



Serving the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

## Christian love can be big and powerful too



Photo by Kate Oseen on Unsplash

BY JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

Children are often bigger believers that they can change the world than adults are. You might notice this if you've ever had a conversation with a 10-year-old who believes she can combat environmental pollution or a 12-year-old who wants to end world hunger.

Blythe Hill, the founder of Dressemer, a global movement to fight human trafficking, highlighted this very idea in her 2015 TEDx Talk titled 'How a Dress Can Change the World'. "As kids, we grow up believing that anything is possible and that we can change the world," noted Hill. "But years go by and somewhere along the line, we start believing that we are powerless to change anything." Hill is no stranger to this feeling. Human trafficking and slavery were topics that became a part of her life in 2005. The more she learned about them, the more her passion grew. "It started a fire inside me," shared Hill.

According to the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024, global numbers of detected trafficking victims are on the rise again after a slump during the Covid-19 pandemic, with women and children continuing to make up the majority of victims. With children, about 60% of girls continue to be trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation while some 45% of boys detected are trafficked for forced labour and another 47% are exploited for other purposes including forced criminality and forced

begging. The report also noted that organized crime groups operating in business or governance types of structures make up the main perpetrators.

### The Blythe Hill story and Dressemer in Atlantic Canada

Hill spoke candidly about how she was molested as a child, and how for years, she carried guilt, shame and questions surrounding her worth. When she became aware of just how far-reaching and devastating human trafficking is, she grappled with the familiar question you and I may ask ourselves as adults in the face of such social injustice – 'What could I possibly do?' As someone who is interested in fashion and trend analysis, she wondered how much of a difference she could make. Even so, Hill was able to find her unique role despite those initial doubts, and that is how Dressemer was born.

What began as a style challenge in 2009 – one that saw her wear a dress every day in the month of December – has now grown into a global movement in association with International Justice Mission, that raises funds to combat human trafficking and slavery. Interested fundraisers – individuals or teams – can register at [dressemer.org](http://dressemer.org) and start advocating by wearing a dress or tie for the 31 days of December and sharing these pictures on social media. You could add facts about human trafficking in your region to these social media posts. IJM is a global organization that protects people in poverty from human trafficking, modern-day slavery, violence and police abuse of power.

Reverend Canon Keirsten Wells is one such advocate right here in Atlantic Canada. Wells' first attempt at Dressemer came about 10 years ago when she decided to take up her friend and Baptist pastor Joanna Doak's invitation to join her in raising awareness for human trafficking. Over the years, the duo have had others join them in the cause.

"Joanna, who is also a music



Reverend Canon Keirsten Wells raising awareness for anti-trafficking efforts via Dressemer 2024

educator and beautiful singer, was so inspired by Dressemer and the Blythe Hill story that she wrote a musical called 'Expendable' which she toured around Atlantic Canada," shared Wells. "She was my inspiration for doing this."

For Wells, it is about getting a conversation going surrounding the very real problem of human trafficking. "[Human trafficking] is a problem no matter where you live. Halifax, N.S. is a fairly busy port for human trafficking."

"When we think about love as a community, we are more comfortable thinking about the gentle side of what it means to love other people, and it's a little bit harder to negotiate the side of love that is fearsomely protective and will come to someone's defence"  
– Reverend Canon Keirsten Wells

According to Statistics Canada, in the year 2023, 570 human trafficking incidents were reported to police. However, the actual numbers could be higher, according to a 2024 CBC report that quoted Cpl. David Lane, an investigator with the RCMP's human trafficking unit in Nova Scotia.

Statistics Canada further noted that since the year 2013, the highest average annual rates of police-reported human trafficking among provinces have typically been documented in N.S. and Ontario, with N.S. recording 6.3 incidents per 100,000 population in 2023. There were a total of five census

metropolitan areas that accounted for almost half (45%) of all police-reported incidents of human trafficking in Canada from 2013 to 2023. Halifax was one of them, along with Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and London. Yet, very few people in Atlantic Canada know about this reality.

Why aren't we talking about this more? "This is a mystery to me," shared Wells, who added that it is easy to buy into the myth that social issues like poverty and human trafficking are not happening very close to where we live. "In the course of my Dressemer campaign last year, I had one person at a Christmas party tell me that they themselves had been trafficked as a young person." For Wells, this was just another reminder as to why it's important to spread this topic among public consciousness.

Human trafficking could seem like one of those conversations that are a little taboo to talk about, shared Wells, but leading these conversations opens doors for people to ask questions and seek out actual information instead of "staying

in the realm of unknowing."

**What can the church do?**  
This seems like the inevitable question one arrives at. Do we have a lesson to learn from the children we come across who sport big dreams and even bigger aspirations to change the world? We probably do.

"I certainly don't think there's a lack of will to help in the Anglican community," said Wells.

Perhaps, the question is more about how we can help.

Referring to the commandment to love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39), Wells,

shared, "I think sometimes, when we think about love as a community, we are more comfortable thinking about the gentle side of what it means to love other people, and it's a little bit harder to negotiate the side of love that is fearsomely protective and will come to someone's defence, even though it's awkward, risky and vulnerable. I think we all want to be that, but it's difficult to be that all the time."

Wells elaborated that it is likely about looking at realities like human trafficking through a "well-cultivated lens of love, in terms of never turning a blind eye to this kind of harm [and] taking action against harm, and seeing that as a very crucial practice of our love." Wells believes that this kind of love can be very empowering, especially when one starts to dig into the numbers of human trafficking (or any other social injustice movements) and sees the organized, dangerous and threatening nature of it. "It's hard to figure out how nice church people could get in there and disrupt that, but I think there's a way," shared Wells.

For starters, we could be having these important conversations over and over again, per Wells. We could be tending to the people in our communities whilst also reaching out to those at the edges of our communities and outside of our communities, said Wells. "Our love as Christian Anglicans doesn't have any boundaries."

It is incumbent on church leaders to create opportunities for conversation and growth, and then it is up to all of us to participate, added Wells. Whether it's embracing Dressemer or something else, there's a lot that can be done within the Anglican community.

Perhaps Blythe Hill's movement and Keirsten Wells' broader definition of what it means to love can fuel a childlike desire in us this month — a conviction that there is indeed something we can do. We can, in fact, change the world.

# Pray as you can



Herbert O’Driscoll entitled “Prayer Among Friends” [anglicanprayer.org/index.php/hov/](http://anglicanprayer.org/index.php/hov/). In the video, CD2-8 “Thin Places of Prayer,” O’Driscoll says that “in such places, the walls between time and eternity, the physical and the spiritual, between earth and heaven are thin. In such places, you and I feel near to God.”

I believe Lent is a thin time. The more we keep our focus on God, the closer the distance seems.

specific kinds of prayer and where it is offered. Although there is nothing quite like gathering with your own faith community, sometimes we are led to explore prayer options not offered in our own parish at present, or not at a convenient time. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (AFP) page on the Diocesan website now has an option for parishes to inform a larger audience of in-person prayer gatherings or those on Zoom – during Lent or throughout the year.

We pray the Sanctus at our worship: *With Angels and Archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Glory be thee, O Lord most high.*

The vast community of heavenly beings, including those we love who have gone before us, joins us in singing the Sanctus, and we worship God, all together.

Whether by heavenly angels or down-to-earth angels, we can be supported and support others in our Lenten journeys.

Over the past few months, I have received enquiries about

On the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island website, under the Ministries tab, choose ‘Anglican Fellowship of Prayer’ and scroll to the tab “Prayer Gatherings” or [www.nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/anglican-fellowship-of-prayer/pages/prayer-gatherings](http://www.nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/anglican-fellowship-of-prayer/pages/prayer-gatherings). This page is still “under construction” but you will find a variety of prayer and contemplative offerings.

Through worship, parish gatherings, personal prayer and various disciplines, let us experience this thin time and prepare for resurrection.

and resurrection of Easter. And, just as Jesus endured temptation in the desert, we attempt to discipline ourselves.

Lent is often perceived as a negative season with must-dos, can’t-haves; a time to be endured. And these disciplines can be life-draining unless accompanied by a stance of deep listening to the Holy, leading to a heart softened and awakened into new life.

As we traverse this Lenten landscape, let us do so as Jesus did – in community – led by the Spirit and ministered to by angels.

The AFP Canada website has a series of videos by The Rev. Canon Thomas

Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash

BY HEATHER CARTER  
DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE  
ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

Is your parish offering a Lenten program this year? Are you looking for a gathering to nourish your faith and to engage with the ethos of this season?

Lent is a time of prayer and reflection as we prepare for Easter. It is a time of practising a variety of disciplines (fasting, repentance, prayer, study of scripture, almsgiving) that help focus our attention on Christ and his journey and prepare us for the joy



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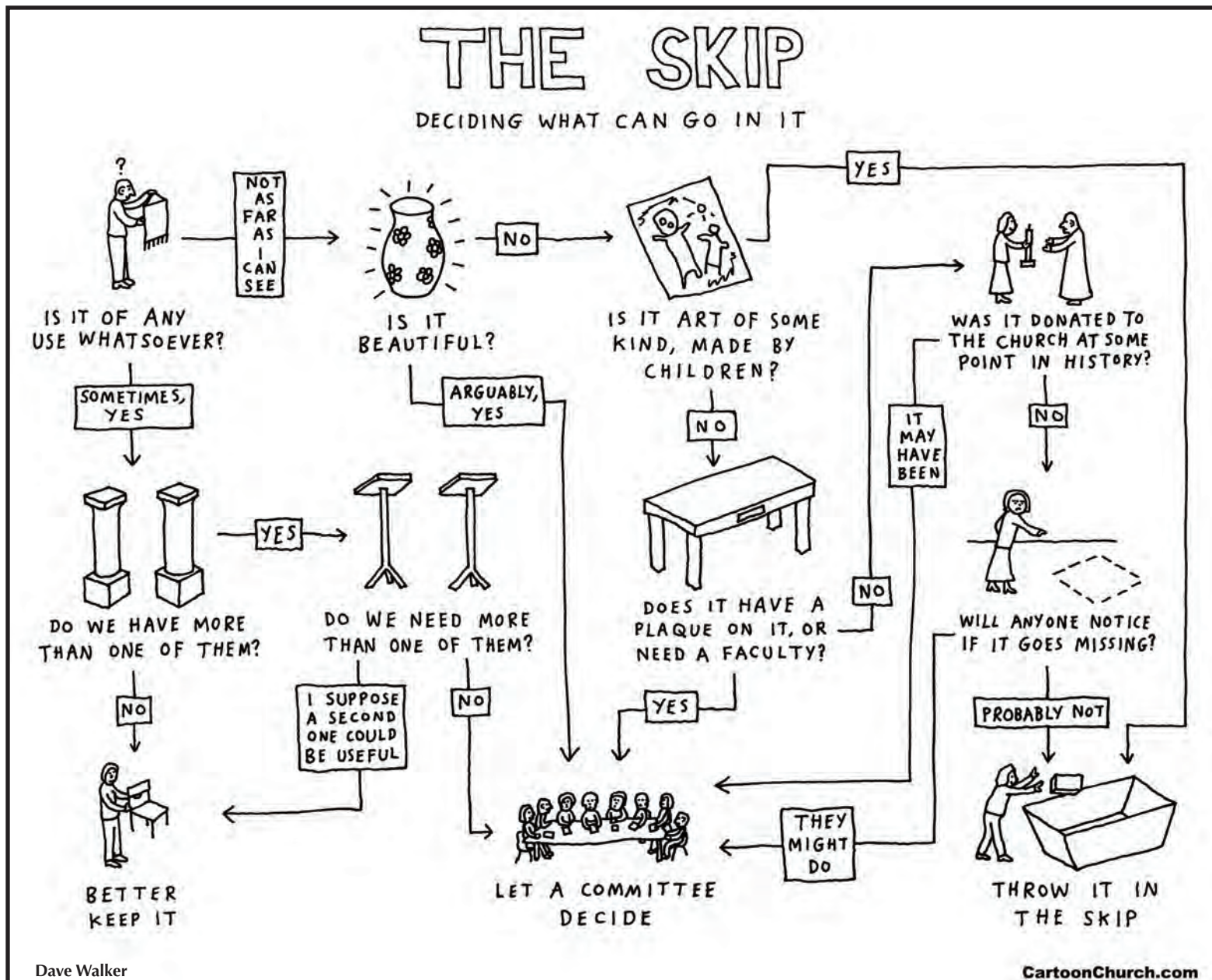
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## BISHOP'S COLUMN

# “For such a time as this”

## Summoning the courage to speak



Bishop Sandra Fyfe,  
Diocese of Nova Scotia and  
Prince Edward Island



Washington National Cathedral © Sharosh Rajasekher on Unsplash

BY BISHOP SANDRA FYFE,  
DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

I first met the Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde (pronounced Buddy) in person at The Lambeth Conference in the summer of 2022. I remember it well. A bunch of bishops were walking together into the City of Canterbury following the first few days of the pre-Lambeth retreat and before the Conference got into full swing. The path into Canterbury was narrow and before long, we found ourselves walking in pairs. Bishop Mariann turned to me as we introduced ourselves, and asked, “What’s your context?”

I had come to learn that this was a very Episcopal Church question. I’d heard it before. It was a great question, though, as it enabled us to talk about not only where we exercise ministry, but how that place and context shapes the way we carry out our ministry. I was living and serving on the east coast of Canada, and she was living and serving in Washington, D.C. There were vast differences, to be sure, yet a post-Covid world had changed the landscape for all of us. That meant we had a lot more in common than we might have originally thought.

Bishop Mariann Budde has now made headlines all over the world for a sermon she delivered at Washington National Cathedral during a Service of Prayer for the Nation on January 21. Her sermon can be easily found online, either on YouTube or on the Washington National Cathedral website, where a transcript is also available. Drawing on passages from the Book of Deuteronomy in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Qu’ran, and the Gospel of Matthew, Bishop Mariann framed her sermon on three foundations that she suggested would help her country to work towards greater unity: 1) honouring the inherent dignity of every human being, 2) honesty and 3) humility.

If you listened to her sermon, you would have heard the gentle manner in which she delivered her message. You would also have heard the moral authority and conviction in her voice. And it would be hard to argue honestly that the foundational qualities noted above are not core to every world religion and faith. They can be found in our sacred traditions and texts. In The Anglican Church of Canada, they are embedded in our baptismal promises, which are also reaffirmed during Confirmation, and in our ordination vows.

In the final two minutes of her sermon, Bishop Mariann made a direct plea for mercy to the newly inaugurated President on behalf of those in her country who, she said, “are scared now.” She went on to name some of those most marginalized: transgender children who fear for their lives, undocumented migrants who have made the United States their home who fear deportation and refugees and asylum-seekers who have fled their own homelands in search of a better life for their families who fear being turned away. This appeal to compassion and empathy was delivered genuinely and seriously without any obvious malice or condemnation. In no way did it appear to be merely an effort to score political points or to humiliate the President. It’s still hard to fathom how this final plea for mercy could even be considered a controversial position to take. And yet it was incredibly controversial – as we knew it would be as soon as we heard it – because without explicitly saying it, Bishop Mariann’s clear message exposed the cruelty and injustice of some of this new administration’s proposed policies. It was an act of incredible bravery on her part. It was prophetic. And it has clearly unleashed a firestorm.

A friend reminded me that we may be witnessing a “for such a time as this” moment. I’ve used that phrase myself on occasion, quoting from the Book of Esther in the Hebrew Scriptures. These words come at a point in time when Queen Esther’s people are facing violence, oppression and possible annihilation. They fear for their lives. Her cousin Mordecai urges her to consider her context, find her courage and use her voice in an effort to save her people. His message is compelling and clear: “And who knows whether it was not for such a time as this that you were made queen?” (Esther 4:14) If you want to know how the story ends, pick up your Bible and read on, but suffice it to say, Esther does seize this moment, even though it puts her own life at great risk.

I can’t imagine what it’s like to stand in the pulpit of the Washington National Cathedral with the President and his entourage seated in front of you, let alone on an occasion of such gravity. Nor can I imagine the courage it takes to speak the truth in a moment such as the one that lay before Bishop Mariann. But I do believe that it was for such a time as this that Mariann Budde was made Bishop. It was her context, her courage and her voice that made this plea for mercy and compassion so compelling, and yet so threatening to this new administration.

It remains to be seen what effect, if any, her plea will have on this administration. It remains to be seen whether her willingness to step up and speak out will have negative repercussions on Bishop Mariann personally (she has reportedly received death threats and has required a security detail for her own safety). However, her plea for mercy and compassion for some of the most vulnerable people in her country has already inspired tens of thousands of people to use their voices as well. It is heartening to know that she has been flooded with messages of support from around the world, including from people and parishes in our Diocese.

I invite your continued prayers for Bishop Mariann and her family, and for those who are scared now, those for whom the future seems so perilous. Please also pray for all who are in positions of authority, that they may hear and respond compassionately to God’s call for mercy. Like the title of Bishop Mariann’s newest book, ‘How We Learn to Be Brave: Decisive Moments in Life and Faith’ (now a bestseller on Amazon, by the way!), may we too summon the courage to speak and act when we find ourselves in “such a time as this.”

In Christ’s love and mercy,  
Bishop Sandra

**If you would like to write a message of support and encouragement to Bishop Mariann, please send it to:**  
**The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde**  
**Episcopal Church House-Diocese of Washington**  
**3101 Washington Avenue NW**  
**Washington, D.C. 20016**  
**U.S.A.**

# Loss, real loss



Photo by Ian Taylor on Unsplash

BY BRYAN HAGERMAN RCT  
THE THERAPIST AT LARGE ST  
PAUL'S CHURCH HALIFAX,  
OUTREACH COUNSELLOR  
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Coming to terms with loss in our lives is an existential and yet difficult reality, something we all face. It is crucial that we face it carefully in order to develop ongoing emotional wellbeing. The following are some examples of real loss in the lives of families, colleagues, neighbours, friends and strangers.

John's mother had been bedridden with a terminal medical issue for months. The seriousness of her illness was known to those closest to her. In her last days, she was lovingly cared for in a hospice, with visits and care from her family, friends, church and medical personnel. Her passing was not a surprise, nevertheless, a period of grief that had already begun would continue for some time after her death.

Mary's seven-year-old son Herbert was hit and killed by a car as he rode his bicycle home from school. The shock for Mary and her family was extreme. They would spend

years going through their grief.

Henry was called into his supervisor's office at the end of the week. He was told by HR that the company was downsizing and that his job was being eliminated.

Tom's mom had left him an heirloom that had been in the family for decades. In one of his moves, it got lost.

A forest fire in a small community destroyed dozens of homes. Hundreds of people were left with only the clothes on their backs. Many pets died.

Mike had been a soldier in Vietnam in the later '60s. On an excursion deep behind enemy lines, his troop was ambushed, leaving him as the only survivor. He suffered from complex survivor's grief and guilt.

The doctor entered Alice's room at the end of the day as he did his rounds. With her family around her, he explained that she had six weeks to live.

Murray took his life in his garage while the family slept. The complex grief therapy that followed took years to help a family come to terms with their questions and their pain.

The Brown family lost their

family dog, Harry. He had been their valued pet for 14 years.

Jesus endured his own loss, with the knowledge of his upcoming death by crucifixion. In Luke 22:44, Jesus is depicted grieving in the garden on the night of his betrayal and arrest – "And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."

Loss is something every single human faces in life. It is natural, it is unnatural, it is inescapable and it is painful. It can come as a surprise, a shock, and in some cases, it can be anticipated. Real loss is inevitable. It can affect us financially, physically, emotionally and spiritually, and it can create, for a time, a form of situational depression.

With any loss, there are stages of grief. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the grief specialist who wrote the groundbreaking book, "On Death And Dying," lists five stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. We move through these stages as we successfully process a loss. If we do not grieve properly, if we get stuck in the grieving process, our lives and relationships will be negatively affected. Life will

be put on hold. Thus, it is imperative that we grieve.

There are various and healthy ways to deal with loss but it may involve some creativity. Each form of grief and the strategy employed will be in direct response to the type and context. For example:

Hazel and her dad had been estranged for years. She had been hurt horribly by something he had done. Her children would grow up not having any relationship with their grandfather. When he died, Hazel had to come to terms with the estrangement and the grief. It was complex. With counselling, she was helped to process her pain. A difficult aspect of that grief was what the therapist called 'unfinished business'. The therapist asked her to consider what she wished she had said or had done before his death. She was asked if she needed to forgive him or herself. Hazel was guided by the grief therapist to journal, and to write a letter of forgiveness to her departed dad. This was painful but therapeutic. She took the letter to his gravesite where she read it aloud to him, then burned it as an act of emotional closure.

The antidote to loss (grief) is to feel the pain of the loss. It is

also very helpful to talk about our grief, the specific loss and how it has emotionally affected us. Those who don't grieve properly become stuck and can have deep emotional scars. To grieve takes courage. Journaling, talking about the loss, a closure experience, attending a small grief circle with others and placing mementos of a person around your home help. When there is multiple grief, it is important to isolate the individual losses and grieve each separately.

So how do we as supporters help the grieving? Certainly not the way Job's friends tried to help him. Often, the best way to help is by being present, listening, validating and with empathic words.

What is your loss? What do you grieve for? Are you grieving?

Our Lord cares.

*"Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*  
Matthew 11 (28-30)

# Jesus bids us shine ...



CYNTHIA PILICHOS FOR  
ANGLICANS POWERING  
POTENTIAL

How many of us remember the child's hymn, 'Jesus Bids Us Shine'? Those of us of a certain age who attended Sunday School in the 1950s/60s, or earlier, probably learned a number of children's hymns during the devotional period that typically preceded the actual Sunday School lesson. We may not recall the words to all the verses completely, but usually enough, along with the melody, we recall the hymn with a smile and we dare to sing it many decades later.

What had me thinking of the 'Jesus Bids Us Shine' hymn were two somewhat interconnected thoughts. First, were all the images, metaphors and similes to light, and Jesus, the Light of the World, during the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons. There is the waiting for the Light of the World, Jesus, in the season of anticipation and waiting, Advent; there is the coming of the Light of the World of the Christmas season; and there is the emphasis of us, followers of Jesus, showing forth this light in the Epiphany season, as commissioned by Jesus.

Imagery and phrases from the most recent Sunday Eucharist at the time of writing this column (many weeks before you are reading the column) dominate: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come ... the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light ... O God ... in your light, we see light." Then there are the concluding words of the Collect of that Sunday: "Transform our hearts by your Spirit/so that we show forth the light of your love/as one body in Christ. Amen." In the Prayer over the Gifts, we



are to live as children of light.

We remember that in the hymn, 'Jesus Bids Us Shine,' we are instructed to do that by shining forth with a clear, pure light, like a little candle burning in the night. We are reminded that it is all too often a world of darkness, so each of us must shine: you in your small corner, and I in mine.

The second musing that had 'Jesus Bids Us Shine' come forward for me, from memory to the forefront, was the image of you, the other, being in a small corner, with me in mine, with both of us shining our light, as Jesus has bidden us. We are to do this because there are many kinds of darkness in the world – sin, want and sorrow – with the sense that we can make a difference in our corners, with our light, shining like a candle. In some visceral way, that children's hymn carried a sense of agency for me that I only sensed as a child, but understood more clearly many years later. It may be a child's hymn, but it does carry the sense that one can make a difference: one can live as a child of light, regardless of age.

Other than the many hours of literal physical darkness of the winter season, did any of us have a sense of the figurative darkness of sin, want and sorrow noted in 'Jesus Bids Us

Shine'? Did we have a sense of the darkness of injustice, discrimination, abuse and the many other darknesses that rob one of a valued sense of self, dignity and humanity? I would wager that many of you, like me, did not.

I was recalling recently, with two granddaughters, the simpler life of my childhood, compared to theirs. Domestically, the technology of television was in its infancy, with its black-and-white images not available in every home. The internet and social media could not even have been imagined in those years, let alone anticipated. One read actual, in-your-hands books. Schoolyard games, after school and weekend play consisted of hopscotch, skipping, ball throwing, marbles, pick up softball, tag, hide 'n' seek, chase and imaginative scenarios. Bike riding may have been a feature if one was fortunate enough to have a bike! There were disputes and arguments for sure, but these were generally resolved amongst ourselves, without resorting to the adults in our lives to remedy the situation. We were immune for many years to the fact that not everyone had the experience of security and general well-being that so many of us enjoyed and took for granted in our childhood and growing up.

For many of us, it was a growing awareness of the American Civil Rights movement, starting in the mid-1950s, that opened our eyes to a different reality. It was still later, with university studies, sometimes not until the postgraduate level, that we became acutely aware that our study of history left many, many stories ignored and untold, as if that reality did

not exist. A real awakening for me was Canada's Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967, with its Report becoming a valuable resource.

I appreciate that Mary Stone shared with me in late January her Mothers' Union column for the March 2025 issue of the Diocesan Times. Just as February is the month devoted to bringing greater awareness of the reality of those of African descent, let us devote the month of March to surfacing and interrogating the reality for women, girls and those who identify as female. Mary has provided a wonderful "menu" of awareness-building, advocacy and action for the month of March when we shine a light on the continued inequities of half the world's population. I encourage every Diocesan Times reader to read Mary's words, so as "to mark, learn and inwardly digest them" (from the Book of Common Prayer) and then take action in some way, however small.

Anglicans Powering Potential wants to shine a light in the days, weeks and months ahead on the patriarchy, gender stereotyping and misogyny that is so embedded in our culture that we don't see it for what it is: an invisible barrier to the detriment of all, and, indeed, a foundation on which gender-based violence flourishes. We resist this sense, often referring to gender

stereotyping as a matter of humour, with those negatively impacted by it as not being "able to take a joke". Misogyny is no joke.

APP wants to provide opportunities to "call in" rather than "call out" this behaviour, to invite friends and colleagues in to help equip ourselves with the language and approaches that can help facilitate (rather than hinder) progress in bringing about an "equality of relationship, where we accord one another equal respect, care, dignity and concern" (Prof. Jennifer Llewellyn of the Restorative Lab, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University). We want to help one another learn how not to remain silent in the face of this so-called humour, this stereotyping; instead, we want to help one another find our voice, a helpful voice, to shine our light.

Anglicans Powering Potential want each of us to realize that we can make a difference, that we have agency, and, with increased skill and helpful language, we can be in our corners, or the wide, wide world, with our light, like a candle burning bright, to chase away the darkness, as Jesus has bidden us to do. 'Jesus Bids Us Shine' is not just a hymn for children; it is a hymn for all of us, of whatever age.

Jesus bids us shine/  
With a clear, pure light,  
Like a little candle  
burning in the night;  
In this world of darkness,  
so we must shine,  
You in your small corner/  
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine,  
then, for all around,  
Many kinds of darkness  
in the world abound;  
Sin and want and sorrow,  
so we must shine,  
You in your small corner/  
And I in mine.



Photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash

## Our Finest Gifts

Dear Diocese, Claudia was a parishioner and member of the parish council when I served in the Parish of Blandford. Claudia is an incredible gardener, passionate about growing her own veggies and about sharing her knowledge with others. Claudia is DEN's official (or as official as a group with no formal structure can be) gardening expert. Claudia has plans for sowing

seeds of inspiration that will (we pray) germinate and grow into a diocesan garden. I was so inspired by "the plan" and the experience Claudia recently had (Divine intervention?) and shared with Carole, the editor of DEN's weekly E-news, that I am compelled to share it.

*Morning Carol,  
This has been the best week  
that I have had since, well, my*

*graduation week, and finding out I made the Dean's List all in one week.*

*It was like good fireworks, the silent kind, going off every day! Somewhere around a week to 10 days ago, I was a bit down. I wanted this project so badly. It was one of those days when I felt I was beating my head against a wall. I heard from several places that there was not a grant option. Envelopes had gone up \$8 a box. Seeds were impossible to find at a decent price. Ink stamps were either expensive or their shipping was way out.*

*I grumbled to Lorn who told me to relax. I shut down my computer and took Jazz for a walk. I had a bit of a serious talk with our Lord, sort of, "Come on. I want this project. You know it is good for your planet. You know it could really help not only the environment but help the people start to bounce with purpose again. I have done all I can think of, so I give it to you. You have to help me here to get this going."*

*I went home and made those macaroons.*

*Yep, be mindful if not careful, of what you ask for.*

*I went for the mail and there was a check for \$500.00 from the*

*Municipality for my planting kits and community garden projects. OK. I have funding for that if nothing else. There is a whole bunch of good.*

*I had sent off a grant to Heritage Trust in Hubbards. They had told me it needed to go through their meeting, but it met the criteria, and they had funds (since approved) and will pay for a fog fence. There's another good thing. Still not Seed Share but projects are moving. Yippee! It was suggested that I write to "Girl's Night Out," another charity in Hubbards. I did so but as Seed Share is all church without a community partner, I didn't think it would work. By noon the same day, they wrote back saying they would be delighted to give \$100.00 to our project (being picked up on Monday).*

*The same day, Rev. Marian asked me what money I needed. I told her \$150.00 for seed and she sent a message to Lawrence to send it to the Parish.*

*The same day I got an answer back from McKenzie Seeds informing me that because I had asked to get seed at wholesale price, I should send an email to get a price. So, I sent an email. The next morning, they wrote*

*back to say they wished to donate to our project. They are sending us a case of pollinator seed as it is easier to send a case. That is 18 bags instead of the 14 I needed. I ran to Rev. Marian to inform her that I don't need DEN funds, and she told me to keep it as something else might come up. I am already thinking of a daycare in Hubbards that may plant for us. Put that on the back burner till I get the rest started. It has been an unbelievable week.*

*Thanks be,  
Claudia*

And my reply is thank you, Claudia.

If any of you, like Claudia, are passionate about caring for God's creation and God is calling you to a particular project or issue, DEN wants to be there to support and encourage you.

Many blessings,  
**THE REV. MARIAN LUCAS-JEFFERIES**  
COORDINATOR, DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT NETWORK (DEN)

# Keeping in touch in 2025

## Anglican Net News



BY LEAH MARSHALL

It's a new year and the new events are already rolling in! Retreats, Synod info sessions, parish openings, family services, youth events, free courses from the national church and of course, concerts, luncheons and all the best events from parish communities across our diocese! But have you seen them?

Luckily, in 2025 keeping

in touch with all the things happening in our diocese has never been easier. All you need is an email.

The Anglican Net News is a digital electronic newsletter that is free and accessible to everyone. It helps you stay in touch with events happening around the diocese and the Anglican Communion and see bulletins from the Synod office. It is an avenue for parishes to let other parish communities know about their

events and to find out about early bird tickets to diocesan retreats, courses and events. You can view the Bishop's schedule and weekly updated job postings. The Net News is designed to keep you informed of the latest. Looking for news that you may have missed? Check out the 'News' column on the diocesan website to see past stories too.

**Want something to be included in our next newsletter?** Content for the

Net News each week must be submitted by Tuesday 5 p.m. to office@nspeidiocese.ca. Net News publishes straight to your inbox every Wednesday. For more details on submissions, contact the office.

You can sign up at the bottom of the webpage. Just go to nspeidiocese.ca and scroll to the bottom of the page where it says, 'sign up for our newsletter' and enter your email to subscribe.

# Journey through Lent



**"I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God."**

– BAS pg. 282, Ash Wednesday liturgy

The 40 days of Lent are an opportunity to renew our life in the paschal mystery. This holy season of self-examination, study, deepened prayer, fasting and sacrificial giving, is an invitation to be shaped by the love of Christ.

Our Diocesan website has a list of resources for individuals, families and

congregations. There are a variety of worship ideas, devotionals and creative activities for Lent and Holy Week. Visit our Diocesan website and search for LENTEN RESOURCES, or find it directly at:

[www.nspeidiocese.ca/pages/lent-holy-week-easter](http://www.nspeidiocese.ca/pages/lent-holy-week-easter)

# Wishes and prayers from mothers

## Mothering Sunday 2025



Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash

March 30 is Mothering Sunday, a day most of us commemorate fondly to appreciate our mothers. But did you know that its origins were somewhat different to what we observe today? Back in the 16th century,

Mothering Sunday was not so much about mothers. It was about people making journeys (sometimes significant ones) back to their “mother” church once a year. Yes, families may have come together as a result but the focus was on people reuniting with their “mother” church. There was also the tradition on this fourth Sunday of Lent for people working in the fields of affluent farms and estates in England to enjoy a day off by visiting their mothers. Attending church on this day was a possibility too. Cut to current times, and churches find different ways to commemorate this special day. At St. Luke’s Anglican Church in Dartmouth, the Mothers’ Union helps plan and also participates in the liturgy. Cookies are distributed as well, with the help of the children in the parish. We asked the Mothers’ Union

at St. Luke’s Anglican Church in Dartmouth to share some of their hopes and prayers for this Mothering Sunday and here’s what they said.

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“My wish for Mothering Sunday is that every child has a mother or someone who fulfills that role to love and guide them through their childhood.”

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“My prayer is that in this season of technology, over-programmed children and the hours of work parents have to work to earn a living wage, families, parents and children may create some time to be together – to be outside enjoying each other’s company or be inside playing games, talking about each other’s days. Let them find

space to deepen relationships and may they experience the joy, grace and love of God in their hearts. And may they be renewed in spirit, mind and body. Amen and Amen.”

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“Loving Lord, we thank you for the gift of mothers and all the mother figures who play an integral role in our lives. May they feel your peace, hope and love. We thank you for the work of the Mothers’ Union as they carry out your work to give a voice to women who need our support and guidance. Amen.”

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“Heavenly father, Thank you for the joy of parenthood and the great privilege of protecting and nurturing the next generation of your beloved children.

Guide the parents of today to promote healthy and accepting people that will love God, themselves and their neighbours. Provide these parents with the skills to navigate our increasingly complex society and to be role models for their children. We ask this in your name. Amen.”

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“Dear God, thank you for all our members of St. Luke’s, Dartmouth. Teach us to pray and to serve you; encourage us to find a way to keep our Mothers’ Union members together. In God’s name we pray. Amen.”

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**Do you have a wish or prayer you’d like to share related to Mothering Sunday? Email us at [diocesantimes@gmail.com](mailto:diocesantimes@gmail.com)**

## Thank you Paul

Paul Sherwood submitted his resignation as editor of The Diocesan Times effective at the end of 2024. After 23 years as editor, it feels like the end of an era. As editor, Paul has done more than assemble the submitted stories and columns. He has travelled the diocese to experience the breadth and depth of the Anglican church in our area. Collecting and sharing stories goes beyond the pages of a newspaper. Paul has made memorable presentations



Paul Sherwood

at Synod, sharing pictures, stories and cover pages. Once, he even let an AI bot pull together a script as a social experiment. Paul is a people person, and he was able to form warm relationships with many. Many expressions of thanks have been offered to Paul for his work with The Diocesan Times. Much gratitude is extended to Paul for his years of dedication to this ministry. At present, a plan is being

developed to maintain publishing The Diocesan Times during this interim period. The next step will be to do a deeper analysis and assess the effectiveness of The Diocesan Times as a communication tool within the diocese. There is a desire to better understand the demographics of readers. We welcome feedback on content, interests and preferred media for receiving stories. We also want to

better understand the barriers or interests of those in our church who do not read The Diocesan Times. Such an analysis has to both examine the effectiveness of the paper as a tool to inform and enrich the people of the diocese, and determine how to get the best possible outcomes from the resources entrusted to our care. Email us with your comments: [diocesantimes@gmail.com](mailto:diocesantimes@gmail.com) We would love to hear from you.

## For All the Saints, March 2025

BY THE REV. JOHN K. MORRELL  
Excerpted from Stephen Reynolds’ “For All The Saints”

**March 21 – Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, D. 1556**  
Thomas Cranmer was a Cambridge scholar who became archbishop of Canterbury in 1533 and guided the Church of England through its first two decades of independence from the Papacy. When he assumed office, he was already committed to Protestant views, but political conditions forced him to keep his sympathies a secret. For over a decade, he studied the issues which divided not only Protestants from Catholics but

also the Protestant movement itself. His studies bore fruit when the political situation allowed him to begin serious reformation of the liturgy of the Church of England. He had a large hand in drafting The Book of Common Prayer, which was authorized in 1549. Three years later, he oversaw a second edition of this Book, which he revised in such a way as to make its Protestant doctrine unmistakable. Soon afterwards, he and his Prayer Book were overtaken by events when Queen Mary I came to the throne and restored England to communion with the Pope. Cranmer was imprisoned and endured a long, humiliating trial for heresy, at the end of which he recanted his

Protestant opinions in hopes of clemency. The Queen refused to hear his pleas, and he was burned at the stake on this day in the year 1556. As the flames licked around him, he thrust out his right hand – the hand which had signed his earlier recantations – so that it might be the first to be burned; and that was the posture in which the onlookers last saw him, as the fire engulfed his body.

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**March 31, John Donne, Priest and Poet, D. 1631**  
John Donne is numbered among the great poets of the English Renaissance. My 8th-grade class in public school had to memorize one of his poems – “Tiger, Tiger Burning

Bright”. Some of his poems also became texts for hymns. Common Praise 1998 has only one hymn #55 – “When Jesus Died to Save Us”. We remember him chiefly as someone who learned the deeper poetry of God’s grace and gave it voice both in his verse and through his ministry as priest and preacher. Born into a prominent Roman Catholic family in 1573, he passed through a dark period of riotous living and scepticism about all religion, before he conformed to the Church of England. Gifted with high spirits and a brilliant mind, he looked forward to a great career in service to the Crown. But his secret marriage to the niece of a powerful politician caused scandal, and for several

years he struggled to support his wife and growing family. In 1615, as the best hope in a bad situation, he accepted ordination as a priest of the Church of England. Seven years later, Donne became Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, where he remained until his death in 1631. He slowly learned that the priesthood was indeed his true vocation, and his original half-hearted resignation to the office was changed into a wholehearted embrace of the crucified Christ who had embraced him. This self-discovery showed in his preaching, which drew great throngs to St. Paul’s, and even after three centuries, his sermons still have the power to move the heart.

# The many faces of grief with



Photo by Sandy Millar on Unsplash

BY JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

There is an inherent quality in emotions that we sometimes miss. More often than not, we are only able to deeply understand another person's emotions if we've felt them ourselves. Take, for instance, grief. It can be so nuanced and unpredictable that we may find ourselves struggling to lend a shoulder to a loved one or friend who's going through a particularly challenging time. The loss of a beloved family member, divorce, losing a job, etc. — all of these experiences come with grief.

Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke, Professor of Pastoral Studies at the Atlantic School of Theology, became interested in the topic of grief in his early days as a parish priest. "[This] also coincided with my first unit of Clinical Pastoral Education," shared Dr. Clarke, adding, "I was absolutely stunned by the amount of grief I began to hear in the lives of the people with whom I worked." What followed was a time when Dr. Clarke had to deal with his own grief which he had repressed, and he recounted this experience as having been an "emotional explosion." This time also deepened his interest in the topic. "I ran out and did as



Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke

much reading and learning about grief as I possibly could."

Eventually, Dr. Clarke

became known as the priest who is "good with grief". He went on to co-facilitate the Bereaved Parents Support Group with Sharon Sinnott, on invitation by the IWK, for three years. This was an experience that broadened his understanding of the emotion. The group discussed things that contradicted popular grief literature and covered topics no one else was talking about. "[The parents] and their children were my greatest educators," recalled Dr. Clarke.

On Tuesday, January 21, 2025, the Diocesan GUIDING LIGHT ministry training session featured a deep dive by Dr. Clarke on the emotion of grief. Even though the topic was challenging, the purpose of the session was for participants to come away feeling a little wiser and more compassionate. In that same vein of thinking, I chatted with Dr. Clarke about what makes grief complicated or complex, common myths surrounding grief, how we can become better at empathy and kindness, and the importance of understanding and appreciating our emotional world. Below are some excerpts from the interview.

**Q: What does grief mean to you personally?**

Grief is a primary emotion; becoming familiar with it has allowed me to feel and experience moments of loss

and not minimize them. Please know [that] it is not an emotion that I want to experience, but when I do encounter it, I allow myself to feel it.

**Q: Why, in your opinion, is grief complicated and complex? And how do these two attributes of grief make them different emotional realities for someone going through grief?**

From my perspective, "complicated grief" and "complex grief" reflect two different realities. Complicated grief is associated with particular kinds of losses. For example, the death of a child or a sudden and unexpected death. Also, if the death was avoidable or violent. And finally, if there is any culpability surrounding the death. All of these make the grief more complicated. In such cases, the bereaved person has a myriad of other factors that impinge on the grief experience. In such cases, the "what if" question becomes painfully present.

Complex grief has to do with the nature of the relationship with the deceased. To use a graphic example, we encounter complex grief reactions when there is a strain or rupture in the relationship between the deceased and the people who live on. In these cases, the grieving person is wrestling with two dominant feelings, they love

## RETREAT: Pathways to Peace

Jesus says, "Come away with me. Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while." (Mark 6:31)

There are many pathways to a rewarding life of prayer. Our Diocesan RETREAT, from June 6 to June 8, features a deep dive on spiritual disciplines, especially the quieter approaches to listening prayer.

Pathways to Peace is hosted on the beautifully landscaped campus of Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S. It is a three-day oasis of quiet and prayer practices. Specially designed for laity, clergy are warmly invited too. (Clergy Retreat is June 9 – June 13 in P.E.I.)

Short talks are given by a variety of voices on how to pray and various creative and engaging approaches to

prayer. If weather permits, we will have 'Wild Worship' in a beautiful outdoor setting. There will be plenty of time for silence and walking.

Registration includes five meals (Friday dinner to Sunday breakfast), two nights' accommodations, free parking, retreat program and materials.

**EARLY REGISTRATION: \$160/ person until April 28.**

**Late Registration is \$180, closing May 20.**

**Ticket options include single, private rooms. There are also double rooms. (Those staying off-site - \$110)**

Come away to a quiet place, slow down, be open to the Spirit and listen.

For details and to register, visit our Diocesan website: [www.nspeidiocese.ca](http://www.nspeidiocese.ca)



# Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke

*“Grief has no countenance for stages, it is non-linear. It comes crashing in when people least expect it” – Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke*

“What bereaved people have shared with me is that they would prefer no words to empty words. It is important to bear witness to the loss” – Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke

There are no magic words. In the days that follow the death, the best thing that people can do is be present and say as little as possible. Just listen, even if that means listening to the silence.

Stage theory has pretty well evaporated, but I still encounter it from time to time. Denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Grief has no countenance for stages, it is non-linear. It comes crashing in when people least expect it. Such fluctuations are completely normal.

**Q: How do these myths affect the person who’s grieving and the people who want to help someone in their time of grief?**

Regarding the first myth, namely that a person can be cured, or it should affect them less as time passes, they may believe that they are failing if they have a strong grief reaction five months, five years or 20 years after the death event. The reality is that they likely encountered a memory or an event that stimulated a memory. These fall into three categories. Chronological issues, or annual events such as birthdays, Christmas, the death day, Mother’s and Father’s Day. Then there are events that occur over the straight passage of time such as retirements, graduations,

the birth of children and weddings. These can all animate a feeling of loss. Then there are the random cues, such as hearing the person’s name, visiting familiar places, smells and music. This last category is in many ways the most brutal because it can catch the person off guard. And suddenly, they think that “they haven’t gotten over the death.” But what it means is that they loved the deceased, and the loved one is missed.

As time passes, people do adjust to the emptiness and to the loss, but it will always be there. Empathy requires that we hold space for the grief and not fill our discomfort with platitudes, like, “There is a reason,” “It is all a part of God’s plan,” “They are in a better place,” “You are so strong,” and “They would not want you to suffer.” What bereaved people have shared with me is that they would prefer no words to empty words. It is important to bear witness to the loss.

Returning to the notion of stages or progression, over time people will adjust to the loss, but everyone’s path is unique. And each path needs to be honoured.

**Q: With the advent of technology and a largely individualistic culture, it is not uncommon for people to become isolated in their grief. How can we Christians**

**embrace empathy and grace, and reach out to people in a more real sense?**

Technology can be a blessing. We can reach out and offer condolences. We can attend funeral services virtually. These are all good things.

Grief has a way of isolating people. No one is truly ready for the pain that comes with the loss of a loved one, but isolation is not healthy in the long run. It is important to remain as connected to the bereaved person as possible. But they need their space too. Check in [and] see how they are, but allow them to navigate their way forward.

**Q: Can grief be a teacher? In a world where there might be an inclination to always avoid difficult emotions, what is your advice to someone going through grief right now?**

All of our emotions are good teachers, if we allow ourselves to feel. All of our decisions, all of our actions and all of our reactions emanate from the world of our emotions. As much as we privilege our “rational brain,” it is subject to our emotions. The key is to understand and appreciate our emotional world.

How many people do you know who are on anti-anxiety medications? It is an epidemic. Anxiety is very real, and it can be crippling, but there is likely

an emotional world beneath the anxiety [that is] screaming for daylight.

In my experience, most people avoid difficult emotions, we also like to put off making difficult decisions. Sadly, this only increases our collective anxiety and robs us of living life with vitality and compassion.

I have often heard it said, “That person is very emotional.” In such cases, the person is not particularly emotional, they are “highly reactive.” Highly reactive people have no idea what is going on emotionally. Unfortunately, our emotional world gets a lot of bad press. This means that a majority of people do not know how to access their own emotional world and thus they are not able to properly appreciate the emotional world of the other.

Accessing our emotional world is not about saying or doing whatever we want, it is about drawing us closer to ourselves and others. It is about investing in kindness, empathy and love, but it takes courage and a curious spirit.

the deceased and hate the deceased simultaneously.

**Q: What are some of the popular myths surrounding grief?**

There are several popular myths. The most common is that people can get over grief, or that you can be healed from grief. That is not how grief operates, this does not mean that grief is a chronically debilitating reality, but it does mean that as time passes, the bereaved person will encounter moments that will evoke a strong emotional response years after the death event.

Another important myth is that people are supposed to get back to “normal.” Often after a death, there is no normal. The physical manifestation of grief is massive, I doubt that anyone is truly ready for its full impact.

## Liturgical Colours For The Month of March

BY THE REV JOHN K. MORRELL  
Adapted from the Episcopal Church Calendar 2025  
Copyright by Ashby Publishing Company

“As God has flooded the earth and sky with colour, so the Church has sensed the symbolic use of colour in its worship. As dominating colours in nature change

with the seasons of the year, so in the Church Year, there is a structural change in the colours of the Eucharistic vestments.”

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

VIOLET – For the Season of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday March 5, 2025. This colour (sometimes purple is used) is symbolic of penitence and expectation, for the gift of healing, for Penance and Unction (administration of Holy Oil) and for Masses for the dead.

## A hymn for Ash Wednesday and Lent (Adapted from Hymnary.org)

BY THE REV JOHN K. MORRELL

### THE GLORY OF THESE FORTY DAYS

Author: Pope Gregory I; Translator: Maurice F. Bell (1906) Tune: ERHALT UNS, HERR by J.S. Bach. Found in Common Praise 1998, # 170. Which begins the section for Lent.

Gregory I., Surnamed The Great (540-604). His family was distinguished not only for its rank and social

consideration, but for its piety and good works. His father, Gordianus, said to have been the grandson of Pope Felix II. or III., was a man of senatorial rank and great wealth; whilst his mother, Silvia, and her sisters-in-law, attained the distinction of canonization. Gregory was responsible for dozens of texts in Latin, many of which later became hymns. Translator: Maurice F. Bell (1862-1947) was born in London He graduated from

Hereford College., Oxford (B.A. 1884, M.A. 1887), was ordained Deacon 1885, Priest 1886, and was the Vicar of St. Mark, Regent’s Park, London from 1904. He contributed to The English Hymnal, 1906, four translations of Latin Texts including ‘The Glory Of These Forty Days’. Tune: J.S. Bach (1685-1750) composed volumes of religious and secular music including 15 Hymn Tunes found in Common Praise 1998.



### THE SISTERS ARE COMING

To learn about the Sisterhood and prayer practices, join us at these events, open to all

#### EVENTS

- Monday March 17 - Open House 2-4, 6:30 - 8:30 at the Cathedral
- Tuesday, March 18, Panel discussion and prayer conversation, 1-4 at Christ Church, Berwick
- Wed. March 26, Tea Time meet & greet, 3-4:30, St. Mary's, Summerside, PEI
- Thurs. March 27, Tools for Prayer, 9:30-3:30, Summerside. For more info email: [retreatssjd@gmail.com](mailto:retreatssjd@gmail.com)



For Info email Rev. Frances Drolet-Smith: [fdroletsmith@gmail.com](mailto:fdroletsmith@gmail.com)

Call: 902-461-5140

# What does it mean to get more families to come to church?



Families at worship during day camp in the Parish of New Germany

BY ALLIE COLP

“How do we get families to come to church?” is easily one of the most frequent questions that I get asked in my ministry. This question comes from all sorts of places within people’s hearts. Sometimes it’s from a place of worry about the future of their beloved congregation, sometimes it’s from a desire for members of their own family to know God and be part of the life of the church and sometimes it comes from looking at the wider community and seeing how many families are seeking meaning, just to name a few.

In the introduction to each episode of ‘Story Pirates,’ which is a podcast for kids based on stories written by kids, there’s a snippet from an interview with a kid who said, “Confusion is the step before curiosity.” Often, when I’m asked about getting families to come to church, there is some confusion and bewilderment there. We have a good and meaningful thing to offer, why don’t families want it? This month, I’d like to offer a

couple more questions to build on that one, to help move out of confusion and more deeply into curiosity, and hopefully from there you can find your way into creativity and compassion.

## What would it mean for the life of your congregation to have more families involved?

There is sometimes confusion within a church community about this, even if you don’t know it. So, this is a good place to start. Get curious with yourselves and with one another about what is behind the desire to have more families involved in the life of your church. If most of your answers are about you or the church, that’s a good indication to take a step back and pray about this. If you want families to be involved for their benefit, because you want to share God’s love with them, you are in the right direction, but you should pray about that, too of course! Keep praying and ask more questions about this, and get really curious about who you are as a community and what

this might look like or mean for you.

## Who are the families in your community?

Take a look at who is in your church or parish community, but also at your broader community. Knowing who it is specifically that you want to connect with is important. Think about who you are already connected to, be intentional about getting to know them and pray for them – not with an agenda of getting them into church, with hope of building or deepening relationships. If you don’t have a starting place with families at all, you can start by reaching out to community partners who work with families. Organizations like family resource centres, for example, would absolutely be able to help you get to know who is in your neighbourhood.

## What are the needs of families in your communities?

By getting a deeper sense of who the families are in your community, you can start to get curious about what needs they are experiencing. Some

**Welcoming Families Chat**

Join us for an informal opportunity to connect with others who are finding ways to intentionally welcome families into the life of their churches!

On Zoom - The First Thursday of the month at 1pm

**Scan here to sign up!**

needs are easier to notice than others because they are tangible – like if families are struggling to put food on the table or cover rent for the month or can’t find stable and secure housing. Others are less so – many families live in isolation from their extended family and lack that support, or feel overwhelmed and anxious about the state of the world. As you start to ask these kinds of questions, it’s important to do so in a way that is respectful of families and that honours them as children of God. Community partners can help you out here too, because they are often closely involved in supporting families in various ways.

## What can you offer to those families?

Again, this isn’t about what you can offer some generic idea of families, but about the specifics of what you can offer the families in your community. If you’ve gotten curious about lots of other things before you’ve gotten to this point, you’ll be pretty well practised at it, and hopefully that will help you to be compassionate and creative about what it is that you can offer.

Throughout all of your confusion, your curiosities and your questions, remember that you aren’t alone, and your church isn’t alone. There are plenty of other communities in the same boat as you right now, and plenty of others with stories to share about things that they have tried that might inspire or encourage you. And God is with you too, offering hope, love and encouragement as you seek new ways to love your neighbours.

To help bring together people across the diocese, who are looking for or finding ways to intentionally welcome families, the Welcoming Families Task Group is hosting monthly Zoom calls as an opportunity for informal conversation about what is going on in your congregations. Wherever you are in figuring out how to intentionally welcome families, we would love to have you join us! We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 1 p.m. If you’d like the link, you can email [youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca).



Elaine Laurie, Donna Parsons and Evelyn Perry.

## Parishioners of the Year at St. Francis by the Lakes Church

On January 26, 2025, St. Francis by the Lakes Church, honoured three remarkable women who embody faith, dedication and service within our parish community. These ladies have demonstrated deep spirituality throughout their lives, serving as beacons of faith and inspiration to all who know them. Their unwavering devotion to God and their commitment to prayer and spiritual growth have touched countless lives.

Highly respected and deeply valued by everyone in the parish, they have consistently shown kindness, humility and a willingness to uplift others. Their example of Christian love and service is a true gift to our community. It is with great gratitude and admiration that we recognize this year’s Parishioners of the Year: Elaine Laurie, Donna Parsons and Evelyn Perry.

# Invitations to action



Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

BY MARY STONE

It is interesting to note the fourth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Church of Canada ...

**“to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation”**

and two of the objectives of Mothers’ Union Worldwide

- ☒ to promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- ☒ to help those whose family life has met with adversity

...carry a very similar message and, as a result, a similar call to action.

After all, isn’t that what we all want for our world? Jesus worked to challenge unjust structures, to support those whose lives had met with adversity, and to pursue peace and reconciliation.

The hard part is turning such marks and objectives into action.

Globally, in the month of March, there is a focus on women and the need for transformation in our societies, which would reinforce and strengthen gender equality.

March is Women’s History Month – both a time to confront the ongoing injustices that plague women around the world and an invitation to celebrate and rejoice in the shared humanity of women. In February 1980, Jimmy Carter issued the first

Presidential Proclamation declaring the week of March 8th as National Women’s History Week. Several years later, it grew to be Women’s History Month.

Around the world, Women’s World Day of Prayer is traditionally held on the first Friday in March. This year, it is on March 7 and members of the Cook Islands have created a beautiful service of prayer, song, stories and information. The theme for 2025, ‘I Made You Wonderful’ emphasizes that we are all under God’s watchful eye, no matter where we are and what is happening to us. We are valued and supported; we are all equal in the sight of God. And yet, we are not equal in the eyes of our fellow human beings.

International Women’s Day 2025 is observed on March 8 with the theme ‘Accelerate Action’ – action that will promote gender equality and challenge discrimination in its many forms.

I have just finished reading ‘For the Love of My Sister,’ the recounting of the family life, love, tragedy and resilience of Paula Gallant, her family and her community. Paula was murdered by her husband.

Alongside all the press that has recently focussed on the horrific incidents of IPV and GBV in our province of Nova Scotia, this book brings home the reality of the victims left behind, of those who have suffered through that violence, of those who have met with extreme adversity and whose families are left in need of stability, peace and reconciliation. And this book is about one family only; there are so many more! Lynn Gallant, author of ‘For The Love of My Sister’ would be quick to tell you that after 20

years since her sister’s murder, change in supporting victims has been slow.

### What can we do?

Check out organizations that promote and educate for gender equity; such as the

White Ribbon Campaign where men are committed to building a world free of all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Visit the International Women’s Day website. As individuals, we can all take steps in our daily lives to positively impact women’s advancement. We can call out stereotypes, challenge discrimination, question bias, celebrate women’s success and so much more. Additionally, sharing our knowledge and encouragement with others is key.

Impactful organizations and groups across the world deliver an array of effective strategies, resources and activities. Whether it’s supporting women candidates, contacting government officials, protesting for change or keeping up-to-date with gender based issues and local policies, it is up to all of us to make this world a safer place for people of all genders and backgrounds.

We Anglicans end the month

of March with Mothering Sunday on March 30, a Christian precursor to the secular Mother’s Day. From the Mothers’ Union website: Mothering Sunday is a time for us all to recognize the importance of those who have cared for and mothered us in some way during our lives. The theme for Mothering Sunday 2025 is The Gift of Peace, a theme that resonates deeply, especially in a world that is often filled with uncertainty, tension and conflict. On March 30, we will reflect on the peace that we need, the peace that mothers and caregivers bring and the peace that we, as a community, must work to nurture and share with one another.

This peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of something much greater – a deep, abiding sense of calm, security and wholeness that comes from God. It is the peace that surpasses all understanding.



Farmer Mariluz Suarez of ECLOF, Colombia

## Our name has changed. Our work stays the same.

### PWRDF is now Alongside Hope

After two years of discernment and consultation, PWRDF’s members\* have approved a new name. Alongside Hope emphasizes themes of partnership, accompaniment, community and teamwork that have always exemplified the way we work.

With its tagline – Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world – Alongside Hope honours the legacy of PWRDF as an agency of the Anglican Church of Canada, and it will carry us forward into the future.

As we walk alongside our partners and many supporters, listening and sharing with one another, we embrace and embody the hope of a truly just, healthy and peaceful world.

Scan the QR code to view a video about our new name and read our list of Frequently Asked Questions, or visit [pwrdf.org/our-new-name](http://pwrdf.org/our-new-name).

\* The PWRDF Board of Directors, Diocesan Representatives and Youth Council comprise the voting membership.

alongsidehope.org



**Alongside Hope**

Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world



**Auprès de l'espoir**

Anglicans et partenaires œuvrant pour le changement au Canada et à travers le monde

# The tree that grew into a Blessing Box

Last year, a tree appeared beside the front walk at St. Luke's Anglican Church in Annapolis Royal. This was in December of 2023. The artificial tree stood there over the Christmas season with packages of socks, hats, mitts and scarves tied to its spindly branches in plastic bags. There was a sign on the tree that read, "If you need something, please take; if you wish to donate, please feel free to add a gift to the tree."

The tree fell over time and time again but it always found a way of standing up again. The Parish thought the tree would come down after Christmas, but there was a great need for the gifts it offered so it remained up all winter. Non-perishable food, gifts of toiletries, Kleenex and more were added to the warm hats and mitts on the tree.



The Blessing Box  
Photo by Julia Ford

The branches got weaker and spindlier after every windstorm but the tree held its place on St. George Street and over the next weeks and months, over 500 hundred items found new homes.

It became obvious that a more secure structure was needed for the "Sharing Tree" as some called it. Plans were drawn up for a wooden hut and a grant was received from the Diocesan "Growth and Ministry Fund," which paid for the materials to build it. Three builders from the congregation (including a red seal carpenter) and a friend of the Parish worked on the construction. A firm base was laid, the hut was painted in the same colours as St. Luke's, handles placed on the doors and signs put on saying, "Take what you need" and "Leave what you can."

On Thanksgiving Sunday, we as a congregation paraded outside following the family service and after the new Blessing Box was officially blessed, everyone placed a gift of food inside. One of our youngest parishioners placed a large apple on the bottom shelf ... even though he had decided to sample his offering and wee teeth marks could be spotted. (It was quickly replaced by his older sister.)

Our Blessing Box stands beside the sidewalk strong and tall and offers its gifts to those who might need a helping hand. It also offers a place for many of our town citizens to share their own gifts.

It is truly a Blessing Box.

## A beautiful and unique Christmas service

St. Paul's Anglican Church Service, Port Morien, December 24, 2024

BY NORMA PEACH

December 24, 2024, 4:30 p.m. – St. Paul's Church was dressed in its finery, the congregation was in place, the Reverend Darlene Jewers said a prayer for the choir, the organist was given the nod to begin to play the organ and the unthinkable happened, the church was plunged into complete darkness.

A power outage of unknown origin took place in the community.

This was the one time I appreciated people who cannot be without their cell phones. They were instantly



The semi-dark Christmas service  
St. Paul's Anglican Church  
Service, Port Morien

turned on, some used candles were rescued from a container

long since abandoned in the vestry and quickly lit for those of us who have not embraced the cell phone age!! Some members of the congregation hurried to their cars to get small lanterns kept for winter emergencies.

The Christmas service began under the capable direction of Reverend Jewers, PIC and LLM Mary MacDonald assisting. In the soft glow of this improvised lighting, we listened to the words for the blessing of the creche, the lighting of the Christ Candle on the Advent Wreath, as well as the readings for the day. There was something very special about the reading of

the Christmas Story from the gospel of Luke.

Reverend Darlene preached her sermon with the aid of a small lantern. The Eucharist was prepared by the light of the altar candles and with the help of some members with their phone lights showing the way, members came forward to receive communion in the semi-darkness of the church.

Joined by the organist, Melissa MacNeil, the four-member choir sang a cappella the beloved Christmas Carols – 'Silent Night,' 'O Little Town of Bethlehem,' 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' and 'O Come All Ye Faithful'. We

even sang an anthem during the distribution of communion – 'A Candle is Burning'!!

As people departed, they shared their thoughts on the service, saying how much they enjoyed the peace and tranquility of the semi-dark church.

We here at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Port Morien took what could have been a very upsetting situation and made it beautiful and unique. We left the church at 6 p.m. and the power was back on at 6:45 p.m.!!

We have heard the good news: Jesus Christ is Born!



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The Most Rev'd Brian Dunn  
RC Archbishop, Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

**11 May 2025**

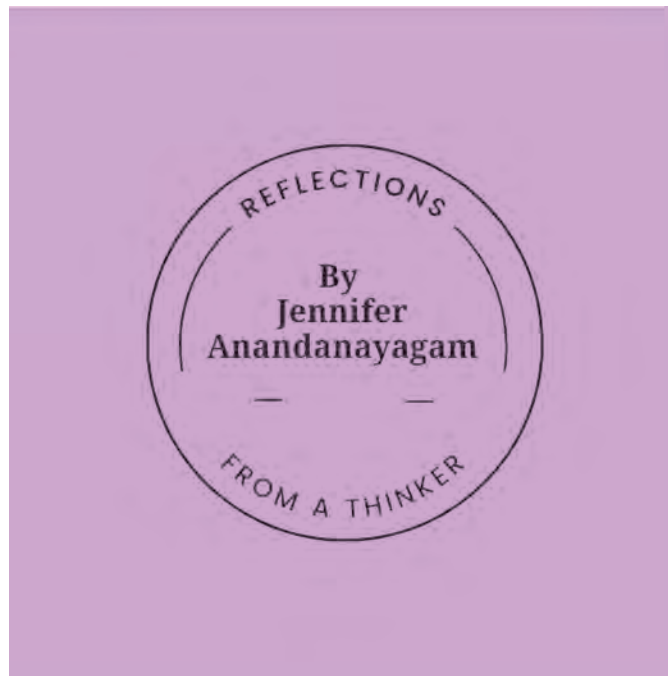
7 pm Choral Evensong  
Mr. Jonathan Eayrs  
Formerly: Associate Priest, St. Paul's Halifax

**1 June 2025**

10 am Contemporary Eucharist  
The Right Rev'd Sandra Fyfe  
Bishop, Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island



**Saint Paul's on the Grand Parade**  
[stpaulshalifax.org](http://stpaulshalifax.org)



## You're not stuck, you're just pausing



Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

that felt authentic to them are some of the popular items on the list. Learning to look at your "now" through this lens can greatly influence how you may feel when life is in pause.

Perhaps, you could cherish the interlude. Fill your time by connecting with loved ones, reaching out to long-lost friends and getting started on the lengthy list of books you have tucked away on Goodreads.

When I shared my thoughts with my twin sister, she wrote back with something she'd read about transitional time periods and why they may feel unsettling. The post she read talked about how growth (emotional and spiritual) comes with discomfort as you move into something new. What to you might feel like a pause and uncertainty might actually be God realigning you with who you were always meant to be. Using the "interruption" to reassess your values and what matters to you in life could help you pass the time more meaningfully.

Finally, there is comfort in the cliché of living every day as if it were your last. Whether you're drinking a hot cup of tea while watching the snowflakes dance in the air before they land on the soft earth or you're embracing a loved one with whom you've spent a lovely afternoon, relish the moment and live in it. Tomorrow hasn't arrived yet and yesterday has turned to mist. All you have is today.

*Jennifer Anandanayagam is a freelance journalist, editor and writer. She lives in Dartmouth, N.S. with her nurse husband and nine-year-old cockapoo. She can be reached at: [jenjustleft@gmail.com](mailto:jenjustleft@gmail.com) Website: [jenjustleft.ca](http://jenjustleft.ca)*

BY JENNIFER ANANDANAYAGAM

Ever felt like your life has come to a standstill? Perhaps you've lost a job or you're going through a breakup. Or maybe, it's a financial or health setback that's making you feel like you're stuck in time.

These are the times in our lives when no amount of praying, worrying or trying to control what is happening to us, yields any "tangible" results. In fact, the more you try to exert influence on the "events," the less at peace you feel. Safe to say, I know a thing or two about how this feels.

What I've also learned in these hiatuses is that your perspective, if shifted, can make you feel unstuck, so to speak. Let me explain.

Say, for example, you suddenly find yourself with a lot of free time because of a job loss or

some other life setback. It could start to feel like the world and everyone else in it are moving a lot faster than you, while you are inching ahead in slow motion. Yes, there's grief that needs to be dealt with when a marriage or relationship ends. Yes, you should seek the help of professional counsellors when there's sickness, or friends and family if you don't want to feel alone in your time of sadness. However, once the grief has run its course and you're left with a new reality, it might be time to skip a few chapters ahead in your storybook and look at what you might want to do more of.

Something that always puts life in perspective for me is watching YouTube videos of people in their golden years talking about the things they regret the most. Prioritizing career over relationships, not expressing their feelings and not living their lives in a way

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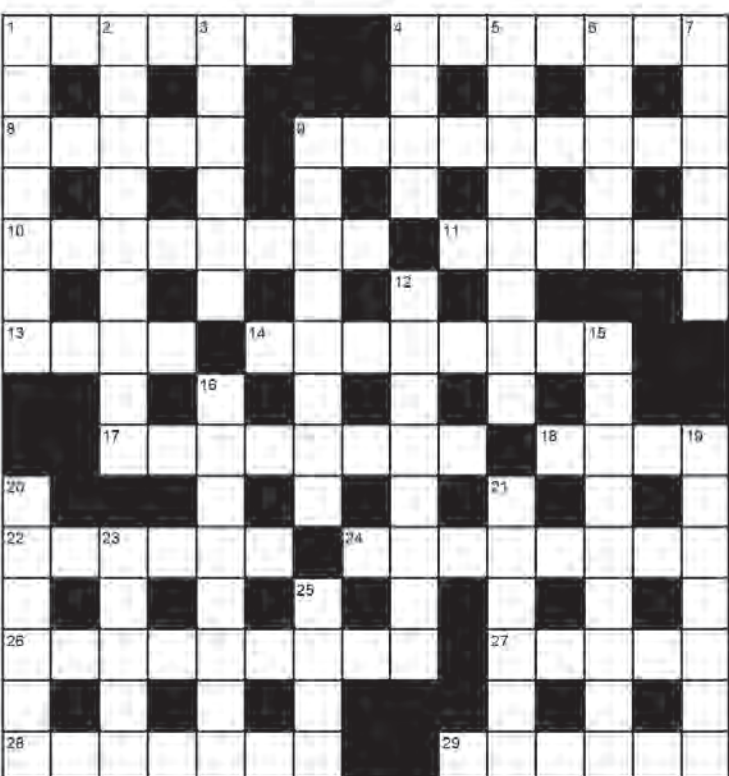
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# March Bible Crossword

by Maureen Yeats



## February Puzzle Answers

1	P	R	O	V	E	R	B	S		5	H	A	N	N	A	8			
	U		P		X		I		9	A		B		O		A			
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	S		R		L		L		G		G		E		V				
12	C	H	A	R	A	D	E		13	S	T	A	N	D	E	E			
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	A		I		A		I			N		L		N		E			
27	B	A	C	K	B	O	N	E	S		28	A	N	T	O	N			
	L		A		L		G		E		I		E		S				
29	E	C	H	O	E	S			30	S	T	A	M	P	E	D	E		

# MARCH 2025 Clues

ACROSS:

- 1- "For my \_\_\_\_\_ they gave me vinegar to drink" (Ps.69:21) dry throat (6)
- 4- "(He gave them) the name Boanerges (i.e. Sons of \_\_\_\_\_)" (Mark 3:17) loud noise (7)
- 8- Force out (5)
- 9- Buildings where people live (9)
- 10- Relative of Esther (Esther 2) (8)
- 11- One of Jacob's wives (Gen. 29:28) (6)
- 13- Jacob's other wife (Gen. 29:23) (4)
- 14- A storey of a building that is underground (8)
- 17- A small candle (8)
- 18- Church season before Easter (4)
- 22- Partial refund on a purchase (6)
- 24- People who seize power by force (8)
- 26- Southern Hemisphere country (9)
- 27- Small remote-controlled helicopter (5)
- 28- Support, bear up (7)
- 29- Large city in Switzerland (6)

DOWN:

- 1- Pertaining to heat (7)
- 2- Of much significance (9)
- 3- "I have no \_\_\_\_\_ or gold" (Acts 3:6) coin-age metal (6)
- 4- "No good \_\_\_\_\_ bears bad fruit" (Luke 6:43) plant with a trunk (4)
- 5- Modern gasoline compared to 1950's fuel (8)
- 6- A daughter of Leah (Gen. 30:21) (5)
- 7- Consequence (6)
- 9- Involving conflict or contrast (8)
- 12- Name for a healing pool in Jerusalem (John 5:2-4, KJV) (8)
- 15- As a result (9)
- 16- One-celled life forms, many of which cause diseases (8)
- 19- A single mosaic tile (7)
- 20- Smashes (6)
- 21- Four-handed card game (6)
- 23- Fundamental principle (5)
- 25- Scheme of action (4)

## Anglicans Powering Potential

Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

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



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

Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

In enhancing capacity for creative ministry, Anglicans Powering Potential are re-imagining Bonhoeffer's spike as a series of nails of varying sizes and shapes . . . to remind us that we can make a difference, that small things can have a big impact!

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# SSJD Sister to visit NSPEI



*Labyrinth walking*

BY MICHELLE BULL

“There are nuns in the Anglican Church? And monks? I had no idea!”

Canada. The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine (SSJD) is, I believe, the only order that originated in Canada. It was founded in 1884 by Mother Hannah Grier Coombe and a



*Installation of Sr. Elizabeth as Reverend Mother*

This is a pretty typical response I hear when I talk about Anglican religious orders. But yes, there are quite a few Anglican religious orders, for men and women. And they’ve been here a long time. It is true that King Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in 1536 when the Anglican Church broke away from Rome. And for some years there were no religious orders.

In the 19th century, with the revival of the church in the Oxford Movement, the need for religious orders became obvious and some women’s orders were founded as early as 1841. The first men’s order, the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), was founded in 1866 and is still active, with a branch in the U.S. Since then, religious orders have been going strong and have been contributing to the spiritual life of the church and doing a lot of work in outreach, especially nursing, teaching, helping the poor and spiritual direction.

There are several Anglican religious orders active in

group of dedicated Anglicans, the first associates. They have their motherhouse in Toronto.

So, what difference does it make to us and to the church to have religious orders in our midst? Obviously, it’s a way for men and women to pursue their own calling and deepen their own spiritual lives, but does it make any difference to the church? Yes, it does.

The heart of most monastic orders (for monks or nuns) is their worship and prayer life. This is central and it is the well-spring of all their other work. SSJD and SSJE communities have four daily worship times, Morning Prayer, Eucharist, Evening Prayer and Compline and individual prayer and study time as well. And they pray for all of us and for the church and world. It’s good to know that at times when we are slack in our prayers for one reason or another, these communities are carrying us.

In the Middle Ages, King John was oppressing the religious orders, preventing the monks from having enough

food. They went on strike and stopped praying for the King, his government and the Kingdom. It didn’t take long before public pressure made the King relent and give them adequate food. In those days, people definitely valued being prayed for!

But religious orders have always been engaged in the wider community also. Most have guest houses where people can come and stay for a retreat or quiet time of reflection. Guests are welcomed into the rhythm of prayer and may be offered spiritual direction. And many orders offer guided retreats and quiet days for guests. I’ve found this invaluable, myself. I have stayed with the SSJD community (of which I am an associate) and the SSJE community, and it is wonderful to be uplifted by the peace of prayer and true hospitality.

If people want a deeper relationship with the orders, they can become associates (men and women), oblates or companions. I have been an associate of the SSJD for over 30 years. Associates

have a rule of life, engage in daily prayer, weekly worship, annual retreats, keep in touch with the associate director about their spiritual lives and do service. I’ve found this so helpful over the years, in helping sustain and deepen my spiritual life.

Oblates have an even closer relationship, essentially living out a monastic life within the wider community. They have a rule of life which includes daily prayer and a life of service to God and the community.

SSJD Companions are women who live with the community for a year of intensive learning about our faith, learning different spiritual practices and working and living with the Sisters. They also have an online version of this program. More info is available on the website.

Besides nurturing these people, the Sisterhood reaches out into the community. They give spiritual direction, lead quiet days in churches and dioceses, provide spiritual care at the St. John’s Rehabilitation Hospital which they founded, and many other things.

Right now, a group of associates, oblates, and companions in the Diocese of N.S. and P.E.I. is preparing for a visit from Sr. Dorothy Handrigan and Shannon Epp. Sr. Dorothy has been a member of SSJD for 24 years. Before that, she was married and she has two sons and a grandson. In her work with the Sisterhood, she has been involved in the guest house, leading retreats and quiet days, doing spiritual care (she is a Spiritual Director) and being part of various outreach projects, most recently at St. James’ Cathedral in Toronto. She is also the Director of Oblates for the Sisterhood.



*Shannon and Sr. Dorothy having fun*

Shannon Epp, who is now married, spent seven years in the religious life working with people who were marginalized, incarcerated and unhoused. Then she left the order, obtained a Master of Theological Studies and now works for SSJD as their Companions and Communications Coordinator. She loves journeying alongside people in their spiritual walk.

They will be in our Diocese for two weeks during March (Lent) and will lead the Annual Clergy Retreat and an Associate Retreat on tools for prayer, but they will also be travelling around the Diocese, including P.E.I., offering information sessions and prayer workshops. See the ad in this issue of The Diocesan Times for details. If you want to learn more about who the Sisters are, what they can offer us, and tips on prayer, please come along and find out. And you can google them.

For the last 30 years, my spiritual life has been entwined with the Sisters and it has been so very good for me. They, and the SSJE Brothers, have helped me through spiritual dry times, celebrated happier times and been friends on a journey. Come, see who they are.



*SSJD sisters*

# SHINE LIKE STARS: Portraits in Faith

BY REV. CANON LISA VAUGHN

“You are God’s children ... Shine like stars across the land.” – Philippians 2:15 b,e

This month, our portraits in faith of laity faithfully serving in ministry features two people with a variety of gifts and passions. One is from the Valley area, while the other is from Dartmouth. Our profile series celebrates the committed discipleship of our leaders who are quietly living out their baptismal call and making a difference in their communities.

NAME: John A. DeCoste

PARISH NAME: Aylesford, N.S.

## HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN ACTIVE ANGLICAN/CHRISTIAN?

Since I was age eight (60 years). An active Christian for as long as I can remember.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MINISTRY?

Music, which includes choir, soloist, joint parishes’ band, hymn selection committee and acoustic jam sessions.

## WITH WHAT OTHER MINISTRIES ARE YOU ENGAGED?

Church Warden, Envelope Clerk, Licensed Lay Minister, church and joint parishes’ council (chair meetings), bell ringer and Synod Delegate.

## WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES?

I like to be involved and engaged in church activities. In many cases, I identified a need and tried to fill it. I love anything to do with music.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BIBLE STORY OR SCRIPTURE PASSAGE? WHY?

I am fond of several passages from scripture. If I had to pick one, I would probably choose the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). I like the message and I hope I identify with the aspect of reaching out and helping others.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE HYMN/CHRISTIAN SONG? WHY?

Needless to say, I have many favourites. At this point in time, if I had to pick one, it would be, ‘Come down O Love Divine’ – both music and lyrics. In some cases, I am moved by the music. In other cases, I am moved by the lyrics and the message.



Chalene Billard and John A. DeCoste

## IF YOU HAD THE TIME, MONEY AND ENERGY YOU WANTED, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? WHAT IS YOUR DREAM?

I have been an Aylesford Village Commissioner for many years, and currently chair the Village Commission. My goal is to work towards making our village the best it can be. In terms of ‘church land,’ my goal is to support our Rector and help her maintain and grow our church.

NAME: Charlene Billard

PARISH NAME: Parish of St. Peter’s, Eastern Passage and Christ Church, Cow Bay, N.S.

## HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN ACTIVE ANGLICAN/CHRISTIAN?

Although baptized as an infant and confirmed in the Anglican tradition, much of my life was not lived as an active Christian. My journey began in earnest 29 years ago, when, right out of nowhere, our 5-year-old daughter asked me if Jesus was Santa Claus’ brother. When she asked me that question, I thought, “Oh, my little girl doesn’t know who Jesus is.” Then I felt like the wind was being sucked out of me because my next thought was, “Neither do I.” That led us to find a Sunday School program in our community and the only reason we started attending St. Peter’s was because it was close to home. I really didn’t want to attend an Anglican church because I thought it would be too boring and it wouldn’t make a difference in my life. My intent was to sit in the back pew and when the kids came up from Sunday School, try

to sneak out without anyone noticing, but God had other plans as we quickly became committed to this Parish. It was through the preaching/teaching of Rev. John Ferguson (former Rector), potlucks, Alpha, Cursillo, home bible study groups, Holy Smoke music ministry, leading morning prayer services, prayer vigils, and more potlucks! Interestingly, at that time I was not only hungry to explore Christianity, but also the heritage of the Christian faith in the Anglican tradition.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MINISTRY?

Licensed Lay Minister. When I was a Eucharist Minister-in-training (in 1997), the first time I administered the cup at the altar, a thought entered my mind that I have always remembered. As I watched the first person approach the altar, I sensed that everything I experienced in my life had led me to that moment. There was a strong sense of call toward the LLM ministry. The opportunity to exercise this ministry as the officiant and preacher at my grandmother’s funeral in P.E.I. in 2007 was a ‘thin place’ experience for me, and one I will never forget.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BIBLE STORY OR SCRIPTURE PASSAGE? WHY?

Romans 8: 38-39. “One thing I know for sure. Nothing can separate us from the Creator’s love. Not death or life. Not spirit messengers or dark spirit-rulers. Nothing from the spirit world above or on the earth below. Nothing today or in the days to come. Not one thing in all creation can separate us from his great love, a love that is ours in the Chosen One, Creator Sets Free (Jesus), our Honoured Chief!” (First Nations Version). I LOVE this passage of scripture because it speaks of God’s unconditional love and that NOTHING can EVER separate humanity from God’s love.

## WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES?

They are the ones that God has put on my heart at this season of my life. At 65 years old, as a grandma and with a mother in her 80s and father-in-law being 90 years old, I tend to be more attentive in discerning what God is

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE HYMN/CHRISTIAN SONG? WHY?

Currently, my favourite is, ‘The Goodness of God’ (Bethel/Jenn Johnson). The song speaks of the goodness of God in my own life, as someone who spent much of her life running from God. The lyrics, “All my days, I’ve been held in your hands. All my life, You have been faithful. All my life, you have been so, so good, with every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God. Your goodness is running after, it’s running after me.”

The song reminds me that it is not so much about finding God, as it is about allowing ourselves to be found. Not so much about inviting Jesus into our hearts, as it is awakening to the awareness that He is already there. This song reminds me that Jesus did not show up in my life when I started going to church or became involved in various ministries. Jesus has always been in my life. It was the response to the love of God, and the acceptance, welcome, gifting, encouragement and challenge of other Christians that awakened me to that awesome mystery.

## IF YOU HAD THE TIME, MONEY AND ENERGY YOU WANTED, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? WHAT IS YOUR DREAM?

If I had all these resources, I would like to build a housing complex for folks experiencing homelessness, housing and food insecurities. Apartments above, with services on the ground level, such as a community kitchen where folks could acquire cooking skills, a service to help folks with taxes and how to access resources they need, childcare, a bookstore and a creative café, where folks could express themselves through different forms of art. Oh, and a garden to grow fresh veggies. DREAM BIG!

Shine Like Stars stories encourage, inspire and remind us to embrace our own gifts and interests. These are ordinary Christians, doing ordinary things, loving God and their neighbours to positively impact the world around them. They are a sample of the many Anglicans, committed in Christ and living out their baptism in our communities. Is there someone in your congregation that would be a fitting portrait in faith? Let us know: [missiondirector@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:missiondirector@nspeidiocese.ca)