wonderful gathering of people."

#### PANDEMIC CHANGES

Then the pandemic changed everything.

"Through COVID, Ann and Doug kept it going," said Susan. "They managed it outside."

There were several months when Ann and Doug were on the sidewalk, giving out gift cards, and treats, she said.

While Outreach used to be held each Monday, since the pandemic, they have limited themselves to the last Monday of the month, and the details have changed.

Instead of a sit-down and socialize event, it's now a come in, pick up your \$10 gift card (for groceries or the city bus), get your beverage, your bag of treats, your non-perishable groceries, toiletries and any clothing you need.

There are no plans to return to the sit-down style, nor every Monday either, for one simple

reason: the resources are not there.

While the Cathedral is generous in giving them a budget, and donors are just as generous, the number of volunteers needed just to make the once-a-month event run smoothly is large, and as they say, they're all getting older.

Some volunteers never come to Outreach, instead working at home to produce baked goods and sandwiches.

Others oversee a table on Monday mornings, and some handle the check-in of guests to maintain records. Then there is the set-up and clean-up crew. It was Doug's job to greet everyone and hand out the gift cards.

"It went from once a week to once a month," said Kirsten McKnight, the Cathedral's office administrator. "It works better with the volunteers."

Volunteers from St. Margaret's Anglican Church provide fruit and other goodies for each gathering, and the Rev. Kelly Burke and parishioners from New Maryland United Church are on-site volunteers.

Cathedral members also pitch in with food and on-site help. Kirsten believes there are

about two dozen volunteers at work for the preparation, execution and clean-up of each Outreach event.

"The need is beyond pressing for people," said Susan. "I wish we had more to give."

#### THE GUESTS

Some people have been coming for years and years. But Ann has noticed quite a shift.

"The demographic has changed," said Ann. "The first language of many is no longer English. It's Chinese, Ukrainian, Arabic, French, Indigenous, Bengali, Punjabi.

"It means so much to them when we call them by name. They're delighted, even if we're not pronouncing it correctly."

Knowing the names of the guests was fundamental to Doug, said Ann.

"Between us we knew everybody's name, and there are 200 names on the list.

"Doug felt very strongly that learning their names, looking them in the eye, was very important."

The guests run the gamut when it comes to life stages.

"We're helping people with newborn babies, seniors as well,"

said Ann. "Some are living rough, but a lot are just down on their luck, living in rooming houses, shelters — but all walks of life."

She's also seeing international students and more children coming.

"I find everyone who volunteers here is very respectful," said Kathy McBride, a long-time volunteer. "And you get close to the guests."

#### THE FUNERAL

People at Doug's funeral learned quite a bit about him. He was a draft evader from Nebraska. He was the Cathedral team coordinator at the Fredericton Community Kitchens. He gathered food for other outreach missions beyond the Cathedral.

"I learned so much at his funeral, from Geoffrey's homily, to learning that every Sunday after church, he would quietly gather up the food donations and deliver them to Greener Village food bank," said Kathy.

Ann experienced an outpouring of love and support at Doug's funeral — sympathy cards, hugs, offers of help.

A former guest had moved away, but found out about Doug's passing. She tracked Ann down

and told her, 'he was always kind to me.'

Then lots more stories came out: he came with me to court; he helped me move.

Ann is very appreciative of the support and love during Doug's illness, and in the intervening months since his passing.

#### IT TAKES A TEAM

"We get strong support financially from Bishop & Chapter. The Dean (Geoffrey Hall) has been very helpful, frequently joining us on a Monday morning to chat with the guests and hand out groceries. And our volunteers are so loyal," said Ann. "People are so kind and generous."

That generosity was demonstrated by many memorial donations to Outreach in Doug's name, she said.

Outreach is a community of those in need and those who strive to fill that need, coming together to live out Doug's favourite bible verse in Matthew's Gospel.

"I'm a tiny cog in the wheel. I do enjoy it. It makes you feel grateful. There but for the grace of God, go I," said Kathy.

"I guess you could say it's an institution in Fredericton now," said Susan.

### THOUGHTS ON DOUG MILANDER

**Hank Williams, Verger Emeritus:** We struck up a friendship. He was from Nebraska, I am from Alabama.

It was more than a casual friendship. He was just such a likeable man.

Doug and Ann are the most Christian people I have ever seen. They have the patience I do not have.

I don't think I have ever considered that they wouldn't know what to do and how to do it — in any situation.

They practice the gospel in service to others.

**Kathy McBride, volunteer:** Doug was a quiet, reticent man.

I think we are called to serve others. Ann and Doug have given so much, without fanfare. I admire them very much.

It takes a village, a community, and I am so impressed by what they have done.

**Susan Colpitts-Judd, volunteer:** We saw his illness advancing, but he didn't skip a beat.

One of our guests is an avid reader, and Doug always brought a book for him.

Doug was a very quiet and very dedicated man. He never made a fuss about anything.

## TESTIFY!

# My weight-loss journey has had God written all over it



BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

To adequately explain my weight-loss story, I have to begin with the story of my daughter.

Jacqueline is a registered social worker, and when she graduated from St. Thomas University, she immediately went to work as a child protection investigator in a rural area of the province.

For three years, she followed up on claims of child neglect and abuse. And as she does with everything in life, she threw herself into her new role with all she had.

But in doing her job, she was threatened and stalked by angry parents. She received abusive phone calls, literally on a daily basis.

She saw and experienced things no one should have to. She had a case load four times the accepted standard.

Much of her time was spent in rural areas without cell service. The dangers were real, but there was little to no support. After three years, she was completely burned out.

During the day, she rarely ate because she couldn't wash her hands, and her appetite was non-existent. But at the end of each work day, she would come home, shower and eat. And eat.

This led to a binge eating addiction, which her therapist later told her was a coping skill not nearly as destructive as drugs or alcohol.

Binge eating had kept her alive. Even so, her weight ballooned and she was dreadfully unhappy.

She began to suspect she had PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and went about researching it.

She made a claim to Worksafe NB, which was denied. They told her PTSD was not recognized in social workers in New Brunswick.

So she arranged for and paid for a professional diagnosis. She was correct — she was suffering from PTSD. She disputed the rejected claim with the new



JACQUELINE &amp; GISELE MCKNIGHT PHOTOS

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Jacqueline, second from right, and fellow patients enjoy chicken broth and protein shakes the night before surgery in 2021, while I had a steak sandwich and fries (they said they didn't mind!); Gisele at the San Diego Zoo two days before surgery in 2025; Gisele enjoying the Pacific Ocean at La Jolla Beach just outside San Diego, three days after surgery.

diagnosis and it was accepted.

That led to three years off work, intense therapy and the stipulation that she never return to work in that region and never again work in child protection.

All that was a huge relief, but it didn't solve the weight issue, so once again, Jacqueline did her research.

## SURGERY OPTIONS

She felt that gastric bypass surgery — what we used to call stomach stapling — might be the best option for her.

In New Brunswick, unless you have co-morbidities like diabetes or COPD, gastric bypass surgery has a 10-year wait list.

She found she could have the surgery in Ontario, at a cost of \$22,000.

Then she discovered that Tijuana, Mexico is the world centre of excellence for this surgery, so she began researching clinics. The cost there is around \$6,500 US.

One afternoon, she asked me to look at a Facebook page and website of one clinic.

There were testimonials with before and after photos from literally hundreds of people who had had the surgery and were successful in losing dramatic amounts of weight.

I remember thinking this was the most amazing answer to her issue, or the most elaborate hoax I'd ever seen. But it turned out to be true.

Jacqueline had a consultation, was accepted and began planning to have surgery in Tijuana.

Just a side note, the Tijuana that many of us have heard of — a lawless, crime-infested city — is not the Tijuana of today.

Jacqueline asked me to go as her companion to care for her, and in the fall of 2021, we flew to San Diego.

A clinic representative picked us up, took us across the border, put us in a very nice hotel, picked us up the next day for

surgery, took us back to the hotel two days later, and two days after that, took us back to the airport.

We did not experience even one moment of fear or regret. It was all well-orchestrated, professional, clean and worry-free, and since then, Jacqueline has lost half of her body weight.

She is a happy woman with a social life, and a new job that is not as a practicing social worker.

Three years ago, my niece, inspired by Jacqueline, had the same surgery at the same clinic with equally impressive results.

## MY JOURNEY

Two years ago, I began thinking about having the same surgery. It felt like it was now or never for me.

I booked a consultation but was ultimately rejected because I have only one kidney due to cancer two decades ago.

My family doctor told me it seemed to him they were cherry-

picking their patients.

They might not want to risk the well-oiled machine of patients in and patients out for one that might have complications. He didn't see any other reason for my rejection.

But that's not the end of the story. A year ago, I saw that Jacqueline's surgeon had left the clinic and started his own. He was looking for new patients.

I booked a consultation and provided my most recent blood work results.

Dr. Z, as he is known, was quite enthusiastic. I should note that it was his colleague and not him who rejected me a year earlier.

I was only a few months away from my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, the usual cut-off, but he decided to take a chance on me.

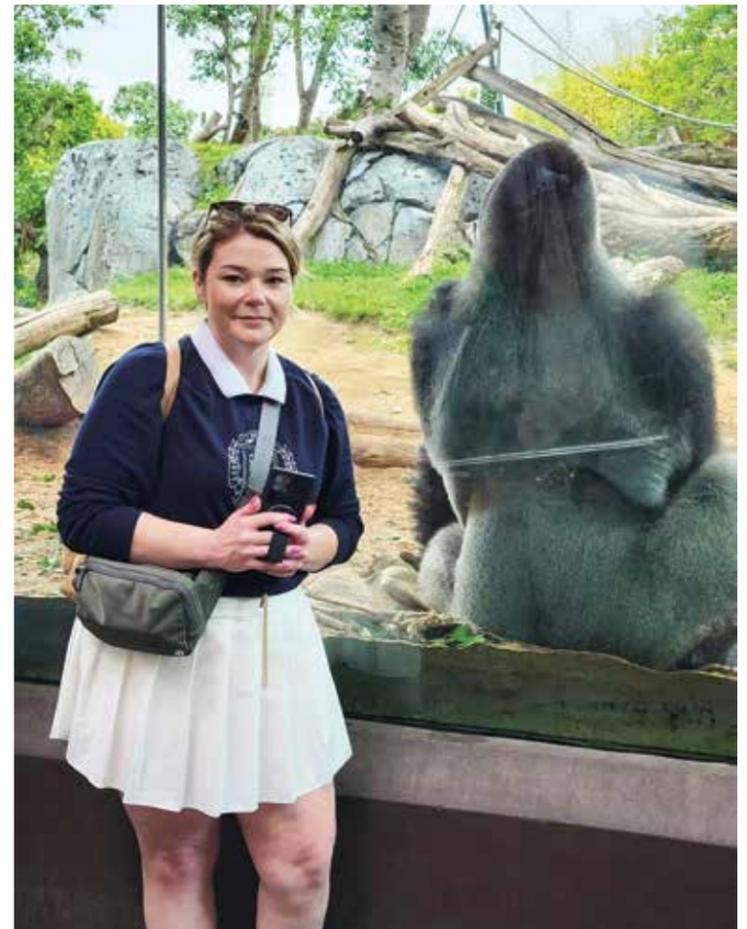
Through all this, I had been praying for guidance for the right decision. I had gotten my hopes up a year earlier and

**Journey continued on page 11**

TESTIFY!



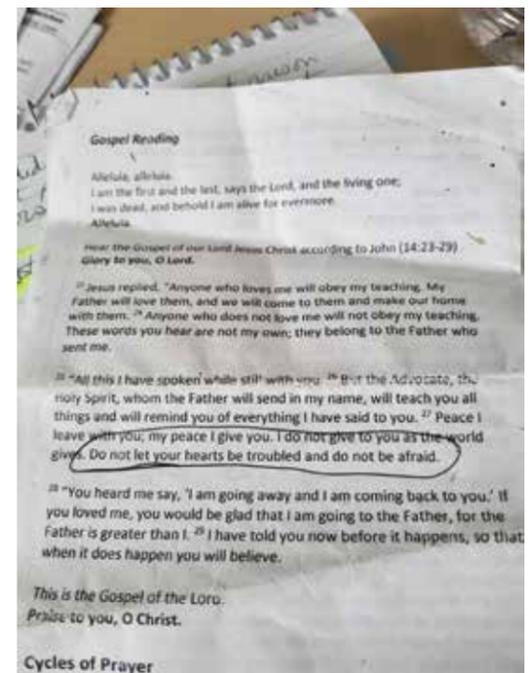
JACQUELINE AND GISELE MCKNIGHT PHOTOS



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Gisele after losing 80 pounds, photo taken in January, 2026.

Jacqueline at the San Diego Zoo, 2025.

The bulletin with the affirming verse that helped calm the fear and trepidation surrounding the trip to Mexico.



## God sent an angel to guide us

Journey continued from page 10

didn't dare hope this time, but as spring came, I realized, it really was now or never.

So I began to plan. My biggest fear was not the surgery. It was flying through the United States. I checked prices to fly from NB to Tijuana, which totaled \$2,500 each.

I just couldn't afford that, so I asked God to get us across the border without any trouble.

I checked on flights from Maine, and found that flying from Presque Isle to San Diego cost \$1,100 each CDN — the cheapest option that also had the best connections.

So I booked the tickets for Jacqueline and me for early June and prayed every day for a positive outcome.

### PEACE & REASSURANCE

Through May I was worried. What would happen if they rejected me or Jacqueline, or both of us, at the border crossing? I had no Plan B.

The week before we left, my church bulletin had a message for me. The gospel reading for May 25 was from John 14:23-29. In my pew, I saw verse 27: *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*

I was absolutely in awe of God's message, which seemed tailor-made for me in that moment. I got out my pen and circled that verse, and that bulletin has been in my purse ever since!

I left church with a new-found peace that all would be well, and one week later as we approached the border crossing, I still felt that peace, although I will admit to a bit of trepidation.

### OUR ANGEL

Jacqueline was driving as we pulled up. I held my breath.

"Where are you headed?" asked the border guard.

"San Diego," answered Jacqueline.

"Oh! I worked in southern California for 20 years. What's taking you to San Diego?"

"Actually, we'll be crossing over to Tijuana. I had bariatric surgery there in 2021, and now I'm taking my mom there for the same thing."

"Oh, what hospital are you going to?"

"CIBA hospital."

"That's the same hospital

where my wife had her bariatric surgery, and I've got the wheels in motion for my own surgery there too! All the best with your surgery. Have a nice day!"

And that was it. We were in!

Now I ask you: could God have sent us a better angel to guide us across the border than this man? He was a gift from God, working the very place, at the exact time we needed him.

My surgery went well, without complication. Jacqueline and I enjoyed an extra day before surgery to visit the San Diego zoo, definitely a highlight.

And after we returned to the city, we spent a day along the coast, enjoying the sea lions and the Pacific Ocean. The surgery did not affect my energy levels at all and I was able to enjoy the sights and do some shopping.

Since last winter, when I began this journey, until the sur-

gery date, I lost 25 pounds. Since surgery, I have lost another 55 pounds. I no longer take insulin, and was able to stop taking one of my two high blood pressure medications.

I am so grateful to God to have been able to afford this surgery, been healthy enough to have it, and to have made the trip without any barriers.

Later this year, I look forward to a much healthier retirement, thanks be to God.

**NOTE:** I am happy to answer any questions you might have, and I highly recommend Dr. Z and his clinic: [zplendid.com/](http://zplendid.com/)

•••

**Gisele McKnight is the editor of the NB Anglican and the communications officer for the Diocese of Fredericton.**

**AROUND THE DIOCESE**

**HOSPITAL SERVICES**



**MISSION IN MOTION: community**



EVA MORTON PHOTOS

**VOLUNTEERS HOLD A CHAPEL SERVICE** at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton every Friday afternoon. The services are organized by Eva Morton with the support of the Rev. Debbie Edmondson, the hospital chaplain. A number of people take turns leading worship, including Mary Lou Price, Dalton London, Debbie Edmondson and Eva Morton, along with musicians from St. John the Evangelist on Fredericton's north side: Judy Jones, Joan Pain and Pat Wilcox. They could use more volunteers to help with portering, as well as publicizing this ministry. Interested? Contact Eva: [eva.morton@gmail.com](mailto:eva.morton@gmail.com) Pictured at top left is the Rev. Debbie Edmondson leading worship. At top right, volunteer Darrell Jones and keyboardist Judy Jones participate in the service.

**CAMP MEDLEY**  
Camper registration is now open

[campmedley.ca](http://campmedley.ca)

Would you like to help send a kid to camp?  
To donate to Camp Medley, send an e-transfer to [finance@campmedley.ca](mailto:finance@campmedley.ca)  
**IMPORTANT:** When using e-transfer, include the sender's name and mailing address so we can send you a donation receipt.

**NEW DIOCESAN SUBSCRIPTION**  
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Huron University's Licentiate in Theology Program is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Diocese of Fredericton. Through this new subscription service, all students from the Diocese of Fredericton can join our network of Canadian Anglican Leaders and Learners and access all courses in Huron's Licentiate in Theology Program - free of charge! Huron's LTh courses are hosted, virtually, outside of the 9-5 workweek to allow greater accessibility for student engagement. Check out: <https://huronu.ca/programs/theology/life-long-learning/> to begin your journey of theological education and vocational discernment.  
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For more information, contact Canon Shawn C. Branch (506) 459-1801 or [sbranch@diofton.ca](mailto:sbranch@diofton.ca)

The **Synod Commons**

The Synod Commons is a regular, open, online forum for clergy, parish lay officers, staff and others who are interested in meeting with Synod staff on a variety of topics. First and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 12:10-12:55 p.m. Learn more at our website: [nb.anglican.ca/commons](http://nb.anglican.ca/commons)

**AROUND THE DIOCESE**



**INTERNATIONAL NIGHT**



KATHY URQUHART PHOTOS

**THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY & ST. BARTHOLOMEW** in Saint John came together to host our second International Pot Luck Night on Jan. 16, organized by the Social Committee and lead by Sandra Cormier and Lea Warren. We had a wonderful turnout despite the weather. A great time of fun and fellowship was had by all of us. At left, Fola, Moyin and Anjola, originally from Nairobi, Kenya, enjoy the get-together.

**MISSION IN MOTION: community**

**DIOCESAN ACW AGM**  
 St. Andrew's church, Petitcodiac  
**Theme: Unity in Christ**  
 Watch for the April edition of *Launching Out* for more details.  
**Tuesday, May 5**  
 One day only  
 No banquet  
 Cold plate lunch

**FARRALINE HOME**  
 Now Accepting New Residents  
 Are you or a loved one seeking a new supportive home that offers community while respecting autonomy and independence?  
**What We Offer:**  
 Homemade Meals  
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 Affordable rates designed to meet the needs of the community we serve  
 Contact [farralinehome@rogers.com](mailto:farralinehome@rogers.com) or (506) 455-6443

**CAMP BROOKWOOD**

Camp Brookwood, near Florenceville-Bristol, is in need of help to launch their camping season.

**ON THEIR LIST:** Household and craft items (including large garbage bags, soap, cleaners, toilet paper, bandages, printer paper, white glue, sporting equipment, liquid chlorine), AND non-perishable foods (sugars, flour, condiments, pancake mix and syrup, cereal, pasta and sauce, pudding and Jello mixes, crackers, marshmallows, juice and large juice mixes, jam, peanut butter and cooking spray).

Thank you for any help you can give. For more information, contact Mary Lee Phillips: [mlphillips320@gmail.com](mailto:mlphillips320@gmail.com)

**Registration is open: [campbrookwood.ca](http://campbrookwood.ca)**

**2026 Lenten Book Study Resource**  
 Fleming Rutledge's  
**'The Seven Last Words from the Cross'**  
 ISBN-10: 9780802827869  
 ISBN-13: 978-0802827869  
 Archbishop David recommends Fleming Rutledge's *The Seven Last Words from the Cross* for reading and consideration this Lenten season.  
 In seven short, powerful meditations, Rutledge reflects on Jesus' final words from the Cross, weaving together Biblical insight, theological depth, and contemporary relevance.  
 This book offers a rich space for contemplation, honest questions, and renewed connection with our Saviour's journey.  
 Available wherever you buy your books.  
 Join the Diocesan Lenten Book Study group:  
[nb.anglican.ca/LentStudy2026](http://nb.anglican.ca/LentStudy2026)

**Lenten Quiet Day**  
 Saturday, March 14, 2026  
 Christ Church Cathedral  
 Kathleen Snow  
 Welby's Mothers' Union President  
**What to expect:** Quiet reflection, inspiring prompts, space to journal or pray, shared worship, and a simple lunch together.  
**Registration: \$25/person (refreshments and lunch included).**  
**All are welcome. 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
**To Register: [nb.anglican.ca/events/](http://nb.anglican.ca/events/)**

# God at work (even at work)

For many of us, the word “calling” conjures up images of religious vocation, mission trips, or roles that are obviously spiritual in nature.

We tend to associate “God’s work” with activities that take place in church buildings or through formal ministry roles.

But what if our everyday work, whatever that may be, is one of the most overlooked spaces where faith comes to life?

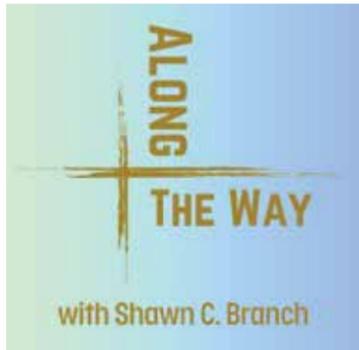
In the early weeks of Lent, the lectionary readings remind us of Jesus’ time in the wilderness: a space of preparation and discernment.

It can be tempting to see those 40 days as separate from the “real” work of His ministry.

But in many ways, they set the tone for how He would live: intentionally, humbly, and deeply aware of how to embody God’s presence in ordinary life.

That same invitation extends to us. Not just in our spiritual practices, but in the everyday places we spend our time.

For most people, that’s not in a chapel or retreat centre. It’s in classrooms and kitchens, in



warehouses, at cash registers, in office buildings, hospitals, and Zoom calls.

It’s in the work we do.

In the book of Genesis, we read that humanity was created in the image of a working God.

A God who creates, names, shapes, tends, and rests.

Work is part of what it means to reflect God’s image. Not just church work.

Not just paid work. All work that contributes to human flourishing, creativity, care, and community has sacred potential.

That includes what we call “secular” jobs. It includes caregiving.

It includes volunteering.

It even includes the unseen work of laundry, spreadsheets, cleaning up after others, organizing events, listening to coworkers, preparing meals, solving problems, and navigating complicated conversations.

When done with intention and love, all of these become part of how we live out the gospel.

This isn’t a new idea, but it is often forgotten.

In church life, we can unintentionally reinforce the idea that the most faithful people are those who devote the most time to institutional roles.

But most discipleship doesn’t happen inside our church walls.

It happens out there, in the mess and living of everyday life.

Think about this for a moment: “What does following Jesus look like where you spend most of your week?”

What does faith look like in a busy kitchen?

- In a board meeting?
- In retirement?
- In shift work?
- In customer service?
- In a season of unemployment?

These are not side questions to the spiritual life. These are the spiritual life.

My friend Brian occasionally asks his congregation this question during Sunday worship: “What will you be doing this time tomorrow?”

It’s a reminder that the mission of the Church is not just what happens for one hour on Sunday, but also what happens at 10:30 Monday morning.

It’s a way of reminding us that faith isn’t an escape from the world. It’s a way of engaging it with grace, attentiveness and purpose.

During Lent, we often focus on prayer, fasting, and giving; spiritual disciplines that help us draw closer to God.

What if part of our Lenten reflection this year was paying attention to where God is already present in our work?

What if the break room became a space of prayer? What if writing reports became an act of offering?

What if managing a team or caring for a loved one became a form of service?

Don’t read what I’m not writing — this isn’t about over-spiritualizing everything or pretending every task is joyful.

It’s about reclaiming the deep truth that God is with us in the work and that our faith can shape how we approach it.

As we journey through Lent, may we remember that God doesn’t just meet us in sacred spaces.

God meets us in the everyday. In routine and responsibility. In effort and rest. In the difficult days and the satisfying ones.

You don’t need to be in a church job to be doing God’s work. You just need to be faithful where you are: attentive, compassionate, and open to the quiet ways the Spirit moves through ordinary things.

Whether you’re paid, unpaid, tired, retired, raising children, leading meetings, or looking for your next role, God is at work in you and through you, even at work.

*Canon Shawn C. Branch is the diocesan Director of Mission & Ministry, supporting the missional life of the diocese and vocations.*



LYNN MILLS PHOTO

## SOUP & SOCKS

**THE PARISH OF GAGETOWN** held a unique event Jan. 24: a hearty soup lunch in exchange for the gift of warm socks. That led to 371 pairs of socks donated, plus several hats, mittens, slippers, scarves, and even a pair of boots!

The ladies in the photo, Vicky Boulter, Dee Zaryckie, Dona King (the creator of the event) and Pat Underhill, made and served delicious beef and barley, turkey vegetable, cream of cauliflower, and bean and pasta soup as well as biscuits, scones and rolls.

The winter items were distributed to outreach programs and shelters in the Fredericton and Saint John areas as well as the local Community Cupboard housed at St. John’s Church, Gagetown.

**MISSION IN MOTION: community**



**Eva Morton, lay leader in the Archdeaconry of Fredericton**

**Favourite book of the Bible** - I love it all. If I must pick one, I’ll go with 1 John.

**Birthplace** - Sherbrooke, Quebec

**What I love most about God** - Always being embraced in love

**Favourite place on Earth** - Any cottage on a lake

**Farthest I’ve been from home** - Normandy, France

**Favourite meal** - Sugar on snow (maple syrup)

**Biggest fear** - Not being able to live within my means

**Hidden talent** - Clicking my heels

**Favourite classic book** - *Dr. Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak

**Favourite contemporary book** - *The Friends of Meager Fortune*, by David Adams Richards

**Hobby** - Reading, gardening

**Always in my fridge** - Cheese, eggs, fresh fruit

**Favourite sports team** - Capital City Rollers (roller derby), my daughter and granddaughters’ sports team.

MUSIC COMMENTARY

# A 'good' piece of music for Lent? What's that?

I've been thinking a lot about seasonal, or thematic, music lately.

Thinking back to Christmas, what makes something a Christmas song?

Often it's the content of the lyrics, but sometimes it's a traditional habit that connects it to a certain time of year ("Jingle Bells" is more of a winter song, for example, but I rarely hear it sung in late January or February!).

Is it the style of the music? Would that mean any music with sleigh bells makes it Christmas music? No, it's something more.

Here we are in Lent, and the music of Lent often conjures up ideas of dirge-like, slow, plodding music, usually in a minor key (or even diminished!), with texts that speak of sinfulness, unworthiness, suffering — you get the idea.

Lent is supposed to be dark in tone, reserved in expression, and devoid of anything too exuberant. At least, that's the stereotype.

Maybe there is something else to it. Maybe the earlier-mentioned aspect of the content of the music has some value.

Could you have Lenten themes in non-stereotypical settings?

Remember that though Lent carries a stereotype, it is always Jesus we're talking about, and though His coming suffering and sacrifice are on the front burner, the victory stands just beyond, and the love of God permeates throughout.

As an example of something a bit different, I'd like to offer up singer/songwriter Matthew



West's latest song, simply called, "Good."

With such a vague title, we don't know at first what Matthew's going for here. Does he mean we're all good, we're all not good, or something else?

The simple guitar-picking and lush background synth strings don't give us any more clues, so we are forced to listen to the text, and see what's at play here.

This is most certainly a song for Lent (and any time, for that matter!).

In a nutshell, the song expresses the reality that we are not good enough to attain anything from God on our own; we are completely and utterly dependant on the grace of God.

That's not new news to many people.

The chorus sums it all up very well, especially the second half: "And I was wrecked by mercy,

The day I understood: / I'm not loved because I'm worthy; I'm loved because You're good."

For some, this kind of theme clashes with the simple backbeat shuffling groove of the song, one that, on its own, could bring a little smile to your face, and cause your foot to start tapping.

That's not how typical Lenten music goes!

Indeed not, but there is something good here: the song doesn't leave us in a hopeless situation.

The bridge of the song shows us that even though we're not good, we are loved — loved and saved by God:

*"When there's nothing good in me, / Just a grateful sinner saved by You / Is all I have to be..."*

That's the good news. Lent leads to Easter and our shortcomings can lead to salvation (starting to get preachy here, huh?).

You get the idea. This song, though clothed in something that does not imbue the stereotypical Lenten musical stylings, nonetheless has a message that is all Lent, and more.

It's not the only piece of music out there that defies such traditions.

So, Dear Reader, keep your ears and wits about you, and don't write off a tune just because it doesn't fit the time of year.

You might find a music gem in the midst of something new!

*The Rev. Canon Chris Hayes is a musician as well as a priest serving in the Parish of Salisbury and Havelock.*

## Good, by Matthew West

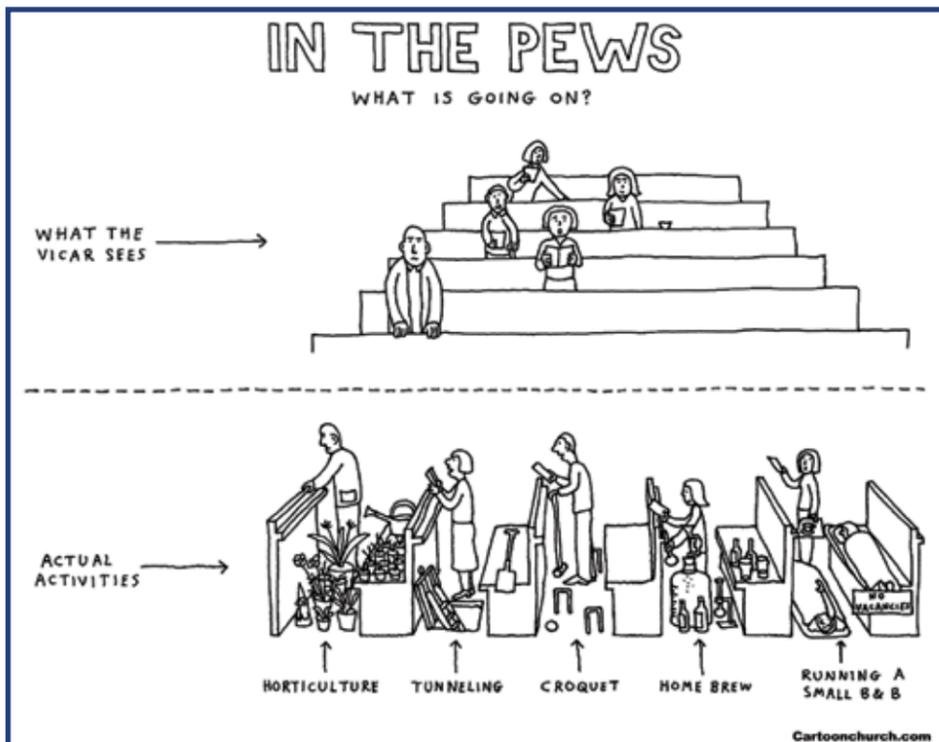
I used to think grace was a ladder  
Every sinner had to climb;  
If only I could just do better,  
I could earn it over time.  
Tried to work my way to good;  
Trouble is I never could.  
But then You showed me  
Just exactly how grace works...

**Chorus:** I'm good at always falling down;  
You're good at never giving up;  
I'm good at getting turned around;  
You're good at saying I'm still loved.  
And I was wrecked by mercy,  
The day I understood:  
I'm not loved because I'm worthy;  
I'm loved because You're good.

I think Paul wrote the book of Romans  
For people just like me.  
For all the beat up and the broken  
Who need to know that grace is free.  
Why do I do the things I shouldn't,  
And I don't do the things I should?  
That's just the proof  
You're the only part of me that's good.

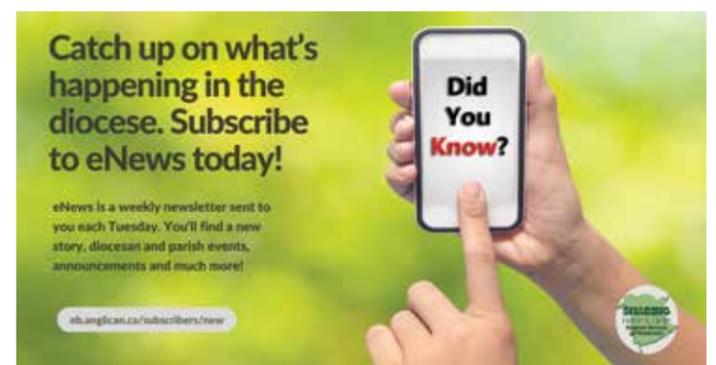
**Bridge:** Loved because You're God;  
I'm loved because You're faithful to me even  
when I'm not,  
Oh God You are so good.  
When there's nothing good in me,  
Just a grateful sinner saved by You  
Is all I have to be...

And I was wrecked by mercy,  
The day I understood:  
I'm not loved because I'm worthy;  
I'm loved because You're good.



The Rev. Rick Cunningham has been appointed a deacon in the Parish of Nerepis and St. John, under the mentorship of the Rev. Mike Caines.

Additionally, Rick has been appointed Missioner for the Lower West, Saint John. Both appointments were effective Jan. 15.



**CHRISTMAS IN THE DIOCESE**



**SILENT NIGHT AT CAMP MEDLEY**

JOHN GALBRAITH PHOTO

**ON THE COLD** but beautiful evening of Dec. 21, 2025, the local community gathered at the Camp Medley Chapel for the third annual ecumenical service of Carols and Lessons. A choir of 19 people from all faith communities, accompanied by the Rev. Andrew Horne on guitar and Lynn Mills on keyboard, led the congregation in the singing of well-loved Christmas carols and representatives from many different churches shared in the readings. This photo was taken during the singing of Silent Night by candlelight to close the service before heading off to the dining room for hot cider and cookies. The weather may have been chilly but the atmosphere was wonderfully warm! Special thanks goes to the people of the Parish of Gagetown and the Parish of Cambridge and Waterborough.

**CATHEDRAL CAROLLING**



**ON SUNDAY, DEC. 21**, after the Lessons and Carols service at Christ Church Cathedral, approximately 20 members of the congregation gathered for neighbourhood carolling. Singing began at Farraline Place, where residents enjoyed songs during supper, and continued through nearby residential streets. Afterward, carollers returned to the home of Tom and Sasha Fetter for warmth, hospitality, and food, along with more music.



KIRSTEN MCKNIGHT PHOTOS

**MISSION IN MOTION: community**