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A fun time at ACW's Quiet Day 4
Diocesan Council lowers shared ministry rate 6
Ordination celebration 8
A life given back, a calling carried forward 14

THE NEW BRUNSWICK
ANGLICAN

A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL | NOVEMBER 2026 | SERVING THE DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON

We are blessed to be a blessing

Archbishop Shane Parker calls Christians to make God's love and grace known in their communities

BY JONATHAN DESROCHES

Archbishop Shane Parker, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, preached at Christ Church Cathedral in Fredericton on Sunday, Sept. 27, as part of a week-long visit to the Diocese of Fredericton that included visits to churches, ministries, the clergy conference and Diocesan Council.

He reflected on the week he had spent in the Diocese, saying it had been "wonderful to meet with your clergy and to see a number of your ministries in different parts of your diocese."

The Cathedral itself also held a particular significance for Parker.

He told the congregation that he had served for 20 years as dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa and that "cathedral ministry is dear to my heart."

With Christ Church Cathedral in a time of transition as it prepares for the appointment of a new dean, Archbishop Parker encouraged the congregation to think not only about who would fill that role, but about the nature of the Cathedral's ministry itself.

"People should notice what cathedrals do," he said.

He reminded the congregation that Christ Church Cathedral serves not only as a parish church, but as the Cathedral and mother church of the Diocese, with a role in Fredericton, throughout the Diocese and within the wider Anglican Community.

He encouraged the Cathedral to embrace the particular opportunities of cathedral ministry and to use its building, space and resources in ways that allow "the grace of God and the love of God and the light of Christ" to be known in the community, the city, the Diocese and beyond.

"Look up as you look to the future," he said.

Archbishop David Edwards welcomed the congregation and presided at the Eucharist.

Kurt Schmidt, Missioner for Christian Formation read Scripture, while Cathedral verger Hank Williams led the congregation in prayer.

From his reflection on cathedral ministry, Archbishop Parker turned to the Gospel reading from Matthew and Jesus' encounter with the chief priests and elders in the temple.

He invited those gathered to imagine the tension of the scene as Jesus entered the temple and began teaching, despite the opposition of the religious authorities.

"Where would you be?" Parker asked. "Would you be out the door? Would you freeze or would you move closer to hear what was happening?"

Jesus then tells the parable of the father and two sons. One son initially refuses his father's request to work in the vineyard, then later goes. The other says he will go but does not.

For Parker, the story pointed toward the difference between saying the right things and choosing to live them.

He recalled God's covenant with Abraham—a blessing that carried with it a responsibility to become a blessing to others.

"You are blessed to be a blessing," Parker said.

He told the congregation that the religious leaders knew the command to love God and their neighbour but had failed to extend to others the love they themselves wanted to receive. He then turned from the Gospel story to the choices Christians make in their own lives.

"God gives humanity Jesus," he said "to reveal both who

Blessed continued on page 2



DESROCHES PHOTO

PRIMATE PREACHES AT THE CATHEDRAL: **Archbishop Shane Parker, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada shared a message on the role of the cathedral in the Diocese, and on being a blessing to our communities.**

DIOCESAN NEWS

Primate and picnic

Blessed continued from page 1

God is and how people are called to live."

Following Jesus, Archbishop Parker said, means choosing to be "kind and compassionate and courageous and merciful."

He continued by naming gentleness, justice, faithfulness, generosity, forgiveness, patience, peacemaking, healing, reconciliation, hope and love among the qualities Christians are called to embody.

"As God gives to us, we are to give to others," he said. "We are blessed to be a blessing." Archbishop Parker said Jesus shows what it means to live fully as children of God, receiving God's grace and extending that same grace to others.

"Strive to live as Jesus taught every day of your life," he said. Following the service, the gathering moved outside onto the Cathedral grounds, where members of the congregation and visitors shared a picnic lunch beneath the trees.

Archbishop Parker continued meeting and speaking with people as conversations carried on around the lawn and picnic tables.

His final words from the pulpit offered a simple summary of the morning's message.

"Know that you are loved. Live as you are loved. Amen."





ABOVE: Parishioners and guests gather for conversation and fellowship

BELOW: The Rev. Canon Jon Lownds (second from left) keeps the hot dog table hopping

ABOVE: Archbishop David Edwards and Archbishop Shane Parker sharing greetings after the service

BELOW: Parishioners and guests gathering for a picnic lunch





DESROCHES PHOTO

Next Deadline
for news and photos for the December edition of the New Brunswick Angelican is
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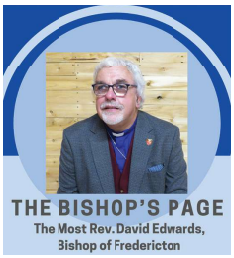
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THE BISHOP'S PAGE

Remembering and looking forward



The month of November is bookended by two significant events in the liturgical calendar.

The first is always on the 1st, All Saints Day; and this year on the 29th we have Advent Sunday.

These days are often missed by many of us, but they are important in the Church year.

All Saints reminds us of two things. The first is obvious. We are part of something bigger than the church we see.

We are built on the life and witness of those who have gone before us.

In our very materialistic Western World, even those of us who claim to be Christians, often fail to recognize that the veil between us and the Church Victorious is very thin.

We are a continuation rather than a separation.

This was brought home to me when I visited Ho. As we know the diocese there owns a piece of land within the city limits, where they hope to build a school.

The proposed site is in a relatively undeveloped area. While travelling we passed a newly built cemetery.

Bishop Matthias suddenly exclaimed, "That is a foolish place to put a burial ground, it will never work".

I looked across the car at him and said, "Why not?" In my mind I was thinking, it does not really matter too much where people are buried and if more room is needed it makes sense to build in a new area.

Matthias responded, "We cannot abandon the dead, they are very close to us and should be buried in the centre of the community, not left outside".

In the years since that conversation, I have often returned to it around All Saints Day. It has changed the way I think, but I am not sure how.

In the calendar this year Advent Sunday comes at the end of the month, not the beginning of December.

The long journey from Trinity Sunday is over and we begin approximately five months of festivals, periods of reflection and penitence, with a little ordinary time inserted after the great festival of Christmas.

During Advent, as I remind us every year, we are in a season of preparation. We look back to Christ's first coming and forward to his second coming.

We look back to the beginning of a New Age and on to the time when that Age will be fully here.

At that point the veil between those who have gone on ahead and those still on the earthly journey will finally be removed. There will be no more Church Militant here in earth, only the Church Victorious.

> *At that point the veil between those who have gone on ahead and those still on the earthly journey will finally be removed.*



David Edwards is Diocesan Bishop of Fredericton.

PRINCIPAL ENGAGEMENTS

November 1
Christ Church Cathedral
Parish of Saint Stephen - Celebration of New Ministry of Rob Pitman

November 7
141st Session of the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton

November 8
Christ Church Cathedral

November 15
St. Peter's, Wickham

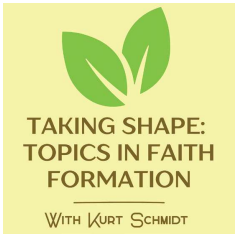
November 22
St. Mary and St. Bartholomew (Coldbrook-St. Mary)

November 27-28
Diocesan Council Retreat

November 29
*** St. Mark's, Tracy (Parishes of Fredericton Junction and New Maryland)**
Christ Church Cathedral (Advent Lessons and Carols)

*** confirmation**

Episode 5 - Remembering...Christ at the center



This month (November) brings us to the climactic and meaningful end of the liturgical year, and to the beginning of a new one. And it is the month, of course, of **remembering**.

We begin the month with two Holy Days, All Saints and All Souls, in which we call to mind and give thanks for the lives and inspiring witness of the many faithful who have gone before us.

I recommend the beautiful collects for these two days (BAS pp.428-429) as sources and guides for your prayerful consideration.

And then on Sunday 22 November, we celebrate the Last Sunday after Pentecost and the final Sunday of the Christian calendar: the Reign of Christ.

On this day we focus on and pray for Christ's ultimate — and universal — sovereignty and the fulfillment of God's reign over creation.

On the following Sunday, 29 November, we launch the new liturgical year with the First Sunday of Advent.

To thematically unify and draw a circle around all of these significant days that we are invited to walk through this November, I'd like to share an old and special prayer: the ***Anima Christi***, or "Soul of Christ" prayer.

The original *Anima Christi* prayer is of unknown authorship and dates back at least until the early 14th century. It was a beloved prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who placed it at the very beginning of his *Spiritual Exercises* (16th century).
The prayer is beautiful both in Latin and in its English translation:

Anima Christi, sanctifica me.
Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Corpus Christi, salva me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Sanguis Christi, inebria me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Aqua lateris Christi, lava me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passio Christi, conforta me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O bone Jesu, exaudi me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Intra tua vulnera absconde me.
Within Thy wounds hide me.
Ne permittas me separari a te.
Permit me not to be separated from Thee.
Ab hoste maligno defende me.
From the malignant enemy, defend me.
In hora mortis meae voca me.
In the hour of my death, call me.
Et jube me venire ad te,
And bid me come to Thee,
Ut cum Sanctis tuis laudem te,
That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
In saecula saeculorum. Amen.
Forever and ever. Amen.

And here is a "contemporary paraphrase" of the classic devotional prayer by the late David Fleming, SJ, well-known American Jesuit priest, author, and spiritual director:

Jesus, may all that is you flow into me.
May your body and blood be my food and drink.
May your passion and death be my strength and life.
Jesus, with you by my side, enough has been given.
May the shelter I seek be the shadow of your cross.
Let me not run from the love which you offer,
But hold me safe from the forces of evil.
On each of my dyings shed your light and your love.
Keep calling to me until that day comes,
When, with your saints, I may praise you forever.
Amen.

Kurt Schmidt is the missioner for Christian formation in the Diocese.



ACW QUIET DAY

A fun time at Quiet Day

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT

The ACW annual Quiet Day was an event packed with activities, worship, good food and lots of fellowship and discussion, but not a lot of quiet time. It was held Sept. 9 at St. Mary's in Miramichi, with worship led by the now-retired Archdeacon Perry Cooper.

The theme, Standing on the Promises of God, was carried throughout the day.

After the registration of 36 ACW members, and some refreshments, everyone headed to the sanctuary for worship.

The readers were Sally Underhill, Gwen McConnell, Mary MacIntosh-Warren and the Rev. Rose Steeves. The organist was Elizabeth Shatford.



MCKNIGHT PHOTO

ABOVE: Fellowship is an important aspect of ACW's Quiet Day.

HOMILY

Perry began his homily by recalling his mother's involvement in ACW in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"It was my mother who had the greater spiritual influence on me," he said. "She believed if God called you, he would equip you. I believe it to be true."

He reminded those gathered of God's promises, to never leave or forsake us.

"It all boils down to this, even though our feelings and gut get in the way. We doubt, but God doesn't move."

The Collect mentioned stirring up, "and there are times when we need to be stirred up, to move. But there are days when I'd just as soon not be stirred up," he said.

But the rewards of being stirred up, of acting for God, are many.

"On earth, they come in the form of satisfaction," said Perry. "You bless someone. You're encouraged. It gives you energy. You're stoked to keep going. Movement creates motivation."

Perry reminded everyone that God blesses good works. "I pray that each of you will be stirred by the Holy Spirit to continue your ministry. I pray that everything you say and do is a blessing to God and to others."

SPEAKER

Rosa Pellerin told the story of her childhood and her married life.

"I was always a believer, but my husband was not a serious believer," she said.

She pondered leaving her husband because of this. But what would happen to their three children?

"I realized it was better to listen to God than listen to my feelings," she said, adding she found answers in 1 Cor. 13 and 16.

"And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him…How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?"

"It was as if those verses were written for me," she said. "Satan was trying very hard to destroy our marriage."

Today, their marriage is much stronger, "and my husband has been transformed by the grace of God," she said. "It is so comforting to know we can rely on the promises of God."

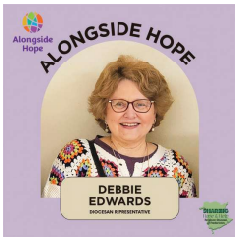
LUNCH & AFTERNOON

Lunch was a casserole called spaghetti bake, which was declared delicious, along with a selection of salads, pies and cakes.

Quiet time was led by Gwen, who arranged everyone into one of six groups, and handed out laminated scripture cards. Each person had a different verse, and each group heard from its members, discussing how each verse resonated with them.

ACW continued on page 5

World of Gifts



For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son…" John 3:16

This month's article focuses on the annual "World of Gifts" campaign. As we think about giving, I thought the most appropriate place to begin is in terms of the verse I quoted above.

We give as a response to God's most precious gifts to us, which include both life itself and, of course, one of the biggest ways we know how much God loves us, through the gift of his Son, Jesus.

Each year, Alongside Hope compiles a catalogue of "gifts" from which, either individuals or groups, can purchase life giving gifts for folks either in Canada or around the world.

The catalogue for 2026 is now available online, www.alongsidehope.org or in paper format through the Anglican Journal, during October-December.

I encourage both individuals and groups within our parishes to consider giving some of these gifts this Christmas season.

When I speak at parish events, I always highlight that giving a "gift" to someone on your Christmas list from "World of Gifts" is a wonderful way to honour a friend or loved one who doesn't need anything for Christmas.

Also, of note this year is that all gifts, up to $100,000, will be matched by a generous donor and all gifts supported by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank are matched 4:1 by the Government of Canada.

This season there is an exciting new addition on the website available to parishes. This option allows parishes to share information regarding their fundraising project.

If you go onto the Alongside Hope website, then click on the link "Get Involved", then "Welcome to the World of Gifts", then open the link called "Parish Toolkit", you can then click on the red link titled "Tell us about your campaign here".

As these ideas from across the country are shared the hope is that they will both inspire and give ideas to other parishes.

I encourage parish groups throughout the Diocese of Fredericton to upload information about the wonderful projects and fundraisers that I know are completed each season.

If you need help with this, please reach out to me by email, deborahcollicott@gmail.com.

I thank you for the gifts that will be purchased by individuals, ACW groups, Sunday Schools, Youth Groups, etc., over the coming months.

As always, if you'd like me to come to your parish and speak to one of your groups or on a Sunday morning, please contact me by the email address above.

Alongside Hope — Anglicans and Partners working for change in Canada and around the world

ACW QUIET DAY

ACW Quiet Day creates connection and a crowd



MCKNIGHT PHOTO

RIGHT: Guest speaker Rosa Pellerin.

TOP LEFT: Diane Radford, ACW's Mother's Union rep, (at left) with her discussion group at Quiet Day

BOTTOM LEFT: Lunch was baked spaghetti casserole with salads and breads, and of course a variety of desserts. Many hands went into making this lunch, which was deemed delicious.





BOTTOM MIDDLE: A good crowd gathered for the annual ACW Quiet Day, held at St. Mary's in Miramichi Sept. 9. The Ven. Perry Cooper, now retired, led the worship service.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Many would say the most fun of the day was the Bible verse based gift bag auction.





ACW continued from page 4

Afterwards, the groups reported back to the whole assembly, sharing the highlights. Several women noted that it was an enriching exercise that blessed them.

The craft of the day was short and simple. Each laminated scripture card had a hole punched at the top, and Gwen passed out lengths of ribbon for all to affix to their cards to take home as bookmarks.

THE BIBLE BAGS

Many would say the most fun of the day was focused on two tables holding 24 gift bags containing mystery prizes.

With each prize was a bag with a bible verse attached. Each member could buy tickets to put in the bags that interested them — a sort of bidding process.

They didn't know what they were bidding on, but the bible verses cryptically noted what might be inside.

Jill Stewart, past president of the diocesan ACW, was one of the organizers who took on the prize bag activity, the proceeds of which were earmarked for Farraline Place.

The Rev. Bob Barry, retired, was tasked with matching each prize with an appropriate bible verse that kept ladies pondering and discussing what might be inside.

Near the end of the day, Jill and Marguerite Barry began the mystery bag activity by choosing a ticket from each bag.

The member with the winning ticket read the verse and then revealed what was in the bag.

For example, Genesis 9:2 mentions animals, and inside that bag was a starfish. Matthew 10:42 mentions a cup of cold water, and inside was a cup and saucer.

The scripture that says 'do this in remembrance of me' came with a wine glass, and so on.

To finish off the auction, Jill drew from all the tickets and the 'grand prize' winner won a handmade and elegant tatted cross, donated for the event.

Between the day's offering and the bible auction, $920 was raised for Farraline Place. The day ended with a prayer and a hymn, led by the Rev. Rose.

A celebration of thanksgiving

To God be the glory great things He hath done

SUBMITTED BY THE REV. CANON GREG MCMULLIN

Almost 60 years ago in 1967, St. Mary and St. Bartholomew's Church was dedicated in the centre of the Forest Hills and Glen Falls neighbourhoods in East Saint John.

Over the years, SMSB Church as we call it today, continued to grow and evolve, with the vision of the church always remaining the same, to serve our community with the love of Christ.

On Sunday, September 20, 2026, with over 125 in attendance, an afternoon service of thanksgiving, led by Archbishop David Edwards, was held to celebrate the end of the mortgage for the SMSB Mission Centre followed by a reception and cake.

"This was truly a dream in the making", said Canon Greg McMullin, Rector of SMSB.

The concept of building the Mission began over 15 years ago, the idea to expand and serve the community by way of creating a community food basket and clothing centre located directly across the parking lot from the Church.

"With no money and only our faith we set forth. Things started to move, we received money to purchase the old rectory, a mortgage backed by our partnering church in St. Andrews, was followed by gifts of building materials, appliances, large donation from a local car dealer, and generous parishioners," said Canon Greg.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

LONG AWAITED MOMENT: shows the Rev. Canon Greg McMullin and the Rev. Ann Fairweather preparing for the official burning of the mortgage.

We opened the mortgage in 2019 with terms for the ability to pay off at anytime.

In the spring of this year we received the remaining $40,000 from our sister parish in Shediac which enabled us to pay off the mortgage.

It truly was a collaborative effort and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." SMSB Mission Centre opened its door during the pandemic in 2020.

Last year, over 13,000 people were served by and through the love of Christ, and the numbers this year will surpass that.

"Faith is the substance of all things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" Hebrews 11:1

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Diocesan Council lowers shared ministry rate, looks ahead to changing church

BY JONATHAN DESROCHES



DESROCHES PHOTO

ABOVE: Archbishop David Edwards chairing Diocesan Council on Sept. 26, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Fredericton.

Members of Diocesan Council gathered Sept. 26 at 10 A.M. at St. John the Evangelist Church in Fredericton for the final meeting of the current council term.

They approved financial and policy changes for 2027 and considered questions of parish governance that will come before Synod in November.

The meeting was chaired by Archbishop David Edwards and included a visit from the Most Rev. Shane Parker, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Parker, who had spent the previous week attending the diocesan clergy conference and visiting ministries around the Diocese of Fredericton, opened his presentation by commending what he had seen.

"You are thinking differently about how you can be the church in your place, in your time," he told council members.

He praised the Diocese for using its property and resources in ways that respond to community needs, before giving Council a brief overview of changes underway nationally through the *Creating Pathways* process and restructuring at Church House.

PARISH GOVERNANCE

Chancellor David Bell drew Council's attention to two parish governance matters that will come before Synod in November.

Council has already recommended a change to Canon Six that would allow a parish to apply for permission for a warden to serve beyond the current six-year limit, reflecting the difficulty some parishes face finding people willing to serve.

A separate motion, submitted by two parishioners, proposes reducing the minimum number of elected vestry members from six to four.

Bell cautioned that smaller vestries could weaken oversight of parish finances, property and other responsibilities.

SHARED MINISTRY

Council approved a change to the Shared Ministry assessment formula for 2027, reducing the rate on the first $50,000 of assessable income from nine percent to seven percent. The other rates remained unchanged.

Treasurer of Synod Philip Shepherdson said the change is intended to ease pressure on parishes facing higher operating costs.

Without the reduction, 52 of 67 corporations would have faced an increase in 2027. Under the revised formula, that number drops to 29, with the Synod absorbing $67,892.

"It's a good sign that we are acknowledging that it is painful out there in parishes," Shepherdson said.

Council approved a gross Shared Ministry assessment of $1,237,639 for 2027.

The treasurer will be communicating this to all parochial corporations in due course.

FINANCES

Council adopted the Synod's reviewed 2025 financial statements and reappointed LeBlanc Scott CPA as independent examiners for the 2026 statements.

The 2025 statements showed total revenue across the three reporting funds increased from approximately $5.8 million to $6.4 million.

Shepherdson said investment performance continues to give the Synod more flexibility. While 2026 investment income appeared $425,000 behind budget at the end of August, the difference is largely due to timing, and Finance does not expect it to prevent the Diocese from meeting its full-year income target for 2026.

The 2026 budget was approved with an operating deficit of approximately $239,000.

Shepherdson said he is working toward presenting Council with a balanced budget, or close to balanced budget for 2027.

CREATION CARE AND BUILDINGS

Finance committee chair Jim Knight also highlighted work connecting parish building needs with creation care.

The Diocese has previously participated in the national Creation Matters network and is exploring how grants and other programs can help parishes address deferred maintenance while also improving energy efficiency.

One recent example is a grant for a parish to carry out an energy and building condition assessment of their church building.

Knight said the hope is to learn from the project and potentially develop a model other parishes can follow when planning major building work. Similar thinking is being applied when older mechanical systems need replacement: if maintenance is already necessary, the Synod wants to consider whether the work can also reduce energy use and emissions.

CAMP MEDLEY

Finance also reported continued progress on Camp Medley's pool and storage projects.

The committee authorized Camp Medley to enter into a $268,613 contract for construction of a storage facility and a $20,000 contract for detailed design of the pool.

The storage facility could be completed by spring 2027, with pool construction potentially beginning around the same time.

A fundraising challenge from the J.T. Clark family will match money raised toward the projects if $375,000 is raised by Dec. 31.

PROPERTY AND RECONCILIATION

Council also heard an update on the former St. Helen's Church property in the former Parish of the Tobique.

Finance had originally brought forward a motion to gift the church and two associated parcels to the appropriate corporation of the Neqotkuk Wolastoqiyik Nation as a contribution toward reconciliation.

One of the parcels contains the former church, which Neqotkuk has proposed using as an Indigenous residential rehabilitation facility or similar ministry.

Another parcel provides access to the river. A larger adjoining property had already been sold to Neqotkuk.

The motion was withdrawn at the meeting after it was clarified that the transfer can be approved directly by the Finance Committee and does not require a vote of Diocesan Council.

Jacobs said the idea grew from conversations among diocesan executive officers nationally about land gifts and proceeds from property sales as part of reconciliation efforts.

SAFE CHURCH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Council adopted three policies connected to the Diocese's revised Safe Church and safeguarding framework: Policy B-7 Program Safety, Policy B-8 Human Resources and Policy B-9 Facilities.

Synod executive officer Cheryl Jacobs explained that the policies pull material that had previously been contained within a larger risk-manage

Council continued on page 7

Council Business

Council continued from page 6

ment section into separate, more useable documents.

Council also amended Regulation 7-2 so the clergy outfitting grant explicitly applies to newly ordained vocational deacons as well as transitional deacons.

Jacobs noted that vocational deacons generally do not receive a stipend, making the initial costs associated with ordination particularly significant.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council approved the appointments of Ashley Hill and Jodi Mesheal as the Diocese of Fredericton's representatives to the University of King's College Board of Governors. Each appointment is for a renewable two-year term.

Members also received an update from the Companion Diocese Committee on plans for the Anglican Vocational and Technical School in Ho, Ghana.

The 10-acre property has been registered in the name of the Diocese of Ho, electrical service has been extended to the site, and the mayor of Ho has committed to waiving building permit fees.

Initial fundraising has also begun, including support from Rotary Clubs and individual donors.

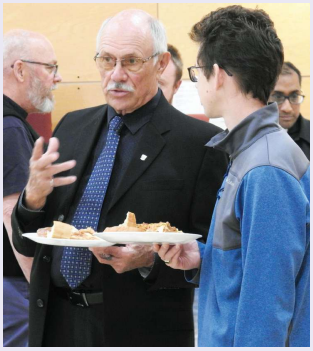
The meeting marked the end of the current Diocesan Council term. Archbishop David thanked members who will not be returning and recognized their service.

The new Diocesan Council will gather Nov. 27-28 at Villa Madonna for its first meeting and retreat.

COUNCIL CONNECTIONS



LUNCH: Lunch was a delicious baked lasagna, caesar salad, bread, and a selection of sweets for dessert.



ABOVE: Jim Knight and Connor DeMerchant share food and fellowship during the lunch break.



DESROCHES PHOTO

ABOVE: (left to right) Gisele McKnight, recently retired communications director, Archdeacon Maria Shepherdson, and Archbishop David Edwards share a moment of laughter after the official meeting.

RIGHT: During the lunch break council members share a time of food and connection—and maybe even a little laughter.



CHARLIE WRIGHT PHOTOS







A beautiful day for an ordination service at Christ Church Cathedral

BY GISELE MCKNIGHT AND JONATHAN DESROCHES

The sun was shining, the temperature was perfect and the smiles were plentiful at Christ Church Cathedral, as upwards of 300 people gathered on Saturday, Sept. 12 — all there to witness the ordination of seven people as they began a new ministry and a new life.

Tyler McKenna, Ellen Kelly and Samuel Landry were ordained to the Holy Order of Deacon, transitional.

The Rev. Rob Pitman, the Rev. Rick Cunningham, the Rev. Virginia (Ginny) Wilmhoff and the Rev. Dr. J-F were ordained to the Holy Order of Priest.

Director of music Thomas Gonder played as the Cathedral Choir and a procession of clergy, layreaders, choir members and ordinands entered the cathedral, led by crucifer Abigail Yeamans.

Many clergy and guests attended from outside the diocese, from as far away as Saskatchewan, all there to support their loved ones and friends on a special day.

Many parishes connected to the ordinands were well represented.

Earlier this year, Archbishop David Edwards announced appointments for the new deacons.

As for the new deacons, Ellen will serve as assistant curate in the Parish of the Nerepis and St. John; Samuel will be the assistant curate in the Parish of St. Andrews; and Tyler has been appointed deacon-in-charge of the Parish of Salisbury and Havelock.

Rick continues with the Parish of the Nerepis and St. John as assistant priest (as well as missioner in Saint John's Lower West Side). Dr. J-F continues with Shediac as assistant priest. Ginny is licensed as a priest in the diocese and is a clinical spiritual care practitioner at the Moncton Hospital. Rob continues to serve in the Parish of Saint Stephen.

SERMON

Archbishop David Edwards presided and preached.

He began with a lighthearted confession that he had forgotten his sermon notes, which were later retrieved by his wife, Debbie, before addressing the subject of ordained ministry.

"What does a person in ministry for 30 years have to say about this?

Remember, it is God's gift to use. Sometimes it might feel like a poison chalice. Most times it's a distinct gift.

"No one receives the call because they are worthy," he said. "But because we are called—to serve the servant of all in a distinct way."

After affirming the place of every member within the body of Christ, Archbishop David turned to the love of God revealed through the cross.

"Many gallons of ink, many words have been spoken on what went on that day," he said.

"I've concluded there is something beyond the mechanics of atonement. When it's all stripped away, the cross is the place of God's unrelenting, savage, compassionate love for His creation," he said.

He described that love as extending beyond the church itself to the whole of creation.

"The love of God was poured out so that the whole of creation can know God's love flows to every corner of the cosmos.

"The apparent foolishness of the cross is the power and wisdom of God on display for all to see."

Archbishop David said the Church is to make this love understood—to make it known.

At the same time, he acknowledged that the Church itself can sometimes obscure the message it has been entrusted to share.

"It is God's love that all too often goes unrecognized and in truth can be hidden by the church, which is called to make it known," he said.

Speaking to the ordinands, he emphasized the importance of listening to God's voice.

"Those being ordained are called to ground themselves in prayer," he said. "We cannot fulfill our Christian vocation unless we hear God's voice speaking of God's purposes."

Using his own accent as an illustration, Archbishop David said spending time in the presence of God should leave a person changed.

"When I've spent time with Canadians, I've somehow got a voice that's been affected by Canadians.

Spending time with God means that we will be affected by the presence of God just as I have had my accent, I'll use the word 'refined,' by living in Canada."

He described the Western world's practice of Christianity in the most recent past as one of chaplaincy: baptisms, marriages, funerals.

"We've been able to be passive because people have come to us," he said. "But now we have to go out and represent the needs of the community to the church."

Archbishop David said there is a distinctive diaconal aspect of ministry for the church today.

Speaking to the deacons, he stressed that the work does not belong to them alone.

"I'm not suggesting you do it all," he said. "I'm suggesting the whole church must take on the role."

He described the diaconal ministry

Ordination continued on page 10



MCKNIGHT PHOTOS

LEFT: Top row (left to right) - Archbishop David Edwards, the Ven. Leo Martin, the Rev. Canon Jon Lownds.

Front row (left to right) - Virginia Wilmhoff, Rob Pitman, Richard "Rick" Cunningham, Dr. J-F, Tyler McKenna, Samuel Landry, Ellen Kelly

BELOW: Clergy singing during the prelude.



ABOVE: Cathedral Choir singing during the prelude.





RIGHT: Archbishop David and a celebratory gathering post service.

Participants

A service of this size involves many people. The following clergy, lay people, family members and representatives took part in the Sept. 12 ordination service at Christ Church Cathedral.

Bishop's Chaplain: the Ven. Leo Martin
Presider at the Eucharist: the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephen Andrews
MC/Assistant: Canon Shawn Branch
Procession Marshall: the Rev. Canon Jon Lownds
Liturgical Deacon: the Rev. Debbie Edmondson
Litanist: the Rev. Canon Chris Hayes
Verger: Hank Williams
Crucifer: Abigail Yeamans
Readers: Cheryl Jacobs and Dr. Ash McLellan
Music: Thomas Gonder and the Cathedral Choir
Greeters: Jamie Yeamans and Carrie Yeamans
Sound: Peter Jacobs
Livestream: Kirsten McKnight
Pre-ordination retreat leader: the Rev. Canon LCol. (Rtd) Dr. Gary Thorne

Seminary Representatives:
Dr. Kristen Deede Johnson, Wycliffe College
The Rev. Dr. Heather McCance, Atlantic School of Theology
The Rev. Canon Grayhame Bowcott, Huron University College

Presenters and vesters

Richard "Rick" Cunningham
Presenters: the Rev. Michael Caines, the Rev. Dr. Chris McMullen and the Ven. Leo Martin
Vester: Chris McMullen

Dr. J-F
Presenters: the Ven. Brent Ham and Tegan Simmons
Vester: Brent Ham

Ellen Kelly
Presenters: the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephen Andrews, Fawna Andrews and the Ven. Leo Martin
Vester: Clair Andrews

Samuel Landry
Presenters: the Rev. Paul Rideout, the Rev. Canon Dr. Gary Thorne and the Ven. John Matheson
Vester: Christine Hoehne

Tyler McKenna
Presenters: the Rev. Canon Chris VanBuskirk, the Rev. Norman Dupuis and the Ven. Rob Marsh
Vester: Dianne McKenna

Rob Pitman
Presenters: the Rev. Canon Cathy Laskey, Linda Pitman, Christine Duplisea, Matthew Pitman and the Ven. Leo Martin
Vester: Leo Martin

Virginia Wilmhoff
Presenters: the Rev. Paul Rideout, Donna Marie Nagel and the Ven. Rob Marsh
Vester: the Rev. Dr. Ranall Ingalls

7 Ordained at the Cathedral

Ordination continued from page 9

as going into the community, listening for its needs, and bringing those needs back to the church, rather than telling communities what they need.

The wider church, Archbishop David said, has a responsibility to support deacons as they listen to communities they serve and help the church respond.

He referenced the Deacon's Den near Smithtown, outside Hampton, the brainchild of the Rev. Deacon Brenda Fowler.

She turned an old, unused church in her parish into a second-hand store that has become very popular, despite its rural location.

Since the pandemic, the store has earned $89,000, and every bit of that has been used to help people in the community.

They buy fuel cards for those travelling to medical treatments in Saint John, pay bills, buy groceries, help those who've had a house fire and so on.

Archbishop David left the congregation with a question.

"Is the Spirit speaking to us?" he asked, "If it is, how do we respond?"

After the ordinands were presented, examined and consecrated, a catered reception was held at Cathedral Memorial Hall, where Archbishop David presented official documents, including licenses, to the ordinands.



LEFT: Top row (left to right) - Archbishop David Edwards, the Ven. Leo Martin, the Rev. Canon Jon Lownds

Bottom Row (left to right) - Virginia Wilmhoff, Robert Pitman, Richard Cunningham, Dr. J-F

BELOW: The Rev. Robert Pitman and the Rev. Ann Fairwether





MCKNIGHT PHOTO

LEFT: The Rev. David Turner and the Rev. Mike Caines enjoying the reception





ABOVE: Ellen Kelly with her sister Clare Andrews

ABOVE: Top row (left to right) - the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephen Andrews, Archbishop David Edwards, the Ven. Leo Martin, the Rev. Canon Jon Lownds

Bottom Row (left to right) - Tyler McKenna, Samuel Landry, Ellen Kelly

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The seven newly ordained reflect on the day—and what ordained ministry means to them.

Ellen Kelly

"What being ordained a deacon means to me is the reality that I have submitted to God's will for my life and I have a duty to follow in Christ's footsteps, wherever he might lead me, for the sake of the world. It feels like a public declaration of the alignment of my will and God's will.

Samuel Landry

"As I knelt before the bishop and sang the Veni Creator Spiritus, that ancient ordination hymn 'Come, Holy Ghost,' I could sense something of the day's significance. Put simply, we were praying for the Holy Spirit and then waiting upon His gifts.

Virginia Wilmhoff

"The highlight of the ordination was the laying on of hands. It was truly awesome to experience the power of God through His Church physically in that way. To be a conduit for God's grace in the midst of peoples' lives is a great responsibility, gift, and blessing.

Rob Pitman

"My Dad was so excited as I entered into this new season of my ministry... He called every Sunday at 3pm to see how the service went and did they like my joke of the day. ... Being ordained means I'm called to represent Jesus both in my parish and in my community and beyond.

Richard Cunningham

"Although the day of ordination at times has felt like a culmination, I recognize that this is a new beginning. The first steps in a new journey with God and the people I will minister to and with.

Dr. J-F

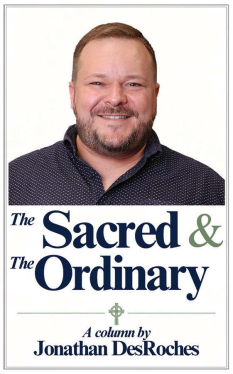
"To be ordained is to simply and sacrificially serve God, to use my life as tool to serve others for the glory to God, and importantly to bring salvation message of Jesus Christ into the lives of people.

Tyler McKenna

"Not that there is fear of the weight, but I feel the awe of its responsibility, and it is quite humbling that God is sharing with me something that is precious to him, to care for his people, his church.

COMMENTARY

Shaped by grief... it gets different





ABOVE: Gene DesRoches and Jonathan DesRoches DESROCHES PHOTO

I miss my dad.

This photo came up in my memories this morning. It was nine years ago.

We were golfing, I had beaten him that day, and apparently I felt the need to make a face about it.

A lot can happen in nine years.

There have been some enormous losses. My brother passed away, and then five years ago, Dad did too.

There have also been some wonderful things. I finished my Master of Divinity at Acadia. I became a REALTOR® and have now helped close more than 200 transactions.

I got married. I quit smoking. I've lost 65 pounds. I've recently started a new job with the Diocese of Fredericton, and I'm back at Acadia pursuing another master's degree, this time in counselling and spiritual care.

There is so much about my life today that I wish I could sit down and tell Dad about.

But seeing this picture this morning made me think less about everything that has happened and more about grief.

It makes me think of something I wish I could have understood five years ago.

When Dad first passed, someone told me that grief doesn't get better.

At the time, I remember thinking that sounded awful. I couldn't imagine feeling the way I felt then, forever.

Five years later, I don't think I would say it gets better. I think it gets different.

When we love someone deeply, we carve out a space for them in our lives and in ourselves.

When they die, that space doesn't disappear, and nobody else comes along and fills it.

For a while, all you can feel is the terrible absence of the person who is supposed to be there.

But eventually, something changes. The space itself is still alive.

> *"When we love someone deeply, we carve out a space for them in our lives and in ourselves.*

It was shaped by that person, by the conversations, the laughter, the memories, the things they taught us, the ways they annoyed us, the arguments, the ordinary days we didn't know we'd someday give anything to have back.

All of it changed us. Death can take the person from that space, but it can't undo what happened there.

I think maybe that's what I've learned about grief. The relationship stops making new memories, but everything it has already written into us remains. We carry it forward.

And eventually, joy starts creeping back in. You catch yourself laughing the way you used to. You have a wonderful day without thinking about the person you've lost for a few hours.

Sometimes you even feel guilty about that at first. And then, hopefully, you realize that the person who loved you would never have wanted your life to end when theirs did.

So, for anyone who happens to be in that raw place today, especially if you're going through that awful year of firsts, I won't tell you that it gets better. But it does get different.

I miss my dad every day. I can say that without hesitation. There will always be a place in my heart that belongs to him.

But five years later, that place isn't only a place of grief anymore. It's full of him.

And this morning, it's a picture of the two of us sitting in a golf cart nine years ago, smiling because I beat him at golf. And apparently making sure he knew it.

Jonathan DesRoches is the Communications Manager for the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton.

Some thoughts on asking for God's help



One of my favourite Bible verses, and I have many, is Hebrews 4:16:

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

I pray for God's help a lot! I pray for it when I'm feeling uncertain about a decision I must make or when I'm faced with a situation beyond my control.

I pray for his help when I'm feeling overwhelmed with too many things to do or am growing anxious about the future.

I come to God with open hands and heart asking for his mercy and grace to give me what I need.

That may be wisdom to make the right choice, courage to confront an issue, willingness to admit I'm wrong, a word of encouragement from a friend, patience to trust God's timing, etc.

I'm bold in my requests because I know that God welcomes my cry for help.

He sees it not only as evidence of my faith in him, but also as an admission of my dependence on him.

Faith, repentance, and acknowledging my need of God are essential elements in all of this.

I also pray for God to help others – my family, friends, people nearby and far away, even those who do not believe in him.

I pray because I know they need his help and I know he is merciful.

I've admitted in this column before that I'm a news junkie. So, as I listen to the news of the latest disaster in the world, I often pray that God will send them help.

One way he answers those prayers is through organizations that are dedicated to relief and development work around the world.

Many of these organizations are Christian and offer their assistance as a tangible expression of Christ's love.

Who needs God's help? We all do! We are not meant to cope with life by our own strength.

God longs for us to come to him with our problems. He is the source of all that we need when confronting life's challenges.

When we pray for God's help, we should refrain from telling him what form his help must come in.

Let him choose to help us as he sees fit. Perhaps that will be through divine intervention in our lives. More often it will be through others, such as our church, family, friends and neighbours.

It may come through people God has gifted to help, e.g. doctors, counsellors, social workers, lawyers, and other professionals.

God's help may not come in the manner we expect. Instead of delivering us from a problem, he may give us the strength to endure it, even using it as the means to draw us closer to himself.

Whatever problem we may be facing, big or small, we should bring it to God in prayer.

As the Psalmist said, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

And then let's pray for eyes to recognize his help in whatever form it comes.

Nancy Stephens, originally from Blackville, served with OMF International for over 30 years, including 12 years as a missionary in Thailand. Now retired, she resides in Fredericton and worships in the Parish of Douglas and Nashwaaksis.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Free lunches return to Woodstock

Luke's lunches seek to give people a sense of community

BY CONNOR BARRY

Originally published in River Valley Sun. Reprinted with permission.



CONNOR BARRY PHOTO

ABOVE: Luke's lunch volunteer Corinne Silverton enjoying a cookie after serving up lunches to a small crowd on Aug. 24.

MISSION IN MOTION: community

BELOW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Jill Craig, Jennifer Taylor, Nancy Robinson, Nancy English, and Janis Richard are all members of the Outreach committee and helped make Luke's Lunches a reality.



CONNOR BARRY PHOTO

As you enter St. Luke's Hall on a day when free lunch is being offered, you cannot help but feel enveloped by the warm atmosphere that seems to surround the place.

For several years, a dedicated group of community volunteers offered free monthly lunches at St. Gertrude's Catholic Church Hall in Woodstock on Saturdays, but the program ended more than a decade ago.

Recently, St. Luke's Anglican Church revived the popular monthly event.

On Monday, Aug. 24, people chatted fervently, and those approaching the hall were quickly invited to join.

Taking a seat and enjoying your meal alongside others, this reporter couldn't shake the feeling that this program had achieved what many only attempt: a sense of community.

"Nancy [English] has a particular passion for outreach and for a long time, she wanted dinner church… and then it evolved into the idea of how do we serve the needs in the community," said Rev. Maria Shephardson, Archdeacon of Woodstock and Rector of the Anglican Parish of Woodstock and Richmond.

According to English, the idea came from services held by Rev. Harold Boomer, who led several church dinners.

"I thought it was a wonderful way to meet people; people were there because some of them didn't like eating alone," said English.

She, along with other members of the Outreach Committee, soon met to discuss adopting it in their own community and, with it, a secular version that would eventually become Luke's Lunches.

"We saw the need in the community that there were a lot of people going to the food bank, and especially with the price of food going up, that we should offer this time they can come in," said Janis Richard, discussing why she felt the initiative was needed.

The free lunches are held once a month at St. Luke's Anglican Hall on Main Street in Woodstock.

The meals range from soup and sandwiches to hot dogs and chips, with desserts, and are held on the third or fourth Monday of every month.

Attendees are also welcome to take an additional meal with them as they leave.

Funding for the meals is provided in-house through the Anglican Church, said Rev. Shephardson.

Since it started in May, only a few individuals have attended the lunches; however, the numbers are slowly increasing as word gets out.

The team, however, seems more than eager to encourage further attendance.

"It would be nice in the summer [if] perhaps some kids could come and have a free meal," said English, highlighting one group that could benefit from the program.

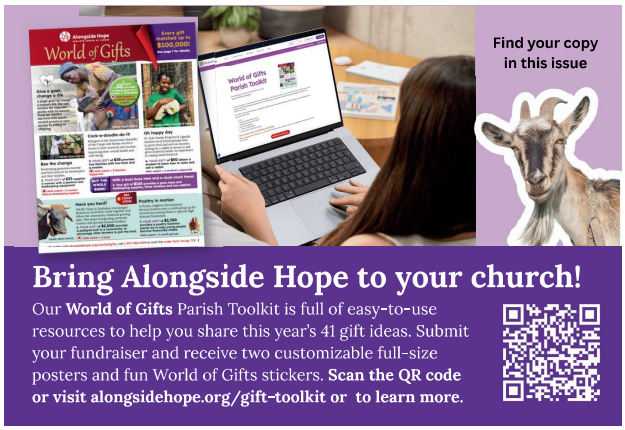
In addition to the food itself, organizers also say that they are serving up something equally important: community.

"[One of the purposes of the program is] just having a chat with somebody, maybe we're the first person they might have a chat with all day," said English.

"I'd say that we would have more folks who come in that aren't normally attending functions at our church hall, or at all in the church; it would be wonderful to see a few more folks here," said Jill Craig, member of the Outreach Committee.

"People are finding isolation post-COVID increasingly difficult to shake off, and we have a heart in the church for the community," said Rev. Shephardson.

"Our big vision is to be community for community, and we felt that people just need to know they can come through a door, they can have a meal no questions asked, [and] can interact with us as much or as little as they like, but the idea is fellowship," added Rev. Shephardson.





COMMENTARY

Are you a creator?

That's small "c" not large "C" creator!



I have become a big fan of the work of Timothy Schmalz, a Canadian-born sculptor of world renown.

He is the artist who created the world-famous "Homeless Jesus" sculpture, which depicts Jesus as a shrouded, homeless person sleeping on a park bench, with the wounds in His feet the only clue to His identity.

This creation, and its impact, has captured the attention of people around the world; 50 different bronze casts of this sculpture exist in many places, including the Vatican, many cathedrals of many denominations, and other places of social significance.

This sculpture really makes one ponder the importance of what it shows, especially if you are one who may have walked past it several times without realizing what is being shown.

Jesus did not have a home, and therefore not always a place to sleep; who is like that in our world today but the homeless we so often see in downtown cores?

The media attention given Timothy Schmalz only magnified and expanded the reach and message his art intends to make to those who take it in.

But here's the thing: when an artist of any sort has a large spotlight, they can get any sort of message out to a great many peoples.

Think of artists with social media accounts that boast millions of followers, or those whom the media will seek out whenever they have something to say or show to the world?

Indeed, their creations can reach a great many peoples.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

So here's another thing: God has granted to many, many people, the means to express themselves in some artistic way.

We are given a way to share that with others. Don't think that because you are not well known that your gift to share doesn't matter.

We don't need to compare ourselves to the greatest painter, or most fabulous musician, or most ingenious woodworker to be important in some way, large or small, known or unknown.

I am an artist - a musician, a woodworker, and now fabulous portrait creator (see the image accompanying this article).

This work will never sell at an auction house, but it did have an impact on a certain group of Sunday Schoolers at church recently.

So, it did its job. It conveyed something at the time to those it was created for. What more could I ask than that?

You, Dear Reader, can be a creator too. In a life lived under Jesus, there is always a chance to share something with others in a way that invites people to imagine, and wonder, and ponder.

It's not always something profound, but often something that is of benefit in the moment. I wonder what you might create in this way.

This article seeks to share artistic expression in its many forms, by many people; artistic forms that speak something to our world, our church, and our faith today.



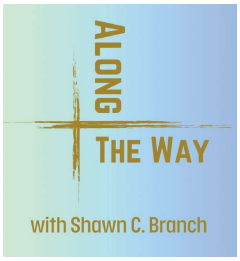
SUBMITTED PHOTO

We can all be a part of this. We don't have to have a padded resumé, a long list of followers, or accolades from famous people. May we all be blessed as we create things that speak to those around us!

Next month: new things for Advent! (already?!?!?)

Priest and musician Canon Chris Hayes serves in the Parish of Fredericton. He writes about music and a wider range of Christian art and culture each month.

Saints in the next pew



When we hear the word saint, we may imagine someone in stained glass.

A heroic figure from another century, glowing with holiness and untouched by the frustrations of life.

The saints we have heard about are rarely so polished.

They lose their patience. They forget things. They occasionally say the wrong thing. They live with doubts, disappointments, and unfinished struggles.

Their lives may never appear in a history book or on a church calendar. And yet, something of Jesus becomes visible through them.

November begins with All Saints' Day, when the Church remembers the faithful witnesses who have gone before us: apostles, martyrs, teachers, reformers, and servants whose courage helped carry the gospel across generations.

But the communion of saints is larger than the list of famous names.

It includes the people who taught us to pray, sometimes without realizing they were teaching us anything.

It includes those who quietly kept promises, offered kindness, endured hardship, and returned week after week to worship God alongside people they did not always understand.

The Letter to the Hebrews describes us as "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses." (Heb 12:1)

The image follows a long account of people who trusted God through uncertain circumstances.

Some experienced remarkable victories. Others endured suffering without seeing the outcome they hoped for.

They were not all successful by ordinary measures. They were faithful.

That 'cloud of witnesses' reminds us that we do not travel the road of faith alone. Every generation receives the faith from others, lives it imperfectly, and passes it on.

Some of those witnesses may have sat in the pew beside us.

Perhaps it was the person who arrived early every Sunday to unlock the church and turn on the heat. Few people notice this job unless it is forgotten.

Perhaps it was the woman who remembered every birthday and quietly sent cards to people who had stopped attending years before.

Perhaps it was the man who could not say much about theology but knew exactly when a neighbour needed a cord of wood, a repaired step, or a drive to an appointment.

Perhaps it was the person who prayed through the parish list each morning, holding before God needs that no one else knew they carried.

These acts seldom appear dramatic. Repeated over many years, however, they become a life.

We tend to celebrate visible accomplishments: the successful program, the stirring sermon, the building restored, or the money raised.

But much of the Church's life rests upon ministries so ordinary that we barely think to name them.

Someone makes the tea.

Someone listens to the same story again, and again.

Someone notices an empty chair and makes a phone call.

Small acts of faithfulness create a place where others can encounter grace.

Saints are not people who have escaped ordinary life. They are people through whose ordinary lives the love of God has found room to move.

This does not mean faithful people should be idealized. They have faults, and the Church has sometimes mistaken endurance for health or silence for peace.

Their witness does not depend upon their perfection; it depends upon the grace of God at work within them.

That is good news for the rest of us.

We do not need to become spiritual heroes before God can use us. We do not need impressive gifts, certainty, or public recognition.

We need only offer what we have, where we are, and allow the Holy Spirit to shape our ordinary choices.

The writer of Hebrews continues: "Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus." (Heb 12:2)

The race before us may consist of caring for a family member, encouraging a weary colleague, serving a struggling parish, or continuing to pray when prayer feels dry.

It may mean extending welcome, admitting a mistake, or choosing gentleness when irritation would be easier.

These things matter because love becomes real through practice.

This November, perhaps we might remember one of the quiet saints who helped form us. We could speak their name, tell their story, or thank God for the particular way their life pointed toward Christ.

We might also look around. The next person God is using to teach us about faithfulness may already be nearby.

They may be stacking chairs, washing cups, singing slightly off-key, or sitting quietly in the next pew.

And someone may be watching our life in the same way.

Most of us will never be remembered by the wider Church. We may never know which gesture was noticed, which word brought courage, or which small act helped another person keep going.

That is all right. Saints do not draw attention to themselves. They help us pay attention to Jesus. By the grace of God, even an ordinary life can do that.

Canon Shawn C. Branch is the diocesan Director of Mission & Ministry, supporting the missional life of the diocese and vocations.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

A life given back, a calling carried forward

The Rev. Dr. Chukwuebuka (Peter) Chukwuemeka reflects on the night that changed his life and the journey that eventually brought his family to Miramichi.

BY JONATHAN DESROCHES



SUBMITTED PHOTO

CHUKWUEMEKA FAMILY (LEFT TO RIGHT): **Back row, Udochukwu; Front Row, Chukwuebuka (Peter), Chukwuebuka (Jr.), Chukwuagbanwe, Nkechi.**

When the Rev. Dr. Chukwuebuka (Peter) Chukwuemeka arrived in Miramichi with his family this summer, he was beginning a new chapter in a ministry already spanning nearly three decades.

Appointed by Archbishop David Edwards on June 23, Chukwuebuka became rector of the parish of Newcastle-Nelson-Hardwicke effective July 7. He came to New Brunswick from St. Paul's, Bloor Street, Toronto, where he had served as an assistant.

With him came his wife Nkechi, and their three sons: Udochukwu (21), and five-year old twins Chukwuebuka and Chukwuagbanwe.

But Chukwuebuka's journey to Miramichi began much farther away, in Ndiowu, a rural community in Anambra State in southeastern Nigeria.

Both of his parents were committed members of the Anglican Church. His father served as secretary of the church committee, his mother was deeply involved in women's ministry, and his grandfather was among the pioneer Christians in the community.

His grandfather later travelled to neighbouring communities as a missionary and church teacher.

Chukwuebuka grew up through the life of the church—Anglican children's ministry, Boy's Brigade, Anglican Youth Fellowship and choir.

At home, the first thing the family did in the morning was read the Bible and pray. The last thing they did at night was sing and pray.

After the evening meal, the family would sometimes sit outside singing hymns and choruses.

"People would always stop and listen," he recalled.

Music, he said, was woven throughout everyday life—singing on the way to the stream, while gathering firewood or walking to school.

Chukwuebuka made a commitment to Christ in 1988 and, over time, became convinced he was being called into evangelical ministry.

But one night in 1991 would shape the way he understood that call for the rest of his life.

On Nov. 11, Chukwuebuka, then an undergraduate, was travelling through northern Nigeria on his way to a relative's wedding.

At about 2 a.m., a bus driver put him out at a junction Chukwuebuka didn't recognize.

He was alone, unfamiliar with the area and unaware that a curfew had been imposed amid sectarian violence. With little choice, he began walking.

Eventually he came upon a fire beside the road and a group of men—four armed vigilantes and a police officer. Another man, injured and covered in blood, was also with them.

Chukwuebuka explained who he was and where he was going. The police officer questioned him and did not believe Chukwuebuka had managed to walk that stretch of road alone at night.

Then the conversation around the fire changed. Chukwuebuka said he suddenly realized the men were talking about him.

The vigilantes believed he had been involved in the violence against their people and were pressuring the police officer to hand him over so they could kill him! The officer initially refused.

Peter remembers something else happening at the same time.

Instead of fear, he felt an unexpected sense of calm and became convinced that God was assuring him his life would not end there.

"I have called you for a reason," Chukwuebuka recalls hearing. "I have called you to proclaim my name among the nations."

Eventually, the officer relented. One of the men got up and began moving toward Chukwuebuka.

Then, Chukwuebuka said, a voice came out of the darkness. A senior police officer appeared, questioned what was happening, examined Peter's belongings and bus ticket, and ordered that he be left alone until daybreak.

Chukwuebuka never saw that officer again.

"I kept asking myself, could this have been an angelic visit or what?" he said.

The next morning, as Chukwuebuka left the area, he saw a body lying near a bridge.

The police officer travelling with him pointed toward it. "That's what they wanted to do to you," Chukwuebuka remembers him saying.

Chukwuebuka describes that night as a defining moment.

From then on, he said, he began to see his life differently. He began seeing it as something given back to him for a purpose.

"The life I now live is the bonus God gave to me so I can proclaim his name," he said. Interestingly, that conviction did not immediately lead him toward priesthood.

Chukwuebuka wanted to be an evangelist.

In 1998, he was appointed to exactly the kind of ministry he had hoped for—travelling between rural communities, planting congregations, teaching and them moving on to begin again elsewhere.

He helped plant eight new churches and was also involved in revitalizing struggling congregations.

When his bishop later encouraged him to join a group preparing for ordination, Chukwuebuka declined.

The job he had asked for, he told the bishop, was evangelist. It took his mother to change his mind.

She reminded him of a dream he had told her about as a child—one he had long forgotten.

She told him, "My son, you belong to the order. Go there and take your place."

Chukwuebuka was ordained deacon in 2007 and priest in 2008. He later became a canon and archdeacon.

Eventually, another unexpected turn came.

One morning, Chukwuebuka told his wife Nkechi, "I'm going to Canada." At the time, neither of them even had a valid passport.

That decision eventually led him to theological studies at Wycliffe College in Toronto and ministry at St. Paul's, Bloor Street.

After two years in Toronto, however, Chukwuebuka says New Brunswick already feels more familiar.

In Nigeria, he explained, pastoral ministry happens in people's homes, farms and shops.

Clergy are expected to visit, to know people and to be part of their everyday lives.

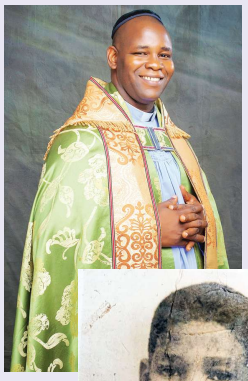
He has been pleased to discover that kind of welcome here.

Coming to Miramichi felt surprisingly natural to him because, he said, "I discovered I could go to people's houses,

Calling continued on page 15

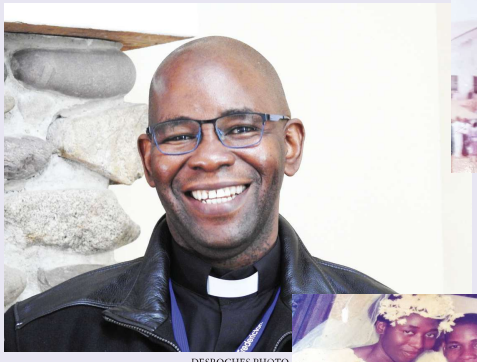
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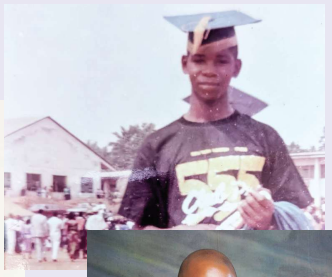




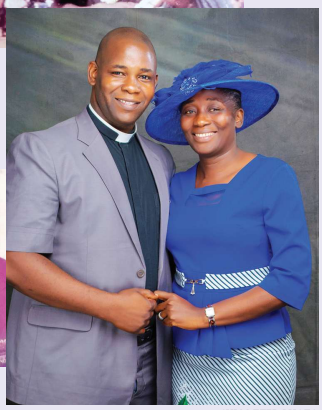
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SUBMITTED PHOTO

FROM NIGERIA TO MIRAMICHI: Chukwuebuka Peter Chukwuemeka and his wife Nkechi over the years.

Calling continued from page 14

knock on doors, and nobody says, 'Who invited you?'".

The Chukwuemeka family's first weeks here, however, were anything but quiet.

Two days after arriving, Chukwuebuka badly cut his finger while opening a coconut and spent hours at the hospital.

Less than a week later, one of the twins was stung by a wasp and suffered a severe allergic reaction.

Chukwuebuka and Nkechi rushed him toward the hospital. Chukwuebuka was speeding when an officer pulled him over.

"My son is dying in the car," Chukwuebuka told him. The officer immediately told Chukwuebuka to follow him and escorted the family through heavy bridge traffic toward the hospital.

Chukwuebuka still sees significance in that moment. Decades after a police officer appeared during one of the most frightening nights of his own life, another officer appeared while his son's life was in danger.

His son survived and continues to receive weekly treatment. For Chukwuebuka, experiences like these are inseparable from the faith he preaches.

"I don't just preach theological concepts," he said, "I'm preaching my lived experience."

And now that lived experience has brought Chukwuebuka, Nkechi and their boys to Miramichi.

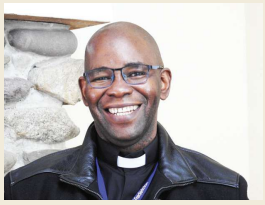
There are still communities to learn, people to meet and places to discover.

For those wondering how to welcome their new rector and his family, Peter may already have supplied the answer.

Knock on the door. Start a conversation. Invite them in.

After all, that kind of ministry feels like home.

TWO MINUTE INTERVIEW



Chukwuebuka (Peter) Chukwuemeka, rector of the parish of Newcastle-Nelson-Hardwicke

Favourite book of the Bible - Psalms
Birthplace - Ndiowu, Nigeria
What you love most about God – The mystery that is unknown yet known so intimately
Favourite place on Earth - Anywhere with his family
Farthest you've been from home - Israel & Canada
Favourite meal or dessert - Akpu (fermented cassava dough)
Biggest fear – Not fulfilling God's purpose for my life
Hidden talent – Singing
Favourite movie or book – *Things Fall Apart*
Your hobby – Football (Soccer)
Three things always in your fridge – Nigerian corn, ube (pear), and onugbu (bitter leaf) for local soup
Favourite sports team - Arsenal Football Club

Episcopal Announcements

The Rev. Dr. Christopher McMullen's term as incumbent (intermim priest-in-charge) of the Parish of Upper Kennebecasis has been extended.

The Ven. John Matheson's term as Archdeacon of Kingston and the Kennebecasis has been extended a further one-year term to Sept. 30, 2027.

Archbishop David has accepted the resignation of **the Rev. Canon Gerald (Gerry) Laskey** as rector of the Parish of Derby and Blackville and Regional Dean of Chaleur-Miramichi effective October 31 in order for Gerry to retire.

The Diocesan Synod welcomes **Kinshi Ladipo-Daniel** as Bishop's Office Coordinator beginning Oct. 5.

The Ven. Robert Marsh's term as Archdeacon of Kingston and the Kennebecasis has been extended for a further one-year term to September 30, 2027.

The Ven. Brent Ham has been appointed Interim Archdeacon of Chatham effective October 1, 2026 and his term as Archdeacon of Moncton has been extended for a further one-year term to October 7, 2027.

COMMENTARY

Where the action is

"Go, and do likewise." (Luke 10:37b)



PHOTO BY KELLAND FAIRWEATHER

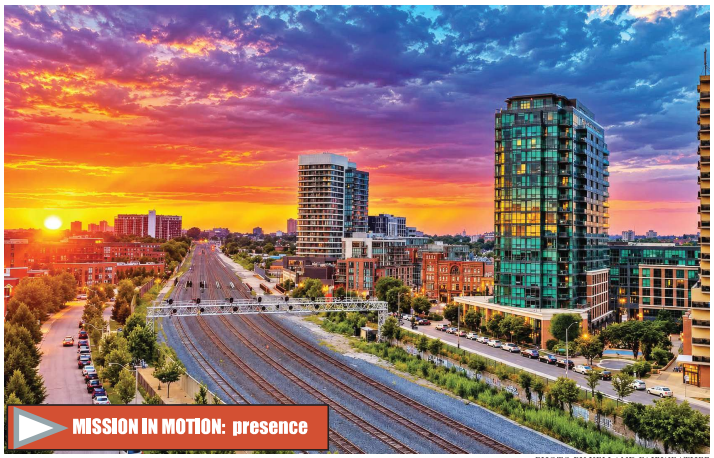


PHOTO BY KELLAND FAIRWEATHER



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LEFT: Toronto streetscape near the hospital district.

CENTRE: Downtown Toronto. A special thank you to Kelland Fairweather for sharing his photos of Toronto.

RIGHT: Workshop of Domenico Fetti, tempera on panel, circa 1620, now at Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

On a recent Friday morning I received a phone call from someone whose daughter had gone to Toronto for a medical procedure, and while wandering around downtown in the heat, had collapsed.

When she came to after dark, she had been robbed. All her possessions had been stolen, including any ID she had on her.

Somehow she made it to the Toronto General Hospital Emergency Department and used the hospital telephone to call her mother in New Brunswick.

Her mother was calling to ask me to contact an Anglican Church in Toronto that she had once attended to see if they could help her daughter.

My first reaction - after a quick prayer - was to call the spiritual care department at the hospital.

I left a message describing the situation. It was not quite 9 a.m., Ontario time, when I called.

Then I started calling the churches I knew, beginning with the one the mother had asked me to contact. Their offices were closed so I left messages.

For some, office hours didn't begin until 10 a.m.

I called the offices of the Diocese of Toronto. I tried several departments, including each of the four bishops. No one was in.

Finally I tried the offices of Inner Varsity Christian Fellowship, because I used to work for them and had some contacts there, and got a human voice at last.

I launched into my story and she was very apologetic, but she was the donor rep and didn't know how to be of assistance. But she was sympathetic and suggested a couple of numbers I could call within their organization. Apparently on Fridays, most work from home.

I was about to call the mother back to tell her I had not managed to reach anyone, when my phone rang.

It was the Spiritual Care Dept. of the hospital. She had received my message and had already begun following up.

She had confirmed that the person in question was indeed in the emergency department.

She was about to visit her, but was calling me back to let me know and to get more details about the patient and any relevant information I might have.

In the days since, she has been doing what she can to help and has contacted the woman's mother to reassure her of her daughter's wellbeing.

When I realized that Sunday's gospel lesson was the story of The Good Samaritan, I couldn't resist. A modern version of this parable had just dropped into my lap.

SPIRITUAL CARE DEPARTMENTS

You may not be aware of this, but spiritual care departments at our hospitals are often viewed with suspicion in church circles, and criticized because they restrict what pastoral visitors and clergy are allowed to do in a hospital setting. The hospital rules are:

- Pastoral visitors are to interact only with those who have given consent to a visit.
- We are to refrain from imposing our own values and beliefs on those we see.

For some, this has been interpreted as preventing Christian faith leaders from sharing the gospel with patients.

Spiritual care practitioners are often mistrusted by Christian religious leaders: they are too liberal, too open to other faith traditions.

They are the Samaritans of the spiritual care community.

In Jesus' parable, who were the first ones on the scene?

Religious leaders — first a priest, then a Levite.

And what did both do?

They moved to the other side of the road and rushed by as quickly as they could.

You see, if either of them had come in contact with the injured person, they would have been ritually unclean, and would have had to go through a process of purification.

The Samaritan, on the other hand, wasn't worried about his own safety or purity, or following all the rules.

All he saw was someone in need, and he had the means to help him.

Self preservation is a strong motivator. Not wanting to get involved. Assuming someone else will do it.

Not wanting to get into trouble for not following proper protocols. Worried about disease or drugs.

Meanwhile, there's someone passed out on a busy city street.

Apparently not a single person stopped to help her, until after dark.

Toronto is the biggest city in Canada, with lots of church buildings and four Anglican bishops.

The churches have offices, and answering services, but no staff were on hand on that Friday morning in August.

All this has made me think.

What are we about if we are so cut off from the world around us that a person can collapse on a busy street and be left unattended for hours?

Is this the Church that has often been accused of being so heavenly minded that it's no earthly good? I don't know the answer to that question.

What I do know is that my experience has given me pause.

As a Church, what are we here for? What good are we if people in need can't get a hold of us?

I'm not blaming anyone. I don't have enough information to criticize.

But what this experience has done is made me think. Are we Christians where we need to be?

Are we available or are we isolated in our safe and secure buildings and offices instead of being out where the real needs of the world are, front and centre?

I don't have any pat answers.

And as I said before, I don't have the back story. There could be all kinds of reasons why I wasn't able to connect with any church people that Friday. Probably some very good reasons.

But what this has done is made me think. Made me wonder.

It's challenged me — and that's a good thing.

We all need to be shaken out of our complacency once in awhile.

And Christian leaders need to think twice before criticizing others who may be doing the work that many of them are not.

We should respect the work of spiritual care and not criticize it.

If churches can't be available for hospital emergencies, spiritual care can. Instead of treating one another as adversaries, perhaps we should be partners.

Or as Jesus calls it, being a neighbour.

The words of Jesus at the end of the story are perhaps a rallying cry for all of us: "Go, and do likewise."(Luke 10:37b)

Eva Morton is a layreader and chaplain at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital in Fredericton.