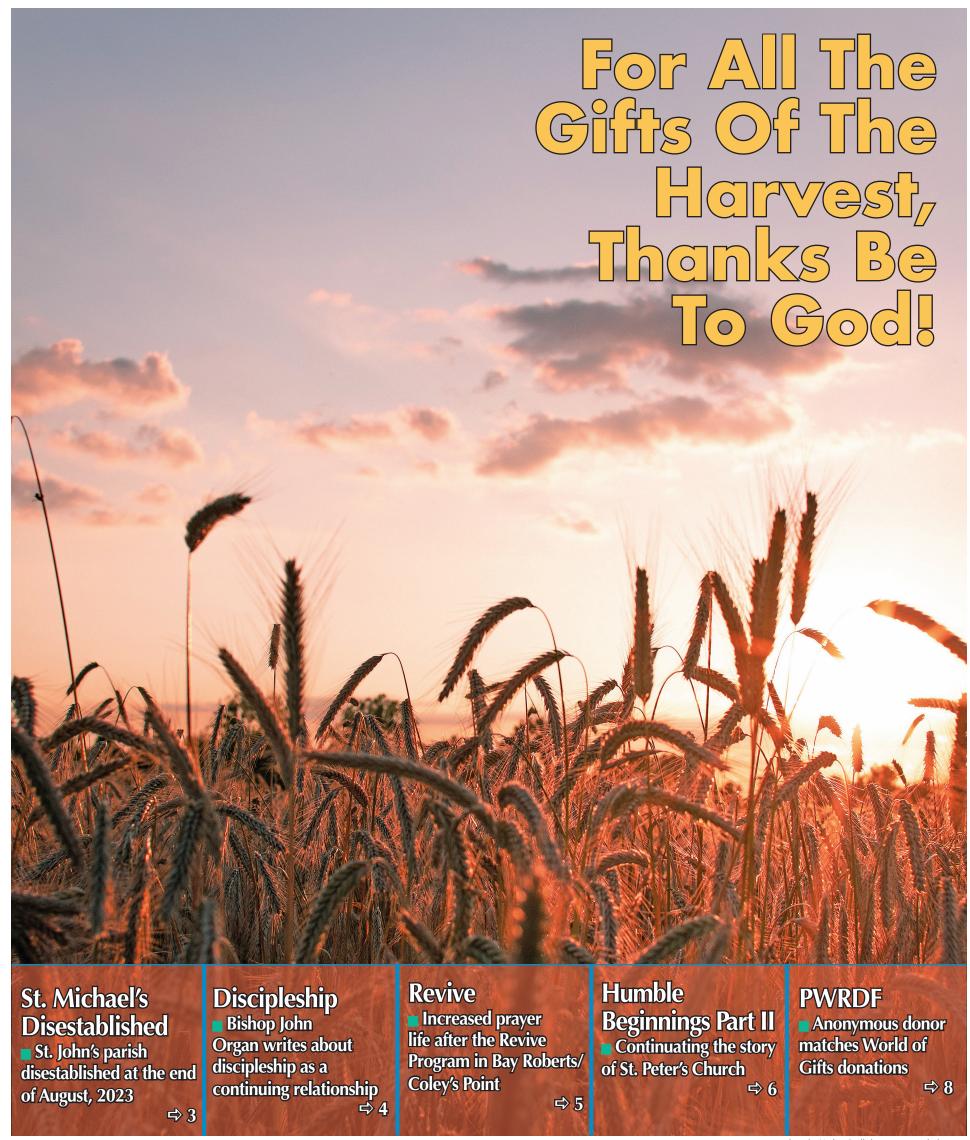
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR • A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL

NEWSPAPER FOR THE THREE ANGLICAN DIOCESES IN





ANGLICAN LIFE in Newfoundland and Labrador is the newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. A cooperative effort of the three Dioceses in Newfoundland and Labrador, it publishes ten issues each year with an independent editorial policy.

Anglican Life is a section of the Anglican

Journal

Editor:

Mrs. Emily F. Rowe 3 Carpasian Rd. St. John's, NL A1C 3T9

Email: anglicanlifeNL@gmail.com

Advertising Rates and other information may be obtained from: The Rev'd Fred Marshall 22 Church Hill St. John's, NL A1C 3Z9 Phone: (709) 727-4346

Email: fred.marshall@nljointcommittee.com

Paid Subscription Rates: Newfoundland and Labrador: \$15.00 Outside the province: \$20.00 International: \$25.00

Layout & Design by: The Editor
Printed and Mailed by:
Webnews Printing Inc.
8 High Meadow Place
North York, ON, M9L 2Z5
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# Bread of Life, Bread of Heaven

# How preparing the meals that we share is a holy thing

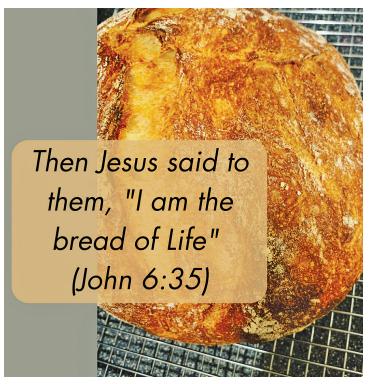
The Rev'd Amber Tremblett Columnist

My favourite food in the world is homemade bread. The homemade bread of my grandmothers', specifically. In my adulthood, I have sought to perfect their recipes. This quest has led to a passion for making bread. And as I have delved deeper into the world of bread-making, Jesus's words, "I am the bread of life," have begun to frame my baking. It is through the sharing of bread that Jesus accomplished much of his ministry. It was with bread that he identified his very body. The breaking of bread was at the heart of the earliest traditions of the church and it still sits at the centre of our faith. There is something significant about bread in our faith, a something that is not fully explainable, but has to do with the selfsacrificing love of Jesus. And it is this connection that I have been thinking a lot about.

Naturally, we talk a lot about breaking bread. But rarely do we talk about making it. Rarely do we meditate on the process of baking bread as something that is holy, that is accompanied by the presence of Christ.

When we make bread, are we not becoming acquainted with the complexities of Christ's body? Are we not caring for Christ's body in a way that is only possible in this particular act? Each time I make bread I take the temperature of the room and the water. I measure every ingredient by weight. I follow exact directions on when and how to incorporate the ingredients, on how to fold the dough on top of itself. And then I wait.

Each of these



meticulous steps reveals to me something about my relationship with our Lord. Baking bread teaches me patience. It teaches me to care. It reveals to me the forgiveness of God because even when I mess up, the final product usually still tastes good. At the end of a long day of baking bread, I still have bread whether everything went according to plan or not. And the same is true of our relationship with God. We can try our best to love with patience and kindness and grace. We will fail in a million different ways. But at the end of the day, God is still good.

We have long accepted that something sacramental happens wnen we sit down with one another and spill the contents of our souls while we fill our bellies. But doesn't this mean that there also must be something necessarily holy about preparing the food that we will eventually eat? I think of Martha and her dedication to preparing for Jesus's visit. I think of the people who prepared The Last Supper that Jesus ate



with his disciples.

Preparing food, making bread is an essential ministry in the context of community, but it is also essential for the way it draws us individually, in the moment, closer to our Lord. When we bake and cook we enter into the creativity of God. Our ability to create something beautiful out of other things is a fraction of the creative ability of God, but it nonetheless allows us to embrace the truth that we are made in his image. Our desire to create, our desire to make things that bring us joy, that nourish us, that feed us, reflects God's desire to do the same. Which is why when I take a loaf of bread out of the oven, I can end my day of baking the same way I would end any other prayer. I can say, "Amen."

### Parish of St. Michael and All Angels', St. John's, Disestablished

Article by Emily F. Rowe Photographs by E. and J. Rowe

On Sunday, August 27th, the Parish of St. Michael and All Angels' in St. John's marked a sad milestone as they took part in their final service before the parish's disestablishment on August 31st. A devoted congregation came together at the Anglican Cathedral for the Eucharist, worshiping with the Cathedral congregation as they had done throughout the summer months. Following the service, the current members of the congregation gathered in the south transept to express their deep gratitude to Fr. Jonathan Rowe and his family. They presented them with heartfelt gifts, recognizing their unwavering dedication and support during their nearly eight years as integral parts of St. Michael's.

Fr. Rowe emphasized a

vital point: the conclusion of St. Michael's does not mean that it has failed, but only that it has ended. The congregation's resolute support of the parish amidst constant upheavals, and their willingness to embrace the changes and challenges, underscore the remarkable sense of community that has thrived over the past few months. It serves as a shining example of true Christian fellowship and family. It is unfortunate that the parish had to close due to a lack of money, and that the funds from the sale of their church building were not able to be used to fund the new downtown ministry project that they had hoped for.

Additionally, the congregation expressed their appreciation to the Cathedral and its leadership for the extraordinary and healing

welcome extended to members of the St. Michael's congregation.

While the congregation of St. Michael's was gathering for their farewells in the south trancept, a baptism was taking place down at the font, and coffee hour was happening in the north trancept. Through the sadness new beginnings and old friendships could be seen and celebrated.

The closing chapter in St. Michael's journey was a drop-in coffee gathering at the Jumping Bean coffee shop on Kelsey Drive on Thursday, August 31st. This tradition was initiated in the wake of the pandemic when the parish hall was still unavailable for use. Over the last year, it had grown in popularity, drawing both parish members and friends to come together and share in this special time.



Above: Altar Guild President Bernice Stokes presenting Fr. Jonathan with a gift from the congregation



On the left: Rector's Warden, Hazel Pritchett Harris, speaks to the assembed congregation.

Below: from the last drop-in coffee at the Jumping Bean on Kelsey Drive. Included in the photograph is Fr. Jonathan Rowe (front right), and his wife and daughter (front left).



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**BY EMAIL:** 

fred.marshall@nljointcommittee.com

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# Discipleship

The Rt. Rev'd John Organ *Bishop* Western Newfoundland

Former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, in his book Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life, stated that, "what makes you a disciple is not turning up from time to time. Discipleship may literally mean 'being a student', in the strict Greek sense of the word, but it doesn't mean turning up once a week for a course (or even a sermon). It's not an intermittent state; it's a relationship that continues."

Discipleship is a relationship. It is a relationship between the follower and Jesus. It is also a relationship between the individual Christian and the Christian community, the Church. A disciple is committed to Jesus and day-by-day learning to know him better and follow him more closely. At the same time, the disciple is one who lives out their following of Jesus in community with fellow-disciples. The individual disciple spends time reading Scripture, especially the Gospels, praying to enable communion with God, making petitions for others



and creation, and in silent listening waiting to hear from God. These practices help transform the disciple into being the person God calls them to be personally. In the faith community of the Church, the disciple is further nurtured and transformed by Word, Eucharist, and the work God sets before the whole Church in service to the world. Developing a rich inner spiritual discipleship and participating with fellow-disciples in worship and work, followers of Jesus flourish individually and as a faith community.

Healthy and effective discipleship requires a relationship with God, the Holy Trinity, and with the People of God, the Church. When we look closely at Jesus' life, we see his

example of personally drawing close to God the Father, and of regularly attending the synagogue and being among the gathered people of God. It is critical to know Jesus personally and for each of us to spend time alone with him. At the same time, it is critically important to gather with fellow Christians. We need both if we are to follow Jesus well.

During the Canada Census of 2021, 21.5% of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians selfidentified as Anglican! We are the province with the highest percentage of Anglicans in all of Canada. There are more than 110,000 Anglicans in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are some 20,000 Anglicans in the Diocese of Western Newfoundland Labrador Straits! Wow! Our Lord began with just 12 disciples. Imagine all Anglicans in our province taking our rightful place in the Anglican Church and living out fully our discipleship! Imagine how much more we could glorify God and serve the

common good!

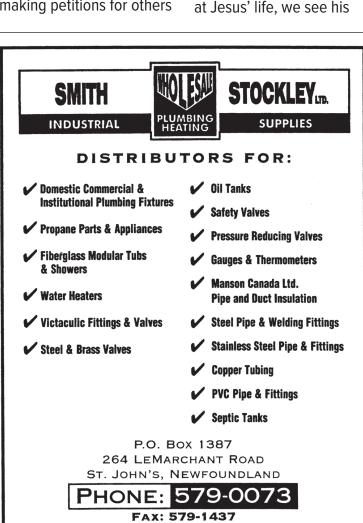
The truth is, we have a lot of Anglicans, not too few Anglicans. Discipleship calls us to be fully involved; to follow Jesus intentionally and genuinely, and to participate regularly in the worship and work of the Church, the Body of Christ. This we can all do! It is simply our deciding to take our discipleship seriously and living it out with fellow-Anglicans all around us.

Being a disciple is what it means to be an Anglican. Being a disciple is what it means to be a Christian. Jesus calls us to follow him and to take our place among fellow-disciples in the gathered family of the Church. Through baptism we are children of God and we belong to God's family. Like every family, it is important to take our place and do our part. But, we not only give, we receive! Our lives are enriched and empowered by living close to God and in fellowship with the people of God.

With 110,000 Anglicans in our province, imagine our strength! Imagine all of us following Jesus and gathering regularly

with fellow Anglicans in our communities! What an even greater love we could have for God and neighbour and creation! What an even greater service we could render to our community, province, country, world, and planet!

Discipleship is the key to a spirit-filled Christian life and to a vibrant and vital Church, locally and globally. Following Jesus, the way of love, is the source for fruitfulness among Christians and in the Church! Discipleship brings us close to Jesus and fills our hearts with his teachings and love, overflowing to those near and far! Discipleship is a continuous relationship with God in Christ, with one another, and our growing in love and compassionatecaring. We are called to be disciples and to help one another to be disciples. The outcome is spirit-filled Christians and a vivacious Church! Discipleship is at the core of of the life of the Christian and the Church. It produces in us the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit. It is continuous relationship and life-giving! Thanks be to God!





# REVIVE Program Completed in the Parish of Bay Roberts/Coley's Point

Article by Karen Morris Photograph by Canon C. Lynch

Is it time for you to REVIVE your spiritual experience? Journey in a REVIVE program with other local lay leaders of your church. The Parish of Bay Roberts/Coley's Point recently completed the ten month journey with seven congregants and our minister following the weekly program. In the program we became closer to each other, with our minister, and with God.

The program consisted of an opening and closing retreat and three sixweek modules. The modules were divided in three overall topics: Communicating with God; Engaging in Scripture; and Called for Ministry. At each session we worked through our manual, watched a guiding video and delved deeper into our spiritual life through discussion. Through reflection and self-exploration we were aiming to transform our personal ministries into

spiritual leadership that could benefit us personally and especially play a larger role in this changing church.

Upon completion of the program, we all felt more confident as spiritual leaders, and we are moving toward a more active church life as followers of Jesus Christ.

Here are the thoughts and knowledge acquired from the participants of this program:

The REVIVE program opened our eyes and minds to the many techniques for praying. This allowed each person to practice the various prayer methods and decide which prayer practice works best for the individual. We also considered our spiritual journey as Christians and what time, talents, and treasurers we can offer to be of service to God and our community in helping



Front: Canon Christine Lynch, Rector of Parish of Bay Roberts/Coley's Point. Left to right are Byron Smith, Linda Warford, Pamela Eddy, Rosalind Morgan, Barbara Crosbie, and Karen Morris. Missing from the photo is Pamela Norman.

to build up the Body of Christ.

I began the REVIVE program thinking that I already knew a great deal about prayer, but I learned so much more! I found myself looking forward to our next REVIVE session more and more as our weekly get together moved on. It was so inspiring to hear and share each other's thoughts and views in all of our discussions on such a variety of topics dealing with prayer. We learned so much about a vibrant prayer life and the various ways to pray—"different strokes for different folks" ways! Our Christian fellowship and times of camaraderie with

each other grew, as did our prayer life, individually and collectively. We certainly felt God's presence!

My prayer life has grown since completing the REVIVE program. Previously I would pray only when I was in need of prayer but now I pray daily and I have learned how to choose my own words for prayer. Many times during the "Engaging in Scripture" module I had difficulty interpreting the passage, but drew from my REVIVE family's interpretations. This program definitely enhances ones spiritually!

REVIVE is the first course of this kind I have participated in. I felt at the beginning out of place as the experience of other group participants told a fuller experience of religious educationcourses, experiences. It was an opportunity to get to know/connect with members of our congregation that I would not have known in the normal course of church attendance/participation. This program made me aware of how much knowledge, experience and commitment there is within our congregation, which is what has helped our congregation succeed during the past 3 years dealing with COVID. There were life experiences, opinions and beliefs that enriched my experience

of REVIVE as I listened to other group participants. It seemed a fitting time to participate, given the Set Sail movement within our diocese. It is very important for the volunteers with each of our churches to have spiritual fulfillment as they complete the different tasks in the church. This was an engaging, enriching program which was a valuable experience for spiritual growth. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to connect with fellow congregants as we participated in the REVIVE program and have the experience of participating in this program.

When I saw the title of the program, "REVIVE, Equipping Lay Readers to be Spiritual Leaders," my first thought was that this was not the program for me since I have never considered myself to be a leader. However, during this course I have learned that there are many ways to be a leader and to grow spiritually. It opened my eyes to the many different ways of praying and having a relationship with our God. Participating in this course also made me feel more connected to the other members of the group; one more benefit of completing this course. I would encourage anyone to take advantage of this program if the opportunity arises.



# St. Peter's (Hopewell) Upper Gullies, Part 2

### The original church building

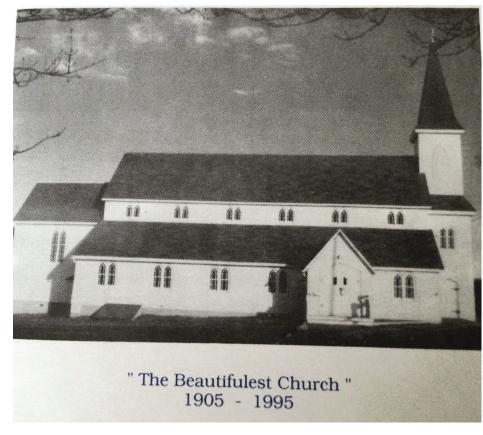
Article by William Lee

The first part of this historical review, which appeared in the June issue of Anglican Life, ended with the death of the Rev'd Benjamin Fleet and the succession of another English missionary, the Rev'd Edward Colley. This part will commence from that point in history.

According to the Newfoundland Churchman, the building which was replaced by the St. Peter's Church was an old Methodist church. Issues of the Diocesan Magazine available back to 1894, included news from a Hopewell correspondent who shares something of parish life during Rev'd Coley's time.

Concerts were staged for the building of a school, which was completed in 1895.

"Directly it was finished," the account states, "the 'Band of Hope' which had not met for three years, was reorganized". The following year the correspondent wrote that the school board resources, "are so crippled that, by existing arrangement, one teacher has to divide his time between the two schools of Upper Gullies and Seal Cove—three miles apart." The congregation raised \$30.00 toward getting a teacher for each school through a tea and entertainment, for which the Cathedral in St. John's lent its piano, which it sent on the train. "The neighboring places were well-represented," wrote the correspondent, "even our village patriarch, Mr. George Kelly (aged 94) walked the distance from



Lance Cove ....".

While the official record of talks regarding a new church building is found in minutes of the annual meeting of 1899, a report on the state of Hopewell Church from 1895 indicates that the old building was starting to cause major concerns. This report too comes from the Hopewell correspondent to the Diocesan Magazine.

"Hopewell Church: Standing on the summit of a rise, very aptly termed 'Windy Hill,' it had many years been supported upon wooden shores which had long ago become to infirm to safely bear their burden, so for the last

few years some pillars of stone have been warding off collapse. This fall, however, under the superintendence of the church warden, Mr. Alfred Andrews, a well-finished stone was built by some men of the congregation, and thankful, indeed are we that it is done. No longer now, we hope, will the lamps swing in perfect time to the threatening gales, nor will the wintry blasts find it henceforth so easy to come in upon us from beneath. Although it was a very necessary work, the approaching winter will prove to us the benefit of what has at last been accomplished".

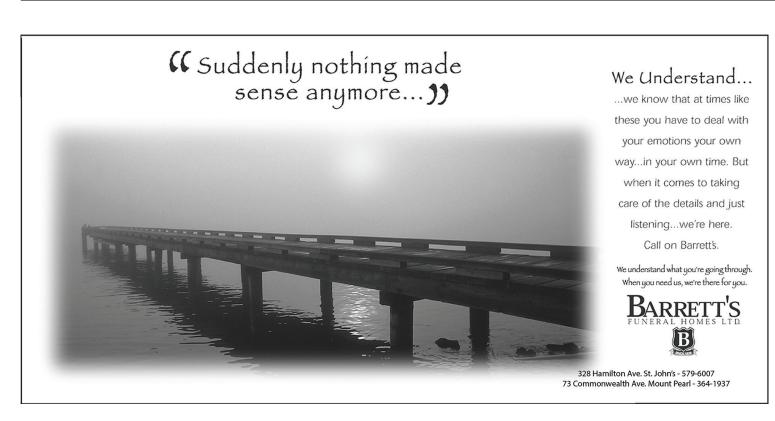
By the time Rev'd Henry Petley

succeeded Colley in 1897, the time was right for new developments. By then the mission in Topsail had split, and Hopewell was part of the new Mission of Foxtrap and Hopewell. The age and condition of the old church at Hopewell was not the only problem. In 1900 Hopwell's correspondent told The Diocesan Magazine that the old church simply wasn't big enough.

"It must be apparent to all, the account says, that the time has come when Hopwell should have a larger and more suitable building for God's worship." There followed this plea for everyone to pull their weight: "This cannot be attained otherwise than by an earnest effort and a determined pull on the part of the congregation. The urgency of the need will not permit our idly folding the hands and doing nothing, nor is it generous to look on cooly while others are grappling with the difficulty and labouring in such a laudable undertaking and for our benefit".

The next article will outline the effort made by the church community to rise to the occasion to ensure the church was completed.

This article is based on information researched, appropriately referenced and presented to the Parish by a committee of the Church for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the church in 1905.





### **From Confusion To Connection**

The Rev'd Jonathan Rowe Columnist

A young family approaches their local Anglican Church with hopes of having their baby baptised. However, what should be the start of a spiritual journey becomes puzzling. They struggle to get answers about the process, about what is expected of them, and when the baptism would even take place. The requirements and duration of preparation remain uncertain, leaving them feeling adrift.

Coming to the church, they expect a warm embrace and a sense of belonging, reminiscent of their previous ties to the parish. They anticipate a return not as newcomers, but as Prodigal Sons and Daughters welcomed back with open arms. Disappointingly, the atmosphere feels less inviting, hampering their connections with others in the pews. Their initial enthusiasm fades.

The weight of expectations further

dampens their spirits. The preparation process feels like a series of hoops to jump through. There is an expectation that they will attend education sessions that may or may not align with what they actually believe themselves. They're troubled by doubts about the journey and concerns about meeting the church's expectations.

Nevertheless, their desire for community and support endures. People have lots of expectations that they will continue to raise their child as part of the church community, but resources on how to do this and support for their own faith journeys seem hard to come by. There's a fear of judgment or exclusion that stifles their willingness to voice concerns and guestions.

At the same time, the church contends with its own frustrations during the baptismal process. Balancing the needs of existing members with those of newcomers



strains the clergy and congregation. Time and resources are limited, which leads to the challenge of not being able to provide anyone with enough attention.

Some families come for baptism but don't stay engaged with the church afterward. This lack of follow-through disappoints the congregation, who consider the investment of preparation as wasted time and effort.

Resistance to change adds to the predicament. Some members don't see any point in changing "the way we've always done things." Finding a balance between evangelism and discipleship becomes a real dilemma as the Church tries to welcome

newcomers while nurturing existing members.

These frustrations demand intentional efforts to create a positive baptismal experience. An emphasis on discipleship and spiritual growth could encourage other members of the congregation to reflect on their own baptismal covenant and identity. Community involvement in baptismal preparation can turn the process from a gatekeeping challenge into a collective endeavour.

Communication and expectation management are crucial. Families need precise information about the baptism process and preparation that is tailored to their needs. Personalization emphasises individual discernment and spiritual growth as pivotal roles. Making room for doubts and providing seeker support enriches the journey. Regular feedback and open dialogues with families and

church members helps with assessment and adaptation, leading to ongoing improvement.

At the heart of building a healthier culture around baptism is a welcoming and accessible environment. Greeters and welcome teams need to be prepared to specially address the needs of baptism-seeking families and visitors. Arranging family-oriented activities and supplying resources for families raising children in faith ensures unwavering support.

Baptism is a significant milestone for young families and seekers, but it may also be a source of frustrations. But when we acknowledge and address these concerns, we can make room for powerful spiritual experiences. By creating a supportive culture of spiritual growth, we can all help celebrate the sacrament of baptism, inviting all into the loving embrace of the Anglican Church.

# **Creation Care and Stewardship: Becoming Fully Alive**

### St. John the Evangelist, Topsail

Article by Louise Smith

On May 14, our Rev'd Jotie was installed as Canon of Creation Care and Stewardship for our diocese. He subsequently, together with three colleagues, initiated a new vision that they hope will broaden the parameters of our present Christian ministries—with emphasis on preserving the integrity of God's creation—by protecting our planet Earth.

Random House dictionary defines the term "having a vision," as having the ability to anticipate and make provision for future events. But in the context of development and growth in the Church, I believe it symbolizes foresight and sagacity in planning for the attainment of certain goals—such as our endeavour, as a church family, to halt or slow down the deterioration of our planet Earth.

Currently, our priest and his team are reaching out to the parishes, via NEW LEAF newsletter, gathering ideas and recommendations, and how they can be integrated into the ministry of the diocese—initial fortitude in the realization that the universe is created for all. We have to acknowledge that it is up to us, and indeed our duty to maintain the planet.

Theories of combined neglect in the past have been postulated and are indeed well founded. This fact, to all intents and purposes, had influenced involvement of the



Diocese to intercede.

This journey will be a challenging adventure. However, with the enthusiasm and co-operation from parish congregations, intentions should expand and thrive.

Our weaknesses may be transformed into effectiveness.

If together as parish families we commit to resurrect our respective talents and gifts from a dormant state, to be all that we can be, then this vision should surely become FULLY ALIVE.

"For we are God's fellow workers, God's field and God's building."

1 Corinthians 3:9

# Anonymous Donor Matches PWRDF World of Gifts, Up To \$110,000

### **News from PWRDF**

Article by Jacqueline Tucci

World of Gifts is PWRDF's seasonal giftgiving campaign that allows you to alleviate poverty, promote sustainability, and support communities in need in Canada and around the world.

This year, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, when you purchase any item from the World of Gifts guide, your gift will be matched, up to a total of \$110,000! (The match applies to all gifts except for support of PWRDF's equity in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which is matched up to four times by the Government of Canada.)

"We're extremely grateful to this generous long-time supporter," says Carolyn Cummins, Director of Fundraising and Supporter Relations. "We know that people love the idea of doubling their impact, so we're confident this will be really compelling to people."

That's not the only new development this year. If you're familiar with World of Gifts, you might also notice that the gift guide looks a little different, both online and in print. PWRDF has launched a brand-new online store, designed to make the user experience more seamless. The physical gift guide has also been revamped, with a more compact size that is easier to navigate and tote along with you. The quide is distributed in the October, November and December issues of Anglican Life/Anglican Journal, and additional copies can also be ordered at pwrdf@pwrdf.org.

This year's gifts cover a wide range of themes, from training citizen journalists to share stories about the environment, to





In the two above photos, we see Archdeacon Charlene Taylor and Bishop Sam Rose while on their trip to Guatemala. Photos from the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador's Facebook page.



Penina Wayua stands in front of a solar powered incubator. This product allows women to earn an income selling chicks with ADSE (Anglican Development Services Eastern) in Kenya. Photo by PWRDF



Women working with ILSA in Columbia receive training, tools, and seeds to create sustainable gardens, which increases their food security and income. Photo by PWRDF.

teaching women to raise bees to increase financial and food security. If you're looking for teamwork, this year's guide also offers many opportunities for group collaboration. Parishes can work together to purchase a well with a solar-powered pump or a hand pump, bringing clean water to drought-stricken communities in Kenya. You can also "buy the whole farm," which includes the ever-popular goats, vegetable seeds, garden tools, training, an egg

incubator and food security initiatives across eight countries.

The countries include
Guatemala and Mexico,
where your gift will support
farmers in 12 Tzeltal and
Q'eqchi´ Indigenous
communities. They will
learn about sustainable
agriculture, empowering
them to achieve food
security through the sale of
local produce.

The Rt. Rev'd Sam Rose and Archdeacon Charlene Taylor, from the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, had the opportunity to visit this new Guatemalan partner, ODIGUA. "The staff who administer these projects are passionate about the work they do," said Taylor. "We were blessed to visit a farming project that grows organic vegetables that not only feeds families but also provides income from the sale of excess produce," says Taylor. "We received the gift of hospitality from a farmer and his family who invited us to his home and served us tea and

soup."

No matter what you choose to purchase this year, you will be giving a gift that makes a world of difference in the lives of people and communities around the world.

Learn more about PWRDF's World of Gifts and view the online store at pwrdf.org/worldofgifts.



# **Sunday—The Day of Rest**

Melanie Clarke Columnist

When I was a little girl, I lived in Kelligrews. It wasn't even Conception Bay South at that time; the towns were separate entities and I had already moved into St. John's when Conception Bay South was formally amalgamated. On Sunday, everything was closed. No one worked unless they were essential workers. In my household, Sunday was a complete day of rest. No one did chores, except cooking meals. No homework was done for school, that was done on Saturday. We couldn't play cards and the day was a church day.

In the morning, we would get out of bed and get some breakfast. The next step was to wash your face and brush your teeth. Then the most exciting part for me was picking out my outfit to wear to church. It was always the best dress I had. My shoes



shined on Saturday and I had to find my whitest socks for church. We all dressed up in our best clothes and everyone piled into the car. Mom would stav home to cook lunch but everyone else went to church. We were told to be on our best behaviour in church because God was watching, and we needed to show him respect. At that time, there were three of us, all under eight years old. You would think dad had his hands full, but I don't remember us being badly behaved. We had our good clothes on, and we were in church—a place we were to listen and sit quietly.

When church was finished, we went back home and took off our good clothes to have lunch. Mom always cooked Sunday dinner which meant chicken, salt meat, all the vegetables, dressing and gravy! A feast in our opinion!

After lunch, we all got ready again to leave the house. This time, we didn't have to be dressed up. The next step in our Sunday was to go to Sunday School. At that time, it was held in our regular school and not in the church. Once again, we all piled in the car. Sunday School lasted a couple of hours and then we would return home for the evening. Supper would be the next step in our Sunday routine where everyone, including

my grandparents, would gather once again at the kitchen table to share the leftovers from lunch. After supper, we would get ready for bed and prepare for the busy week ahead. We all had after school activities and volunteering during the week to prepare for, so my parents told us it was especially important to get a good night's sleep on Sunday. Before bed we would all say our prayers, kneeling at the side of our beds, with mom or dad leading the prayers. A kiss good night would end the day and then we were off to dreamland!

By today's standard, our Sunday routine seems rather boring, but we had a family day which was focused on church, Our Lord and Saviour, and being together without everyday chores and activities. We all went places together, as a

family, ate as a family and prayed as a family. No matter how much "work" had to be done, it was never done on Sunday, and yet, we all had plenty of time to accomplish everything we needed to do in the other six days of the week.

Our lives have become so very very busy that we don't stop to appreciate our many blessings family, togetherness, down time, and faith. God has given us the ability to accomplish anything we put our minds to, but in today's world that means being busy all day every day without a break. Even God rested on the seventh day when he created the heavens and the earth. God wants us to rest as well for one day a week: hopefully, spending that day with him!

God bless you all!

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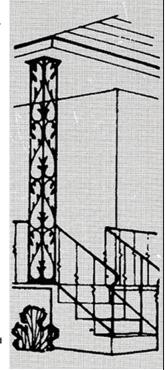
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### Who Is Jesus For You?

The Rev'd Canon Jeffrey Petten Columnist

Recently within the liturgical life of the Church, we heard proclaimed the Confession of St. Peter as found in St. Matthew's Gospel. I really like Saint Peter because of something that both he and I have in common, which I like to refer as "foot in mouth disease": open mouth and insert foot now. Make no wonder that one professor in seminary had on their door a sign which read: "A closed mouth gathers no feet." Neither Saint Peter nor myself have really learned that lesson. Throughout the gospels, we find encounters where Peter has his moments of foot in mouth disease. There are times in which he is totally out to lunch and there are times in which he is totally right. What we have before us today is a case where Peter actually gets it right.

In looking at things from the perspective of the context and the chronology of Saint Matthew's Gospel, we come to a junction where the direction of Jesus and his disciples' changes. Mind you there are a lot of those junctions but this is the junction where the direction of the ministry plan really changes from one track to another. We have been with them on the Sermon on the Mount. We have been with the disciples when they have been called to follow Jesus and we have been with them when they saw all the miracles that were done; even to include Jesus' walking on the water and the feeding of thousands. Based on all of these things, Jesus, being the good teacher that He; offers a pop quiz. Now with our modern day thinking we may be thinking that Jesus is offering such a question to rate his popularity before he makes his next move but that is not the case. In being the true teacher that Jesus is, he asks the question because he wants to know what it is that his disciples have learned about God, about their faith and about what it is that they have been called to be part of. For Jesus to ask the question of what do others say and think, that is to get a feel for what it is that he needs to do in order to fulfill the mandate given to him by the Father.

There are those who indeed think about who and what Jesus is. Even in our own time, we have those who say that he is a nice teacher and that what he says does indeed hold a lot of truth. Yet, some of these people think that Jesus is just a nice guy who lived 2000 years ago.

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But, what do we actually think about Jesus? Who is Jesus for us? Who is Jesus for you? Who is Jesus for me?

For the institutional Church, Jesus is the one who constantly pushes the boundaries of what the Church is called to do and called to be. In this instance, Jesus is the one who is calling a group of people to be different, to be seen as people who follow him because of their actions: their love of one another. It is the name in which we pray and it is the name in which we gather, and it is in him that that we live, move, and have our being; we are in him, we are NOT him.

Who is Jesus for Me? Well, that is a very interesting question: Who is Jesus for Me? To put it in the terms of social media and to declare the relationship status of Jesus and myself, the best way that I can put it is this: "It's complicated." Now, you may think to yourself,



surely as a parish priest I should have all my ducks in a row, everything neat and tidy, and faith and a relationship with Jesus is a wonderful thing. Well, faith and a relationship with Jesus is indeed a wonderful thing and it is one of the best, if not the best thing, that I have in my life. But, it is far from neat and tidy. It is mucky, muddy—good moments and bad momentsmoments in which we want to stay and moments in which I just want to run away. For me, Jesus is indeed real, and like Peter I will indeed open my mouth, and insert my foot if I have to, to talk about Jesus. Hence, when teaching confirmation class, I often wear a t-shirt which says: "Warning: I may start taking about

In his Book, *Heaven* experiences of heaven and Burpo finds out that there and she painted a portrait get goose bumps and not

only do I see Jesus but: I see the face of every child I have baptized, every couple I have married and every person I have buried. So, for me, Jesus is as real as you can get.

So, who is Jesus for you? Is he someone who has become a lovely excuse to say his name in 45 languages when you hit your baby toe off the leg of the bed? Or is he the one, you turn to in the moments when life seems hard and there is no one there? Who is Jesus for you? In our own way, we all need to come to our own understanding of who and what Jesus is for us as individuals. We all need to come to the understanding of what it is that Jesus can give to us but not only give to us, but what we can give to him and what and how we are called to share it with those who are in a desperate need of having Jesus in their lives. Before we can do anything in sharing who Jesus is, before we can say anything about him, we need to come to our own understanding, no matter who weak or strong it is, of who and what Jesus is for us. We have the key to open the door, it is we who need to turn it to see what is actually on the other side.





Jesus at any time. is for Real, Todd Burpo, recalls the conversations with his 6-year-old son, Colton, about his his description of Jesus. is a girl in Europe who had a similar experience of Jesus. The portrait is in the book. When I read the book and I came to the portrait and even now, when I look at it, I

### Reasonable and Probable Grounds to Believe

### A relationship with God

Ford Matchim Columnist

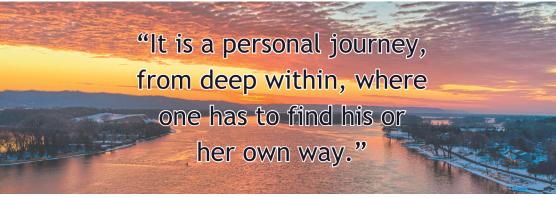
As with all relationships, first impressions are important. For those of us who have experienced "praying" whilst growing up, early impressions of God were vague, full of wonder and uncertainty. And on reaching adulthood it continued to be difficult. The build-up of any relationship involves making a connection with someone else, developing trust and caring toward one another. Compatibility, background interests and common goals and so on, all factor into whether the relationship will thrive or perish. Personal relationships can sometimes rapidly develop, soar as a hot flame, explode and disintegrate. Others can slow down to a dull crawl, become cold and even freeze up. However, in contemplating a meaningful relationship with God, the bar is placed quite high, and we really are embracing utmost complexity to an already varied and uncertain mix.

In a relationship that flames out or becomes cold, we can sometimes find ways to resolve the problems that lead to the break-down and re-establish the trust that seemingly has



become lost. However, with God perhaps the biggest obstacle is first establishing a relationship, let alone getting that relationship back. A relationship with God, as with people, tends to grow and improve gradually. It most always takes time, lots of time. One has to strive and seek to find God's awareness and presence. You certainly do not get to know God by grabbing him or her by the arm and saying, "Let's be friends." It is a personal journey, from deep within, where one has to find his or her own way.

Relationships are often difficult with those in our natural world let alone trying to hook up with someone of the supernatural. For many it's too difficult to even try. The beginning of a relationship with God has to be based on one's faith and belief, first and foremost that there is a God, and to have a growing desire to know God better. Getting to this



level is perhaps the most critical of all. The process is not so much different from the early steps that we experience in getting a relationship underway with another person. Unlike a worldly relationship though, feedback from God may range from nuance to only the slightest possibility of any communication existing at all. It is during these early periods of wondering and doubting that so many of us just tire and drift away, as opposed to hanging in there and pursuing all possible avenues of getting to know someone. When you stop and think of it, just how a relationship with God could be anything but unimaginably complex. And requiring one to be dutifully patient and to pursue, even to the end of time. As temporary quests on this planet earth, none of us has all that much time.

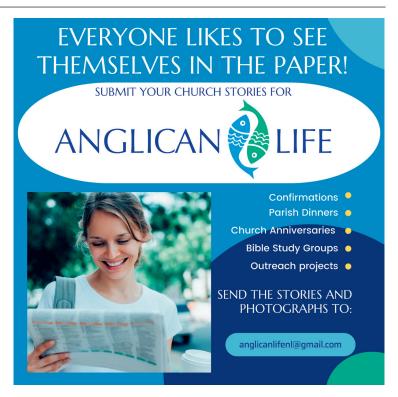
Those of us who

believe we have a relationship with God have difficulty in articulating what it really is. It is more of a sense of something going on in your life, rather than something you can talk about or explain. But you know it exists and that you are on to something fundamental, and that that something is of solid importance in your life. In our own natural world with its daily complexities and complications, it is most difficult to articulate the meaning of a relationship with another person. The very moment we speak it can misrepresent just what we really feel, and that these very feelings may be even changing as we speak.

Losing a relationship with God can have profound consequences. The loss of one's faith can shake the very centre of our core, filling us with sadness, that can be likened to a lonely bird,

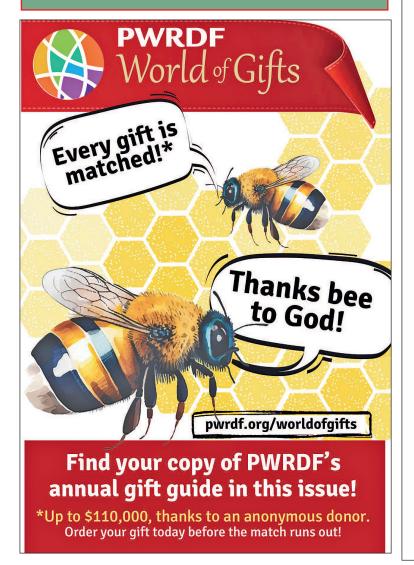
perched on a lonely rock, by a lonely sea, engulfed in darkness and drear. Sadness lingers and a melancholy nakedness just grips us that will not let go. As with the loss of anything of great personal value - we must strive to get it back, and we are duty bound to arrive at a proper place of balance. It takes time to adjust to a loss, and we need to allow ourselves lots of it. As a faith-based model in coping with spiritual doubt, many of us aim to be neither too joyous or too sad, and as long as we can keep on thinking and allow ourselves time, the black cloud of doubt and uncertainty will lift and a silver lining will begin to appear. And we will find new avenues to explore and new challenges to embrace. By hanging on, we find that life is much like Ol' Man River, "...he just keeps movin' along."





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