



# CONNECTIONS

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

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

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*But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead,  
the first fruits of those who have died.*

~ I Corinthians 15:20

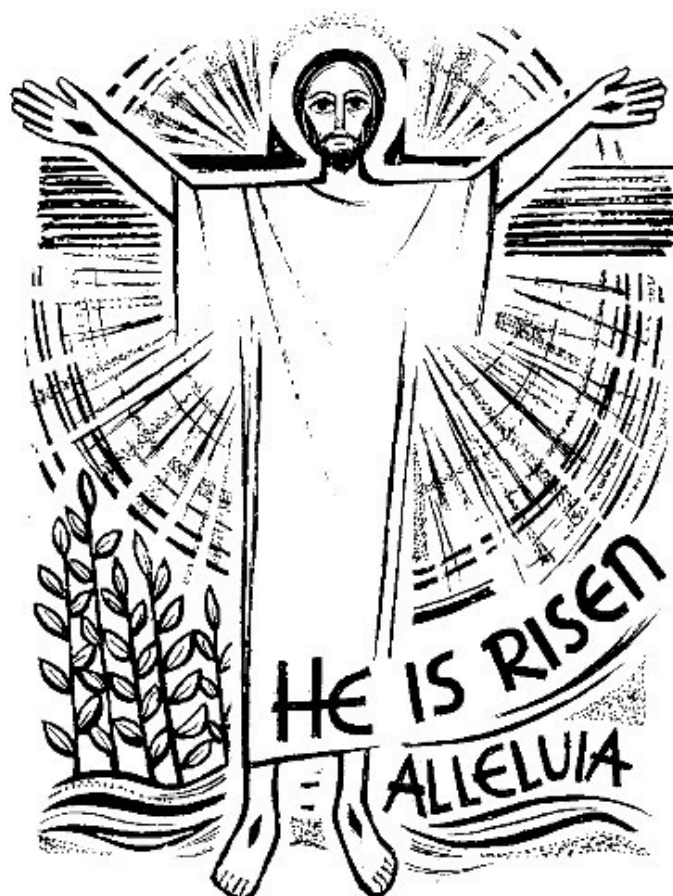
*Dear Friends in Christ,*

**I**t is finished. As Jesus drew his last breath on the cross those around him thought that his ministry, the promise of his life was over, done, and finished. There was a rush to bury him before the Sabbath so there were things that had to be left for later. Which is why early on the third day the women went to the tomb with spices to prepare his body for burial. They came to honour him one final time.

*He is risen.* The angels waiting at the tomb told the women that things were not finished, over, or done because the tomb was empty. They shared the surprising news that the death of Jesus on the cross was not been the end of what God was doing through Jesus. The news of the empty tomb was unexpected and extraordinary. Yet as the message of the resurrection spread something else incredible happened- the world changed for the disciples.

*You are witness to these things.* The good news of Jesus was loudly proclaimed by the disciples who only days earlier had been broken, scattered, and despairing. They told the story of the life of Jesus and his message and also of his death on the cross and rising from the grave. They told what they had seen and more importantly they allowed others to experience the power and promise of the gospel message.

We gather at Easter to celebrate that the tomb is empty. We do so understanding that through the crucifixion and resurrection, God brings to the earth the



promise of salvation and that because Jesus is alive that all of us are invited to share in the forgiveness and grace of God. That good news is ours to hold in our hearts and it is also ours to share with the world.

May this Easter season be a time of renewal and hope for you and your family and may we as a church never stop proclaiming the good news that "Christ is Risen!"

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

# ST. JAMES HOLY BAPTISMS



Harlow Olivia MacDonald, daughter of  
Courtney (Myers) and Kyle MacDonald



Olivia Ida Sinclair, daughter of  
Jillian Sarty and Christopher Sinclair

## *Poems to Inspire*

### ***THIS IS MY CHURCH***

This is my church -  
It is composed of  
people like me.  
We make it what it is.  
It will be friendly if I am.  
It will do a great work if I work  
It will make generous  
gifts to many causes  
if I am a generous giver.  
It will bring others  
into its worship and fellowship  
if I bring them.  
Its seats will be filled  
If I help fill them.  
It will be a church  
of loyalty and love,  
of faith and service,  
if I, who make it what it is -  
am filled with these.  
Therefore, with God's help  
I dedicate myself  
to the task of being  
all these things I want  
my church to be.

## *and Poems to Amuse*

Dear God:

So far today, I've done all right,  
I haven't gossiped, lost my temper,  
been greedy or grumpy, been nasty,  
selfish or over indulgent.  
I'm very thankful for that.

But, in a few minutes, God,  
I'm going to get out of bed.  
And from then on, I'm probably  
going to need a lot more help.

*submitted by Marilyn Swim*

# Sunday School Update



Since September, a new format to deliver Bible lessons to the young people of St. James has commenced. After much consideration by the CF&D committee, it was decided to adopt a “Children’s Worship” style of Sunday School. Under this format, volunteers lead a worship service for the children, which includes songs and prayer. As part of the worship, the adult volunteers tell a Bible story, using simple language, figurines, sandbox, and other props to ignite the children’s imagination and curiosity. After the children hear the Bible story, the volunteers encourage them to wonder and question the story and meaning within it. Next, the children “work” with the story to create meaning from the story in a personal way. For example, they might create a piece of art, a

clay model, or play out their own version of the Bible story. The children will then have the opportunity to share their work with the group, and receive an individual blessing from the lead volunteer. And like all good worship services, this one ends with food! After a snack of goldfish crackers, they join the rest of the congregation in the hall. My favourite part of the service is the children’s spontaneous insights, such as:

*Is it time for goldfish yet?*

*On what day did God create oxygen?*

*Because you need oxygen to make water,  
and you need oxygen to make air.*

*So on what day did He make air?*

*I made a play-dough Jesus driving a big truck!*

*I know this story better than yoooooooo!!!*

*I drew hearts for everyone I love, especially my cat.*

So how do we run the program? Since last spring, we have offered two sessions to train volunteers in the Children’s Worship format of Sunday School. Currently, we have ten active, patient and enthusiastic volunteers who assume one of two roles during the service. The “doorkeeper” helps the children settle to pray and listen to the story, and helps manage some of the behaviours or dynamics during the service. The “storyteller” leads the children through prayer, songs, and the Bible story of the day.

If you would like a fun yet thoughtful role in the church, or would like to learn more about what goes on during Children’s Worship, we would love to hear from you. Please contact a member of the CF&D Committee or myself, Claire MacDonell, for more information.

*In peace and kindness,  
Claire MacDonell  
CF&D Coordinator*





# Holy Communion in the United Church of Canada



The United Church was formed through the union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist Churches in 1925. As a result the theology and practice of the United Church around the celebration of the Lord's Supper is rich in its diversity and application. There are a number of different methods of celebrating the Sacrament which reflect the diversity of the founding denominations. In the United Church, the Session or Council of each congregation is entrusted with the responsibility for overseeing the administration of the sacrament.

The service of worship follows the same order whether communion is celebrated or not. The "Service of the Table" section is excluded on Sundays when Communion is not celebrated. This follows the reformed practice of using a common order of worship for all Sunday Services. The service of the table follows what Jesus did in the upper room in that he "took" the bread, "gave thanks" to God, "broke" the bread, and "gave" it to his disciples. The celebration of Holy Communion always takes place in the response to the word section of the liturgy, and the tradition of the local congregation has been to celebrate on a regular basis (once a month).

## Invitation

The invitation to Communion begins the Service of the Table section of the liturgy. It fulfils a similar function to the Call to Worship in the Service of the Word part of the liturgy. The Invitation is just that, an invitation to the people to come to the table of Jesus Christ to receive the gifts of bread and cup. It is seen as an invitation that echoes the many calls of Jesus to the disciples to follow him.

## Hymn

There is then a hymn sung as people prepare themselves for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. At this time the servers prepare themselves and the table for the distribution of the elements. The hymn usually recounts the actions at the last supper or mentions the celebration of Holy Communion but at certain times a hymn reflecting the liturgical season may be used in place of the communion hymn.

## Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving commonly begins with a responsive introduction and then moves through a series of sections which may include, praise and Thanksgiving, Sanctus (Is 6:1-3) and Benedictus (Mt 21:9), Words of Institution, memorial acclamation, offering, and calling of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis).

## Breaking of Bread & Pouring of Cup. (Fraction)

At this point the bread is broken before the people and the words used refer to Christ's death for us on the cross ("The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, broken for you"). The cup is either filled with grape juice or lifted at this point and again words are said which remind us of the death of Jesus for us. ("The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was poured out for you".) After the fraction there is commonly a short invitation before the distribution reminding the people that the gifts on the table are for them "Come for all things are now ready" (Lk 14:17)

## Sharing of the Bread and Cup

There are many different methods for receiving the Lord's Supper. In some churches the people come and kneel at the rail, others come and dip the

bread in a common cup, and still others are passed the elements by the servers. The common practice at St. James is for the people to remain seated and the elders to pass the elements to them, first bread, then cup. Everyone waits for the whole congregation to receive the element and the word of distribution before partaking.

### **Prayer after Communion**

After the elements have been distributed and taken the service of the table ends with prayer. This ends the service of the table and usually moves us to the closing hymn. In the prayer we give thanks for the table itself.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Communion**

### **Who is invited to partake?**

The Basis of Union of the United Church states that “All may be admitted to the Lord’s Supper who make a credible profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus and of obedience to His Law” (Article XVI) In recent years there has been a discussion within the church on whether or not to allow children (who have not been confirmed) to share the sacrament. The decision at St. James has been to permit children to receive the elements.

### **Why do we sit?**

The disciples sat in the upper room with Jesus and Jesus told the crowds to sit when he fed the multitude. We sit in the pews to recover as closely as possible the atmosphere of the Upper Room when Jesus broke bread and shared the cup with his disciples.

### **Why does someone give us the elements?**

The server takes the trays from the minister and then passes them down the rows. The bread and cups are distributed are given to you by the person sitting next to you. This is our way of remembering Jesus actions of service in the Upper Room through the

washing of feet and his call to all of us to be the servant of each other. During the distribution no one serves themselves. The servers serve the congregation, the minister serves the servers, and then a server serves the minister.

### **Why do we all eat together?**

This is a longstanding reformed tradition which signifies greater community with one another, since at a meal people usually start together. The first moderator of the United Church, Rev. Dr. George Pigeon, used this method at the inaugural service of the United Church to emphasize the equality of the uniting denominations.

### **Why little cups with grape juice and pieces of bread?**

The tradition of using little cups and pieces of bread are from our Protestant heritage. The reformers argued that every person was invited to share in the bread and cup. The distribution of the same bread and grape juice was seen as a representation of the gift of the same Spirit to each individual (1 Corinthians 12). The tiny cups also came about for hygienic reasons.

Grape Juice is part of our temperance heritage and has a history of being a controversial topic in the United Church. The social justice emphasis in the church in supporting the temperance movement (the United Church officially encourages its members to voluntarily abstain from alcohol) led most United Churches to substitute unfermented wine (grape juice) for wine.

### **What do we believe happens when we eat the bread and drink the cup?**

In the United Church we believe as we celebrate communion we are participating with the disciples in the Upper Room. We believe that the risen Jesus is with us as we celebrate, making the event spiritually nurturing and strengthening to us. For us it is the action of celebrating together the Lord’s Supper, not the elements of bread and cup, which are the most important part of the service.

# Words of Hope from Hope

*He spreads snow like a white fleece,  
he scatters frost like ashes,  
He broadcasts hail like birdseed—  
who can survive his winter?  
Then he gives the command and it all melts, he  
breathes on winter — suddenly it's spring!  
Breakfast view when I lived by the sea.  
Breakfast view when I lived by the sea.  
One of my favourite among God's creatures.  
One of my favourite among God's creatures.*

As I sat at my kitchen table this Saturday morning and had a little Quiet Time, I got to the section of the Psalm written above and I determined not to do anything else on my to-do list until I wrote to you, family and friends. I had a visual flash of the Maritimes. Although, I heard it was recently 10°C in the Antigonish area, it may not be so balmy anywhere in your vicinity by the time you read this, if my memory of January serves me well.

## Hello to all.

Thank you for your faithfulness in keeping in contact. Life is busy here—what did I expect as the life of a nursing prof? In addition to the regular life-consuming work of class prep and assignment marking, I seem to have to wait inordinate periods of time for the Internet to download documents and deliver communication. For example, when I started this note this morning it was an hour after I received an email with the treasured last Sunday's service at St. James. I always look forward to sitting with this audio, following along with the bulletin, singing when I remember the words, hearing familiar voices, revelling in the lovely music, and being spiritually nurtured when I listen to the sermon and prayers. (Plus of course, I get to keep up on the announcements.) I probably won't be able to access the recording until tomorrow morning now. Around 0400 h seems to be

about the best time of day for Internet access. As you might guess, I've become less of a night owl than ever here in Haiti.

We now have lots of North American visitors on the mission compound: 13 second-year nursing students from Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) accompanied by a professor, a clinical supervisor and a resident assistant. The latter two are both nurses, too. They have been a special gift to the university since they willingly stepped in to fill an essential gap left when another nursing prof unexpectedly needed to return to USA. They are using an interpreter to teach nursing skills to first and second year students. Fortunately, their schedule allows them to work this in along with their IWU duties. Since the IWU students will be here for one trimester, their help over a somewhat extended timeframe in this instruction is most appreciated.

As a matter of fact, the challenges of the university really keep one on their toes. In early Jan, while our Dean was here (she tries to balance two weeks in Haiti alternately with two weeks at home in Missouri with her husband who cares for the Dean's mother), her lively 99-year old mother suddenly became ill, and despite leaving La Gonave as soon as possible, the Dean was not able to make it home before her mother went to her Maker. Thus, my New Brunswick nursing colleague here, Dawn Wheaton, was asked to act as Dean while the Dean grieves and does the essential things after such an event. Simultaneously, we are minus one Haitian nursing prof who is off on Mat leave until April. Just to add to all the balls that need to be juggled, a work-team of nine persons arrived to "help out". (They had been scheduled to come for some time.) Of course, work-teams require sufficient orientation, and frequently, translators in order to "help-out". Although I can express support and try to think of creative ways to help Dawn, I'm not really of much help in that I need a translator for so many things and have an abysmal lack of knowledge of university infrastructure.

I feel privileged to work alongside Dawn who is fluent in Kreyol, having spent 20 years teaching nursing here in Haiti when there was a diploma nursing program at the hospital. When she returned

to NB more than a decade ago, she spent a number of years teaching in a Community College situation, so she is well experienced in teaching and is a beloved prof here. Her obvious love and care for the students is such an inspiration for me as I struggle to “figure out the system” and function more independently.

There are certainly some similarities between teaching nursing at a university level in NS and teaching in Haiti but there are lots of differences. The big difference for me is working with woefully inadequate textbooks that students can read. The world availability of nursing texts in French are like the proverbial hens’ teeth, as far as anyone here is aware. The instructor resources to accompany such texts are non-existent here, in any language. I find myself feeling like I need to “write the book” for the students and spend an inordinate amount of time (and Internet data \$\$) seeking resources on line that are appropriate for the topic and relevant to this context. Then, too many times, I need to spend time doing Google translate and correcting the French as much as I am able before I use it with the students. (Hence the need to begin the day so early!)

My most recent faux pas was an exam retake for a few fourth year students. Nationally, the passing grade for each course at the university level is 75%! (I was shocked when I first learned that and wondered how-on-earth anyone passes?) In all university courses, for a fee, students have the right to sit a “reprise”, a re-take, for the course. The reprise is an all-or-nothing deal. No class marks, mid-terms, term projects or anything else is factored in the reprise grade. Well, I developed a reprise for the students, and when I went to grade it, I noticed no student was even close to correct in answering one of the short answer questions. I felt sure the question was a fair one. Then, I examined the French and realized there was a term in there I had never seen used before in this context. I wondered if it was just the usual bad-Google-translate, so I looked up the word in my French-English dictionary and realized it actually was a correct word but I was fairly certain that it was not a term that my translator had ever used when we were discussing the topic in class. My translator translates my English into Kreyol. He is not as comfortable

translating into French. (He’s certainly better than me, but that is not saying much.) As I usually do with student quizzes and exams, when I have any questions as to whether I’m missing something in the student’s response, I ask the translator to verbally translate what the student has written into English. Sure enough, he knew the word and knew it was a correct word but admitted it was not a word he had ever used in class. So I decided to throw the question out of the exam and re-calculate the final grade out of the 100%. More work....

The French language is the official language of instruction in Haiti and the national nursing exams that our graduates will write are in French so I have no qualms about requiring students to use French in all their submitted assignments for me. My ex-pat nursing colleagues are totally supportive of me in this requirement and express a wish that they were more comfortable with French. Both of my ex-pat nursing colleagues are long-termers in using Kreyol. I admire their ability to read the French texts and then teach in students’ heart language, Kreyol.

Change of subject: I was able to live 1 ½ months in an idyllic 2-roomed hovel by the sea. Swimming every morning just before dawn and every evening, just before sunset was really-hard-to-take-but-someone-had -to do-it. One early evening on my walk home from the mission compound my iPhone was stolen and my glasses got broken. The mission administration then decided I could no longer live in my preferred residence and I, regretfully and with heavy heart, returned to the compound. I miss the frequent swims and the excellent 10-minute brisk walk that I took 4-6 times daily. As a matter of fact I find it difficult to get sufficient exercise in my current living arrangement. C’est la vie.

Out of respect for you, readers—A.K.A., also known as my family and friends, I need to stop writing and get this sent. This has become more of an epistle than most busy people have time for and I’ll try not to be so long in sending people the next episode of the saga of my sojourn here in this paradoxical paradise.

I surely appreciate your thoughts and prayers, love and support. God’s best to each of you.



# A Little Bit of Heaven



Many of you know me and know my very friendly son William. I thought you might find this recent experience of ours to be an interesting little story of our trip to Nashville and our bad luck followed by good while traveling.

By way of a bit of background for those who may not know, William is a bit of a performer, singing country music wherever he can, with a big white cowboy hat, which he loves to toss in the crowd to the delight of all. He knows the music, the entertainers, their dates of birth, their recordings, and many, many facts which amaze us all. So when our family was trying to plan a getaway for mid winter, and Florida was not available, I thought a few weeks in Nashville would be great for all, especially William.

Plans were made, bookings were researched, and we were anticipating a nice time. But fate had other ideas. University schedule reduced Jermal's availability to three days, so it was decided that it was not worth his time or the cost. So six becomes five. Surgery scheduling for a sick grandmother was finally decided and while it was before the actual time, it was close enough that the first week for two more family members was just too close, and they would stay back to help with the recovery, so we all agreed that five should be three, at least for the first of the two week vacation. Enter a strained meniscus for one of the two remaining boys, and the vacation, at least the first week, was William and I.

Now we have traveled alone together before, but it is a very different kind of trip. Good, but different. So we tried to remain calm and not allow frustration to creep in, but you find yourself thinking about "bad

omens". ( We are of Celtic blood, so those kinds of demons are hiding behind every rock!) Saturday was flying day so we planned to leave late afternoon Friday for Halifax, stay over night and catch a very early flight to Toronto, then a flight to Nashville. Well, the weather had another idea. One of those now famous Nor'easters came in and a two hour leisurely drive made so many times that it can be done on automatic pilot, turned into a four and a half hour ordeal, with slush as far as New Glasgow, and then a very strange frozen snow on the road full of ruts, reducing the average speed to 60 kilometres an hour! Not a good omen, but we took it in stride and tried to get some sleep.

The next morning we get up at five, rushed around, headed to the airport, only to find that, even though we are already checked in, the line for security stretched back beyond the Air Canada check-in area! I have never seen that in forty years of flying out of that airport. We hurried to put our luggage on the belt so we could get in the security line as soon as possible. The belt to carry the luggage away did not work! The "automatic" belt, designed to save time, did not work! A very busy but pleasant Air Canada person came over and fixed it after a while. The security line was now much longer. While In line we watched an agent go up and down the row talking to some people but could not determine if she was looking for people running late. I caught up with her and ask; we were told to go by all the line to security. We with about a dozen others made our way to security, went through that process of throwing out your bottle of water, taking your belt off, walking through the screener, and trying to redress quickly to make the flight.

Rushing up the stairs ( I took the escalator, but stairs sounds better!), we began the long walk to the gate. Wouldn't you know our gate was at the far end of the airport and running is not something I do much of anymore! William and I walked as fast as I could, he carrying my carryon to ease my burden. We can now hear them calling our names, telling us the gate is closing! We have all experienced this at some point I'm sure, but coupled with all the other things leading up to this point, I was really starting to question whether the universe was trying to tell me



something. We got to the gate to find an older couple planning to take our seats, and a nasty agent saying “ we started giving your seats away”. Meanwhile the older couple turned around, looked at us and said,” thanks a lot”! Yet we knew that the agent was really happy we were there. If we had not arrived they would have had to hold up the flight for quite a while to find our luggage and remove it! Since 911 planes can not take off with luggage on the plane that belongs to people who are not on the plane!

The flight to Toronto was uneventful. We arrived, deplaned, and began the next long walk to the other end of the Toronto airport. Not like the full length of the Halifax airport; much longer walk. Fortunately we had time, but we had to also clear customs. It is now a much more civilized process, funny little blue sheets being replaced by a very efficient electronic machine. Put in your passport, answer a few questions, pick up a printout and move to a customs agent. All good, and if the walk had not been so long I would have thought the universe was back on my side!

The plane to Nashville was small, two seats on each side. Two big guys side by side do not have enough room to be comfortable. Luckily after takeoff a very nice flight attendant offered that I could move up to the front where there were two empty seats! That made the flight much more comfortable for both of us. Arriving in Nashville we waited until the plane emptied out before deplaning, because we were now seated far apart and I wanted to be sure William was ok. He was and we started our next long walk to the luggage carousel. When we got to carousel #7, I was surprised to see no one there, and no luggage. I thought by now all the bags would be down and people would be collecting them. We waited around a bit, then realized something was wrong. Went to the information desk, who sent us upstairs to the AC desk. There was no one there and the agent in the next desk told us, you guessed it, to go down to information! I went back down, he paged the agent for AC and eventually they showed up and we got our bags. Just another little glitch.

Got a rental car, found it had no GPS, but the phone got us where we needed to go. Great resort, great rooms, but as you can imagine we were very

tired after all this. We found a Cracker Barrel restaurant for a very late lunch, went home and napped for a few hours. Later we got up and made our way to a grocery store, did some shopping and went to bed early. I had asked Will if he would like to go to church the next morning, and he said he would. I had found a Methodist church a few miles away with the help of my Yelp app, and told him if I was not too tired I would go. About 9:45 I was tapped on the shoulder by a fully dressed William, all ready to go. The church was at least 20 minutes away, and I was not even up at 9:45. Service started at 10:30, and to top it all off I was still tired and suffering digestive upset from a day of grabbing a bite here and there between long walks.

What to do? I was feeling awful, but William was all ready to go. I told him there was no way we could be on time, but I decided I had to go, and I figured God would rather us late than not at all! We drove for twenty minutes, arrived in front of a beautiful brick building built circa 1880 or so, and about thirty steps above the street! We made the climb and came in to service already about a third gone. The building inside was beautiful, with a massive pipe organ, gorgeous dark woods everywhere and more stained glass than most European cathedrals ! (Bit of an exaggeration there!)

The seats were straight and hard, (I missed my cushion which is always waiting for me when I get to St. James), but people smiled and made room for us, and we felt welcomed. The Minister, fully garbed in the holy purple of the Lenten season, presented as almost “ lofty”, but spoke in a very comforting manner. As I looked around I realized that the average age of the parishioners was probably 35, much younger than I am recently accustomed to. During Prayers for the People, individuals stood and asked for prayers for new borns, newly weds, cancer patients, and they were all so comfortable and seemed to be a very close community.

When the sermon began I was struck by the gentle, friendly and caring way this minister, a woman in the later part of her career, could quote and relate scripture to our lives today, and at the same time make it very clear that we needed to take responsibility

for our own actions. She had a wonderful ability to make the scriptures real, relevant, and made us want to do better. Using humour and stories, she held the congregation's attention, a bit their friend, a bit their teacher, a bit their parent, but always their minister. She was truly a gifted preacher.

As I sat and reflected on my past few days, my many troubles, all of which are clearly “first world problems” (which means they are not really problems at all compared to what the rest of the world suffers), I felt a wonderful feeling of contentment and wellbeing. Somehow the fates had conspired to get me to this wonderful place, amongst these wonderful people, to listen to this wonderful preacher, and to enjoy this wonderful life. There are few experiences like this that are very special. I think it was a small miracle!

You can be sure that I'll be back next week, and you can bet I will arrive early so as not to miss any of the joy this special place offers.

*God Bless, Brian MacLeod*

## Who decides when Easter will be each year?

Unlike Christmas which is always the same day on the calendar, Easter moves from year to year. That's because the early church tried to keep it close to the time described in the gospels as being near the Jewish festival of the Passover.

The exact method of deciding the date of Easter is quite complicated but basically it usually works out that Easter falls on the Sunday after the first full moon in spring, and when the first full moon is a Sunday it's the next Sunday.

That means that Easter can come as early as March 22 and as late as April 25. Normally though, our celebration of the resurrection of Jesus falls on the first week of April.

This year though we are a bit earlier as the full moon after the start of spring (March 20) which is actually March 31 this year, which is why Easter falls on April 1st.

## The St. James Men's Club



An “unsung hero” of our St. James faith community, the Men's Club has for decades worked humbly and tirelessly to make sure that our church building and grounds are kept in great shape. In the past year, their fundraising efforts have enabled the purchase of a new snowblower and lawnmower, which were sorely needed. Local initiatives, like school breakfast programs, have also benefited from sustaining donations from the Men's Club, which in this way helps to improve educational outcomes for the youth of our community. The popular Lobster Dinner is the main social event of the year, and a perennial fundraising success, made possible through generous contribution of time and effort by St. James men.

We meet in Christian fellowship on the last Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m. in the St. James hall. A delicious and satisfying meal is prepared by a few capable volunteers, followed by what is usually a brief meeting to discuss club business and finances.

Once business is out of the way, the men are presented with a reliably interesting local speaker. The topics are pleasingly varied. In the last few months, we learned from a slideshow presentation by local historian Bruce MacDonald of Nova Scotian enlistees in World War I; Chief Paul Prosper of the Paq'tnek first nation spoke at length of the challenges and opportunities facing his people, as well as on Mi'kmaq spirituality. Dr. Ronald Charles gave an enrapturing outline of his new book on slavery in Biblical times, specifically looking at what history can tell us when we try to see it through the eyes of the oppressed.

If you are interested, come on out at the end of the month. You will be warmly welcomed. Contact Bob Murray for more information.



# The Annual Lobster Dinner



Once again the St. James Men's Club hosted a successful lobster dinner, with back-up assistance from many members of the UCW. This is a highly-anticipated rite of spring which for some reason always seems to be accompanied by an unanticipated snow event. No matter - the hundreds of satisfied customers (and workers) who brave the elements to attend are testimony to the popularity of the dinner. Thank you, one and all, for proving once again that the Maritime appetite for seafood is surpassed only by the enthusiasm of the St. James Men's Club volunteers who continue with this springtime tradition.





# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## A Hymn for Sailors & Travellers

A Presbyterian Book of Praise published in 1897 was found among the effects of the late Jimmy MacPherson and given to St. James for our archives. In looking through we were intrigued by a hymn section entitled Special Occasions - Sailors and Travellers which we have printed below.

Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid

1. Fierce was the wild billow,  
Dark was the night;  
Oars laboured heavily,  
Foam glimmered white;  
Trembled the mariners,  
Peril was nigh:  
Then said the God of gods.  
'Peace! It is I'
2. Ridge of the mountain-wave,  
Lower thy crest!  
Wail of the tempest-wind,  
Be thou at rest!  
Sorrow can never be,  
Darkness must fly,  
Where saith the Light of Lights,  
'Peace! It is I'
3. Jesus, Deliverer,  
Come Thou to me;  
Soothe Thou my voyaging  
Over life's sea:  
Thou, when the storm of death  
Roars, sweeping by,  
Whisper, O Truth of Truth,  
'Peace! it is I'

Anatolius, tr.J. M. Neal

The Hymn tune is EUROCLYDON by G.W. Torrance. It starts out minor and changes to major for the words 'Peace! It is I'.



## Podcast for the Faithful

If you have already discovered the wide world of podcasts that are out there, then you will already be fully aware of the incredible variety of topics they cover. You are likely also nearly overwhelmed at the sheer number of them, and wondering how you can possibly find the time to listen to everything that interests you!

This has been my (self-inflicted) predicament since discovering the endless proliferation of quality podcasts about history, politics, and random trivia - I can't seem to get enough! In the work I do, much of which is solitary in nature, a person can get a lot of listening done in a day. I think that I am slowly coming to realize, however, that there would not be time enough in a thousand lifetimes to appreciate all the fascinating content that is out there.. not to mention all that printed material I've promised myself I will someday get to!

With this in mind, I've learned that I need to make a conscious effort to set real limits on listening to some types of podcasts, (like daily news programs, detailed hours-long excursions into ancient history, or political panel discussions and debates, all of which I love), I unfortunately have not been giving as much



attention as I would like to matters of spirituality, to exploring my faith in God, or my love for Jesus. At this rate, I am afraid that I may any day reach the end of my life spectacularly informed about the Persian empire's court intrigues, or the personalities populating the White House, but no closer to the eternal salvation that should be the focal point of our lives on earth.

I suppose that I could just turn off the shiny device and listen to my own thoughts every now and then, and sometimes I do just that. More and more though, I've been trying to develop a balance between the secular media I follow and media that comes from an explicitly Christian perspective.

One favourite podcast of mine that I have been following for a few months, and would like to share with our St. James congregation is The Christ-IN Culture, a project of a couple pastors in Nebraska. Every episode examines an artifact in today's seemingly secular pop culture landscape and shows that Christ is so much a part of who we are that he is present in all that we create. Subjects of recent episodes have focussed on topics as varied as the music of Eminem, the Walking Dead TV series and the books of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Every episode begins with the following introductory monologue, to give an idea of what one may expect.

"Ever since I was a small boy, I've been obsessed with movies, books, and music. But as I grow older, I've begun to realize that these things increasingly miss the mark of fulfilling who we are meant to be. But they seem to have a common theme: they point us to a greater story, a greater adventure, a greater love, a greater joy. On this show, we dive into our favourite themes and songs, books and movies, so we can begin our discussion with what our fascination with these stories actually reveal: A desire for something more. A desire for the unknown. A desire for love. A desire for God."

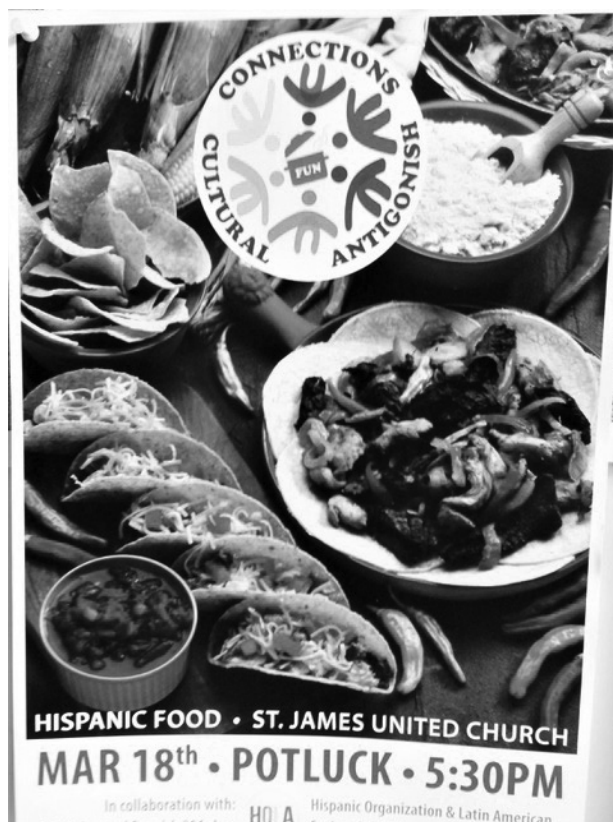
There are so many podcasts that Christians can really appreciate, you are sure to find one that speaks to you. If you are new to this, as I was not that long ago, I would be happy to get you started.. see Chad or Sarah after service on Sunday. Happy listening!

*Chad Brazier*

## Cultural Connections & St. James: A Community Working Together

I just wanted to thank everybody involved with Cultural Connections Antigoneish for organizing a fantastic community event yesterday, and all my students for all the hard work they have done on their part as well. I was there with my family, and we all had a wonderful time. The food was excellent, and the company great. Thank you, also, for bringing decorations and the music. Last but not least, I would like to thank Arlynn McGrath and Service Learning for making the connection between the community and our Spanish program. I hope that we will have the opportunity to work together again. Maybe we should aim at a Hispanic Dinner every year?

*All the best, Wojciech*



# Arabic For Beginners: Not As Hard As You Would Think

“Every time I saw Arabic in script, it looked like a different language from one style of script to another. Now, I can recognize and even read the words!” This was how one student of Arabic expressed her satisfaction in having learned to read and write words and sentences in Arabic script. It’s been nearly 3 months, but students in Arabic 297 were unanimous that learning the script slowly is the best way to remember and use it. It may be challenging, but, as students put it, “It’s also fun.”

“I wouldn’t have expected to find so much pleasure in practicing writing,” said one student. “I’m even reading English from right to left now,” another said, jokingly. And it’s heightening students’ awareness of English pronunciations and improving their English penmanship.

Of course, they haven’t been learning just the script. There’s vocabulary, conversation, and culture alongside. Culture, of course, includes a certain style of humour, and I found an appreciative audience for my stash of Middle Eastern jokes, such as this one: “Hodja was on his way to the market with a basketful of vegetables which he had loaded on his donkey. Halfway there, the donkey suddenly stopped. Hodja tried to coax it to move forward again but the animal would not budge. In anger and desperation, Hodja began to belabour it with a stick. People began to gather around them. ‘Why are you beating the poor creature?’ asked one man. ‘Stop beating it at once!’ ordered a second man. ‘What a cruel man you are!’ said a third. Hodja gave his donkey an admiring look. ‘If I had known you had so many relatives to defend you, I would never have hit you!’ he said. ‘I see you come from a large and opinionated family.’”

Joking aside, it’s very satisfying for this instructor to see her students thriving and enjoying learning. After all, everything becomes a lot easier when we enjoy it. When asked if they recommend the course to others, students answered with a resounding “Oh, yes!” And, having gotten over the phase of feeling daunted by the prospect of learning Arabic, if they have the chance to go on and learn more, they will.



*The strength of our musical offerings is one of the many strengths of St. James United Church. Visitors from the community are always welcome to join us.*



*Hee-Jung Choi continues to enrich the congregation of St. James United Church with her many gifts. Through the Lenten season the women’s chorale sang one of her recent arrangements: If We Don’t Praise*

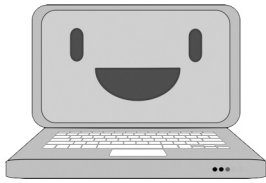
So, if you’ve been thinking you’d like to learn some Arabic, don’t be put off by fearing it may be too hard. Speak to Linda Darwish about registering for the next course, which is scheduled for Fall 2018. Remember what just about every student said: “It’s not as hard as I expected. It’s fun, though!”

(More Arabic humour)

“Mulla Nasruddin was in love. After sneaking around for months, he finally asked the girl to marry him. She agreed, and the next day, Mulla went to meet her father for the first time. ‘So, young man,’ her father said. ‘I hear that you would like to become my son-in-law.’ ‘Not really,’ Mulla said. ‘But if I marry your daughter, I don’t see how I can avoid it.’”



# Computer Etiquette Tips



Two suggestions for sending emails out to groups ... If you send an email to a group using the “To” line in your address box, you are opening up everyone whose address appears on that email to viruses, worms, spam, and other nasty things from the computers of everyone else on that email thread. To quote Wikipedia, “Many viruses and spam programs are now able to sift through mail files and address books for email addresses.” Even if you practise safe computing and have good virus protection, there’s no guarantee that everyone else in the address list does! It’s much safer (and good computer etiquette) to use the “Bcc” option (found on the drop down menu by the “To” you usually use), thus hiding everyone’s addresses from others on the email. That way no one else sees the other email addresses (which some people may prefer to keep private anyway) or receives anyone else’s responses.

Fun fact – this dates from typewriter and carbon copy days. “Bcc” stands for “blind carbon copy”. “Cc” stands for plain “carbon copy” and is used when you’re writing to one person, but truly need/want others (usually just one or two) to be aware of the subject matter. Remember slapping that typewriter carriage back at the end of every line?

The second point is this – unless it’s absolutely necessary, don’t use “reply all”. Remember that some of your correspondents are on numerous group email lists dealing with multiple issues. If every time they receive an email everyone uses “reply all” to respond, they can end up with over fifty or a hundred email responses in a day – that they really don’t need to see. Especially jokes, etc. Generally speaking people don’t need to know how others respond to a joke, or whether everyone else is baking cookies or squares for that meeting. Unless it serves a real purpose – please don’t inflict dozens of responses on other correspondents!

# It’s Yard Sale Time Again



Spring has sprung and that means yard sale season is just around the corner. ST. JAMES UCW will be holding their annual SPRING YARD SALE on Saturday, April 28th, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. I’m sure a lot of you have started gathering no-longer-wanted items in anticipation of getting them out of your house and into someone else’s. You know the old saying, ‘One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.’ We are now accepting donations up until Friday, April 13th. That allows us time to sort through everything and price it.

We accept the usual yard sale items: household goods, toys, furniture, seasonal items, etc. Please NO CLOTHING or OUT-OF-SEASON items. Donations must be in GOOD WORKING CONDITION, CLEAN and ALL PIECES INCLUDED. We no longer accept older-style tv’s, printers, computers, or keyboards as they just do not sell. We ask that you check with Barb Gardiner at 863-1641 to arrange a drop off date for larger items as we don’t have the room to store them for any length of time.

The church (back door) will be open on weekdays: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. If you have any questions, please call Barb at the above number. Thank you for your donations. We appreciate your generosity, time and effort in getting them to us.

## Connections Challenge...



**H**ow many of these people can you identify from this circa 1900 photograph of the St. James Sunday School? We can identify the first girl from the left (next to the boys) in the front row as Mabel (Turnbull) Barter, born in 1893.

Drop a note off at the church office or contact Joanne Mackenzie (choir) if you can identify any of these children and we'll publish what we've learned in the next edition of Connections.



*The congregation is always delighted when Kenji Omae contributes to the worship services at St. James United Church.*



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