

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter for St. James United Church • 197 Main Street, Antigonish, NS

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

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*(Jesus said) "Ask, and it will be given to you;
seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."*

~ Matthew 7:7 ESV

Dear Friends in Christ,

“Happy New Year!” I initially laughed when someone said that to me one Sunday after church early in September. I found the comment funny because, of course, we are still months away from the start of the new year. The truth is though that for many people the fall of the year is filled with more new things than January. School starts again, work becomes busy, we return to the programs and groups of the church, and life generally becomes filled with activity. For most people, September marks a time of new beginnings.

So this Fall I wonder if we should do what is normally reserved for January 1st and consider how we want our lives to be different. This month as our lives shift from the quieter days of summer to the activities of Autumn, why not take some time to look at new opportunities for us to improve our spiritual lives and deepen our faith? Why not look again at what is happening around us to see different ways we can serve and grow as disciples of Jesus?

With that in mind, I would invite you to look through the pages of this issue of Connections with an eye to seeing what has happened in our church as well as new things you might do in the year as it unfolds. For as we follow Jesus together in faith, let us keep our hearts open to the new things the Spirit calls us to do and be as God’s people.

May God continue to bless us as a church.

*Yours in Christ’s Service,
The Rev. Peter A Smith*



WHAT’S NEW & EXCITING?

Joanne and Lawrence MacKenzie are overjoyed to announce that their son, A. Jay MacKenzie, his wife Cheryl and their four children, William (9), Maria (7), Ula (5) and Andrew (2) have moved to Thompson, Manitoba from Matamora, New Zealand. This awesome move brings the promise of summer visits to Antigonish as well as to other parts of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. to see all their friends and relatives.

In addition to this, Joanne and Lawrence are also excited to announce that their daughter Candace has moved home and begun employment at St Martha’s Hospital.

St. James Brass Quintet

The Brass Quintet practices began early in September in preparation to play as part of a Gospel Concert in Westville at the end of the month. The plan is to start the concert with BQ playing a Canadian Brass version of “Just A Closer Walk With Thee”. The Quintet plans to play as part of the services for Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Sunday, African Heritage Sunday in February, Easter Sunday and a final Sunday near the end of May.

Social Justice Committee

Your Social Justice Committee is small in numbers but active! For the past year we've successfully utilized a "no meeting" policy and worked mostly by email. Much of our work is either educational or intermediary in nature. We strive to keep the congregation up to date on social justice issues (poverty, food security, environmental, accessibility, racial/gender/orientation equality, housing, peace promotion, etc) globally, nationally and locally. We liaise with numerous other groups (Antigonish Poverty Reduction Coalition, Srs of St Martha Social Justice Committee, Antigonish Diocese Social Justice Committee, Antigonish Emergency Fuel Fund, SAFE etc). From time to time we support other initiatives via letter writing campaigns and/or our physical presence.

Recent projects have included: supporting and collecting signatures for the Blue Dot Movement and supporting SAFE toward sponsoring a Syrian refugee family.



CHILDREN AT THE CHURCH

Other upcoming projects are: conducting the fall Adopt-A-Highway clean up; sponsoring three short films at the Antigonish International Film Festival on indigenous issues ("Building Legends", "Eskasoni" and "Tribal Canoe"); and orchestrating the annual Antigonish Gift Book campaign (wherein we facilitate people supporting local front line charities as an alternative to traditional gift giving).

Although limited in the work we can do by our numbers, we welcome new projects. We would also welcome new members! Please feel free to join us, suggest issues we should investigate and bring forward to the congregation, or just tell us what is on your mind. Committee members are: Michèle Ashby, Anne Camozzi, Barbara De-Marsh, Hemlata (Sarita) Ghore, Hope Graham, Judith Jowett, Krista Lauff, Muriel Kennedy and Rev Peter Smith.

New members only require a passion for social justice issues.

*"Peace is the fruit of love,
a love that is also justice.
But to grow in love requires
work – hard work.
And it can bring pain
because it implies loss –
loss of the certitudes, comforts,
and hurts that shelter
and define us."*

Jean Vanier



Getting to Know Our Friends



It's Sunday morning. The church bells are calling out to the community as worshippers fill the pews. The folks from L'Arche are in their preferred row – up front and as close as possible to the music!

L'Arche is an international organization made up of communities of homes shared by people living with and without developmental disabilities. L'Arche, like the United Church of Canada, recognizes the intrinsic value of every individual and seeks to build a community of belonging. To that end, L'Arche operates homes that mirror a family style living arrangement – where responsibilities and decision-making is shared among all household members.

Although not a religiously affiliated organization, L'Arche encourages faith-based community activity. You can find L'Arche members in many centres of worship in town every Sunday. Here at St James we are always happy to welcome Matthew Wright, Elizabeth Jean Boucher, and Heather McKinnon.

Matthew's smiling face is a fixture of the choir loft. His enthusiasm lights up the congregation and livens the spirits of the choir members. He was baptized at St James, attended Sunday school, and has maintained a deep connection to the church. He volunteers in the kitchen, keeping things spic and span. Together with his family, we look forward to celebrating his 40th birthday

on May 7, 2016.

Elizabeth is probably Christine Morrison's biggest fan. Sometimes she is so moved by the Sheila's playing of the piano that she can't help but dance! Community participation is important to her, which she shows through her baking for fundraisers and her attendance at the Spring and Christmas concerts. Where there is music – Elizabeth is there with bells on!

Heather has been a member of the church for many years. She enjoys the atmosphere of the church, and listening to the readings. She gives tithes every week, and has even helped with the collection of offerings. She looks forward to participating more. She and Elizabeth are both eager for a chance to ring the church bell to call worshippers to service.

In Antigonish, we are fortunate to be a part of a vibrant L'Arche community of five houses, an apartment, as well as day programs and summer camps. There are over fifty people involved in the arts program at The Studio alone! The three folks who regularly attend our church are only a small representation of the diversity in L'Arche. If you would like volunteer, or know more, please contact Joan Gilfoxy at the L'Arche Antigonish office at humanresources@archeantigonish.ca or call 902-863-5000.

Sarah Claudette Armstrong



2015

INTERNATIONAL POTLUCKS

5:30 pm at St. James Hall

- Sunday Sept. 27th

(Mayor Town Councillors hosting our season opener)

- Sunday Nov. 29th

The Antigonish International Potluck Group is excited about an upcoming community partnership with the AIFF (Antigonish International Film Festival). Our group will serve a six-course Asian-themed meal for the Closing Community Dinner for the AIFF on Sat., Oct. 24th.

This is not a potluck event. Instead it highlights the excellent culinary talents of some of our local international residents who have for the last six months been part of a multicultural cooking group. All interested in this event can go to the AIFF web site to see the menu.

The venue for this dinner is our own St. James Hall, with many of the volunteers drawn from our own church members. It will truly be a community event. Follow the Casket for more information or go to Jeff Parker at Lyghtesome Gallery for tickets.

Another bit of news is that our potluck group is now known as Cultural Connections Antigonish! We decided we are more than potlucks due to our recent involvement with the SAFE (Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace) group and the arts council.

Anyone who is interested in helping with these events please contact Fran at: 902- 863-3546.



A Visit with Rev. Kate

While visiting their grandson in London, Ontario in July, Mavis and Bob Murray were delighted to visit Rev. Kate Crawford whom some of you would remember from the time she was with us twenty years ago. At that time Kate was a member of the congregation when Rev. Glenn Ashford resigned due to health reasons. It was in 1995 when Kate Galea was appointed as lay supply for the congregation. She had completed all the necessary courses in theology but had not proceeded towards ordination. She remained as Lay Supply until 1996 when Rev. Keith Hagerman began his ministry among us. It was that year that she became an inquirer for ordained ministry and a Discernment Committee was formed at St. James. In 1998 she was recommended to Pictou Presbytery to be received as a candidate for ordained ministry and this was endorsed by Presbytery. During our 200th anniversary year in 2004 we welcomed Rev. Kate back as our anniversary preacher.

While enjoying coffee in Kate's garden we met her eldest daughter Martha who is studying at McGill University. Her other daughter Norah is a student in London but was not at home that day.

Kate told us that she looks upon St. James as her home church and has so many fond memories of her time spent with us. We were amazed that after a twenty year absence she remembered so many people by name and inquired about them.

The Rev. Dr. Kate Crawford is now serving at Huron Shores United Church in Grand Bend (on Lake Huron) since February, having previously been at First St. Andrews United in London where she still has her home.



In 1979 my home church in Kingston, Ontario, sponsored a refugee family from Vietnam. As a young girl, I had no understanding of what this family had endured or what it meant to them to arrive in a new country, whose language they did not speak. What I did understand was the friendship we had with the Tran family over the following years and their contributions to our church and our community. The Syrian crisis has conjured up memories for many of those who worked to bring thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laos refugees to Canada at that time. Today it is impossible to ignore the atrocities faced by the Syrian people. We have seen shocking images and heard unimaginable numbers. And now we are being called to act, as Christians, as neighbours, as compassionate human beings.

In March of 2011 protests erupted in Syria, quickly leading to a civil war that has left thousands dead and approximately 11 million, nearly half of Syria's citizens, displaced from their homes. The images have been shocking, the numbers unimaginable and the prospects grim. And so, in late spring a group from the Antigonish community came together to form SAFE—Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace. SAFE was formed with the purpose of sponsoring a Syrian refugee family displaced from their home by war to resettle in the Antigonish area. We need to raise \$27,000 to allow us to begin the process of identifying and contacting an eligible Syrian family that is living in a refugee camp outside of Syria. The Antigonish community has proven to be open hearted and generous and SAFE is now at the stage of identifying a family to be welcomed into our community. It may be a matter of just a few months before the family arrives.

SAFE continues to raise money needed to support the family once they arrive in Antigonish. The family will be guaranteed financial and

settlement support for their first year after arriving. As a sponsoring group we will support the family in all aspects of settling into life in our community. We will secure housing, access health care, provide help in finding employment, support children as they adjust to school, and help with English language training. SAFE continues to expand, with new members who are interested in participating in welcoming a family to our community and supporting them while they settle into life in Antigonish. As a member of the Antigonish community you are invited to make a financial donation to SAFE or to lend your support by volunteering.

Since the crisis began in Syria, the United Church has been contributing to relief efforts and sponsoring refugees. In September, the Moderator, The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell, issued a church-wide appeal, calling on members of the United Church to act. "We are called at this particular moment in time to witness in a concrete way to our Christian faith in response to the needs of millions of desperate people seeking refuge and compassion." (United Church webpage, September 11, 2015). As a member of the United Church you are asked to support the efforts being made by donating, by supporting United Church communities sponsoring refugees, and by urging the government to expand its resettlement plan and to expedite the processing of refugees so that they can settle in Canada sooner.

These are some ways you can help:

Support a refugee family coming to Antigonish by donating to SAFE by e-transfer through online banking to safamiliesembrace@gmail.com or write a cheque to SAFE, Suite 204, 219 Main St., Antigonish, NS, B2G 2C1. (tax receipts for donations \$50 or over). Volunteer with SAFE on the Fundraising, Communications or Settlement Committees. Speak to Bronwen Cooke, phone me at 867-3617 or e-mail me at bronwen4@hotmail.com

Donate to the United Church's Syria Appeal to provide food, shelter, medical care, clothing and other necessities for millions of displaced Syrians (please see the United Church website for instructions regarding the government matching program).

Urge the federal government, and election candidates, to significantly increase the number of Syrians being brought to Canada, to provide greater support to those wishing to provide private sponsorship to refugees, and to expedite the process of bringing refugees and reunifying families.

Bronwen Cooke

The Bell Choir

The bell choir is in full swing this fall as we prepare for our upcoming An-

niversary Sunday. We have recently acquired a fourth octave of bells and are looking forward to ringing them in church soon. Look for the deep richness of the large base bells and the melody of the small treble bells. The accompanying picture shows our largest and smallest bells.

We are anticipating a busy season this year as we again join with the Antigonish Choral Society in their annual Christmas and Spring concerts. We are looking forward to attending a Bell Festival in Truro this May. There will be several bell choirs from across the Maritimes and well be a great experience for us.



St. James CGIT Alumni Plan Reunion for 100 Anniversary of CGIT



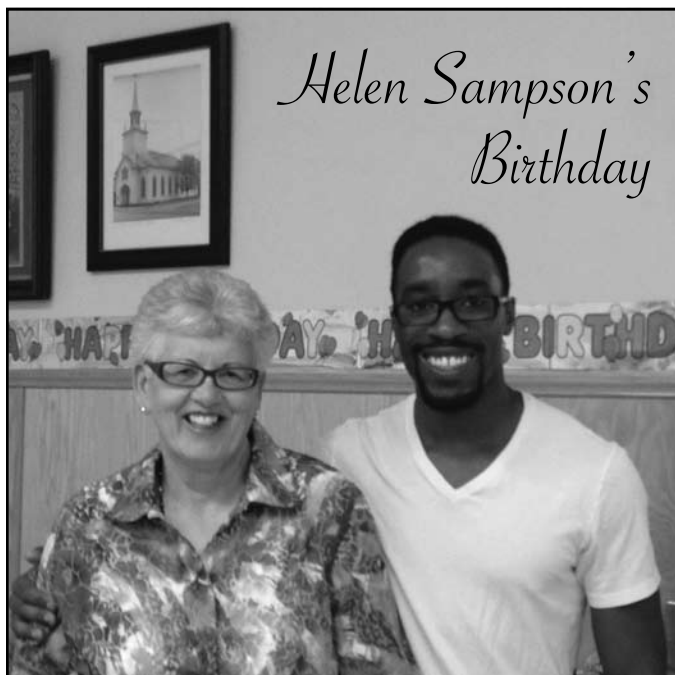
A Committee of “Old” CGIT’ers are busy planning a reunion of all CGIT Alumni, from any church anywhere.

Mavis Murray (902-863-3179) is gathering a history of CGIT. If you have any information for the archives please call her - she is interested in pictures for displays. Put your name and telephone number on the back so they can be returned to you.

Joyce Hilling, now known as “Mrs. Dick Tracy” (if you know who he is, you’re showing your age) is compiling a list of former CGIT “Girls”. She has almost 100 names now. If you haven’t been contacted please call her at 902 863 5881 or email her at joycehilling@gmail.com

The event is planned for Sunday December 6th. There will be a “Meet and Greet” in the church hall beginning at 2 p.m. with many displays. Dinner is at 5 p.m. and Vespers at 6:30 p.m. in the church. Registration fee is \$20.00 including dinner. Please contact Joyce and come out and meet all your old friends and make some new ones.

Please cut this out and put it on your fridge so you won’t forget or send it to anyone you know who was a former CGIT girl.



*Helen Sampson's
Birthday*

Seniors Fellowship

Under the capable leadership of Bob Murray, president, our group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, except for July and August. We enjoy road trips to various places of interest. In May we visited Knoydart Cheese Company. In September we drove to Port Hood, to have lunch out.

Quite often we have a pot luck lunch at the church. We also have a guest speaker come in occasionally. It would be very nice to have more of you join us. We collect \$1.00 per person each month and donate it to worthy causes.

Marilyn Swim (Treasurer)

Vernon's Poem to Hazel

*Yes, the time did slide
Since the year of 1955.*

*Boy I dug in both feet
Last year of college to complete.*

*The pay was \$1.80 per hour,
We didn't think life was sour.
The house was built by 1959
Hazel said! "It looks divine".*

*Three children they did appear
With Gary taking up the rear
We got by on just one pay
Many can't do that today.*

*And cancer, we did survive
We knew God was on our side.*

*Now its your memory that gone lame;
you have shown you are up for the game.*

*Now some Pet names I have made up;
Princess, Sweet Pea, Honey Boo
and Isabella.*

Now don't you think I am quite the fella?

*The next few years, a slippery slope.
Hand in hand we will cope.*



Vernon and Hazel Murray celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this summer. This beautiful poem summarizes their life together. Congratulations, Vernon and Hazel.

Note from the Choir: At St James United, we are blessed with wonderful singers that enjoy sharing their gifts with the congregation. Each week a new song is presented by one of our choirs. You may notice that the choices of each anthem reflect the liturgy of the service. At this time we are looking forward to Thanksgiving and Advent music. Christmas will of course follow soon after. We hope our efforts will enhance your enrichment of each service.

The choir is always happy to welcome new members, and the ability to read music is not mandatory. Why not come out on Thursday evening at 7:00 and see how much fun it is to 'make a joyful noise' with other singers? You won't regret it.

UCW News Report: Fall 2015

- June 16th catered to funeral for Dr. JB Stewart
- July 8th catered to funeral for Mrs. Pearl MacPherson
- Received certificate of Appreciation from L'Arche Summer Camp for financial support at a reception/barbeque late August
- August 2nd catered to Hope Smith's baptism celebration
- Sept 19th catered to 60th anniversary celebration for Vernon & Hazel Murray
- CGIT celebrating 100 years: save Dec 6th as a day to remember and enjoy events arranged by the very busy planning committee. The day will end with a traditional vespers service
NOTE: The first Tuesday of the month is the date reserved for general meetings. All ladies of the congregation are invited/encouraged to attend. The meetings are usually in the room behind the choir and start at 7pm. Tuesday, October 6th is the first meeting for 2015-16. There will be a guest speaker, business meeting and light refreshments.
- UCW units meet on the second Tuesday of the month. OPHRA Unit meets at 1:30 on the second Tuesday and Ruth meets at 7:30. Ophra has had one meeting already. That unit is doing an Advent calendar for the Christmas season to raise money for the benevolent fund. UCW extends a sincere thanks to all its members and helpers within the church who assist us in anyway to achieve our goals.

Joanne MacKenzie, Sept 29/15

Beryl MacIntosh's Birthday



Left to right: Marg Brown, Fran Wittgens,
Beryl MacIntosh, Marie Cormier

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY: REV. PETER

Each Tuesday morning at 10:00 am a group of interested people from our church (and occasionally from other churches) gathers to look at the Bible. The hour is filled with discussion, conversation, and stories as we consider issues from Scripture and the world around us. This fall we are beginning the "Animate Faith" video series which looks at different topics such as; *God: Faith Is a Quest, Spirituality Is not Enough, Jesus: The Revolution of Love, and the Bible: A Book Like No Other*. We understand that not everyone is able to come each week so feel free to come whenever you are available. Each week builds upon the last but they also make sense on their own!



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