

Connections... a Newsletter for St. James United Church

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Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.
-Psalm 84:4-5

Dear Friends in Christ,

The most famous picture of St. James is probably the pen and ink drawing of the tree which stood in front of the church for many years. That image is used on our welcome cards for visitors and is at the center of the pictures of former ministers hanging in the parlor. I know it is a treasured depiction of our church because I have seen the print hanging in more than a few homes.

Yet I never saw the tree in front of the church so the image is not what springs to mind when I think of St. James. I see the freshly painted church with color to highlight the woodwork and clocks pointing to 10:30. That is the image of St. James that I think of because that is how the church has looked for most of my time here in Antigonish. Yet I am also aware that in the years to come the church will look different than it does this day.

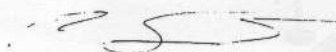
Our church has changed dramatically since the congregation was formed 205 years ago. The church building was constructed, modified, and expanded on numerous occasions. Ministers have come to preach and serve, organists have played while choirs have sung, Sunday School lessons have been taught, and milestones have been celebrated in baptisms, marriages, and funerals. Worship has taken place on Sunday mornings, committees and groups have met and events have taken place. St. James has been active for over two centuries and as we worshiped and shared the gospel the church has changed.

Anniversaries are a time to pause and look back. In Antigonish, we have a proud and rich history and have witnessed and been a part of the development of the town, county and indeed the province. Yet Anniversaries are not only a time to look back, they are also an opportunity to look forward.

For we have been through many changes as a congregation and we will continue to change as we gather as Christ's people and reach out with the gospel message. We are on a journey of faith and as we travel under the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will be transformed both as individuals and as a community of faith.

So let us this fall give thanks for the rich heritage which is ours to celebrate and let us also be open to the new things which God will do in the weeks and years to come. For the picture of St. James will change as God works with us and through us.

May God continue to bless us and our life together,



The Rev. Peter Andrew Smith

Closing Service Antigonish Highland Games

The closing Church Service during the 2009 Antigonish Highland Games was held on Sunday July 19th, at 10:30 AM with a good attendance. Piper John Hamilton led members of the Antigonish Highland Society into the Sanctuary which was decorated with tar-

tans of various Scottish Clans.

Margaret MacDonald sang a Gaelic solo and the Men's Choir presented a musical selection. Scriptures were read by Chief of the Clans, Darren Thompson, Dr. Allan Brand from the Old Scots version of the Bible and Katriona Parsons in

Gaelic. Rev. Peter Smith delivered the Sermon entitled "Where God Wants to Be". Following the service a luncheon was served in the Church Hall to a good number of people.



A Prayer by our Junior Sunday School

Dear God,

Thank-you for Animals, food, clothes, shelter, fun, family, and friends.

When we think of you we use these words: kindness, happy, abundance, awesome, powerful, good.

We ask you to give us guidance toward world peace and a cure for cancer. We thank you for all you've done.



Amen

Our Coady Welcome Service



What do you get when you gather more than one hundred people to-

gether to participate in an enthusiastic Worship Service followed by a lively Welcoming Reception? A great time; that's what you have! On Sunday, July 26th, St. James Church once again welcomed the Coady International participants to our church community. It was our pleasure to share the experience and a wonderful meal with new friends. Thanks are

expressed to Gordon and Christine Morrison for arranging the entertainment and to Harley MacCaull for agreeing to be Master of Ceremonies. The Outreach and Communications Committee and the Congregational Life and Hospitality Committee members thank everyone who contributed to the success of this event.



New's from Bonnie

I am happily settled into Kingston Pastoral charge in Kingston NS. The Valley is beautiful as the leaves begin to turn and the bountiful harvest of fruit and vegetable is amazing. I am living in a huge house but I use only part of it when I am alone. Anyone who visits gets to choose a room in the part I normally don't use. It is just so huge and comfy and a really fine place to be. Anyone travelling this way is welcome. My email remains bonniefraser@eastlink.ca so please email or call me at 242-5035. Kingston Pastoral Charge is a three point charge and we worship in Margareville first and third Sundays at 9:30; every Sunday in Kingston at 11:00; and second and fourth Sundays at 2pm in Torbrook Mines.



On September 16th we served over 300 turkey dinners with all the fixin's including apple crisp for dessert. By 5:30 we had sold out all the tickets and turned away a long line of people. This weekend we go to camp at Sherbrooke Lake Camp. It is the South shore/Valley equivalent to McLennan Camp except a bit more primitive as in no pool and they have privy's! We go to camp Friday night and come out after worship Sunday. That is where my covenanting service will be. I am finding this life the most relaxed I have had in years and I am very much enjoying meeting the new people of this part of my church life. I think of all my St. James people often.

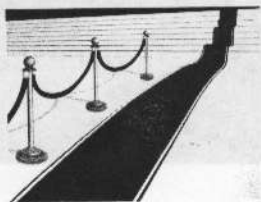
Blessings to all,

Bonnie

Second Hollywood Fun Night Sunday, Nov. 8, 7-9 pm

Echoes of laughter, challenges - "I don't think there is a bird called "A Little Alder Bird", "Oh Yes" was the reply, "I saw one in my yard". And so it goes, and the judge has the final say.

Please join us for an evening of fun, as we gather for another Hollywood night. Refreshments will be served.



News from the Meditation Group



Each fall St. James is invited to consider the meditation group that has been meeting since 1995. Inter-denominational, it's attracted individuals from all stages of life, but perhaps we haven't done enough to let you in on

its special power. Below is a selection from John Main's writings about mediation (from **Silence and Stillness in Every Season** edited by Paul Harris). If you want to learn more, ask some of our members, Beryl MacIntosh, Fran Wittgens, Marilyn Gerriets, Carol Day, Marg Brown, or Ruth Young. We're also looking for more male members to keep John Grahampole company! We meet Tuesdays at 3:45 p.m. except for the last Tuesday of the month when it's at 6:45 p.m. Check the church office for details.

"Meditation is the step away from self-centredness to God-centredness. In taking that step we find our own place in the world, where we should be, and where we truly are. All our relationships are consequently put into a right order; our relationships with one another, with the environment and all creation, our relationship with God. Then we discover, and it is vital for our own health that each of us does discover it, that we do have an essential place in God's plan. It is perhaps the most important thing for people in our society today to discover the dignity of responding to the unique gift of our own creation.

How can we set about doing this? Meditation is the discipline of doing it. It's discipline that we learn to stand back and to focus our attention, our whole being on God. We have to begin somewhere. We have to begin with ourselves and by learning to be silent within ourselves. This means simply learning to be, to be ourselves, rather than defining ourselves by what we do or what we think. As an art and a practice, meditation brings us towards this state of simple being through the still, silent repetition of the mantra."

By Dom John Main

The Men's Club

St. James United Church Men's Club is a group that is open to all men in the congregation. Meeting nights are on the last Monday of

each month at 6:00 p.m. These are supper meetings, with different men preparing the meal each month. Guest speakers are invited in to talk on various subjects and occasionally there are outings to tour different facilities and events around our town and county.

The next meeting is November 30th. New members and ideas are always welcome.

Thanks

Allan Farrell, President



Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

A "guest" when you arrive...A "friend" when you leave.

As late comers to the GWCTD wave that has hit St. James, we weren't sure what to expect when we signed up. You see, in the past we have been away every time the Guess Who's Coming to Dinner date came along. Last Sunday we were "host" participants and could feel the excitement mounting at church that morning!



We stirred the pot on the stove at 5:30 thinking about the "guest" participants who, at the same time, were gathering at church and we couldn't help but wonder who would be coming to our door. Would the eight be mostly people we see socially? Would they be church members who we have only known through worship and gathering at St. James? Would they be a combination of both? It was exciting to anticipate. We had the camera ready as we promised to take a photo of our "guests" for this issue of Connections.

The first car, with two occupants, pulled up to the door around 6:20 and was immediately followed by a second with the final six. And then the fun started! All of our "guests" were people we appreciate knowing through St. James but not one of them had ever been to our home. Within minutes there was so much chatter and story telling going on one would never guess this was quite simply a random gathering of hungry people. Dinner was served and the conversation continued to explore many different topics. Throughout the evening there was not a single dull moment.

We thoroughly enjoyed the company of our new "friends" and look forward to the next GWCTD. Congratulations to the seven organizers and many thanks for making our day. Oh, the photo....sorry, we were too busy having fun and totally forgot!

Roy and Catherine Murray



Brenda Botterill, Pamela Cunningham, and Joyce Hilling.

Excerpts from GWCTD: Joel and Jonathan Price with Sheila Davidson.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

BAPTISM CONTROVERSY - 1878

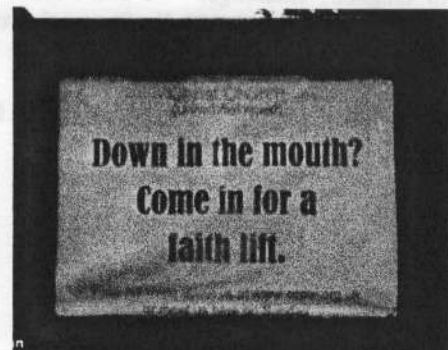
A meeting of the Session of St. James Presbyterian Church was held at the Manse on the 12th day of April, 1878 with the Moderator (Minister) Rev. Peter Goodfellow and five Elders present. The following is from the minutes of that meeting:

The session was occupied chiefly with a consideration of the relation in which some members of the congregation stand to the question of infant baptism. After mature and prayerful deliberation the Session resolved as follows. Whereas some members of the congregation when they applied for admission into fellowship with the Church have difficulty in accepting the doctrine of infant baptism and whereas the Session believing these persons to be Christians, notwithstanding their doubts, and perplexities on the subject, agreed to receive such and did receive them into the fellowship with the Church, in the hope that in a short time by patient and prayerful consideration, they would be led into entire accord with the Church in this matter.

And whereas several years have now elapsed since the aforesaid members were received into communion with the Church, and in that time only one of them has made application for baptism for his child, the children of the others still remaining unbaptized, and others in the congregation are neglecting this ordinance or delaying from year to year to present their children for baptism, encouraged thereto, the Session believes by the position the parties referred to occupy in the Church, therefore resolved that measures be taken by this Session with a view to bring the said parties into accord with the views and practices of the Presbyterian Church. That the Session endeavour to find out the opinion at present entertained by them on the matter of infant baptism, and if any of them have rejected that doctrine, such will be given to understand that they cannot continue to remain members in full communion and to those who are still undecided, the Session will allow a reasonable time with the understanding that if their children are not presented for baptism by that time, their (the parents) names will be dropped from the roll, and lastly with respect to others, the Session resolves that those parents who have young children unbaptized, persist in neglecting to have the ordinance administered to their children, the names of such parents will also be removed from the communion roll.

The Session closed with prayer.

Minutes signed by C. A. Harrington, Clerk



A Spotlight on our New Members

Beryl Publicover

I moved from Halifax to Antigonish in August 2008 to join my son, Keith, and my grandson Thabo. Keith had taken up his position as Vice President, Recruitment and Student Experience at St. Francis Xavier University a few months earlier and it was evident that his schedule would require help with Thabo and his many activities. I made the decision to retire and join them. My first priority has always been my family, five children and now the addition of grandchildren. Two of my grandchildren live in England so being a grandmother to Thabo takes on special significance on a daily basis. I spend part of each summer in London with Celeste, aged three and our newest addition, John who is just six months old.



I was involved in fund raising for health care in the Maritimes for thirty-five years starting with the Grace Maternity Hospital, the IWK and subsequently the QEII foundation. I was very fortunate to find a profession that never felt like a job. I always enjoyed my work as I travelled throughout all three provinces to meet with many wonderful people who chose to support better health care in our area. I also took an active role in my professional association, the Canadian Association of Gift Planners, which afforded me many opportunities to travel across Canada to attend conferences and board meetings. I was used to being busy and interacting with people on a daily basis and it was important for me to stay involved.

I arrived at the end of August and immediately joined the Auxiliary at St. Martha's Hospital, a decision that has provided me with the opportunity to meet people in the community as I volunteer in the coffee shop and take part in the various events carried out by the Auxiliary on behalf of the hospital.

My first priority, however, was to find a church home. I left Edgewood-Oxford United Church in Halifax after thirty-seven years of involvement in all aspects of church life. I taught Sunday school, was a member of the Church Council and served on most committees at one time or another. For obvious reasons I seemed to get involved in a number of fund raising projects. My favourite of these projects was the one we completed shortly before I moved from Halifax. Fifteen members of our youth group, along with several chaperones, travelled to El Salvador on a life altering mission trip in the summer of 2008. We had a wonderful time raising the funds needed to make the trip possible and we had six months of intense activity including concerts, bake sales, car washes to name but a few. It was a team building effort that united the entire congregation in a special way behind our young people.

I attended St. James on the first Sunday after I moved to Antigonish and found that Peter lived up to his advanced praise from the retired ministers (five in number) who were part of the congregation at Edgewood-Oxford.

Music has always been an important part of the service for me and I was thrilled to find that music at St. James is as wonderful as I was used to hearing at Edgewood-Oxford. I look forward to hearing from Sheila and the various choirs each week.

I was pleased that you had a coffee hour after church as it gave me the opportunity to introduce myself and meet members of the congregation. I am particularly grateful for the Murrays and Beryl MacIntosh who made me feel so welcome that first Sunday.

'Guess Who's Coming to Dinner' was another opportunity to meet people and I hope this event continues. I know it is a lot of work for the organizing committee but it is a wonderful way to socialize, not only for newcomers but also for the established members of St. James who do not always have the opportunity to spend time together outside of Sunday morning services.

I have discovered that the UCW is comprised of a terrific group of hard working, dedicated women who seem to have an endless supply of projects and I am happy to help in any way that I can. I am looking forward to involvement in our Capital Campaign as planning goes forward.

I have found that there is no end to the community projects here at St. James and we seem to be continually looking forward to the next event. The involvement of the students from the University, and especially those from the Coady program, is a special gift to our congregation and I have enjoyed getting to know some of them. I was pleased to be asked to share a little of my background with you and I really appreciated the opportunity to thank each and every one of you who has made me feel so welcome here at St. James.

Where Are They Now?

Diane Theuerkauf has returned from Kuwait completing an adventurous 3 year teaching experience in the middle east. On Sept 11th 2009 her daughter Breanna Gordon (husband Jason Gordon) gave birth to a healthy beautiful baby girl Gracie Gordon. The baby was born in Calgary where the Gordon family is presently residing.

Going Green

Did you know there is a container in the church hall ready to receive your used batteries? Next time you change the batteries in your camera, flashlight, or other household item instead of throwing them in your home trash container, drop them into the battery recycle bin at St. James.



Here's a small challenge to the kids....how about sharing some of your great recycling ideas or inventions with the rest of us.....there might even be a free pizza in it for you! If you have an idea you'd like to share send it through email to recycling@stjames.ca. If we get lots of ideas we'll draw a name to see who wins the prize. Send your idea in by November 30th. Have fun and thanks for sharing.

Reader's Corner:

The Book of Negroes by Lawrence Hill: Set in a time when slave-vessels ran rampant between Africa's west coast and the Americas, and the theft of human beings was common-place, this novel takes us on an epic adventure. Captured from her peaceful village of Bayo in what is now Sierra Leone, Aminata Diallo is forced into slavery. The reader sees the world through this young girl's eyes as she journeys the globe, and struggles along the path to womanhood. Award winning author Lawrence Hill skillfully dives deep into this character and bares her soul. It is an excellent work of historical fiction which is full of sorrow, romance, and exhilaration. Winner of multiple awards, The Book of Negroes is by far one of the best books I have ever had the pleasure of experiencing.

- submitted by Yema Quinn

Favourite book remembered from youth: Jillian Sarty remembers one book in particular that was a favorite of hers according to Ida, her mother. She remembers reading it often and remembers it today, 20 odd years later. The title is, **Are you there God, it's me Margaret**, by Judy Blume. Jillian doesn't remember it being particularly religious but it being about a girl in the process of growing up and has a lot of questions and asks God to help with the answers.

The Inner Landscape of Beauty: In one of his last interviews before his untimely death, John O'Donohue discusses his devotion to writing on what he called "the invisible world." A former Catholic priest of 19 years, he committed himself to meditating and pondering questions of beauty, friendship, the material and immaterial, the visible and invisible world.

[This program was originally released on February 28, 2008]
A Show of Remembrance "It's strange to be here," John O'Donohue wrote, referring to life. "The mystery never leaves you." And creating this program has been a lovely, if strange and mysterious, experience.

O'Donohue was an Irish poet and philosopher beloved for his books, including *Anam Cara* — Gaelic for "soul friend" — and for his insistence on beauty as a human calling and a defining aspect of God. I sat down with him in the fall of 2007 for a wide-ranging, *two hour conversation*. Then just a few months later, before it could go to air, he died in his sleep, suddenly, at the age of 52. And so this hour of conversation has become a remembrance of him.

We're putting his lovely, lively, exuberant voice out there in the world, as it touched so many the first time. And he would surely see this as a serendipitous continuation of his life's work — of bringing ancient Celtic wisdom to modern confusions and longings.

We ended the show with *his reasons for Remembrance* a poem of blessing he wrote for his mother upon the death of his father. A number of listeners who read and loved John O'Donohue's work have written to us as we began to post this and *with love and thanks for sharing his work*

And when your eyes
freeze behind
the gray window
and the ghost of loss gets in to you,
may a flock of colors, indigo, red, green and azure
blue come to awaken in you a meadow of delight

by John O'Donohue

Smile and the World Smiles Too

A mom was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him and she wanted to give him the feeling that he had some independence but yet know that he was safe.

So she had an idea of how to handle it. She asked a neighbor if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. She said that since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed.

The next school day, the neighbor and her little girl set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbor girl he knew. She did this for the whole week.

As the two walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do everyday all week. Finally she said to Timmy, 'Have you noticed that lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?'

Timmy nonchalantly replied, 'Yeah, I know who she is.' The little girl said, 'Well, who is she?' 'That's just Shirley Goodnest,' Timmy replied, 'and her daughter Marcy.'

'Shirley Goodnest? Who is she and why is she following us?' 'Well,' Timmy explained, 'every night my Mom makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life', so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!'

May Shirley Goodnest and Marcy be with you today and always.



Need a lift?



to pick you up.

With the colder weather upon us if you need a ride to Sunday Worship Service, please call the church office at 863-2001 and leave a message. We'll do our best to arrange for someone