



CONNECTIONS

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

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

Volume 11 • Issue 3 • Autumn 2017

*How great are God's signs, how
powerful God's wonders!
God's kingdom will last forever,
God's rule through all
generations.*

~ Daniel 4:3

Dear Friends in Christ,

The weather this past summer was so consistently warm and sunny that it seemed like the season would last forever. Morning after morning was hot and it felt like those days would never end. Yet in early September signs of fall appeared with colder temperatures at night and the first leaves turning colour.

Change happens in life. Whether it be the seasons ending and beginning, the years progressing, or people arriving and leaving there is always something today that is different from yesterday. The church is no exception. This past summer Ida and Judy finished up their time leading our Sunday School and Sheila retired from leading our music ministry at St. James. We are richly blessed as a congregation to have had them sharing their gifts with us for so many years and we are grateful for the ways they made us a stronger and more faithful church.

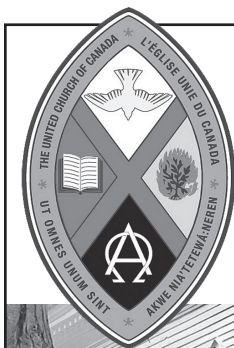
Those retirements mean that this fall at St. James is different from last fall in many ways. Claire and a team of volunteers have stepped forward to help shape our children's ministry and a new person will soon be playing our organ on a weekly basis. As they share their gifts and faith with us there will be new experiences and activities here at St. James to accompany the things we know and love. None of that diminishes the blessings God has showered on us through Ida, Judy, and Sheila but is simply what happens when there is change within our congregational leadership.

As people of faith we are grateful for what was and treasure our memories and experiences of the past as we move forward in faith- believing and trusting that God continues to call us to be people who live, serve, and grow together in the way of Jesus Christ.

May God continue to bless our life together.

Yours in Christ's Service,

The Rev. Peter A. Smith



*Our St. James
family welcomes
visitors from Coady.*

Audi from Migetia, Julia and
Alice from Zimbabwe





St. James will certainly miss both these women: Hope Graham (left) and Sheila Davison (right). Hope is continuing her good work, this time on La Gonave, a small island off the coast of Haiti, and Sheila, after 30 years of providing the music we associate with our church, is taking a well-earned retirement. Ladies, you will be missed!

Thank you Sheila Davison



"In so many ways she has enriched the music experiences of this congregation with her Preludes, Offertories and Postludes."

from a *Tribute to Sheila Davison*
"Summer 2017 Vol. 11 Issue 2"

Messages From Hope

Greetings from the Island of La Gonave, Haiti. The weather is warm. The weather in Port au Prince, according the Weather Network, is 35 ° C every day, with a humidity around 35%. The humidity feels much higher here on the island but it could just be me. The sun shines daily. Occasionally we have a heavy, short, tropical rain at night. Sometimes, in the evening or at night, we have impressive thunder and lightning with no rain. I understand this is supposedly the dry season but no one is complaining about having some rain along the way.

The Dean of the School of Nursing Sciences of the Wesleyan University of Haiti arrived on the island yesterday. They are conducting entrance exams for the new class of nursing students today. Classes start for all four years of study on Sept. 4. I have much preparation to do before I'm ready for classes. The texts for one new course I'm teaching hasn't arrived yet so I'll have to inquire as to how this event is handled. All texts are in French, although I will be teaching in English with an interpreter. My language skills in Kreyol are limited to extremely simple phrases. I've used French with some success around the school.

Many of you were interested in my living arrangements. I have a spacious bed-sitting room that is next door to where I will soon have access to a refrigerator and stove. This morning my new success was to succeed in lighting the gas stove and making some oatmeal. Yesterday, I walked to the market with Gaëlle Churchill (daughter of a missionary family from Halifax) and purchased some canned powdered whole milk, some oats, and some baking soda (for cleaning the ever-present and accumulating dust). I am so pleased to know that so many things can be purchased right here in town. I just need to ask the right person.

As many of you know, one of the fun highlights I remember of my only previous time on the island was to go snorkelling. I've already had a chance to check out my gear with Gaëlle and a week-long USA college grad who, in her first venture outside her own country, came to visit her aunt and uncle who are

missionaries here on the island. We used the private beach of a friend of the Churchills. The Californian lady coordinates/sponsors a small school that accepts 12 students each year between 9-12 years of age who have not had any education so far. They are offered intensive personalized education so that they can successfully pass the grade six national exams and go on to higher education. The graduates from this process have a remarkable ability, so far, to excel in the next schools where they have chosen to study.

Actually, I have met a number of amazing expats here on the Island who cooperate together to see local Haitians gain skills so they can be self-sufficient. The number of shops are myriad. You just have to know where to go. The fresh food market is the familiar close, pan-roofed stalls, one sees in photos, along with the relevant variety of aromas. I hope to get to know these folks better as I start to shop for the yummy produce of this area: mangoes in season, papaya, passion fruit (just had my first one yesterday—WOW!), oranges, soursop, coconut, and some I don't even know the names of yet.

I do have internet connection, when it works. There is no particular explanation anyone has for the randomness of its availability. Because there was no router or computer stick available when I went to get set up with a new SIM for my phone, I need to plug my phone into my computer and use it as a 'hotspot'. I know lots of you computer-geeks have done this numerous times but it is a new technique for me. If something is out of stock on the island, there is no one who knows when this might be available again,

if ever.

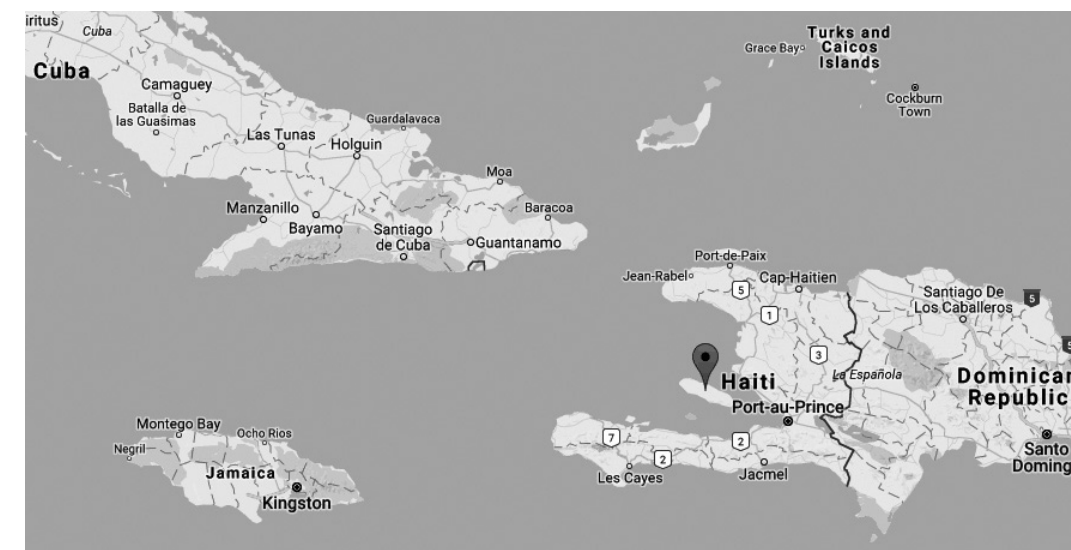
My only accident so far was to smash my camera to complete dysfunction. Hopefully I can get the next folks coming to the island to bring me a replacement. So far, I haven't figured out how to view the pictures that are on the memory card because, as I discovered to my complete dismay, this new computer I brought has no card reader. Who knew that those slots were not universally standard in computers? I'm sure some of you knew that but I had used an old MAC for too long and am still suffering with the Microsoft system, trying to get the right language functioning in a tolerable manner.

Hello everyone,

Thank you so much for all your thoughts, prayers, and emails as we carefully listen to the news and weather forecasts.

Here on La Gonave Island we've been in ready mode expecting Irma to arrive at any minute. Haiti closed all schools (most businesses joined in) yesterday morning for the rest of the week. Since she didn't arrive last night we've been anxiously watching the sky all day—started out with high cloud, then out came the sun, then some black thundery-looking clouds in the east, then more solid cloud but not dark. It certainly is on everyone's mind. Some are checking if the usual lady who cooks great BBQ chicken on the street corner if she were going to be open this eve. We had a couple of heavy rainfalls

with wind about 45 minutes ago but the wind and rain stopped and now there is a bit of blue sky as the sun hastens down for the night. I can't see the western sky from where I am. If the sun reflecting from the clouds is any indication, I think it is a beautiful sunset this eve, albeit short, as is the norm when closer to the equator than the Maritimes.



Many expats here have been listening and watching all the forecasts they can access plus what folks in North America are sending trying to pinpoint the time and severity we might expect here. A couple of hours ago, some missionaries in northern Haiti sent word that they had NO WIND, although earlier in the day they had a lot. (I haven't joined in the accessing info much because I got locked out of my computer and late this morning finally acquired a loaner and tried to re-create my list-serves so I could let everyone know what is happening here.)

As I wrote to a number of people privately, we received a memo from our field director on Tuesday eve that we should have lots of water, a well-stocked first aid kit, "travel docs and bags ready to go". I'm gradually figuring out what each of those mean. The lots of water was further clarified for me—not just the litre bottle of water I was carrying around! It means fill every vessel that is water worthy. They've lost the waterline here for a few days in the past and everyone remembers the stress of that. I guess since I'm newly arrived, a packed bag wouldn't contain too much and my travel docs (passport + any cash) are safely in a ziplock bag, as I received the personal

St. James United is
always looking for new
choir members.



Thank you Ben, for helping us on Sunday,
September 10th.

explanations from individuals.

The day has turned into night as I was writing. I just checked the sky and there is a bit of pink reflecting from the clouds and a most pleasant slight breeze. Quite balmy, actually.

We pray for those who are already suffering many losses from the effects of this storm and for those who might be affected along the way.

Peace to all,
Hope



General information about the film festival can be found at: antigonishfilmfest.org or email us at: antigonishfilmfest@gmail.com or phone: (902) 735-2792

Festival Pass (access to all films) are \$20 regular / \$5 student, unwaged will be available at the door of each venue. Seating on a first come, first served basis. If there is an overflow, people with passes will have priority for seating. There is also admission by donation at the door for those without a Festival Pass, space permitting.

FESTIVAL PASSES now on sale at:
Lyghtesome Gallery 166 Main Street
People's Place Library 283 Main Street

AIFF Community Dinner

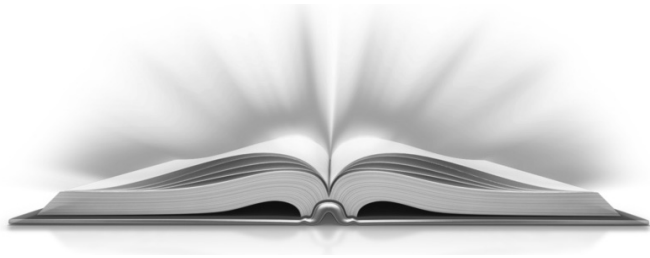
This years dinner will be held at St. James United Church on Saturday, October 28th. Doors open at 5:30 pm and the dinner will be served at 6:30 pm.

Tickets are \$20 and on sale at Lyghtesome Gallery (166 Main Street Antigonish) or to reserve contact aiffdinner@lyghtesome.ns.ca

Book Reviews

(new to the St James library, by Michèle Ashby)

In July I was truly privileged to attend the UCW's National Conference in Vancouver. One of the aspects I enjoyed most was browsing the well stocked resource centre. The only difficulty was finding a few things to bring home – while staying within our limited budget! I tried to find a bit of something for everyone. So here's what came back with me this time:



And Give You PEACE: Words of Comfort at a Time of Grief is a small pamphlet (34 pages) by Arden, Peter and David Mead that deals with grief and grieving. It covers many of those "firsts" that happen after a loved one's death - the difficult moments that we encounter as life marches on despite our loss - and provides tips on how to adjust to living without that special person being there for us. It includes pertinent Biblical references and I found it an interesting read despite not being in that situation.

Yours, Mine, Ours: Unravelling the Doctrine of

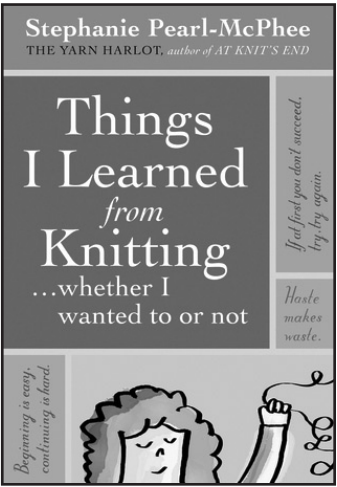


Discovery is a special edition (Fall 2016/164 pages) of INTOTEMAK, a publication of the Indigenous Relations department of the Mennonite Church of Canada. Over forty articles, plays, letters, poems and art work by Indigenous peoples and Settlers, Christians and Traditional practitioners; deal with an assortment of First Nations, Inuit and Métis issues including a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings. It also delves into the centuries old history of discovery and dispossession;

makes comparisons with Black history in North America, Palestinians in Israel, Swedish Sami and the Māori of New Zealand; and addresses "white guilt". It provides a fascinating variety of perspectives and certainly forced me to think "outside the box". My personal box, anyway! Much food for thought. And perhaps action? It includes a Study Guide and Editors' Picks for Further Reading.

And She Said: Monologues on Biblical Women is the latest offering (206 pages) from Betty Radford Turcott, past president of the National UCW. Some of the stories are wholly Bible based, some are imagined by Radford Turcott. While I found reading the individual stories all in one go rather repetitious, I appreciated how it made me think about not just the familiar women of the Bible (Sarah, Ruth, Mary), but also lesser known or under-appreciated ones (Judas' mother, Peter's mother-in-law, the wives of the shepherds who celebrated Jesus' birth). Each short section finishes with questions for discussion. This could be useful for devotions at UCW meetings or personal practice.

Things I Learned from Knitting ... whether I wanted to or not is a "lighter" book (160 small pages) by Stephanie Pearl-McPhee that appealed to me as a complete non-knitter who really appreciates St James' Prayer Shawl Ministry. A quick flip through this little book



revealed that it held pearls of wisdom that can be appreciated by anyone – knitter or not! For example, "Three men can keep a secret if two of them are dead." "Everything is funny as long as it is happening to someone else." And "Knitting is like marriage." I had several good chuckles as I read this and am certain that a knitter would have even more. By the time I finished, I felt like I knew the author – and wanted her for a friend.

Sunday School News

Another Sunday school year is beginning. We look forward to another year when we get to spend time Sunday mornings learning and growing together as we continue to travel on our Christian faith journey, listening to stories, singing songs, praying together, sharing in laughter, and sharing our time and talents on special occasions with the rest of the congregation.

As always we thank the congregation for their continued love and support. We will keep you posted on upcoming special Sunday school news and events.

St. James Sunday School

FROM THE ARCHIVES Missions & Hymn Books

At Antigonish and within the St. James Manse here, Thursday the eighth day of April, one thousand and eight hundred and ninety seven years and at two o'clock in the afternoon. Which time and place the Session of St. James Church met and was duly constituted with prayer by the Moderator Mr. Munroe. Here present Messrs D. Chisholm, S. Williams, W.D. MacMillan, J.H. Stewart, and R. Dickson. Mr. H.B. MacKay being present was invited to sit and correspond.

The question of establishing a Mission by the Church in Korea was brought before the Court when it was moved by Mr. S. Williams, seconded by Mr. W. D. MacMillan and passed unanimously that we as a Session desire to see the Korean Mission opened up.

Moved by Mr. D. Chisholm, seconded by Mr. J. H. Stewart that our congregation adopt the new Hymnal as soon as possible. This motion was carried unanimously.

Closed with the Benediction.

J.R. Munroe, Moderator
R. Dickson, Clerk

Yes! It's Back • Oct 22 GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

What is it?

An evening of fun, food and fellowship – getting to know your “pew neighbours”!

Who?

Hosts (as many as possible) ~ Guests (all comers – singles, couples and kids)

Where?

At the homes of our hosts (handicap accessibility will be available)

When?

Sunday evening, 22 October

How?

Look for upcoming details in the church bulletins

Cost?

A donation of \$5.00 per person is appreciated and will go to offset host's expenses.

All surplus money collected will go to St James' Hot Lunch Program.

Questions? Suggestions?

Ask GWCTD? Committee Members:

Michèle Ashby (232-3473)
Pamela Cunningham (863-7709)
Linda Darwish (735-2856)
Doug & Paige Hunter (863-6737)
Randy Lauff (863-8341)



Antigonish Food Bank Did You Know..?

• that through regular donations to the Antigonish Food Bank, our congregation is working to fight hunger in our community? During our time of offering every Sunday, you will see a handcrafted box lovingly carried forth, heavy with contributions made in the name of Jesus Christ. There is always a need for nonperishable foodstuffs of every type, as well as personal hygiene products and toiletries. Glass jars (and lids!) of every size are eagerly sought as well, which the cheerful volunteer staff use in the repackaging of bulk supplies. Donations can be placed in the Food Bank box at the entrance as you make your way to Sunday service.. thank you!



Did You Know..?

• that your used postage stamps can be used to help transform the lives of people afflicted with leprosy? Stamps brought to St. James make their way to effect: hope (formerly the Leprosy Mission of Canada), which is able to sell them to stamp wholesalers and collectors to fund medical treatments to leprosy sufferers around the world. There are criteria for donated used stamps, which you can read about on the St. James community bulletin board, or on the wooden donation box kept for this purpose in the narthex. Your kindness and compassion will help restore dignity and courage to those who have suffered much too long.. thank you!

Farewell from Jowett Family

Thirteen years ago we landed in Antigonish, ready to begin our new life, new jobs, new culture, new school. Immediately we felt a welcoming acceptance from the St James community, where we found new friends and a progressive group of people who were keen on bringing awareness to some of society's most challenging social and environmental issues, and also performing outreach to those who have need for a good meal and fellowship. Through your humble efforts, we witnessed real progress in improving people's lives in and near Antigonish.

And so, as we leave here to return to our old "stomping grounds" of Alberta, we are better people for having known and worked with you. We all feel your support and good wishes, and with heartfelt thanks, we extend an invitation to you to please look us up if you are in our new community of Claresholm in Southern Alberta. We hope to return and visit again in this beautiful part of Nova Scotia.

God bless you all,

Judy, Peter and Dawson

Mark Your Calendar

"Celebrating Spirit"

United Church Women's Rally

Saturday, October 21, 9am - 1pm

St. James United Church Hall - Sponsored by St. James United Church Women. Michele Ashby, Resource person. Watch for further details.

Sunday, December 3, 4-7 pm

Who remembers those wonderful Advent congregational pot luck suppers? They were a part of our congregation for many years. There will be inter-generational games, food, carol singing, and a closing Advent Worship Service conducted by one of our church families.

It seems too early to be speaking of December events but time passes quickly and people's calendars are soon filled with special events.



Alice Ndlovu is Fran Wittgens' new "Coady Neighbour." Alice is from rural Zimbabwe where she works in the environmental protection and awareness.

*Did
You
Know?*

that St. James has a **Lost and Found** bin? Located in the elevator room off the narthex, any unclaimed items left behind from worship services, meals, classes, or special functions are likely to be found there. If you've misplaced something at St. James, the Lost and Found is the place to look!



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BY THE OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

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Phone: (902) 863-2001 • Email: st.james@ns.sympatico.ca

www.stjamesuc.com/connect.htm