



# CONNECTIONS

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

By the Outreach & Communications Committee

*The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep  
darkness, on them has light shone.*

- Isaiah 9:2

## *Christmas 2019*

Dear Friends in Christ,

A couple of weeks ago we put up our Christmas tree. As Hope and I unwrapped the ornaments to go on the tree there were a flood of memories. Some of the ornaments have been given to us, others Hope made in school, and there is even a set which were added last year as a surprise. The decorations each have a story and we relived the joy and delight of years past as we put them up.

Christmas is like that. As we draw closer to the day we are reminded of past concerts and gatherings, we think of the people we have shared the season with, and we remember. Christmas is a time for memories and for traditions, as we look back to the familiar and wonderful story of Jesus being born so long ago.

We had to put new lights on the tree this year. The old ones were deemed to be unsuitable and so other ones were considered, found, and strung. They go with the decorations from before but they also add something new which makes our tree this year unique and special.

Christmas is like that as well. For we celebrate each year not simply what has happened but also



what is happening. Yes, a birth took place in a stable, the angels sang, and the shepherds came to see so many years ago but the arrival of Jesus and all that means for the world is still being experienced in the lives of those who have faith.

So this year I would invite you to practise your traditions, sing your favourite carols, and let the joys of the past enrich the season. I would also invite you to open your heart to the new things which God is doing this Christmas.

May God bless you, your family, and our community of faith.

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



# Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday, December 24

4:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at  
St. David's United Church in Cape George.

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Service at  
St. James United Church.

9:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion Service at  
St. James United Church.

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

## How to Live Thankfully in the World

This Thanksgiving people were invited to share the  
ways in which they were going to live thankfully  
within this wonderful world God has placed in our  
hands. Below are some of the responses to help us to  
live with respect in creation.

- Be Generous
- Repair not replace
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle - stop buying stuff
- Embody God's special gifts of human love
- Solar power
- Bike more
- Stop using single use plastic
- Recognize that it is a good day (and you don't  
need anything else)
- Voting
- Be thankful and grateful
- Offer your assistance to all neighbours and  
friends when needed
- Walk instead of drive
- Building a greenhouse using more local  
produce
- Switching to an eco-friendly laundry detergent
- Smash Capitalism (how about sharing instead  
of buying and selling?)

# From the Archives

As we approach our Annual Meeting here is a snapshot of  
the congregation's life 98 years ago as reported by the  
Clerk of Session A.C. Thompson 98 years ago.

Session of St. James Church for the year ending Decem-  
ber 31, 1921

It is our privilege once again as a Session to submit our  
annual report for the year closed. And in the first place we  
would express our grateful thanks to God the Great Head of  
our Church for the wonderful blessings we as a congregation  
have enjoyed during the year.

The general work of the church has been carried along  
quietly and we trust with encouraging results. We have had  
the addition to our communion roll, but in numbers its about  
where it did this time last year, that is we added 2 by Cer-  
tificate and 11 by Profession of Faith – 13 in all, but 6 were  
removed by certificate and 4 by death. The Sacrament of  
the Lord's Supper was celebrated 4 times during the year  
with a fairly good attendance at each. And the Sacrament  
of Baptism was administered to 2 children during the year.  
.Sorrow in different forms came to some of our people and  
to also exercised the Session would extend our sympathy  
and prayers and the hope that as a people we may realize  
that we are in the hands of one who is deeply interested in  
our wellbeing. We sincerely thank all those who have a deep  
interest and are giving themselves so faithfully to the work of  
the church. And especially to the Supt. and teachers of the  
Sunday School. This is a work that necessitates a good deal  
of sacrifice on their part and I am afraid we do not appreciate  
it as I am sure the Great Head of the Church does.

The Session would most heartily express its appreciation  
of the excellent services so cheerfully and Faithfully rendered  
by the Choir which adds so much pleasure and profit to the  
services of the sanctuary. We are also glad to know that the  
funds necessary to meet all obligations notwithstanding the  
considerable advance on the budget. Mrs. McKeigan who  
has just completed collecting for the Bible Society reports  
\$52.70 eleven dollars of which was contributed by the Bap-  
tist brethren. And in conclusion it only remains for us as a  
Session to thank all who have helped in any way to advance  
the Kingdom in our midst and as we look forward to another  
year may we decide that with God's help we will consider it a  
great privilege to be workers with Him in doing what we can  
to uphold the Cause.

# GUESS WHO CAME TO DINNER?

We are so pleased to announce that 2019's  
"Guess Who's Coming To Dinner?" event  
was another unqualified hit! 24 guests were fed by  
5 gracious hosts this year. Bread was broken and  
fellowship enjoyed. Lip-smacking meals were con-  
sumed by old friends and new. This event is so much  
fun! One host stated "We love GWCTD? and look  
forward to it every year. We always have such inter-  
esting guests full of wild stories and fantastic tales of  
adventure. Amazing the things we learn about and  
from each other when a meal is shared in hospital-  
ity." What more can we add? Except perhaps that  
we'd love to see more folks participate next year.  
Whether as hosts or guests, this event is open to ev-  
eryone and is a truly wonderful way to meet other St  
James' "family members". Special thanks to all our  
congenial host families (two and four legged) and  
those who provided entertainment ... William!



## 2019's Success Story



# Mission & Service

Globally, human trafficking is the third most  
prevalent type of organized crime (after  
drugs and the arms trade). Within India, the  
national government reports that a child goes  
missing every eight minutes. Mission & Service  
partner with the Church of North India in tack-  
ling the issue with an anti-human trafficking pro-  
gram. The program educates communities and  
community leaders about trafficking, rescues  
those who have been trafficked, and provides a  
safe haven and support for those rescued. Japhet  
Ndhlovu, staff with the United Church of Cana-  
da, recently visited this partner and says:  
*Children, especially girls and young women I  
met, told me they were taken from their homes  
and sold in faraway places for sexual exploita-  
tion and to work in bonded labour. The agents  
deceived their parents with promises of educa-  
tion, a better life, and money. Instead, traffickers  
put children to work in brick kilns, in carpentry  
units, as domestic servants, or as beggars. Some  
are the victims of organ harvesting. The Church  
of North India offers support and loving care  
to these children so they can reclaim the child-  
hoods that were taken from them.*







## HOLLY TEA An Annual Pre-Holiday Tradition

The much-anticipated annual Holly Tea and Sale was held by the St. James UCW on Saturday, November 16, 2019.

The weather was far more wintry than usual for the first part of November and so, for the comfort of the early-birds eager to take part in what has become a seasonally favourite activity, we opened the doors a bit early.

As usual the hall was quickly packed with happy, smiling faces enjoying our delicious luncheon of sandwiches and sweets. Baked goods, the Christmas room and jewellery table, as well as the great bargains on the new-to-you table are all so popular at this time of year. The silent auction always has wonderful items on which to bid, some beautiful, some practical and some just plain delicious.

The children are never left out of the fun and were entertained with decorating cookies, doing a craft, and enjoying a lunch of sandwiches, juice, and cookies.

We had plenty of volunteers, although it took many phone calls to find them. This is frequently a problem, and the UCW would love to have more able-bodied helpers to make the day run smoothly.

Our profits were down this year by about \$860, a sizeable amount, but we still brought in \$4778 after expenses which is a very respectable amount.

Everyone, workers included, enjoyed themselves. We are so appreciative of everyone's help and donations. Bless you all and may you enjoy a wonderful Christmas with your family and friends.

## PEOPLE'S SCHOOL ON POVERTY (Part 3)

### Recommendations & Conclusions

In the last edition of Connections we looked at recommendations addressing the specific poverty related issues identified in the Antigonish Poverty Reduction Coalition's People's School on Poverty Abstract. Here are some further general recommendations and the report's conclusion.

#### The Hub Model

One of the most common recommendations across categories has been the implementation of a hub model for services. This model is based on the concept that "every door is the right door". It understands that poverty is multi-faceted and is influenced by many factors that extend beyond financial status. When all related services are in the same physical space, someone who is accessing services does not need to deal with the difficulties of navigating which is the right service, where it is, how to access it, etc. Instead, someone can go to a hub, and be directly helped in whatever way is most appropriate for them. It also eases communication among service providers, and uses a lens that understands that people face a complexity of barriers and difficulties which require wraparound services.

Throughout the sessions, many versions of a physical hub model were introduced. One version suggested an immediate need space which would provide a few spaces of emergency housing, a food bank/community meal space, and a community navigator who could then help with ongoing services.

Another version suggests a service centre that includes all ongoing service providers in a single building, including non-governmental organizations and government services. This may include but is not limited to: employment services, social assistance, child and family services, the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Asso-

ciation, A Roof over Your Head, the Naomi Society, and more.

Finally, there were many suggestions of increasing services and options in spaces that already serve as informal community hubs, such as adding a community navigator to the People's Place Library in town or adding a food bank or pantry to community centres and/or churches in Pomquet, Upper Big Tracadie, and Paqtneke.

There are practical difficulties to implementing a hub model, not the least of which is finding a physical building to occupy. In the current absence of such a building, having a virtual hub where all the contact information, clear expectations, and locations and hours of each service are clearly outlined and organized could be incredibly helpful. Additionally, in the creation of a community hub, it's important to ensure that a feedback model is implemented, and work is done to ensure that pieces which are not in the hub are not forgotten or dropped. The service 211 is a newer service which works to connect people to the services they wish to access, but many people don't know of this service, how to use it, or may feel uncomfortable accessing it.

#### Recommendations to Service Providers

It was clear throughout all the community sessions that real structural changes are needed in order to rid our communities of poverty. While advocating for structural change that addresses racism, sexism, and capitalist inequality, community members can access programs and services to help alleviate the effects of poverty in immediate need. Community members identified a number of qualities which make these programs and services more successful. These qualities are outlined below.

According to our communities, successful poverty reduction programs and services are:

#### Inclusive

Programs should be designed in such a way that people do not feel they can't 'qualify' for them, or that there is suspicion they are 'taking advantage of anything'. People should be able to access services and programs with no questions asked. This is par-

ticularly important when dealing with Black, African Nova Scotian, and Indigenous persons, who are more likely to be questioned for their right to be there based on racist social assumptions and stereotypes.

#### Accessible

Programs and services should consider how to serve clients with limited access to transportation, and how their hours of operation may limit accessibility to the service. They should also have physically accessible spaces that accommodate and welcome everyone.

#### Transparent

Anyone accessing a service should know exactly what to expect from that service and receive it accordingly. There should be clear information of services and expectations in easy to access spaces. Clear communication lines between service providers and those accessing services should be defined and easy to find.

#### Connected and Cooperative

Many programs and services have limitations, but they should be ready to refer people to other relevant services and programs that can help them in other capacities. Services and programs should be aware of and in communication with other organizations in order to cooperate and help people navigate the complexities of services.

#### Funded

While it seems obvious, the most successful programs and services are those with paid staff and funded initiatives. Volunteer based programming is subject to burnout and is less sustainable.

#### Respectful

Services and programs which make people feel singled out, pitied, or looked down on are disrespectful and make it difficult for people to access them. Events and programs may offer opportunities to help out, which gives people a feeling of ownership and participation, which may make it more likely for them to accept free admission/meals/etc. This

should be optional and people should be able to access events and programs for free, regardless.

**Conclusion**

Poverty is a reality in our communities. This is well-known, although sometimes there is a reluctance to admit it. While community members have been working hard on creating programs and services to help ease the burdens of living in poverty, at the end of the day, it is clear that community members need more. By increasing communication, creating more inclusive programming, and continuing to advocate for legislative reform, community members hold the power to create stronger communities and make people’s lives healthier, easier, and more fulfilling. The services and programs identified by community are working and can be improved, but actions towards eradicating poverty must be multi-level. The root causes of poverty, which include racism, sexism, colonialism, and capitalism directly impact the people of our communities, and must be addressed at a systemic level in order to actually eradicate poverty in our communities.

**Sad Fact**

According to Statistics Canada, Nova Scotia has the highest overall poverty rates in the country. And, in contrast to all other provinces, our child poverty rates are on the rise, with about one in six Nova Scotian children living in poverty in 2017. Please keep this in mind as we approach the “holiday season” and give generously to the local Food Bank and other front-line poverty organizations! Give the gift of cheer where it's most needed this Christmas.

**Memorial Registry of Children Who Died at Canadian Residential Schools**

On September 30, 2019, The United Church of Canada was part of a ceremony to publicly remember those children who did not come home from residential schools.

Call to Action 72 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called for a memorial register of children who died at residential schools, so that their lives and names will never be forgotten. Following consultation with Elders, the National Centre for Truth Reconciliation released the first group of names at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, QC on September 30. These 2,600 names include those of 240 children who died in 14 schools run by The United Church of Canada.

Bernice Salteaux of the National Elders’ Council, Cathie Cunningham of the National Indigenous Council, and General Secretary Nora Sanders attended the ceremony on behalf of the United Church.

Sanders says that for the United Church, “this is a time to publicly honour those children who did not return home from the schools we ran, and the terrible loss that their families suffered. We recognize the pain that seeing and hearing their names will cause for school friends who remember them from childhood, as well as for relatives, including those who never had the chance to know them.”

The National Student Memorial Register is available online. It contains the names of students who died away at residential schools and the name of the school. It will not contain any other information. If you are a relative and want to find more information, you can contact the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to receive it.

The names of many children are still to be found. If you have information on missing children not on the list, you can provide that on a confidential basis directly to the Centre.

How can you participate in this act of reconciliation?

- Remember, if you are a non-Indigenous person, that this act of reconciliation offers both healing and hurt to those most affected. Please travel humbly and with kindness as you strive for reconciliation and justice.
- Pray for the children who did not return home, their friends, families, and communities. Pray also for our church to remember and atone for the role we played in the deaths of these children. You may wish to use the Memorial Prayer for Children of This Land offered by Indigenous Ministries.
- Read the names of the children who did not come home. Prayer or ceremony may help you to do this in a good and respectful way.

As residential school survivors encounter this information, the registry, and see or hear the names of those lost, please know that many, many will be gently offering their prayers.

**Memorial Prayer for Children of This Land**

(offered by the Indigenous Ministries of the United Church of Canada)

Great and Heavenly Spirit,  
God of compassion, healing and comfort,  
We lift up in prayer the sacred lives of the children, some now known to us, all known to you, who died in residential schools.

We lift up in prayer the sacred lives of the children who went missing from these schools and whose fates are unknown to those who held them most dear.

We grieve the loss of so many thousands of these little ones, and we grieve especially their loss so far away from home.

We grieve the loss of youth with so much potential. These were children of this place, children of our land. The loss of their giftedness is our collective loss.

We lament how long their families have had to live with unanswered questions.

Hear our prayers:

for those who were not informed of their children’s deaths at all, or on a timely basis;

for those who were not told of where their daughters and sons had been buried;

for those who have long hoped that a child who went missing somehow survived and had a good life – even as they may have also feared the worst.

We lament our complicity in the loss of these children. As members of a church which ran residential schools, we seek your help as we look to redress the many ways in which our church failed these Indigenous children, their families, and their communities. We pray that your reconciling love will teach us how to create true bonds of community and understanding as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples today.

We lift up with gratitude the efforts of all those who are seeking to honour the lives of the children who died, as well as the children whose fates are unknown, through ongoing research and acts of remembrance.

We ask for your continued guidance of them as they work to uncover the stories of the lost. We understand how precious this information is, and how vital it is to the healing of so many families and communities.

Bless those who are preparing to honour the children with sacred ceremonies and those who work to protect burial sites, in keeping with the traditions of Indigenous peoples across this land.

We pray for the families of these children and for all who loved them. Envelop them in the warmth of your infinite care and give them peace.

Inspire all of us with energy, wisdom, and commitment to the loving pursuit of the truth which will heal all of us in our brokenness and lead to reconciliation with our neighbours across this land.

Amen.

*[taken from a news release by the Moderator of the United Church of Canada dated Sep 26, 2019]*



# FINANCIAL NEWS for 2019

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all members of St. James. As we come down to the crunch time to balance the books for the end of the year we find for the first time in many many years that we are, at the end of November, in a deep deficit position. Offerings are running on par with last year, but as everyone can attest to in their own households, expenses are rising while the income is not. St. James offers many programs and projects all the year through and for us to continue to be able to do this we need to examine our income level. The members of the PAR program help with a constant flow of money all year long even if they cannot be there. Presently we have 85 PAR members and 74 envelope givers. Anyone who would like envelopes or to move to PAR can check with the secretary in the Church office any morning. The following are the numbers going into the bulletin for Sunday, Dec 15, 2019.

Offering Last Week \$3,125 Year - To - Date Offering \$150,572  
Required for Budget \$3,915 Year -To - Date Budget \$191,907

The offering for last week reflects the money received from the congregation through donations put on the offering plate and through PAR. The required for budget amount is the total collection needed to break even, if all budgeted activities took place.

The year – to - date offering is the actual amount that our congregation has donated so far in 2019, to the end of November. The year – to - date budget amount is the required amount needed for all budgeted activities to take place this year as of the end of November, 2019.

To the end of November, St. James is in a financial deficit position in the amount of (\$24,590) which is more than at this time last year. As we go into the holiday season we would ask that you consider this problem. Every dollar counts.



## Scott Williams

Scott Williams has been singing in the tenor section of our choir at St. James for many years, but his association with St. James goes way back to his childhood and through his family, his connection with Antigonish goes back even farther. He is a sixth generation Antigonisher – his pioneer ancestor was Zephaniah Williams who settled in the area in the mid 1780s. He had his homestead at what is now called Williams Point, which is named after him. When he became anxious about the new settlement across the harbour from where he was raising his family, he had a local Mi'kmaq guide lead him through the woods to a new holding in what is now called Addington Forks. That path, known as Joe Snake's trail, became well travelled, and formed much of what is the present day Main Street of Antigonish.

Scott was born in 1948 to Murray and Louise Williams and, with two brothers, lived on Adams Street. He attended St. Ninian Street School, and was a Sunday School member at St. James. He also took part in youth groups such as Tyros and Kyros, and sang in the Children's Choir. He also tried piano, guitar and violin lessons but was not ready to work hard at any of them, so he gave them up fairly quickly. His family moved to West River when he was sixteen. He completed his high school education at St. Andrews Rural High School, where he participated in a number of theatre productions, including a couple of musicals and variety shows. He was the spare on the school's Reach For The Top team. Upon graduating in 1966, he headed for StFX University, but before he got there, his musical life took a very significant turn and he has been following that path ever since.

Scott met a young piper by the name of Francis Beaton, from a nearby farm in Brierly Brook. Francis was already an accomplished piper at a very young age and Scott had seen him and his younger brother performing at the Antigonish Highland Games. In

exchange for a ride on his motorcycle, Scott received his very first chanter lesson from Francis and he was hooked. Francis introduced him to his teacher, Sandy Boyd, who agreed to take Scott on as a student. Once classes began at St. F.X., Scott found that all his classes were in the morning, and he used his afternoons to pursue his piping development. Almost every day for several months, Scott would have a lesson with Mr. Boyd. He purchased his pipes and was ready to play in his first Remembrance Day in November. Fifty-four years later, he is still playing for this occasion. He competed for the first time in May of 1967, placing first in the senior amateur class. He served as the Official Piper to the Centennial Highland Games in Halifax, and competed with considerable success in both solo piping and band events for almost fifty years.

Scott put himself through university with money he earned by piping at the Goshen Restaurant and the Dingle Motel every evening from June to September for six years. In 1969, he took a bit of time off to tour Canada for three months with Les Feux Follets, Canada's National Folk Ensemble. He performed nightly in 52 towns and cities across the county. Back at University, he met his future wife Maureen Loneragan at Summer School in 1970. He received three degrees from StFX, a B.A., a B.Ed., and an M.A. in Education. He started his teaching career in Inver-

ness, Cape Breton, where he was also teaching the Bonnie Brae Pipe Band. He played with the Antigonish Legion Senior Pipe Band, and the newly formed Antigonish legion Junior Pipe Band. He was with the latter group when they won many national and international awards and from 1972-74, served as their piping instructor. This band, unfortunately, folded in 1977. Such was it's reputation for excellence that it's farewell concert was held with Ryan's Fancy in the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium in Halifax, with two sold out shows.

Scott taught piping at St. Ann's Gaelic College in Cape Breton from 1972-93. In 1998, he attended the Ontario School of Piping and was engaged to teach there for the next 17 summers. He helped found the Scotia Legion Pipe Band under Pipe Major Barry Ewen. The band was based in Halifax but practised weekly in Truro. It was Nova Scotia's very first Grade 1 pipe band and was a major prize winner from the very beginning. He left the band in 1979 when his son Zeph was born. That same year, he became involved with founding the Scotia Highland Dancers with three local Highland dance teachers and served as their director for 11 years. The troupe performed extensively in Canada and the United States, appeared on national television, and toured in Scotland twice.

Scott organized the 100 member massed pipe





band that led His Holiness Pope John Paul II onto the Commons in Halifax in September, 1984. It was at this event that the seeds were planted that grew into the Clan Thompson Pipe Band. The band originated in Antigonish but soon moved its headquarters to Stellarton. Under his guidance, the band won the Grade 3 North American Pipe Band Championship in 1989.

At the same time, he was teaching a new batch of local children in Antigonish and by 1991, the Antigonish Highland Society Pipe Band was marching on the street. In 1995, he took them to Ontario where they won the Grade 4 North American Championship. He continued to teach the band until February, 1998 when a serious heart problem resulted in triple bypass surgery. The band and the Antigonish Highland Society School of Piping and Drumming were taken over by others and were in good hands by the time he was recovered sufficiently to start playing his pipes again.

Scott returned to the Clan Thompson Pipe Band in 2006, and also to teaching piping in his own home in Antigonish. The band became a very popular concert and parade band and was in great demand from Cheticamp to Liverpool. The band played every Wednesday evening at the DeCoste Centre in Pictou for more than ten summers. They staged a total of eleven benefit concerts in churches in the area, four of which we held here in St. James. The first concert was in aid of the Fort MacMurray Fire Relief Fund and subsequently the proceeds were earmarked to help fund various church projects. On November 8th, however, Scott led the band for the last time as their pipe major in the Remembrance Concert at St. Ninian's Cathedral. He has stepped back a bit, but has accepted the role as Pipe Sergeant to aid his successor in keeping the band alive and active.

Scott was a school teacher for 32 years. His first school assignment was in Inverness, Cape Breton. In 1975, he moved to the elementary school in Tracadie, Antigonish County. For many of his 18 years there, he taught a ukulele program that grew to number 186 musicians. His top performance group was a demonstration group at one of Chalmers Doane's International Ukulele Conferences in Halifax, and

on two occasions, they performed at the Nova Scotia teacher's College in Truro as well as in many schools in Antigonish, Pictou, Guysborough, Richmond and Inverness counties. A group of ninety of his young singers and musicians performed at the Antigonish Highland Games Concert Under the Stars. Scott taught this special music program for a total of 13 years. During that time, he received the William C. MacMaster Award Special Merit Section in 1991. His presentation actually was awarded second place of over 2000 submissions and resulted in Scholastic Books offering native reading materials for children over the next number of years. In 1993, Scott and his family went to Scotland where he worked as a Commonwealth Exchange Teacher in the village of Kiltarlity, near Beaulieu, in the North of Scotland. Upon his return, he was transferred to St. Andrews Consolidated Elementary School where he taught for ten more years to finish his career.

Scott was not idle during those years after his heart surgery and before he returned to pipe bands. In 1998, he compiled and published the first two of a four volume collection of his original music entitled "New Bagpipe Music From Nova Scotia". The other two volumes followed in 2000. About the same time, he published "Pipers of Nova Scotia" and "Pipe Bands of Nova Scotia", a children's novel entitled "Sandy Chisholm's Chanter Lessons", and a bagpipe tutor for beginners. He was a guest instructor at the first pedagogy workshop offered by the Pipers and Pipe Band Society of Ontario which was held in Niagara Falls. He wrote more than fifty articles on Pipers of North America for the Celtic Heritage Magazine.

Scott continues to teach piping students, young and old. His youngest student started at the age of six. Now a university graduate, he is still piping. His oldest beginner was 84 years old when he first picked up a chanter. He had his pipes by 86, piped a bride down the aisle at 89, and was still playing well into his nineties. A couple of years ago, he took up the harp as a precaution, he said, just in case there were no openings in the Heavenly Pipe Band when he got there.



## Adopt-A-Highway News!

Michèle Ashby

This year we only did a spring clean-up. Next year we plan to do both spring and fall clean-ups again. However, on Oct 5, Tim and I attended

a Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Information Session in Truro. I represent St James and Tim represents the Antigonish Lions Club. As always, it was both enjoyable and informative.

This year's topics included: Program Updates; Profiling the Litterbug!; Honey vs Vinegar: Building Relationships and Changing Behaviour Through Environmental Compliance; Roadside Clean-Up Safety; and Ocean Friendly Nova Scotia: A Program to Reduce Single-use Plastics at Restaurants & Cafés.

Recently AAH has partnered with "Clean", which means AAH is now also coordinating the "Great Nova Scotia Pick Me Up". Two programs with the same great goal.

AAH involves: a three-year commitment; the clean up is coordinated by a representative of an organization; signage is installed along the adopted route; and after a clean up, data is reported back to the provincial office. The Great NS Pick Me Up involves: a one time commitment to a litter pick up; volunteers register on line prior to the pick up ([www.nspickmeup.ca](http://www.nspickmeup.ca)); and after a clean up, data is reported back to the same office.

For 2019, by Thanksgiving, between the two programs, 509 clean ups were performed by 14,709 volunteers. 51 kms of shoreline were cleaned and 774 kms of roadway. 7,966 bags of garbage were collected and 571 bags of recyclables. This reduced litter in Nova Scotia by 170,850 lbs! Thank you St James' volunteers!

The most commonly reported items continue to be: coffee cups and fast food wrappers, followed closely by cigarettes and packaging. Marine debris

consists of: shells/ammo, various plastics, Styrofoam, assorted lobster traps, bands, tags, etc.

According to our expert, the profile of the "typical" litterbug is a 15 > 24 year old male smoker who eats fast food three times weekly and drives less than 50 kms daily ...

The "Changing Behaviour" segment revealed startling facts. Signage politely requesting compliance – doesn't work. Nor do fines. Nor does having extra trash bins around. Education (starting at an early age) and follow up with major dump site offenders has the most effect on changing attitudes. And prevention through strategies like the upcoming ban on single use plastics will be important.

Our recent "friend" Dorian washed up tons of garbage and plastic onto our beaches – more work for dedicated volunteers next spring. One of the major problems with marine plastics is that much of it is "micro". Meaning it isn't even visible to the human eye. Nonetheless it's causing health hazards to marine life and people alike! Eat fish? Be concerned ...

Lunenburg has adopted an innovative pilot project recognizing restaurants making serious efforts to "go green". They award bronze, silver and gold levels for initiatives such as: banning straws (except for medical reasons)/plastic bags/Styrofoam containers/single packaged condiments/plastic cutlery/plastic drink bottles and coffee cups. Some restaurants ask you to bring your own cups, then take 25¢ off your drink price!

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world." – Nelson Mandela



# Cultural Connections Antigonish

We recently had our last pot luck before Christmas. I had a great time, talking and meeting lots of people. I also enjoyed the entertainment of dancing and singing plus great food.

Have you ever been to one of our pot lucks? Everyone is invited. They are lots of fun. As a newcomer to Antigonish (1 1/2 years) I attended my first pot luck about a year ago. It showed me what a great place Antigonish is and introduced me to a lot of new people. The diversity of Antigonish gives us a chance to get to know people from all over. I now look forward to each pot luck - meeting new people and catching up with friends, the delicious food and the entertainment.

And there's not a lot of work to prepare. All you need do is bring a dish to share so that there is enough food for all and then just enjoy. You prepare one dish and you'll have a whole table full of food to sample and enjoy with great desserts as well.

There is also Wonderful entertainment. Every time is different but always a lot of fun watching people dancing, singing and sharing their cultures. We learn more about others and see the amazing talent which is all around us.

Children have fun as well with an area to play and meeting new friends.

Come out and enjoy a delicious meal, some fun entertainment and great conversations. Spend some time with old friends and make some new friends. You'll meet the people of Antigonish, both newcomers and people who have lived here for years.

I look forward to seeing you at our next pot lucks. Mark your calendars and join us at 5:30 on the following dates next year: January 19, March 1 and March 29. Great food, great friends and great fun,

Blessings,

Joan MacGillivray

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# Moving On

Many of us have been adjusting to the reality that a fond friend has left us. Marilyn Gerriets has moved to Waterloo, Ontario to be near her daughter Mara. At St. James her departure will be felt in her service as the church librarian and also her years in the Bell Choir. Besides that, she's been part of most of the activities throughout the year. On her last free weekend in November 2019 Marilyn joined friends at Kathi Ryan's Loonsong getaway in Guysborough. It was a perfect fall day and we immersed ourselves in good food, good stories, some walks, and a chance for a massage. We hope that this plus all our warm thoughts stay with Marilyn as she ventures out.

For those who would like to wish her well in her new home, her address is:

Marilyn Gerriets  
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