

ANGLICAN LIFE

NEWSPAPER OF THE THREE ANGLICAN DIOCESES IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

A Section of the ANGLICAN JOURNAL

January, 2022



Women's Weekend 2021 In The Diocese of Central Newfoundland

Article by the Rev'd Daphne Parsons
Photographs by Marilyn Dowden

A Women's Weekend/Conference was held on October 29th-31st at Lion Max Simms Memorial Camp in the Diocese of Central Newfoundland. There were 31 ladies in attendance. The theme for the weekend was "Arise! Let Your Light Shine." The theme song was "Children of the Light."

Registration was scheduled for 4:00, but ladies started arriving even before that time—everyone was so anxious and so excited to be able to gather and see each other for the first time in months! There were COVID-19 restrictions, but no one had any objections to following

guidelines. Masks could in no way cover the smiles and laughter that began from the beginning of the conference.

At registration, each lady was given a zip-lock bag containing their name tag, a bookmark, a tea light candle, and a few treats. The tea light candles were hand held high as we sang songs of light throughout the weekend.

The opening worship was a "Service of Light," reflecting the theme of the weekend. Following the worship, there was a time for "ice breakers," and then free time for fellowship. The energy, both spiritual and physical,

could be felt throughout the centre from the time of arrival. Literally hundreds of candles of all shapes and sizes lit up different areas of the centre. In fact, our Saturday night dinner was lit by candlelight.

Our speaker for the weekend was Archdeacon Charlene Taylor from the Diocese of Eastern NL. She was an excellent choice, and spoke to our theme on a number of levels. She inspired us, challenged us, and gave us so much food for thought. Her presentations were captivating. Thank you, Archdeacon Charlene.

Besides hearing from our guest speaker, there

was free time on Saturday and also a prayer walk as we walked around the beautiful surroundings in the area, stopping to pray and to take in the beauty of God's creation. The weather was absolutely beautiful.

On Saturday evening, we came together for evening worship and sharing time. During this time, we were asked to share one thing that had brought light into our lives during the dark times of COVID with all the restrictions. The answers were heart warming.

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ANGLICAN LIFE
NEWSPAPER OF THE THREE ANGLICAN DIOCESES IN
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

"On The Road Again"

Confirmations in the parish of Catalina

Article and photographs by
The Rev'd Eli Cross

On July 4th, Bishop John Watton was on the road to the Parish of Catalina when the call came in that we had a COVID-19 alert, and two confirmands were being sent for testing. One of his two visits went ahead, but the second was postponed.

So, on July 4th, at St Mark's Church in Summerville, eight young members of the congregation received a contactless "laying on of hands" to receive the rites of confirmation, and then their first receipt of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The St. Mark's confirmands were: Nicholas, Jorja, and Grace Newell; Margaret and Kimberley Long; Amelia and Sidney Tobin; and Camryn Baker. With the absence of a younger congregation in town, this may have been the final confirmation witnessed at St Mark's.

On September 19th, Bishop John was once again on the road to Catalina. The second instalment of confirmations at both St Peter's (Catalina) and St Nicholas' (Amherst Cove) took place that day. There were supposed to



The confirmation class from St Mark's, Summerville

be six confirmands, but a 'flu bug kept two away. The class was composed of twin sisters Keiara and Karlee Paul, Todd Crewe, Christopher White; absentees were Bradley Phillips and Dylan Duffett. The latter confirmands will be added to a new cohort

already who have already begun their learning at St. Peter's for confirmation in 2022, when Bishop John will be "On the Road Again." Pictured with the two groups are Bishop John Watton and the Rector of the parish, the Rev'd Eli Cross.



The confirmation class from St. Peter's, Catalina

The Name of Jesus

The Rt. Rev'd Samuel Rose
Bishop
Anglican East NL

Someone once asked, "What's in a name?"

Names identify who we are, who we belong to, where we come from, and even when we were born.

I am Sam—Samuel Vincent—son of Samuel and Elaine, grandson of Samuel and Lillian, and Vincent and Alice. I'm a Rose from Bell Island with roots in Harbour Main and Victoria, "BC" (behind Carbonear). But I am also Sam—husband to Jill, son-in-law to Greg and Marilyn. I am Sam—father to Amy and Samuel Gregory. Many know me as "Fr. Sam," or "Rev'd Sam," in the former parishes I served in. Today some call me Bishop Sam.

But I am also—through all these things—Samuel, a child of God. All that began about 47 years ago when my parents decided to take me to a church for baptism. My parents probably did not know that my name also meant something—the Hebrew name Samuel means "God has heard," referring to the prophet Samuel.

Names are important. When Jill and I were expecting our first child I remember buying this thick book containing all different baby names for a boy or a girl. There were thousands of names all with little explanations

behind their meanings. I am sure that many parents carefully considered the names of their new children. Perhaps you too did a bit of research behind the meaning of your child's name.

On January 1st we celebrate another important name—a name that not just identifies who the person is but what that person's purpose is. That name of course is Jesus, and we celebrate his Holy Name.

To quote from a great book called *For All the Saints*, by Stephen Reynolds, about the name of Jesus:

Jesus is the Greek form of a Hebrew name, Yeshua (or Joshua), meaning "God saves." That fact has immense significance for the Church. According to the Book of Exodus, God spoke to Moses out of a burning bush and called him to bring the Hebrew out of Egypt. Moses asked the divine voice, "What is your name?" And God answered with the word "Yahweh," which means, "I am who I am." Because this name was laden with all the holiness of the Almighty, the people of Israel developed the custom of never speaking it; whenever they met it

in the text of Scripture, they spoke the Hebrew word for "Lord" instead. But when Mary gave birth to her child, "I am who I am" entered human life, as "I am the One who saves." God's unspeakable name became speakable for humans because all the saving power of the Almighty was embodied in the "name of Jesus." To take this name upon our lips – and still, more to manifest this name in our lives – is to become what Jesus is, human life in intimate communion with God. (FAS, p. 38)

The name of Jesus does not just identify who Jesus is, but it identifies why Jesus came. The Angel spoke to Joseph and said to him, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-21)

So, we read that Jesus' purpose was to save people from their sins. In the Jewish tradition, only God can save people from their sins. That is why Jesus' name also has another important meaning, one that is vital

for those wishing to be saved from their sins. Again, from Matthew's Gospel, we read, "All this took place to fulfill what had spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.'"

There is another important purpose in the name of Jesus—that God is with us. Imagine that! God no longer is distant, removed, and otherworldly. God has a face and a name. God has an identity and a purpose. God has flesh and bones, just like you and me.

I am sure that expectant parents often wonder what their baby will be like when they are born. I know that we did. Who will she look like? What colour will his hair be? What colour eyes will she have? There are all the questions and the expectations and the wondering. And finally, when the birth happens, those questions are answered. But the questioning doesn't stop, does it? I know when I look at my children I think, "What will they become? What will be their interests? What will be their purpose in life?"



Photo by Crisby/Dinham

So often many people wonder who God is. What is God like? How can I know God? In Jesus, we are invited to see who God is, what God's purpose is, and what God has planned for you and me. We are invited to meet God in the person of Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God offers a person, a name, and a purpose for us.

Perhaps you have already met God in the person of Jesus. Perhaps you have recently met him. Or perhaps you are still wondering who or what God is. Wherever you are in your faith, God is inviting you to take another look at his Son. In the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



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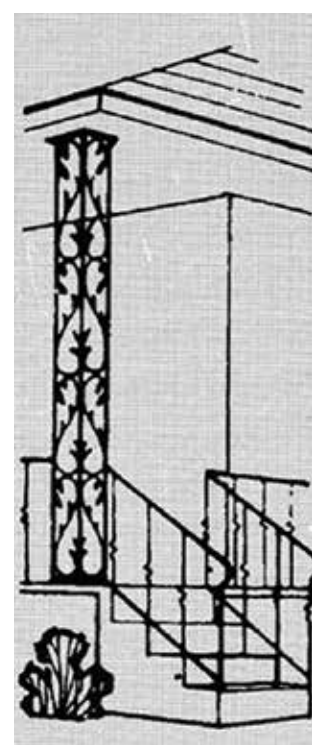
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WOMEN

from page 1

Then came the time for laughter and fun. There were a number of skits, including a "wedding" and a "trip to the doctor's office." There were games of cards and lots of singing (while wearing masks).

We were very blessed with lots of music. Our music team included May Feltham, Gertie Hodder, and Marilyn Rideout. What a great team they made. Lorraine Morgan brought along her guitar and even entertained the kitchen staff. There were a number of vocals.

Besides candles, the centre was beautifully decorated with lots of fall decorations brought along by the committee and some other ladies. Needless to say, the meals were delicious and the staff very friendly. They were as happy to see us as we were to see them.

Following the Eucharist on Sunday morning, a number of ladies stayed to enjoy their meal with each other rather than take it with them on the road.

There was a reluctance to leave with some asking, "Can we do this again next weekend?" One lady said, "We came here strangers and we are going home friends."

The committee for the weekend was: the Rev'd Daphne Parsons, Marilyn Rideout, Rose Collins, and Marilyn Dowden. None of them had attended a women's weekend before but was blessed indeed by organizing and witnessing the light of Christ shining in and through all who attended. Thank you, ladies, for attending.

For the ladies on the Burin Peninsula who were not permitted to attend due to the COVID-19 outbreak in your area at that time, please know that we missed you, were sad for you, and prayed for you.

We give God thanks for making it possible for us to attend this conference in 2021. We encourage other ladies to attend whenever possible.

Christ, Be Our Light

The Rev'd Cynthia Haines-Turner
Columnist

"Longing for light, we wait in darkness..." begins the hymn "Christ, Be Our Light" by Bernadette Farrell. A few years ago, I was in Iqaluit in January when the choir at my church was learning this hymn. "This was one for you," the musician had said, as clearly I had complained about the darkness to her. That's because it was after 10 in the morning before you could turn off the lights in the place where I was staying and it was just after lunch when it got dark again. It felt stifling. I get the same feeling as we approach the shortest day of the year in December and as we go through the winter months. The feeling doesn't leave me until the days begin to lengthen substantially leading up to my favourite day of the year, the summer solstice.

So because of that, I have really come to appreciate the season of Epiphany, a season with such emphasis on light and on Jesus as the light of the world. As we read in the gospel of John, "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1:3b-4. The refrain of "Christ, Be Our Light" puts it this way:

"In fact, it's when the darkness is at its greatest, the light is needed the most."



*"Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in Your church
gathered today."*

We are surrounded by enough darkness in the world—nearly two years of living with this pandemic, war and conflict and violence, hungry and homeless people, millions of refugees, our neighbours around the world suffering from hunger and the effects of natural disasters—so much hurt and pain. We also know darkness in our own lives through experiences like loss and grief, broken friendships and relationships, our own hurts, unemployment, the stress and demands of making a living, spiritual hunger, depression, anxiety, other mental or physical illness. And much more.

Into that darkness comes the light of Christ shining in us, through

us and through those around us. In the season of Epiphany, we hear of the call of the disciples, how they came to reflect the light of Christ in their own lives and the lives of others and we come to understand how we are called to do the same. Even though the darkness may seem, at times, insurmountable, the smallest gesture of kindness or love can totally pierce it. In fact, it's when the darkness is at its greatest, the light is needed the most. As theologian Samuel Ryan said "A candle is a protest at midnight. It is a non-conformist. It says to the darkness, 'I beg to differ.'" I am reminded of another hymn, this time by Jim Strathdee: "I am the light of the world! You people come and follow me! If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery of what you were meant to do and be."

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NL Dioceses Invest In The Future With PWRDF's World of Gifts

Janice Biehn
PWRDF Communications Coordinator
Photographs by PWRDF

Whether planting seedlings in Uganda or breadfruit trees in Haiti, preparing gift bags for new babies in Lesotho or teaching gender rights in El Salvador, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund's partners are investing in their communities.

The annual World of Gifts campaign makes it possible for you to invest, too. Supporting World of Gifts is an investment in a sustainable future for some of the world's most vulnerable communities.

The campaign launched in October and leads up to Christmas, but the opportunity to give and support our partners is year round. The 2021 guide supports 17 partners as they plan for a healthier and stronger future. Programs include restoring and preserving seeds in Bangladesh, providing families with supplies to raise chickens in Colombia and Zimbabwe, continued support of "smart" dairy farming initiatives in Kenya and of course, back by popular demands, giving goats to people in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Cuba.

Goats and these other conservation agriculture initiatives improve nutrition for smallholder farmers, and also improve their yields so they can earn more income in the local markets. Supporters can still "buy the whole farm"

and support a range of agricultural projects with one gift.

Support for World of Gifts in Newfoundland and Labrador has always been strong. In 2018, Sunday School children from St. George's, Gambo, collected coins for two months and raised \$571.20 to buy 80 chicks, 5 goats, 30 ducks 2 20-kg bags of seeds and mosquito nets. During last year's campaign, despite the pandemic, churches and individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador donated \$28,762 to World of Gifts. Ten parishes raised funds to support World of Gifts, with donations totalling \$6,692. This includes the confirmation class at Holy Trinity Church in the parish of Grand Bay, who raised enough funds to "buy a whole farm."

The clean water project in Kenya is still being supported in World of Gifts in 2021. Through our partner Utooni Development Organization, PWRDF has been supporting the construction of shallow wells, and last year raised enough funds to build 17 wells with a hand pump and four well with a solar-powered pump. If a donkey is not suitable to help a family carry water from the well, UDO also provides water tanks to store the water.

There are also opportunities to invest in women recovering from sexual violence in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and new mothers in Lesotho. Financial support at these critical times can have an enormous impact.

This year's guide is also promoting our new Indigenous Responsive Programs grant. For 25 years PWRDF has supported and accompanied Indigenous organizations in Canada working to reclaim their language and culture, to improve community health with clean water and safe birth, to support economic opportunities and to engage youth. The new responsive program aims to expand our support of Indigenous communities by providing grants of \$5,000 - \$15,000 to Indigenous-led groups working in Community Health, Climate Action, Empowering Youth or Safe Water. With a gift supporting this program, you are investing in Indigenous communities as well as Indigenous leadership.

Like any good investment, the return on World of Gifts is high: communities become stronger, healthier and more resilient, and we are able to live out Jesus' commandment for us to love our neighbour, no matter where they may be.

"If Only"

Kevin Smith
Columnist

*"Yesterday is gone.
Tomorrow has not yet
come. We have only today.
Let us begin."*
- Mother Theresa



Happy New Year, everyone! 2022. Who knows what this year will bring? Hopefully it will be a good and blessed one for us all.

However, I would like to share a few reflections on this past year or so. COVID-19 continued to dominate our attention and lives, first with vaccination, then second amid the first, second, and third waves of this virus. Sick people. Schools, businesses, and churches were closed or had severe limitations placed upon them. Someone mentioned that churches can never go back to the way they were before. The use of technology and the internet have become vital tools and have significantly replaced in-person church attendance. However, one priest mentioned that he had 300 people following his service via Facebook.

Throughout all of this, positive things are happening in the planned giving arena. Two cases that immediately come to mind involve two gentlemen who have passed away in the last year or so. The first, a man from CBS, left a number of bequests for 5 parishes on the Avalon Peninsula, as well as for both Queen's College and the CLB. The residue of his estate (yet undetermined) will establish two funds at the Cathedral in St. John's.

The second, a widower from St. John's, was also very generous to the Church in his will. In fact, he had 17 bequests for a number of parishes in the Eastern and Central Dioceses, and others for the CLB, the Anglican Foundation, and the Primates World Relief and Development Fund. A wonderful legacy indeed.

This is good news for the Church as it struggles

with the ravages of COVID-19 and invents new ways to connect with parishioners and serve the community at large.

American writer Mercedes Lackey said that "What If" must be the two saddest words in the world. What if my will was not drawn up or updated before tragedy struck? What if I had not made provision for a power of attorney? What if I had not bequeathed a gift to my church? Mercedes was right. These two words are sad and the past can't be rewritten.

Don't be one of the "What If" crowd. Please make an effort to get your estate plan (large or small) in order and have a legally drafted will prepared. And, prayerfully consider leaving a bequest in your will for the Church and/or one of its many ministries. As Mother Theresa suggested, "We have only today. Let us begin."

Finally, financial planner Christine Ibbotson wrote in the Telegram recently :

"If you die without an estate plan, the Canadian Government will make one for you – guaranteed to not be the way you would have wanted."

True words.

Kevin Smith is a gift planning consultant for Anglican East NL. He can be contacted at 709 739-5667 or by email: kevin.smith709@gmail.com

Optimistic For Old Time Christmas Revival

Article and photograph by
Louise Smith

As I sit in front of my laptop with my fingers fidgeting on the keyboard, I find myself lost in thought regarding the diversion our journey in life has taken these last twenty months.

Here at St. John the Evangelist Church, and indeed all other neighbouring places of worship, distancing and mask wearing still prevails. However, our record in Newfoundland of keeping COVID-19 somewhat under control can be primarily attributed to the professionalism of Dr. Janice Fitzgerald, and the consequent respect shown to her judgement by all.

With so many restrictions on our church activities, a big congratulations is also in order to Mrs. Emily Rowe, editor of Anglican Life magazine, for allowing us to continue submitting

parish news without interruption during this perplexing period. It also keeps us up to date on what other parishes are accomplishing while restricted.

Since my last report, we have been successful in taking on the adventure of a fall fair on November 6th. But unlike years previous to 2019, in house food was not included in our project.

Encouraged by the response and consequence of that venture, our team initiated a plan for a three-course stuffed chicken breast dinner as a take-out.

At the time of planning, we could only speculate on the given date of November 20th, which depended on the COVID-19 situation.

However, everything went off smoothly and on time, with no surprises.

We hope that before Christmas, it may be safe to eliminate or at least be less stringent with regards to social distancing, as our entertaining team is looking forward to resuming the traditional Holly Tea in December, after a hiatus.

Most individuals or groups can boast, whether big or small, of some semblance of a Christmas tradition. Random House dictionary describes it as a custom so long continued that it has almost the force of a law.

Twelve years ago, the ACW ladies of St. John the Evangelist in Topsail, decided as part of our Christmas celebrations, to host a special tea party, served on our best china and befitting a king. After all, despite the commercialization of Christmas in the secular



world, Advent is still all about the anticipation of the birth of the greatest king that ever lived.

As a gesture of a good will and fellowship we extended invitations outside the confines of our own parish family, and the response to that outreach was overwhelming. As a result, the festivity known as our Holly Tea was born, and enjoyed each year up

to 2019.

We look forward to its resumption this year of 2021.

The accompanying photo portrays the original group of our "Holly Tea Ladies" of 2009.

"The hope we have is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast."
Hebrews 6:19

They Want To See Jesus

The Rev'd Jonathan Rowe
Columnist

In many Anglican churches, the priest will hold up the bread for the Eucharist, either during or after the Eucharistic prayer. We do this to focus the attention of the congregation at a pivotal moment in the liturgy. As Anglicans, we believe that the Body and Blood of Christ are present in the bread and wine we share at the altar. We may not necessarily agree on how or when it happens, but we believe that the bread and wine change. They are not *literally* becoming Christ's Body and Blood, but there is something more than a purely *symbolic* representation. The best that we can say is that Christ is present *sacramentally* in these formerly ordinary things.

Some clergy hold up the bread because the congregation are

watching for a glimpse of Jesus. This moment becomes a focal point in the service when the faithful show the reverence and devotion they would show to Christ himself if he were physically present. Others hold up the bread to show the congregation what they are becoming. Just as ordinary bread becomes the Body of Christ, so ordinary people are becoming the Body of Christ—the Church.

Receiving and becoming the Body of Christ is a great privilege for us, but it also comes with a great responsibility. By elevating the consecrated bread, holding it up for the people to see, the priest is also showing them what they must do. Our encounter with Christ is not limited to an hour in church on Sunday. What happens next? We are

dismissed, sent out into the world, to show Jesus to the world, just as he has been shown to us.

This is the heart of mission, and it's something particularly worth remembering at this time of year. We have just come out of the Christmas season, with its emphasis on God taking human flesh and becoming like us. January takes us into the season of Epiphany, when the Gospel lessons, especially in the early weeks, focus on Jesus making himself known to the world. We hear the story of the coming of the Magi, and then of Christ's baptism in the River Jordan and the voice from heaven that proclaims him to be God's Son. We see the first sign that he performs at the wedding in Cana. We see him making himself known in the synagogue at

Capernaum, and telling his first disciples to let down their nets for a catch. The theme builds to a climax on the last Sunday after Epiphany, when we see him transfigured, speaking to Moses and Elijah in dazzling white clothing. All these stories are the stories of Christ being revealed to the world, and as we leave our churches on Sunday morning, we are stepping out into the mission that God calls us to share.

'As the Father has sent me, so I send you,' says Jesus. When we proclaim the good news that we have heard, or make disciples, or care for those in need, or challenge injustice and corruption, or care for the world that has been put into our care, we are carrying on the work that Christ began. There is a story in John's



Gospel of a group of Greeks who have arrived in Jerusalem, and come to Jesus' disciples saying 'We want to see Jesus.' For some people, all they know of Jesus will be what they see and hear from us. When people look to us, will they see signs of lives transformed? How are we holding Christ up for the world to see?

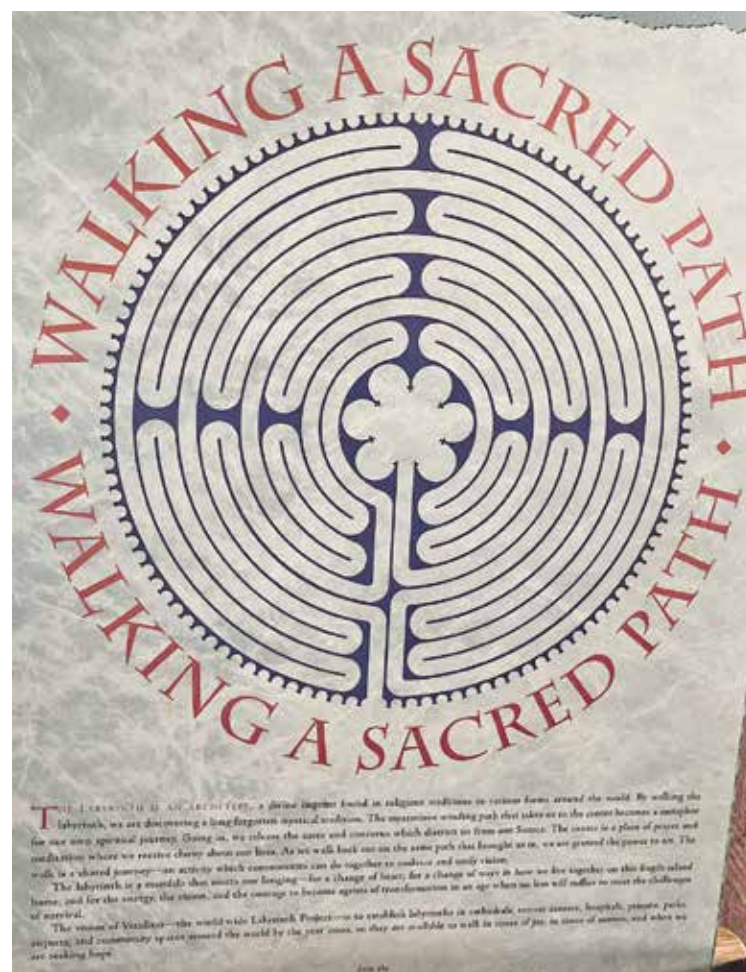
Spirituality—How Anglicans Can Connect With God in Different Ways

Claire Donnan
Guest Columnist

Spirituality is, hence its description, a deeply personal and individual experience. People feel closeness with God through a variety of different activities and everybody's relationship with faith is different. For this reason, the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John's provides a variety of different experiences to help people strengthen their spiritual relationships with God in different ways. Two examples of this are our Sundays@Seven services (which were highlighted in the November print issue of Anglican Life), and our labyrinth; they both serve different and specific spiritual purposes. I sat down with David Buley and Susan Cummings to discuss the spiritual importance of both things and how these experiences can strengthen spirituality and spiritual connection.

"In my curation of what we do...how does the opportunity to sit in the silence or in darkness... how does that slow us down to take time to sit and listen?" asked Buley. The art of silence, of presence in our minds and ourselves, is quite the lost art in modern society, long since replaced by the art of doing what we are told. Our Sundays@Seven seek to do the opposite. Buley said, "This is a sense of spirituality to find its own way, without being told that now you're gonna have a spiritual encounter."

As for the impression Buley hopes his services have, he hopes for immersion. "I guess one thing is an opportunity to immerse ourselves in different musics that perhaps would be more challenging at the 11am service...it's an opportunity to just experience things and then say 'oh that's another piece of God's



grandeur, another piece of creation, another piece of this world.'" Our 11am service, for context, is the sung Eucharist from the Books of Common Prayer and Common Praise, including spoken and sung prayer with lessons, a sermon, and communion. He believes musical spirituality can help us access that higher knowledge and closeness with religion without disputing what the Anglican faith believes, and can help individuals improve their connections with God, the world, and each other.

Next I met with Susan Cummings, regional manager in pastoral care, ethics and bereavement services with Eastern Health, as well as the person largely responsible for the installation of the Cathedral's outdoor labyrinth. When I asked her about the purpose of the labyrinth, her response was quite interesting. "I wish we knew! I mean, labyrinths

are at least 3, 4000 years old...and of course all that history is shrouded in mystery." Labyrinths have been assigned many different purposes, from a representation of great odysseys in classical Greece to a representation of religious pilgrimage in Christianity in the middle ages. Contrary to mazes and other puzzles, the labyrinth is a straightforward design with one entrance and exit, meaning it requires no problem solving. Cummings said, "the only decision that you have to make is whether or not you want to walk".

Because of this open-ended design, the modern day uses of the labyrinth are as unique as those who choose to walk it. "What draws us, I guess, is key to answering [what are some uses of the labyrinth]... there's such a thing as a labyrinth practice...it's like a mandala, a pattern for our own life's journey." The labyrinth helps



On the left is an illustration of "Walking a Sacred Path," intended to help those who are learning more about labyrinths. It says that "the mysterious winding path that takes us to the center becomes a metaphor for our own spiritual journey."

Above is a photograph by Claire Donnan of the labyrinth that was cut into the lawn just below the Anglican Cathedral in St. John's last summer.

separate past, present and future by encouraging its walkers to live in the present moment; the present thought. "It's an intuitive practice, really," said Cummings, "Reasons are as many as there are individuals. What would draw us, you know?"

Because of this open-ended use, the question of what impact a labyrinth could have on personal spirituality became inadvertently biased. To remedy this, Susan Cummings reached out to several friends who walked labyrinths frequently and asked them about the labyrinth's impact on their personal spirituality. Answers were widely varied and individual. The included Holly, who said that the imagery of the labyrinth has "captured her imagination," and that she employs the labyrinth to help her "get in touch with her truth." Bernadine said that the labyrinth enables her to feel "refreshed and [with] a better outlook

on...life." Joan said that the labyrinth causes "a sense of problem solving [to arise]," which enables "a deeper connection with all." Finally, Robyn said, "meeting the labyrinth was like meeting a new friend," and that in the labyrinth she "felt both free and held." It's plain to see that the labyrinth means so many things to many different people, and can help people heal and learn in a variety of different ways.

Both the Sundays@Seven and the labyrinth are fantastic ways to increase spiritual closeness and relationships with God. Both offer opportunities to deepen personal connection with the personal spirit and with God as well, in ways more personal and less technical than a traditional Eucharist. There are still many other different ways to strengthen spirituality, so do what is best for you!

Advent Ecumenical Lessons and Carols

Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Corner Brook

Article by Dr. Doreen Helen Klassen
Photograph by Fr. Lynn Brave

As is custom, the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Corner Brook hosted an Advent Ecumenical service on the first Sunday of Advent, November 28th. Relaxed COVID-19 protocols once again allowed for a sizeable Salvation Army Band and an expanded, though selected, choir.

The choir included the Cathedral's Choral Scholars (sponsored by MUN's Bruneau Center for Choral Excellence), Cathedral Choir members, and several singers from the Bay of Musical Arts Chorus, many of them students of Dr. Jennifer Matthews. Their choral selections, chosen by the

Cathedral's Vicar Choral, Fr Lynn Braye, included "Jesus Christ the Apple Tree" by Elizabeth Poston, "Advent Peace Canon" by Pachelbel, arranged by Elaine Schram, and "Gabriel to Mary came," a 14th century Irish piece.

The band, prepared by Wendy Woodland and directed by Jason Reid, played a prelude and accompanied several congregational hymns including "Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming" and Frederik Kaan's "Tomorrow Christ is Coming."

Organist, Dr. Doreen Helen Klassen, accompanied several other hymns, and flautist Vickie Crocker several choral selections.



Pictured here is the combined Temple and Citadel Salvation Army bands that played at this year's Advent Ecumenical service at the Anglican Cathedral in Corner Brook.

The service used the Anglican Nine Lessons and Carols format, but it was a truly ecumenical event, as instrumentalists, readers,

and choir members came from the city's Anglican, Bahai, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, and United churches and

faith traditions. Funds raised were donated to the local food bank.

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A New Year's Lesson

Ronald Clarke
and Melanie Clarke
Columnists

The gospel for the first Sunday after Epiphany tells the story of Jesus going into the temple at the age of twelve. Like any other twelve year old, he was curious and wandered away from his parents. Jesus spent his time in the temple listening and asking questions of the temple elders. When Mary and Joseph discovered him missing, they immediately returned to Jerusalem to find their beloved son. No doubt Mary and Joseph were beside themselves with worry. I would imagine, even two thousand years ago, the thought of a young child alone on the streets of a city would have brought panic to his devoted parents. I can imagine the horrors Mary and Joseph thought about while searching for Jesus. This biblical story ended well with Jesus being found safe and sound. When questioned, Jesus simply said he was doing his Father's business. Mary and Joseph had no idea what Jesus was talking about at this time but of course we all know what he grew up to become—our Saviour.

When I was twelve, I went to Europe on a school trip. My father was the chaperone and we went to Amsterdam, Paris, and London. I had never seen such grand buildings before, large

streets, and crowded cities. I was particularly taken with London and all it had to offer. We went to Westminster Abby, a huge cathedral where kings and queens and famous people had been buried. I remember looking around at the grandiose surroundings and being amazed. I remember thinking to myself, who walked up this aisle? Who listened to the sermons in this building? And who were the great ministers who preached to royalty? At twelve I couldn't imagine all the possibilities.

Shortly after visiting the Abbey, we went shopping on the streets of London. I was in paradise! So many shops, so much to look at, so much to buy! Just about everything I saw, I wanted to buy. I had no real concept of money at the time and was unaware of the cost of things. Dad quickly reminded me that I had bought many souvenirs already and I couldn't possibly have it all, yet I continued to look and continued to ask for purchases. Dad was looking for a new pair of shoes so we were spending a little too much time in one place for my liking. I decided to explore the shop next door to the shoe store without my father's knowledge. As you can imagine, I lost track of where I was and forgot that I was in a very large city. In

my excitement, I wandered further until another lovely souvenir caught my attention and I turned to ask my father once again if I could purchase it. But my father wasn't behind me when I looked around. In fact, my father wasn't anywhere to be seen. I was alone, in London, without any money and without the knowledge of the name of our hotel. I was lost!

Being twelve, I didn't realize the gravity of the situation. I didn't panic. I just knew my father would come find me and all would be well. I knew my father couldn't be too far away and all I had to do was wait. I believed whole heartedly he would come and keep me safe. I stayed where I was and waited. Of course, in time, dad did come frantically up the street, calling my name. We were reunited and all was well, just as I knew it would be.

Looking back now, I can only imagine what my father must have been thinking. Only the day before, a newspaper in London reported that the body of a 14 year old girl had been found. She had been taken and murdered. The worry on my father's face when he found me was clearly visible. My father, much like Mary and Joseph probably were, was very relieved to find me unharmed.

When I think of Jesus

at the age of twelve and compare my twelve year old experiences, I can see that Jesus knew right from birth that he was meant for greatness. He knew he was the son of God. Mary and Joseph probably knew Jesus was meant for greatness too but parental worry is instinctual and they no doubt had been very frightened for him.

This story is the only one recorded of Jesus during his growing up. The Bible records his birth, his baptism, this day at the temple and then begins again when Jesus was an adult. One story of Jesus' childhood and what lesson do we learn? I believe this story reminds us of Jesus' humanity and not his deity. It is sometimes hard to imagine Jesus being the son of God and the son of man. Part of him was just like any other twelve year old boy of his time or mine. He got lost in his excitement and did not think of the consequences of his behaviour. Jesus felt safe because he knew he was the son of God **and** he believed his parents would keep him safe. His curiosity and thirst for knowledge caused him to stay and listen to the temple elders, forgetting about the very real dangers of wandering off from the protection of his parents. This short glimpse of Jesus as a child reinforces his humanity. I would



imagine, at some point in all our lives as children, we all experienced being separated from our parents and we all had faith our parents would rescue us. We all felt at the time there was nothing to worry about. When I read about Jesus as a boy, I feel closer to our Saviour. I feel like we all had a shared experience of being lost and found. Although the story doesn't show Jesus being in any way concerned about his well being, just knowing both he and I shared a similar experience makes me feel closer to him.

Jesus felt safe in the knowledge his heavenly Father and his earthly parents were always protecting him. We should have that same faith in our heavenly Father. He keeps us safe and protects us from dangers. As long as we have faith in our heavenly Father, we will never be lost. And that is something we believers can always count on.

God bless you all in this new year!

- Melanie Clarke



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Formless, Empty, and Dark

The Rev'd Michael Li
Columnist

What does it mean that the earth was formless, empty, and dark (Genesis 1:2a)? Before I deal with this question, let me revisit Genesis 1:1.

Genesis 1:1 introduces us to God. By way of beginning, God created the entire cosmos. Genesis 1:1 denotes the entire creation period. But nobody really knows how God created the cosmos, nor when. After Genesis 1:1 the focal point of the creation story is the planet, our earthly home.

Genesis 1:2a tells us the earth was formless, empty, and dark. Some people have suggested that after the initial creation, then something happened that caused the earth to become “formless, empty, and dark.” In this view, there was a long period of time (a gap) between what happened in Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Perhaps, the fall of Satan destroyed the Earth completely. At this point, God started all over again (James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: Volume 1*, 1998, pp. 56-57).

In this view, the formless, empty, and dark earth existed prior to God's creative act, and the creation was a matter of organizing the existing chaos—making something good out of something not good. This view was supported by St. Augustine and Basil the Great. In short, the destruction of an original world was followed by a recreation described in Genesis 1:3-31 (Boice, p. 57). This allows for eons of time and can accommodate modern science.

One difficulty of the gap theory is that it requires that creation suffer death and destruction before Adam's fall. Another objection: if something important had occurred between the first two verses of Genesis, God would have told us



so, rather than leave us to speculate. According to R. C. Sproul, “the gap theory puts a strain on the grammar of verse 2 to translate as became, making it unlikely from a grammatical point of view” (Before the Face of God, Book Three, 1994, p. 34). If the gap theory is really true, it means that God failed his first attempt to create the cosmos in Genesis 1:1 and he had to recreate it again in Genesis 1:3-31.

It is better to interpret that there was no gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Genesis 1:2a tells us that, when God first created the earth, it was formless, empty, and dark; it was unfinished and uninhabited. The rest of Genesis 1 tells us the six days of creation. If God first forms the earth (Genesis 1:1) and then later creates light (Genesis 1:3), there would have to be darkness over the earth in Genesis 1:2a. This indicates that God's creation is in progress. In other words, the description of “formless, empty, and dark” is simply an expression of stages of progress during the first day of creation (Genesis 1:3-5).

As Christians, we should not be too concerned about how God created the cosmos. We must not miss the wonder, glory, and majesty of what God created. Indeed, the intricate beauty of nature continues to reveal God to us.



With Eddie Joyce to Help African Children

Submitted with photograph
by Willie Loder

Eddie Joyce, MHA, hosted a dinner with the St. Paul's ACW ladies at the home of Willie Loder, ACW president. Due to COVID-19, we are and unable to serve food at the church hall. Our ACW supports Eddie with his project in Uganda and Kenya, helping children in an orphanage by providing shoes and medical services.

The Epiphany Journey

Emily F. Rowe
Editor

It's the beginning of a new year again, and with Epiphany upon us, I often drift back to something that I first read more than 20 years ago now, “The Journey of the Magi” by T. S. Eliot. It's one of those things that I *had* to read for school, but then came to love.

T. S. Eliot was a practicing Anglo-Catholic, and his faith always had a huge part to play in his writing.

The focus, as the title of the poem suggests, is on the trip itself to see the Christ. This physical journey of the magi is a representation for a spiritual journey of faith. For us today, as people who continue to practice Christianity in a world that has become mostly secular, the portrayal of alienation felt by these outsiders that Eliot expresses can ring especially true—these are men who are not Jewish or Christian, but who are on their way to see Jesus, whose birth would be a huge threat to the pagan religions that they belong to. This was clearly the beginning of something new, but at the possible expense of the things that had gone before—at the expense of the familiar things. The narrator of the

poem says,

*were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was
a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no
doubt. I had seen birth and
death,
But had thought they were
different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for
us, like Death, our death.*

There are some of us in the Church that struggle like this a great deal these days. The world has changed so much, and so quickly. We may worry that the good things are all gone. Our constant need to “pivot” (a big buzz word of the pandemic) is exhausting, and I can feel a connection with these magi who feel like they are seeing their very identity disintegrating.

Perhaps there is worth in noting that Christ's birth was not a good thing for all people, even those like the magi who saw this as so important that they travelled to be witnesses to it. Important, but also a bit worrying.

When Archbishop Linda Nicholls was visiting last fall, she talked about some of the good things that have happened since the pandemic began.



For example, people have found themselves reconnecting with traditional worship like the daily offices, which are one of our real strengths as Anglicans. Let's take the time to rediscover who we are, and remember the things that make us unique and beautiful.

I don't think that the death of the Anglican Church is at all on its way, but this is a good time to understand who we are and who we want to be. We need to address the many problems from our past, and at the same time we can embrace the good things and build on them. We can take this time, this epiphany season, to experience insight—to see more clearly the way that is before us as the Church. The way to avoid the bitter agony and death is to allow God to direct us in the way that he wants us to go, and allow the light of the world to shine through us.

Jesse Tree in Port Aux Basques

Submitted with photographs by
Lisa Brown



On November 28th, the first Sunday in Advent, St. James’ Church in Port aux Basques held a “Jesse Tree Service.” Rev’d Jane explained to the children the origin of the Jesse Tree, and after that, the children placed symbols on our Jesse tree. It was a beautiful morning of worship.

Sitting At The Feet of Jesus

A retreat reflection

Article by
The Rev’d Canon Ed Keeping

During the week of November 22nd, 2021, I took four days to spend time in prayer and study at our home in Chapel’s Cove. I invited four friends in ministry to come and spend a morning with me for reflection and renewal as I continue in my ministry as a chaplain to the hospitals, and in preparation for the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

On Monday morning, I invited the Rev’d Russell Osmond, retired priest in

the Parish of St. Philip’s. Russell, along with his wife Joan and our friend Gloria, joined us for the first day of the retreat. After singing one of my favourite hymns of the season of Advent, “*Come thou long expected Jesus, Born to set thy people free,*” Rev’d Russell led us in Morning Prayer as we prepared for this occasion. He reminded us that the Advent season, like other liturgical seasons, is a season of hope and grace as he began his meditation

with us. His presentation, entitled “*And Grace will lead me home,*” referred to God’s unmerited favour. It is goodness and kindness from God that we don’t deserve and cannot earn by our own merits. It is God’s goodness and benevolence, or his favour upon us as unworthy as we are to receive it. As far as we know, Jesus never used the word “*grace,*” but his person, his ministry, and his teaching disclose that he was full of grace. Grace was part of his

character and nature. He taught us parables of grace; perhaps the best of them was the parable of the prodigal son. Using the scriptures and quoting people like Barbara Brown Taylor, Rev’d Russell put into perspective how God’s grace is a gift and how his grace is at work in our lives. He ended his meditation with these words: “As children of God, people onto whom grace has been bestowed, we enter a season of emphasis on waiting and yearning;

hoping for wholeness, transformation; waiting for a time when all brokenness is mended; wounds are healed; when God’s peace and justice rules the earth; when the lamb and the lion can pasture together and we become the people God intends for us to be.” *Grace will lead me home. Amen and amen.*

⇒ see *RETREAT*
page 12

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RETREAT

from page 11

On the second day, Father Rudolph Anthony, Rector of St. Augustine’s, came to share the morning with us. After prayers, we listened for eight minutes to Denzel Washington as he reflected on his personal faith and ministry. This led us into the theme for the morning: “*Our Calling to Ministry*” for both ordained ministry as well as the important ministry of our laity. Father Anthony’s talk caused us to reflect upon our calling and the ministry we share with others in the life of the church. His thoughts were focused from the Book of Acts, chapter 8, verses 26 - 33 and 34 - 40. We had time to share some of our own experience in ministry as we reflected upon these scriptural references. We concluded the morning by listening to a beautiful song by Jason Ingram and Kari Jobe, “*Be Still My Soul (In You I Rest)*”.

The Right Rev’d Cyrus Pitman, retired bishop of our diocese, came on Wednesday morning to be my guest for this third day of meditation. After Morning Prayer and a renewal of our baptismal

covenant, the bishop moved into his theme for the day: “*The seasons of our lives*.” This theme was based on his first reading in Morning Prayer from the Book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 1- 8. He talked about the different seasons in the life of the church, and said we as individuals go through seasons in our lives; sometimes we hurry through them rather than being present. Often, we find ourselves going back to the past or centring ourselves on the future and not enjoying the time we are in, whichever season that may be. I was able to more greatly appreciate the significance of the importance of waiting and taking time to be present in the moment in the seasons of life.

Finally, on the fourth and final day of this retreat session, Archdeacon Charlene Taylor from Church House came to spend Thursday morning with us, and our friend Gloria once again joined us. Her theme was: “*The Waiting Place of God*.” In her opening devotion, Archdeacon Charlene

focused on the sentence “*Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint*.” (Isaiah 49:31) In her first reflection on waiting, she led us to think about the prophets by looking at the scripture of the Old Testament foretelling the coming of Christ into the world. Afterwards, we shared some reflections on some thought-provoking questions she had prepared. Her second talk centred on thinking about Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the different “times of waiting” she experienced: the time she spent with Elizabeth, and waiting for the birth of Jesus, and the journey to Bethlehem as his birth was imminent; also the time of waiting at the foot of the cross. Our session concluded with a guided meditation before we closed with the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. In essence this final retreat session reinforced the understanding that when God works in our lives, no

matter how long it takes, it’s always worth the wait. Each afternoon, after the guests left, I would do my daily walk which gave me time to reflect upon what I heard each morning. This experience was worthwhile and I encourage others to do it for their own spiritual growth. It was truly an experience of sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to the word, and having the word penetrate in my heart and mind. I want to thank my wife, Joyce, for preparing breakfast and lunch for our guests, and for sharing with me in these days of meditation as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour. I want to thank Rev’d Russell Osmond, Father Anthony, Bishop Pitman, and Archdeacon Charlene for travelling to Chapel’s Cove to share with me in this personal retreat time. Your sharing and friendship have been a blessing in my life. I give thanks to God for this time together and for our many years of friendship. *Thank You* for sharing your faith, love, and commitment in the

one who has called us into his ministry. With each of your presentations, you allowed us the time to share and reflect. We were glad to have others join us for these meditations and to be able to share their thoughts and feelings, too. These four days of prayer and meditation have indeed been a blessing for me as I move forward in my ministry and took the time to stop and smell the flowers once again. Have a blessed season, whatever “season” you find yourself in as you journey through your life and ministry. My prayer for you is the same as Father Anthony shared with us in his session on Tuesday morning in this Irish Blessing: May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be ever at your back May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of his hands. Amen.

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