



# CONNECTIONS

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

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

Volume 7 Issue 4 • Winter 2013

*The shepherds returned, glorifying  
and praising God for all they had  
seen and heard...*

(Luke 2:20)

Dear Friends in Christ,

The unexpected news of Jesus' birth broke into the lives of the shepherds as they watched over their flocks that Christmas night. They hurried to Bethlehem filled with expectation and found everything as they had been told. The Bible says as they went from the stable, they were praising and glorifying God. They went back to their flocks, their lives, and their families knowing that something important was taking place.

At Christmas, we know something important is taking place. We can feel it in the warmth of the season despite the chilly weather. We can see it in the expectation which builds as friends and neighbours gather together in a spirit of generosity and friendship. We can hear it in the joy of the familiar carols and exchange of holiday greetings. Something special is taking place.

The birth of Jesus Christ may have happened far in the past but the effect on our lives continues. Each and every time we remember and celebrate the arrival of the Saviour we re-experience what happened to the shepherds that first night. For at Christmas we recognize the great things God is doing even as we remember what God has done.

Christmas is a time for glorifying and praising God for the arrival of Jesus in our world. Please come and be a part of our Advent and Christmas services as we celebrate together through carols, prayers and the familiar Bible stories of the season.

May God continue to bless our worship and witness as a church and may you and your family have a blessed and meaningful Christmas and New Year.

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



Gina, Kyler, Cameron, Jack and Owen Bell light the first candle of Advent on Dec. 1st.

# Christmas Eve Services Tuesday December 24th

St. David's, Cape George • 4 PM Family Service

St. James, Antigonish • 7 PM Family Service  
• 9 PM Communion Service

Come as we celebrate the birth of Jesus with special music, familiar carols and the stories of the Bible.

## Christmas Questions and Answers

*Where is the story of Jesus' birth in the Bible?*

The story of Jesus' birth is found in the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:1-20). The Bible story tells of Joseph and Mary travelling to Bethlehem and Jesus being born in a stable and visited by shepherds who had been told the news of his birth.

*Why was Jesus born in a stable?*

The Bible says nothing other than there was "no room for them at the inn." (Luke 2:7) Presumably there was such a crowd in town because of the order to be registered for the census that there were no free rooms anywhere for them to stay.

*Where is the story of the Wiseman and the star?*

The story of the Wiseman is found in the second chapter of the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 2:1-12). Although we are not actually told in the Bible how many Wiseman there were, traditionally it has been assumed there were three since there were three gifts presented to the newborn king.

*Was Jesus really born on December 25th?*

None of the Gospels actually record the date when Jesus was born. Early Christians celebrated it at different times of the year until about the 3rd century AD. December 25th was chosen as the date for Christmas by many churches because that is when days stop getting shorter and begin getting longer. An appropriate time to celebrate the arrival of Jesus the "light of the world".



Mavis & Bob were found decorating the church sanctuary





# Sunday School News

The under 16 year old crowd in the church is getting excited about Christmas and the dedication of the newly renovated church. On Friday, December 6th, Rev. Peter tested the Youth Group's knowledge of all things Christmas at our St. Nicolas Day Party! On the 8th the children will be enjoying crafts and fun with the children from St. Paul's Anglican, while the youth group packs bags of toiletries for the local food bank. Special thanks to the Kell family for hosting this annual event. On the 15th we will be taking part in the dedication service, celebrating the opportunities for ministry and service that the renovations will provide.

The younger children, pre-schoolers to grade 6, continue to enjoy Sunday School with the amazing Miss Judy, while the Youth Group, from grade 6 to high school, enjoy a monthly get together on a weekend night. They may also help out with the younger class or practice for specific events on Sunday mornings. We have also revised the plan for nursery coverage. We will only have one volunteer on duty each Sunday, with back up from the Sunday School teachers or Youth Group members if needed. We still need more volunteers to sign up.

We have been blessed this year to have two StFX students join our Sunday School teaching team. Christina Chediac and Shuchang Dai have been helping out and will be organizing some special events with the Youth Group in the new year.

Wishing all ages a very Merry Christmas and a blessed 2014!

Your Christian Education Team



*Christmas Service at the Highland Crest Home*



# St. James United Church Capital Campaign Committee Report to the Congregation

*November 2013*

The Capital Campaign Committee has worked through the construction phase to ensure the project is completed by year's end, and that all final details are managed properly. The main construction is finished and now your committee will tie up the loose ends.

There is still work into the New Year to manage deficiencies, (small items which may have been overlooked or need to be redone before the contractor leaves the site). We also need to monitor warranties. The work is guaranteed for one year, and anything which does not work properly, or which comes undone during that time must be documented and reported to the contractor. Then we need to be sure the repairs are made. This is common on all construction projects, and requires diligence. This process allows time to evaluate materials and be sure they are of acceptable quality.

While there were a considerable number of unexpected items which came up during the

construction, we are happy to report that we will be coming in on budget. The work of your Capital Campaign now must turn itself to managing the closeout of the construction as outlined above, and to the management of the pledges which are to come in over the next five years. Now we need to follow the pledge process, collect monies as pledged, and ensure that the payments are made over the next few years. You are aware that we have borrowed money from Maritime Conference Financial Services to fund the project while we await the pledges being funded. These payments need to be made, and this process needs to be managed.

Finally, it is incumbent on the Committee to provide a full accounting to the Church Council, at whose pleasure this committee serves. This report will include a detailed accounting of all funds collected, pledged, borrowed and spent. That report will be made available as the Council deems appropriate. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the committee if you have questions.

Respectfully submitted,

*Brian MacLeod*

*Chair*



*The United Church Women serve St. James United Church's first meal from the newly-renovated kitchen on Nov. 26th: the Presbytery dinner. A good time was had by all.*

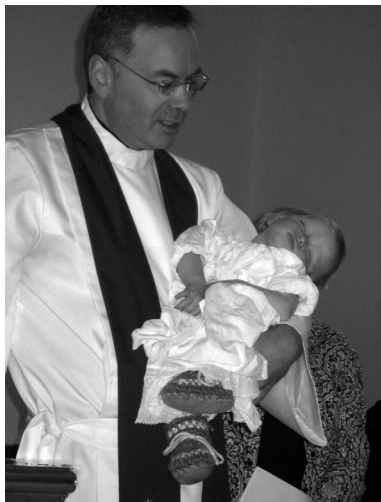


# ST. JAMES HOLY BAPTISM

Josie Louking child of Amy Ferguson and Erin King, Oct 20

Baptism of Anna and Marshall Cooke, children of Bronwen and Marc Cooke, Nov 17 (photos below)

Baptism of Tanner Wade Alex Rudolph, son of Coady Rudolph and Dana Adams, grandson of Teddy and Jeanie Adams, Nov 24 (photo right)



## Adopt-A-Highway Program: Fall 2013

Fortunately Saturday the 26th of October dawned cool but sunny: a perfect day for walking and “trash talking”. The right kind of trash talking, that is. Either we’re getting much better at this or those new Adopt-A-Highway signs that recognize St. James’ community contribution have inspired less littering – we finished in two hours flat this time. Our happy team was comprised of Gina Sampson, Barb DeMarsh, Allan

Farrell, Tim Hinds, Barb Shea, Sara Aavmat, Krista Decoste and Michèle Ashby. Fourteen bags of trash and one bag of refundables were collected. Money from the refundables will be donated to the Benevolent Fund. Our trash this time consisted of all the usual items (fast food wrappers and coffee cups, cigarette packages and butts, etc). The only peculiar thing we came across was a perfectly serviceable hose rolling device. Bennett’s Market kindly provided their usual tray of yummy cookies and muffins – always extra enjoyable after a few hours spent walking in the great outdoors.



# Living in Right Relationship with all Creation

by Judith Jowett



On October 4, 2013 a red oak tree was planted by the Sisters of St Martha's at Bethany to express their gratitude to St. James member Anne Camozzi. They said that they were thankful for her assistance with taking information from their Environmental Assessment Study and helping them plan to implement the study. They said her work "helped to plant the information into our hearts, our minds and on our property – especially at Bethany".

Part of the work included finding ways to deepen their understanding about living in right relationship with all of creation. Anne said that a red oak was the choice of her five-year-old granddaughter Lyla because she said it was a "strong, good tree". Anne was pleased with the choice as it is a local species that provides food for wildlife and reflects her values. Several members of the Social Justice committee attended the ceremony to share in the celebration.



## Hard to believe it's been 30 years!

Glenna Quinn

It was the early fall of 1983 when my husband, Willie, and I first walked through the doors of St. James to worship one Sunday morning. We were newly arrived in Antigonish and while our first order of business had been to find reasonable, decent accommodation, our next order of business had been to find a United Church which we could attend. We, before moving to Antigonish, had worshipped at Trinity United Church at Bloor & Spadina in Toronto and were, in fact, married at that church by the then minister, Rev. Bill Phipps, who later became a Moderator of the United Church of Canada.

When we moved to Kingston, Ontario, for graduate school, we attended another United Church – St. Margaret's United Church -- at which the Rev. Douglas Bacon was the minister. So, it was not by accident that we walked into St. James that fall Sunday in 1983 and listened to a sermon by Reverend Webber. Why the United Church one might ask and the answer would simply be that it is because it has traditions and hymns similar to those of the church in which we were both raised.

My story, then, does not begin with the United Church of Canada. It begins in Sierra Leone, West Africa, where I was born, raised and educated in a Christian family with roots spanning generations in the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) Church, now United Methodist Church (UMC). My father, Glenn, and my mother, Sylvia, were raised and steeped in the traditions of this church and so it is not surprising that I spent my high school years in a Christian boarding school run by missionaries, of the United Brethren in Christ (UBC) tradition.

At school, we followed the required high school curriculum but there was tons of religious education as well. Prayer and singing were a huge part of



this. Our missionary teachers taught us all kinds of choruses. We had prayers in our dorms when we woke up each day, prayer before each meal, prayers in the chapel before classes and prayers just before we curled up into our beds at night. Sundays were extra special in terms of worship and prayers. In addition to some of the prayer sessions above, we also had Sunday school before the regular morning service and also something known as “Christian Endeavour” before evening service. You would think that this much praying would turn one off. Well, you would be right if you thought so. We, being young and a bit rebellious, certainly did not see or feel the need to pray that much (my Canadian raised teenage daughter seems to feel much the same way about church and prayer, much to my chagrin) and would have loved to opt out from time to time if we could, but for the strict code of behaviour. It was simply better to pray whenever and wherever than to face the consequences of breaching this code. Today, however, as I reflect on that period of my life, I do so with gratitude for all that was taught to me: the scriptures and the hymns that accompanied much of this scripture. There are very few parables of Jesus for which I do not know a corresponding chorus: for example, The Prodigal Son – “I’ll not pine here for bread”, he cried, “nor starve in foreign lands. My father’s house has large supplies and bounteous are his hands”. The Lost sheep – “There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold, but one was lost on the hills away, far off from the gates of gold” and the ten Lepers, “One came to worship, but where are the nine? Were there not ten cleansed, where are the nine?” Also, I sing along lustily in my heart whenever I hear some of my favourite scripture being read, Mary’s “Magnificat”, for example. “My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour”.

I have been a fairly quiet (not so regular) member of this congregation slipping in and out of church on a Sunday morning but always meeting my obligations to the church. I am often amused,



St. James is fortunate to have Yih Ming Tan (Melvin) and Qian Xian Lin (Cathy) with us since May 2013. They first came to St. James when Melvin’s mother was visiting from Malaysia to see her grandson, Xian Rui Tan (Ethan). Melvin has been living in Canada almost 13 years. He first came to study at King’s-Edgehill. After he graduated from Compu College, he began working as a restaurant manager in Halifax.

Cathy came from China in 2008 to study graphic design at NSCAD and at that time she met Melvin. They married in 2011 and came with their young son Ethan to Antigonish in 2012. Here in Antigonish Melvin works as a sushi chef at Sobeys. Cathy has shared her talents with the planning committee for the Antigonish International Potluck group. Cathy appreciates how there is always something to learn when worshipping at St. James. They all, including Ethan, enjoy the music.

though occasionally a tad annoyed, when I am stopped by well-meaning congregants (usually more recent arrivals at the church) who assume I am a Coady student and, therefore, decide to welcome me as warmly as possible to Antigonish and to St. James. I appreciate the warm welcomes but not the assumptions.

This is a synopsis of my Christian life and I cherish the fact that part of it is tied to the story of the United Church in general, and to St. James, in particular.



## An Update Regarding My Sabbatical

*Rev. Peter Smith*

Within the Fall 2013 issue of Connections, I outlined the reason the church offers sabbaticals to ministers, the process we have followed getting ready for my upcoming sabbatical, and what I hope to accomplish during that time. Since that article the Church Council has finalized plans for my sabbatical replacement while I am away from January 1 until April 1, 2014.

During January we are pleased that Ida Sarty will be leading our services of worship. Rev. Meredith Marple has agreed to provide pastoral care during that month and will be visiting in the hospital and nursing homes on a regular basis. Her contact information will be available from the church office and the Sunday bulletin. She will also be assisting the Church Council in their work during that month as our pastoral charge supervisor.

During February and March the Rev. Norman Marple will be leading our services of worship and providing pastoral care. The Church Council has asked Rev. Norman to also provide some administrative support to the committees and Council and he will be present for our Congregational Annual Meeting in late February. His contact information will be available from the church office and in the Sunday bulletin and he will be keeping office hours during the week.

I know we are blessed to have these individuals sharing in our life together as a congregation during the winter months and I am grateful for their willingness to serve in this way. May God bless their work among us.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### Sale of Pews

This is a follow up on the building of the present church structure in the last edition of Connections.

At a meeting of the congregation held in the old Presbyterian Church on the 29th day of September 1862 pursuant to due notice.

1st Resol. Moved & seconded & passed that the Pews in the new Presbyterian Church at Antigonish be sold by auction to members of the congregation by number.

2nd. Moved ,seconded & passed that all who purchase Pews above the amount of their subscription shall be entitled to six months credit on said excess.

3rd. That no person will be allowed to purchase more than two Pews nor shall any person be allowed to sell or trade away his or her Pew or Pews for payment directly or indirectly and it shall be left to the discretion of the Trustees to decide who shall require more than one Pew for the accommodation of their families.

4th. That members purchasing two Pews shall have one fourth part of the purchase price cut or discounted by 25%.

5th. That all sums of money due for building the new Church either by subscription or by notes of hand be paid up or over to the Treasurer of the building committee on or before the day of the sale of the Pews.

6th. Moved & seconded that the fourth resolution in reference to 25% discount be rescinded. Lost, 11 against 16.



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### *More on the Pews*

A full meeting of the Presbyterian Congregation of Antigonish at this 18th day of November, 1862 held in the new church in pursuance to due notice.

The following Resolutions were moved, seconded and passed:

1st. That the 25% discount to purchasers of two pews as passed a former meeting be rescinded. It was put and passed.

2nd. Pew holders in arrears for Stipend two successive years to the amount of half their Subscription shall there by forfeit their claim to Pews in their possession respectively and after due notice to said Pew holders by the Trustees, then if payment of said arrears be not made, the Trustees shall give two weeks notice of sale and shall sell said Pews to the highest bidder for ready cash, the funds realized there from shall be applied for the purpose of discharging said arrears of Stipend and other debts which the said parties may be owing to the establishment, the balance of any there be to be handed over to the persons whose Pews have been so forfeited.

3rd. That in case any member, a Pew holder by purchase should be leaving the County permanently, such member be allowed to dispose of his or her Pew to any other member of the congregation but not to any person who is not a member of said congregation, the whole transaction to be subject to the approval of the existing Trustees of the congregation.

4th. That a note of thanks be passed in favour of Mr. Alexander Monro for the elegant and substantial manner in which he has finished the inside of the New Church which was fully expressed by a show of hands.

5th. It was agreed that Pew No. 54 be set apart for Mrs. Downie as her choice and the Pew No. 55 be the minister's

Terms of the sale of Pews in the New Presbyterian Church at Antigonish.

Mr. Alex McInnis, auctioneer, who read aloud

the following terms:

That all persons purchasing Pews to any amount exceeding their subscription will be entitled to a credit of nine months on note of hand with approved security. That all persons not subscribers for funds to build the said Church who purchase said at sale shall be required to pay half the purchase price in hand, the remaining half at nine months on note of hand and approved security. Sale to be begin at Pew No 66 and continue round the building.

The resulting auction and sale of Pews netted 1,078.15 pounds



## *Welcome the LeBlanc Family*

**T**he LeBlanc family moved to Antigonish two months ago. They are all originally from Quebec but had spent the past few years in the Annapolis Valley. Alain studied Music in Paris and plays almost every instrument. He also gives music lessons. He organizes activities at the Ecole Pomquet where Willow attends kindergarten. Elena studied nursing in Quebec and is considering finishing her degree at StFX. She is also a registered massage therapist for ten years in Quebec. They are very happy to be here and also to be a part of the church family.



## Holly Tea & Sale

*Barb Gardiner*

The St. James United Church Women (UCW) held their annual Holly Tea and Sale on Saturday, November 16. Because of the ongoing renovations at St. James, St. Ninian's Church graciously offered the use of St. Ninian Place. This location was ideal as the hall and kitchen were spacious, and St. Ninian's has a good-sized parking lot. The crowds were large and the smiles even larger as people enjoyed a delectable selection of baked goods, bargains on the new-to-you and Christmas tables, the excitement as the final moments of the silent auction drew near, and, of course, the delicious luncheon.

Looking back over the past 10 years, this year was definitely the most profitable as the UCW realized over \$5300, surpassing our previous best of \$4900 in 2009. An incredible amount of work was required prior to the sale day, but it was definitely worth it in the end. Over 70 people were needed to have everything ready for the big day, and that's not counting all the work that goes on in homes as people knit, bake and look for items to donate to the sale tables. Most of the UCW members are pressed into service, as well as many people in the congregation.

This year several men were a huge help as they packed their vehicles with boxes from St. James and transported them to St. Ninian's and then back again the following day. Without all the volunteers our major fundraiser would never have happened. Thank you everyone. We hope to see you next year in our newly renovated hall at St. James.



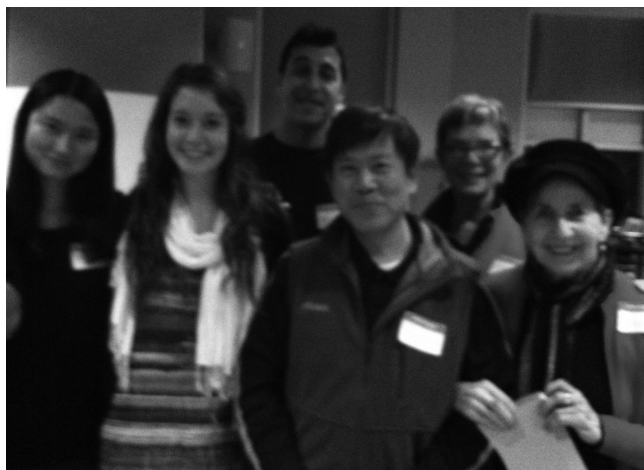
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## Antigonish International Pot Luck Dinner

The People's Place was the scene for the second potluck of the season put on by The Antigonish International Potluck group. Service Learning students from the Nutrition Department helped to coordinate this event. Abbas Jafarnian, a member of the New Glasgow Multicultural Association, shared slides and stories to inspire the Antigonish group. Now that the hall is finished at St. James, the community looks forward to a full potluck in the new year.







*The Maryvale group and Betty Webber are delighted to be back at St. James for the Tuesday hot lunch program.*



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