



CONNECTIONS

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

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

Volume 7 Issue 2 • Summer 2013

S U M M E R 2 0 1 3

Dear Friends in Christ,

The construction will soon begin at St. James. After many years of talking about it, discussing what needs to be done, considering plans and possibilities, and after the raising the funds, we are finally ready to renovate the building. We've arrived here because the congregation has worked hard to carefully and prayerfully consider our life together and what we need to fulfill our calling as a community of faith. The new facility will be more open, more functional, and will be a complete transformation of what we are used to as a church.

Yet more important than how wonderful the church will look, or even how much more efficient the space will be, is the fact that our revitalized building will allow us to better express our faith. With increased meeting space we can do more things as a congregation and with greater accessibility we will be able to welcome more people to our activities and worship. As well, being freed from the limits of our old building means we will be able to consider new things: new expressions of worship, new opportunities to study, and new means of serving each other and the world.

Over the next few months things will be a bit unsettled at St. James as the old is changed into the new. Throughout the summer we will continue to worship each Sunday and in the fall when everything is finished we will give thanks to God in a special service of dedication and begin to discover what God has in store for us in the years and decades to come.

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

*(The Lord says) "See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am
making a way in the wilderness and streams in the
wasteland."*

- Isaiah 43:19

Ida Sarty: A True Leader

The children, teachers and parents of St. James Sunday School will miss the many years of leadership of a special person, Ida Sarty. Ida, with her genuine loving spirit, made every member or newcomer feel

sincerely welcomed and wanted. Ida could find joy in all aspects of God's work, including her effective teaching, reviewing and choosing Sunday School curricula as well as ordering supplies and materials, planning church services that the Sunday school participated in, teacher training and much, much more. She even treated her charges to homemade cookies each Sunday!

Children like to play the game "Follow the Leader" where they mimic the actions of their leader. With Ida as the leader any child who follows her example will definitely be on the right path in life.

Thank you, Ida, for the happy moments, the prayerful moments, the golden moments, the crazy moments and every other moment we have had with you.

Judy McCarron





Sunday School News

On April 28th the Sunday School provided leadership for the morning worship service. It is always a blessing when the Sunday School youngsters get to share their many gifts and talents with the entire congregation. For this service the children and youth shared special music, prayers and dramatic readings. Thanks to Fran & Diane for helping us compose our prayer and thanks again to Fran for taking pictures during the service. As a congregation we are truly blessed to have children and youth that have such enthusiasm and energy.

We visited the RK on Sunday June 9th and shared in a small worship service with the residents.

Our Sunday school closing was Sunday June 16th. The Penner family hosted a closing celebration at their home following the morning worship service. Sunday school will resume in September.

We wish everyone a safe and Happy Summer,

St. James Sunday School

Ida Sarty



Planning for Accessibility



It's no secret that there's going to be a lot of change in the next year. The renovations are starting and everyone is excited and hopeful. During the planning period for the new design, the congregation kept hearing how accessibility was one of the underlying features of the plan. But in order to make that a reality, planning and dialogue were needed.

Dale Archibald, the architect, spoke frequently with the users of the kitchen, for instance, as well as with every other group involved at St. James. In January of 2013 an ad hoc group was formed to pursue special accessibility features. We are very fortunate at St. James to have two occupational therapists who were willing to offer their expertise. Also Anne Camozzi had spoken and guided us from her own experience.

The ad hoc group consisted of Dale Archibald, architect, Rev. Peter Smith, Lori Young, Jennifer Hilling (both OTs) and Fran Wittgens. Early in the process we discovered that there was a small provincial grant we were eligible for. This meant we looked at one part of the project, barrier free washrooms, as our main focus. In doing this, we obtained over 15 letters of support from the wider community. It was affirming to read repeatedly

of the high esteem in which St. James is held and the community's recognition of the need to have accessible washrooms.

After four months of meeting and dialogue, the plans reflect an earnest effort to be more than barrier free. Out of the four entrances, three will be accessible. With the floor raised, there won't be issues related to stairs. Workspace in the kitchen will include an accessible sink and lower space where people can sit to work. It will even accommodate children. A welcome change for many is the upgrade of the audio system both in the church and in the hall. These changes only hint at the many other features that will be in place to make the church an even more welcoming place for all.

Fran Wittgens

Important Notice: Summer Funerals

The Funeral Committee would like to inform the congregation that during construction, post-funeral receptions will not be possible as we will not have a kitchen. The committee members are always willing to provide sandwiches and sweets in the event there is a funeral, and the process for initiating the call for food will not change. Rev. Peter will notify Betty Webber or Joanne MacKenzie and the call for food will be activated. It is expected that this offer will help grieving families as they arrange reception(s) in their homes or other locations. Families will be responsible for their own coffee, tea, milk, cream, etc. It is possible that families could contact The Legion for a space if they would like to use that facility.

Wishing everyone a safe and
wonderful summer,
The Funeral Committee

THE ST. JAMES UNITED SENIOR CHOIR



A few members were missing when this picture was taken. We wished Bonnie Moore (front row, third from left) a fond farewell as she left Antigonish to pursue her studies at Dalhousie University.

Young People Show an Interest in Social Justice

James Goldie made a presentation on the following subject to the St. James Youth Group Sunday School on June 2nd. "The Peasant Farmers' Committee of the Highlands: Fair Trade Coffee and the Pursuit of Justice in Guatemala." James has worked in Guatemala with the Breaking the Silence organization. According to Alex Penner, one of the participants in this special event, "It was really interesting to learn about another part of the world. It made me want to go on trips like that and do that kind of work." The young people were very interested and may follow up with some fund-raising in the fall.

St. James Bell Choir



SEX & Today's Youth

Now that I've got your attention... I'd like to ask you to give some thought to just what images are inflicted on today's youth – and how often – via media and entertainment. I've been thinking a lot about the subject of sex and today's youth, since hearing Caroline MacRae (from the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre) address a General UCW meeting on the topic of *Hypersexualization*. I followed up by attending a workshop she organized on the same subject, and since then I've been doing some internet research. It's scary out there!

You see, the world has changed since I was young. Sure, as a young woman I was periodically subjected to negative images of women, but it was a print-based culture as opposed to today's image-based culture. We read and heard about stereotypes, but there was greater awareness of "women's liberation" issues and there were ongoing counter campaigns to get involved in, ensuring there was wage equity, equal hiring, etc. Today the negativity that our young women and men face via technology and social media is (in some ways) more subtle.

By conservative estimates the average youth sees 200-plus images *daily* in on-line advertising, movies, magazines, video games, music videos

and television. The internet and cell phones mean that youth are continuously bombarded by pictures of thin, airbrushed “perfect” women portrayed as dehumanized objects, strippers, nymphomaniacs or dolls, and frequently just reduced to isolated body parts – you can guess which ones. Men don’t fare much better. They are routinely portrayed as dominating, insensitive, violent, emotionless and controlling – *hypermasculinization*. Frequently there is no connection between these images and the items they’re supposed to be selling. Some specific, troubling examples include *American Apparel* ads, the *Victoria’s Secret* lingerie line “*Bright Young Things*” aimed at teens, the *Sears Wish Book* line of *Playboy* wear obviously geared at young girls and TV shows like “*Toddlers & Tiaras*”. What kind of video games are youth playing? With some of the explicit sexuality in music videos, is it surprising that even young children mimic the sexual moves of their elders? No wonder rates of eating disorders and depression are rising as youth aspire to look like the unrealistic and distorted body images they are surrounded by. The pressure on young women to be “thin, sexy and available” is enormous.

So, why is this issue important to us as Christians and what can we do about it? If we believe that we are made in the image of God, this focus on distorted body images and sexuality becomes a spiritual problem. For anyone who has younger folks in their sphere of influence (children, grandchildren, neighbours) take every opportunity to discuss the complete lack of reality in the media’s portrayal of women, men and their relationships. Encourage conversations about how and why men and women are portrayed the way they are on TV and other media. Stimulate discussion of ways for both genders to stand up to sexism. Let businesses that use sex to sell their products know that you’re not interested in that style of campaign. Let politicians know you’re concerned about this issue. Support advertising watchdogs. Stay informed! *Know* what your children are viewing.

Michèle Ashby

INTERCULTURAL vs MULTICULTURAL Is There a Difference?

On May 21st we considered World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development during the Minute for Social Justice. Fran Wittgens asked the congregation: ***What are we doing to promote and sustain cultural diversity here at St. James and in the wider community?***

She shared a recent reflection from the United Church. The United Church of Canada has committed itself to becoming an ***intercultural church***. The Church intentionally chose “intercultural” instead of “multicultural” to describe the vision of beloved community. *Multiculturalism* can be a simple celebration of food, fun, and festivals of different cultures while being relatively unchanged. *Interculturalism*, however, is a deep commitment to dialogue and power shifts among and between cultural groups, interactions, engagement, and transformation of all of God’s peoples. On Multiculturalism Sunday, and throughout the year, we can remember our commitment to becoming an *intercultural church* community.

At St. James under the encouragement of both the Social Justice and Outreach and Communication Committees, five international potlucks were enjoyed. It was gratifying that they each attracted from 70 to 140 people, many from the international student community. She said that over the summer they will be reaching out for ways to be more ***intercultural***. “We’ll have fewer potlucks, perhaps three to four a year, and more getting to know each other.” Fran ended with the question: ***Who would like to join us as we move into another stage with our International Potlucks?***

Conversations and planning are going on now and into the summer, with the first potluck at St. James Hall the last Sunday of October. The International Potluck Committee welcomes any suggestions or support.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE Adopt-A-Highway Program Round 2



May 11th saw another successful Adopt-A-Highway clean-up at Interchange 32 in Antigonish. This initiative is sponsored by the Social Justice Committee but open to the entire congregation. A small but energetic group spent a pleasant three hours picking up highway litter and improving our environment. The spring team included (left to right) Mike Cook, Hope Graham,

Gina Sampson, Barb DeMarsh, Michèle Ashby and Barb Shea. Intrepid photographer (and participant) was Tim Hinds.

A blue toboggan, toy panda bear, one roll each of dimes and nickels, what turned out to be a *stolen* licence plate and two tubes of “Lactating Cow Treatment” (complete with plastic syringes for inserting into bovine teats) were some of the interesting finds this time around. Fourteen bags of trash and two bags of refundables were also collected. Once again Bennett’s Market kindly provided some delicious post-clean-up snacks. Prizes acquired during a recent Adopt-A-Highway information session in Truro were distributed to all participants. Hopefully by the time we do our clean-up in the fall our official signs will be in place!

Submitted by Michèle Ashby

New United Church Crest



The current crest, a blue oval containing symbols representing the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches, will soon be updated to include the yellow, black, red and white of the traditional aboriginal medicine wheel “in acknowledgment that The United Church of Canada was founded and continues to exist on Indigenous land,” according to the proposal from the task group. The church also accepted the task group’s recommendation that a Mohawk translation of “All my relations”, Akwe Nia’Tetewa: neren, be added to the bottom of the crest alongside the Latin words Ut Omnes Unum Sint, which translate to “That all may be one.”

St. James Sunday School

participates in service at the RK chapel
June 9, 2013



Where Are They Now?

If anyone happens to know the whereabouts of previous members of St. James, why not drop Connections a short note so that the information can be shared?



Margaret Wittgens (*above right*) who lives in Vancouver ran the BMO Vancouver Marathon in early May. She successfully met her fundraising goal which supported Parkinson's research through the Terry Fox Foundation. She did this in memory of her father, Herman. She finished in the top 10% of her age category, a good finish on both fronts!

Her older sister **Andrea Wittgens** (*above left*) continues to be creating new material. In June she'll join her singer songwriter friends at the Steel Bridge Festival in Wisconsin which has become an annual destination for her. Fran is excited that both girls are talking about coming home to Antigonish for Christmas 2013.



Kate Crawford, (*above*) who preached at St. James before she was ordained, has been serving at St. Andrew's United in London, Ontario, since 2010. She was recently mentioned in the May 2013 edition of The United Church Observer.

Confirmation Sunday May 13, 2013

Confirmands Breanna Scott and Holly Scott with family.



Donovan Rehill with his family.



Ashley Hilling with her family behind the communion cloth donated in memory of her great-parents is 1999.



News from

The Coady International Institute

Shanon Archibald, Public Engagement Coordinator for The Coady Institute, has passed along the following schedule of upcoming events. The next group of world leaders should soon be arriving at the end of July. We are encouraged to be a community friend in some way, whether it is to go to the Women's Picnic in August, the Welcome Social in mid-August, or to become a "Coady Neighbour" and have regular opportunities to get to know each other.

June 24 - 7:30 p.m. Panel Discussion: Citizen Led Sustainable Change, St. Andrews and District Community Centre

August 9 - Women's Picnic, TBD

August 16 - 7:30 p.m: Welcome Social - Diploma program, Dennis Hall

August 29 - 1 p.m: - Graduation ceremony - Indigenous Women in Community Leadership, Schwartz Auditorium

The Coady students will be here for 19 weeks to complete a Diploma in Development Leadership. The Coady Neighbours program (previously Conversation Partners) is a program that provides the participants with a valuable and special opportunity to engage in and learn about the local community and for the volunteers (a.k.a. Neighbours) an opportunity to meet the community development professionals from around the world and learn about their culture and work. We match volunteers and Coady participants in August and suggest they meet a few times a month (or more as schedules allow). Meeting places could be the Marie Michael Library or the Riley Lounge at the Coady International Institute, the volunteers's home, or a local coffee shop - wherever the partners find most convenient.

June Lawson



Longtime members of Saint James will have fond memories of June Lawson, who served as church secretary from 1982 until 1991. June died this past February in Bass River where she and Dale had moved in 1994 following his retirement.

June carried out her secretarial duties with cheerfulness and efficiency, always giving a warm welcome (and often a cup of coffee) to those who stopped by at the church office.

Even after moving to their retirement home, June continued, as long as she was able, to come back each year to help with phone calls for the annual Men's Club Lobster Dinner.

It was a special gift this past Christmas Eve to have had June and her family present with us for the late Christmas Eve service, June still gracious and smiling in spite of her struggle with MS. Her dedication and service to the congregation of Saint James is still remembered and treasured, and we express our heartfelt sympathy to Dale, Heather, Paul, Karen and Susan.



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An Incredible Journey

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, also known as DRC, DR Congo, or Congo-Kinshasa, has a population 75.5 million, approximately

2.25 times the population of Canada. DRC's total area is larger than Nunavut and more than 42 times the size of Nova Scotia. It is the second largest country in Africa. The country is in central Africa and straddles the equator. It has the second largest tropical rainforest in the world (second to Amazon) and also has one of the worst human development indexes in the world, tied with Niger's rank at the bottom.¹ By contrast, Canada is # 11 whereas DRC and Niger are # 186. The DRC has rich natural resources of cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, coal, hydropower, and timber.

²Coltan, from which tantalum and niobium are extracted, has been cited as financing some of the serious conflict still occurring in parts of the DRC. Coltan is used primarily for the production of tantalum capacitors, used in almost every kind of electronic device, including cell phones.

I tell you all this so you can, if you wish, try to picture this country in which I plan to volunteer for at least six months, starting in mid-August. StFX University has granted me a leave of absence for the next academic year. Since French is one of five official languages in the country, I have been taking a beginning level French course since last September at StFX. I have also registered to participate in a 5-week French immersion course before departure to the DRC.

I expect to live and work in the Kasai Occidental province of the DRC. (See map.) About 30% of the population of the province consists of refugees from other parts of the Congo or from neighbouring countries. I will be working with a local non-

¹ United Nations Development Program. (2013). Human development report. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013/>

² Retrieved May 3, 2013 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coltan>

governmental organization (NGO) called Butoke (pronounced boo-toh'-kay), which means light, created in 2005 in response to the devastation caused by war. You may access Butoke's website <http://butoke.org/English.htm> for more information.

Butoke is an ecumenical non-profit organization involving both Christian and Moslems. Its work has four foci: food security and nutrition, education, health, and human rights. The health aspect, my area of concern, is involved in issues of access to medical care, malnutrition, water, hygiene and sanitation, and disability. Part of my responsibilities will also include teaching English as a Second Language to one of the physician co-leaders of Butoke.

The Canadian organization through which I am making my arrangements for going to the DRC is World Hope Canada, a Christian faith-based organization. It is partnering with Butoke and currently coordinates a CIDA grant addressing the four foci of Butoke. You may access World Hope's website <http://worldhope.ca/democratic-republic-of-congo-country-profile/community-health-and-economic-stability-project/> for more details.

I will deeply appreciate your prayers for me as I prepare to go and live in the DRC. I expect this to be the most challenging six months of my professional life. Pray that I may be a Jesus follower who walks humbly and serves faithfully.

Hope Graham



Image from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/

Tuesday HOT MEAL PROGRAM



Connections spoke to Betty Webber, one of the volunteers who helps to organize this weekly event.

Where did the idea for the Tuesday Hot Meal Program originate?

About eight years ago, following the celebration of St. James' 200th anniversary, we wanted to become involved in an Outreach program in the community.

How many volunteers are needed on any given Tuesday?

We have teams of 6 – 8 people as well as two or three service learning students during the university year. Anyone who would like to donate two or three hours is welcome to attend, to see how it all comes together.

How are they organized? Do the same people work every Tuesday or does each team work in rotation?

We are organized into six teams: A, B, C, D, E, AND F. Each team is responsible for one meal approximately once every six weeks.

Who decides on the menu for this meal?

Where is the food preparation done?

The team decides on the meal, which can be prepared either at home or in the church kitchen, depending on where people are more comfortable working.

Where does the money come from to make the necessary purchases?

People are very generous with gifts of either money or food. Since the beginning we have never had to ask for funds.

How many people, on average, attend each week?

Our very first meal eight years ago served five people. On Tuesday May 28th we served between 58 and 60 people.

How can members or adherents of St. James become involved in this Outreach activity?

There are many ways. People could volunteer to cook, bake, join an existing group or even form a new team. The Lions Club and the Maryvale Team joined two years ago and are a huge help.

More information can be had by contacting the following people.

- Team A (1) Betty at 863-1301
- Team B (2) Mary at 863-0585
- Team C (3) Mavis at 863-3179 or
Joyce at 863-1580
- Team D (4) Irene at 863-5213 or
Laura at 863-2098
- Team E (5) Claire at 863-3529
- Team F (6) Eileen at 863-3825

Does this program run through the summer months as well?

Yes, under the leadership of Dana Mason, who organizes people from the community. This summer, during the renovations at St. James, the Jean Paul Centre has graciously offered its facilities for this purpose.



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From the Archives

Intemperance frowned upon in the 1860's

This is an exact copy of the minutes and some of the sentence structure used at that time may appear to be a bit odd to modern eyes.

Presbyterian Church Session Meeting October 13th 1860

The Session met was constituted with prayer by the Moderator (Minister). Present with the Moderator Messrs. Chisholm, Smith Steward and MacDonald. The Moderator stated to the Session that John Baxter and his wife, George Williams and his wife applied to him for admission to the Lord's Table, the Session the said persons with John R Fraser be admitted. After suitable address from the Moderator, they received tokens.

Mr. Smith and MacDonald gave in their report of their interview with Mr. Hugh MacLennan, respecting his intemperate habits, which stated that Mr. MacLennan denied some of the charges made against him, it was agreed that Mr. MacLennan be heard in Session in his own defence which he did appear and give the Session some satisfaction. After a suitable address from the Moderator, in warning of the danger and the evil of intemperance and the disgrace it would bring on religion and gave him warning to be cautious in future and live in accordance with the profession he has made. The Session agreed that Mr. MacLennan should continue as a member in the Church.

The meeting closed with prayer by the Moderator.



When was the Presbyterian Church in Antigonish named St. James

This rough copy of a letter to Judge Patterson was found in the Congregational Minute book dating from 1840. The copy was not signed

In 1937 Judge Patterson inquired as to when the Church was named St. James. Some research was done but no confirmed date could be found. This was the reply:

“You will observe from above that “Saint James” is mentioned first in the minutes of the Session in July 13, 1889 and first in the minutes of the Congregational meeting on November 16, 1891. After these dates the minutes of each organization state as being held in St. James Church. It may be the change in name was made by Pictou Presbytery about the year 1889. I cannot find anyone here who knows why the change in name was made.

I have copied the first and last part of the Constitution and Bylaws of our Church as written on Aug. 2, 1832. The Constitution gives the name of the Church as the “Presbyterian Church of Antigonish” and I also show the Rev. James Munro deeded the land the Church stands on and the Cemetery back of it to Nathaniel Symonds in trust for the Presbyterian Congregation of Antigonish on Jan. 18, 1819. This was about four months before he died”

Submitted by Bob Murray

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner



Guess Who's Coming to Dinner is back by popular demand! This year's dinner will take place October 20th, so please mark your calendars now. If you're not familiar with this event, it's designed to encourage members of our congregation to mingle with other congregants they may not normally have a chance to get to know. Children, spouses and partners of the congregation are welcome.

Participants sign up as either guests or hosts. Hosts accommodate between 2 and 10 diners at their home for a simple family-style meal. Neither party has any idea who the other is until they meet for the evening. During the sign-up process guests can indicate any personal issues relating to transportation, dietary requirements, allergies and/or physical limitations. All can be accommodated.

More information will be forthcoming. Members of the group whose names are listed below are happy to answer questions. Please don't hesitate to talk to any one of us.

Michèle Ashby (232-3473)

Brenda Botterill (867-1095)

Pamela Cunningham (863-3816)

Joyce Hilling (863-5881)

Doug Hunter (863-6737)

Randy Lauff (863-8341)

Joyce Stephen (863-1580)

It's Not Easy Being Green

Are you confused about what to recycle? About what days for the green cart? (Some people in Halifax say they look out their windows and see when their neighbours put theirs out.) Are there different instructions for the Town of Antigonish and the County of Antigonish?

On Tuesday Sept. 17th, 2013, all will be revealed. The Orpah Unit of the St. James United Church Women is sponsoring an information session in the parlour. The town and county waste management coordinator will be our guest, so come with your questions and concerns.

If renovations are not completed by Sept. 17th, watch for a notice in the church bulletin for change of venue. If you have any questions, please telephone Betty Webber at 863-1301.

Sunday School Hand Crafted Flowers for Mother's Day



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