

# THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST MESSENGER



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November 2015

## CELEBRATION



The new Incumbent is congratulated by wife, Michelle

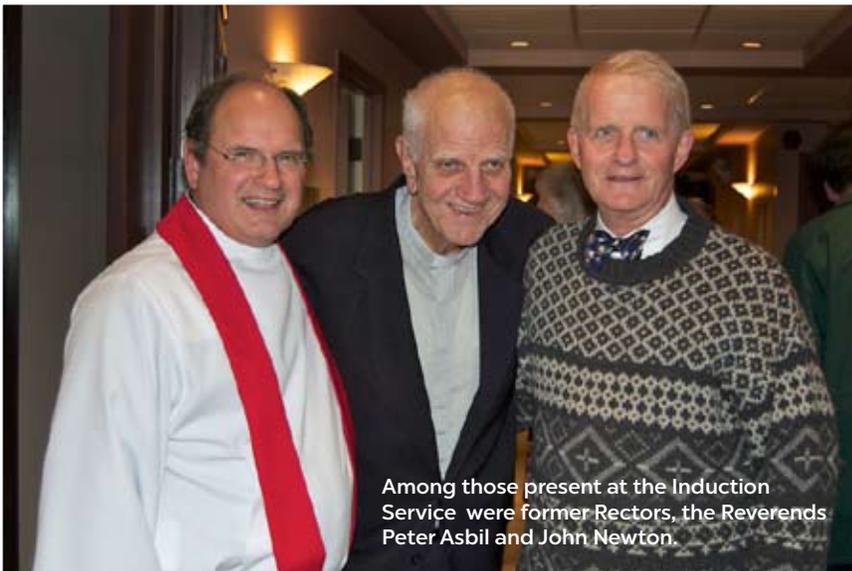


### A New Ministry

The Reverend Lorne Eason was officially installed by Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson and welcomed by the attendant clergy and congregation as the new incumbent at the Church of Saint John the Baptist in an Induction Service on Sunday, 25th October last. Two hundred people filled the church

and *raised the roof* with singing and good cheer. After the service, all were invited to a reception in the Church Hall to greet Lorne, his family, visiting clergy and many well-wishers from other parishes. It was a joyous occasion to mark a new beginning.

(continued overleaf)



Among those present at the Induction Service were former Rectors, the Reverends Peter Asbil and John Newton.



**A highlight of the Induction Service** was the sermon offered by Rev. Dr. Neil Mancor. The members of the congregation might have been forgiven had they imagined, at its onset, that they were attending Lorne's "roast" rather than his Induction. Stories told, indiscretions forgiven! Dr. Mancor was kind enough to pass the text of his sermon to the MESSENGER and a few excerpts follow. He began:

*The life of the church goes on year after year, but the arrival of a new minister does mark the turning of the page from one chapter to another. I am so pleased for both St. John the Baptist and Lorne; this is such a good match and it is wonderfully encouraging to see Lorne flourishing in his position as parish priest.*

*What I can say about Lorne? What will be the essence of his gift to you? Faithfulness. Lorne is a deeply faithful man: faithful to his calling, faithful to the church, faithful to Jesus Christ. You need to know that he will not be perfect: he will make mistakes. He will not magically lead you into the Promised Land. He will not bring back the glory days. He does not have all the answers. But one thing I know, is that Lorne will be faithful to you, the people of St. John the Baptist through and through. More important, I know, I know that he will be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The heart of Dr. Mancor's address centred on a verse from that Sunday's gospel:

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

### **Jesus Call us to One Another**

*Jesus calls us to one another. It is a call to be Church. It is a profound truth that if we belong to Christ, we also then belong to one another. For this is the place first of all where we learn to live out the love we receive from God. If we cannot love each other, we won't be able to love God's world either.*

*Many of us see faith and church as primarily individual. My faith is private, I come to spend time with God: and sharing*

*life, faith ministry with others doesn't always come into the equation. But when we do that, going to Church is like taking a spiritual selfie. But that is not how the Bible sees church: we are deeply connected to one another, and I think it is beautiful to know that as members of St. the John the Baptist, you are here, part of this body because Christ chose and appointed you.*

*There is no programme you can follow, no plan you can adopt, no advertising you can send out on any platform you can name that will replenish the pews if the Church will not be Church. But if we will be church in obedience to Christ the opportunities are boundless.*

### **Christ Calls us to the World**

*Fruitful ministry is gospel ministry, missional ministry that touches lives and changes hearts.*

*We want people to come but how do we get them to come? I have news for you; they are not going to come. We have to go. That means for us all to be active in the mission of God. Use this beautiful building as a hub for mission work. There are 30,790 people in Pointe Claire, of whom 63% are aged 15-64. So you have a lot to work with. Think about how you as a body can serve your community.*

*Anglicans don't normally have their eyes in the clouds; we have our eyes in the books. I feel I need to say the 1960s are not contemporary any more. I think the challenge for you is to look beyond the books and figure out how Christ is calling you to his mission. Go proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Make disciples, bind up broken hearts. Proclaim the just reign of God; feed the poor, visit the imprisoned and clothe the naked and take care of the widow and orphan.*

*This church has borne much fruit in the past. Will you bear fruit now?*

*As you embark upon a new journey with your new priest, live under the authority of God's Word. Obey and follow Christ, God's Word made flesh, as he calls you to be God's Church in God's World. And know as you do so, Christ will be with you.*

From a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Neil Mancor, October 2015

## Vicar's Vignette

### Love, the anchor that holds in the Storms of Life

I've often come across a word, a phrase or an idea, that I've either read in a newsletter, a magazine, a book, or sometimes that I've heard in a movie, on the television or perhaps in a conversation, that catches my attention and gives me reason to pause.



Such words or ideas usually strike a chord within me at some level; they seem to contain some grain of truth, or pearl of wisdom that I find relevant in my own life and situation; they challenge me, they encourage me, they instruct me.

Generally when I come across such words I try to write them down as soon as I can so that I don't forget them, so that I can think about them more clearly and carefully later on.

Such was the case recently when I came across a sentence that caused me to pause as I read through an article in November's issue of *Christianity Today* titled, *When Islands of Meaning Sink Beneath Us*. In it author Douglas Groothuis describes the struggle he and his wife Becky have gone through as she suffered through twenty-five years with fibromyalgia and is now contending with a rare and cruel form of dementia called primary progressive aphasia, an incurable and fatal condition that has taken over her life. He writes this, "Love remained as happiness fled and dread approached."

Groothuis does not gloss over the fact that their struggle has been hard and will get harder. Nor does he shy away from admitting his own inability to find meaning in his wife's suffering. He writes, "... when I try, I come up dry and gasping." But what he also says, is that, "Even as the disease progresses, she is still Becky, she will still be made in God's image, she will still be my wife and in covenant with me, she will still be living out the vicissitudes of Providence", which I take Groothuis to mean that Becky will still be living out the changing of her life from life to death to life.

When I read these words, "Love remained as happiness fled and dread approached," I couldn't help but think of the love exhibited by Christ for the Father and the Father for the Son even as Jesus' suffering and death fast approached. And I couldn't help but wonder at that same Love extended toward us, a Love that did not and will not disappoint, as was demonstrated in the empty tomb.

Even if, as Groothuis says, he cannot make sense of the larger meaning behind his wife's suffering and their struggle with it, he nevertheless has set his hope in the gospel of Love, in Christ, and in a Resurrection when all will be remade.

"Love remained as happiness fled and dread approached." How do these words strike you? Do they give you reason to pause? Do they give you cause to hope, even in the face of suffering?

Yours in Christ, Lorne



**Meanwhile these three remain: faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love.**

1 Corinthians 13:13

## HOME

no one leaves home unless  
home is the mouth of a shark  
you only run for the border  
when you see the whole city running as well

you only leave home  
when home won't let you stay.

you have to understand,  
that no one puts their children in a boat  
unless the water is safer than the land

no one burns their palms  
under trains  
beneath carriages  
no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck  
feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled  
means something more than journey.  
no one crawls under fences  
no one wants to be beaten  
pitied

no one chooses refugee camps  
or strip searches where your body is left aching  
or prison,  
because prison is safer  
than a city of fire  
and one prison guard  
in the night  
is better than a truckload  
of men who look like your father

i want to go home,  
but home is the mouth of a shark  
home is the barrel of the gun  
and no one would leave home  
unless home chased you to the shore.

no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your  
ear saying —

leave,

run away from me now

i dont know what i've become

but i know that anywhere

is safer than here

Excerpted from *HOME*, a poem by Warsan Shire  
Kenyan-born Somali poet



## Sister Pilgrimage – July 2015

*Early Sunday morning, dressed in our special t-shirts, we left in plenty of time for the morning church service at St Martin's-in-the-Woods.*

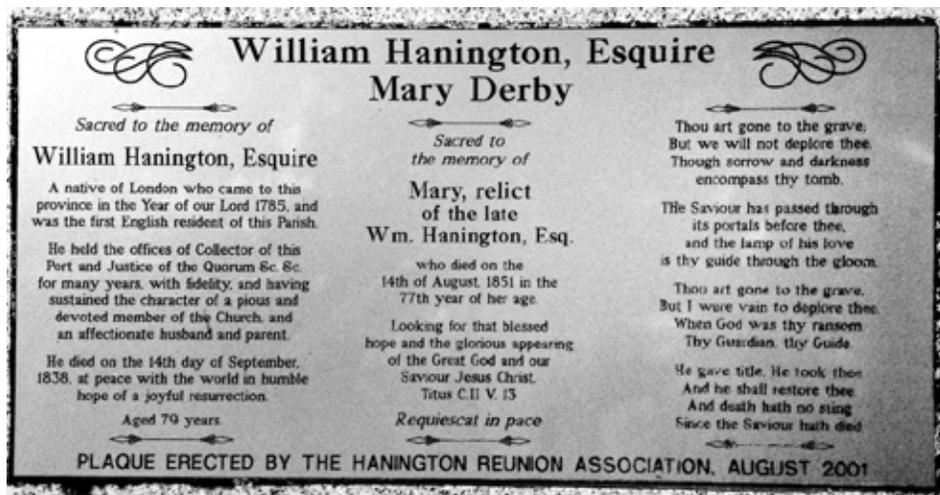
*The greeter welcomed us warmly, and we asked if there might be any Haningtons at church that day. She beckoned down the aisle to her husband who came and introduced himself as Allen*

*Hanington. Overjoyed, we threw our arms around our surprised distant cousin and snapped a commemorative photo. And so our journey began.*



My 3 x great grandfather, William Hanington, was the first English settler in Shediac, New Brunswick, in 1785. He was an amazing fellow who emigrated from England at the age of twenty-six, built a whole community, set up lumber exports, built ships, married a Prince Edward Island girl and had a family of thirteen. Later in life, in 1823, he donated a piece of land and built St. Martin's-in-the-Woods Anglican Church, where he was buried in 1838.

This past July, my sister and I decided to go on a "sister pilgrimage" to explore our family history in Shediac from two hundred and thirty years ago. We ordered our "sister pilgrimage" t-shirts and planned our family-and-friends-fun-filled trip to the Maritimes. A very special trip for us both. We hadn't travelled together before and my sister, recently widowed, was embracing a "carpe diem" attitude.



Peggy's Cove was our first tourist attraction and we enjoyed a stroll around the lighthouse and its spectacular rocks overlooking the ocean. The quaint little shops were charming and the local afternoon tea was delicious.

On our way to Shediac, NB, we visited my sister's friend Helen who was new to the area and provided us with a hearty lunch. We checked into our B&B in Shediac, and set off to explore the delightful little town. On the waterfront, we climbed onto the famous giant lobster to pose for the ultimate tourist photo. Afterwards, while strolling along the boardwalk, we came upon a historical monument dedicated to our 2x great grandfather Daniel Hanington, a famous politician in his time. What a terrific surprise!

Hopewell Rocks was our second tourist attraction with its incredible change in tides. That morning, we walked along the "beach". Then we lunched nearby at the Apple Blossom Café, run by three retired schoolteacher spinster sisters. What a hoot they were! After lunch, we returned to find high tide had completely transformed the whole bay. Amazing!

The next morning, our GPS helped us find our way to tiny Clairville, NB, to visit my friends Carol and Bruce. Their cozy place was beautifully perched up on a hill overlooking a vast field. After a tour of their house and garden, we had a delicious lunch and then set out for Charlottetown, PEI.



While driving across the spectacular Confederation Bridge, it was difficult to imagine how William and his Indian guides paddled across the Northumberland Strait in 1792 to claim his bride in Summerside, PEI (then known as Ile-St.Jean).

We checked into our B&B in Charlottetown and headed off to meet Anne of Green Gables, our third tourist attraction. Luckily for us, there weren't many visitors that day and she was able to personally fill us in on all the latest town gossip.

On our last day, we visited our mother's best childhood friend. Our mother passed away when we were very young, and "Auntie Jean" has been a precious source of their childhood tales. It was a thrill to see her and her family.

Later on that Sunday after church, we visited with Allen's charming sister Lillian, the family historian who knew our exact location in the Hanington family tree!

And just down the lane from the church, off Hanington Street, was our grandmother's summer cottage. Our grandfather, Canon Lindsay, would fill in as their pastor from time to time over the summers and several people at church that morning remembered him fondly.

Finally, as we drove down the driveway to visit with Allen and his wife Willa, there they were sitting on the porch swing waiting to welcome us into their home. The afternoon flew by with lemonade and homemade treats and eventually we bid farewell to our cousins with heartfelt promises to keep in touch.

PS The August 2015 family newsletter, the Hanington Herald, just arrived by mail! Included in the comments from the President's Desk (that would

be our cousin Allen!), it says: "We just experienced a lovely visit from the Anglin sisters; Lucy (Montreal) and Margaret (Ontario) who were visiting in the area and attended morning service at St Martin's-in-the-Woods Anglican Church on Sunday, July 5th 2015. We had a very nice visit on Sunday afternoon. They are descendants of Daniel Hanington."

Lucy Anglin (Hunt)



## The Grounds & Property

During October, the usual Fall cleanup of the church property took place, a dozen or so parishioners pitching in to spruce up the parking lot and front lawn. As can be seen, some helpers were a tad younger than the norm; the rest were sure that they had seen the same leaves last year! In addition to this *cosmetic* effort, some diseased or dead trees were removed professionally in the interest of our own safety and that of our neighbours. Thanks are due to Liz Steinson for documenting the proceedings.



## Motherhood

Today, I went to a local playground near my Mum's house.

A-----a, my daughter, was having a ball and the sun was shining. There was only one other mum and her young 8-months-old son sitting on a bench, nursing. I smiled and we went on playing. But I looked over again later and saw the mother clinging to the baby's shirt as he sat on the bench, mercifully not quite mobile. Her eyes were shut and I recognized that look of sheer exhaustion. That moment of "I am desperately trying to take care of my baby but I simply cannot stay awake." I've been there. All mothers have.

I debated whether or not I should say or do something, whether I would be perceived as overstepping or out of line. But if the baby fell off the bench on to the concrete, I knew I would feel responsible. So I gently approached her and said:

"Hello, I'm here playing with my daughter. I know how tired you are. Believe me. If you want, I can watch your son. He can play with us and you can sleep." She barely spoke English, and my Chinese is pretty limited to dim sum only, but she looked at me like I was a life raft on a desert island. And handed me, a total stranger, her child. We played in the sand, A-----a showed him some leaves, and soon his mama awoke.

This is motherhood.

This is what supporting the global village of Mums everywhere looks like. Because man, this is a hard job, 24/7.

From a former student, writing in FaceBook

## Miracle in Lunenburg

*This story of the restoration of the historic church of St. John's in Lunenburg bears some similarity to our experience here in Pointe Claire. St. John's Church, like the Church of Saint John the Baptist, also rose "like a phoenix from the ashes". The story was told by John Demont, a writer for the Halifax Chronicle-Herald last June.*

"The little congregation of St. John's and the town of Lunenburg could never restore this church without the generosity of the people of the world," says Archdeacon Michael Mitchell, a preternaturally young-looking 62-year-old who was born in the north end of Halifax. It is possible that the world saw St. John's for what it is: a piece of history and an architectural gem, as well as a place of worship.

The church has its roots in the French-English battle for North America and the decision by the British crown to settle Lunenburg with "foreign Protestants," mainly German Lutherans, along with Swiss Calvinists and German-speaking Huguenots. Since the Church of England was the state religion back in Britain, the liturgy at St. John's, from the start, was Anglican — even though few in the congregation understood English — making it the second-oldest Protestant church in Canada.



In the beginning, Mitchell tells me, it was an unheated wooden box with roof beams brought from a Boston church to Lunenburg aboard a British man-of-war.

It's hard to reconcile that with the structure that stands before us now: the wooden steeples, spires and peaks, and rounded windows that reach Gothic-style toward the heavens, architectural characteristics that helped the church earn not just a National Historic Site of Canada designation but were also central to Old Lunenburg being designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The miracle began the moment the congregation voted to restore St. John's to its pre-fire glory rather than replace it with some sort of replica. Much of the interior was undam-

aged, including the altar, which five firemen rescued from the smoldering church. The \$7 million for the job poured in from Lunenburg and throughout Nova Scotia. It came from the pockets of strangers elsewhere in Canada — a fundraiser was held at Toronto's Massey Hall — and small donations from people in Europe and the United States who heard about the fire on stories carried by American television networks.

Inside, as much as outside, it is obvious that we all owe those people a huge debt. Mitchell's favourite part is the windows, restored by a German artisan, that become "gems that sparkle" when the sun shines through. But it makes the hair on the back of the arms stand up a little to read the memorial plaques for the parishioners who helped found Lunenburg, who sat in the numbered wooden pews a century before Canada was a country and who, in some cases, are buried in the crypt beneath the church, which a visitor can go downstairs to visit.

In the chancel near the altar is something extraordinary: a deep blue ceiling dotted with 700 gold stars. It was thought that the stars were randomly placed. After the fire, an astronomer from Saint Mary's University somehow figured out that the stars, ordered as they are, depict the Lunenburg sky at sunset on the night Jesus Christ was thought to have been born — in other words, the first Christmas.

With thanks to André Hammond



# CONSECRATION

**Mary Irwin-Gibson** moved to the Montreal area from Sarnia with her parents at the age of 3. Her early education was largely in French at a Montreal school affiliated with the United Church of Canada. She grew up mostly in Boucherville. The family parishes included St. Margaret's, Tetraultville in east-end Montreal and St. Mark's, Longueuil, which ceased operation as a parish this year although the building still operates as centre of diocesan activity.

Montréal's new Bishop considered a career in social work and to that end added a good command of Italian to her English and French. "But I wanted to help other people worship God."

Ordained as a deacon in 1981 and a priest in 1982, she was the third woman ordained as a priest in the Diocese of Montreal – and the first, she adds, ordained as a priest at a time in her life when she was both starting a ministry and a family. She served in the Parish of Vaudreuil for three years and the Parish of Dunham-Frelighsburg for seven years before going to Holy Trinity in Ste Agathe for 18 years and then the cathedral in Kingston as Dean.

Mary Irwin-Gibson is installed as Montréal's first female bishop.



## Synod 2015

*Working well together means learning to appreciate one another's ways of speaking and working and doing ministry. I am grateful for the richness of leadership in this diocese and for the gifts and institutional knowledge of many who have invested so much love and hard work over the years and who continue to do so. We each*

**bring our gifts to the service of God; the strength of the Diocese and the wisdom of those who have experience is a vital component.**

*The word 'mission' has migrated in meaning from the expression of our call in Christ to thinking that it only means reaching out to those less fortunate, or standing up for the environment or against injustice. I believe the Mission of the Church encompasses all of these things and that reaching out to the community is not limited to helping those who are poor and isolated. It is the Anglican Communion's expression of the church's "common commitment to, and understanding of, God's holistic/integral mission" ... It is imperative that we find ways to reach out in mission and in faith to those who have not heard the Good News. It is not enough to tell ourselves how friendly our churches are while the attendance stays stable – or worse...*

When new people come to our churches, we need to offer the kind of hospitality that Christ has offered us. This is more than handing them



a bulletin and ignoring them. Who is that PERSON that Christ has sent to you today? How can your parish serve them? If your parish can't do it, help them find a church that is willing to do so! Making disciples, growing disciples, and equipping lay people for ministry will make it possible for the other marks of mission to flow. As people animated by the Holy Spirit, we can count on God wanting to work through us. If we teach others how to live with Christ, more can happen.

(Consecration continued)

I am encouraged to hear of the partnerships between congregations that are being worked on in our Diocese and of the regional ministry in the Laurentians that seems to be flourishing. Be assured that as your Bishop, I will be journeying with you all as we work courageously for the kingdom in Christ's name. Yes there are and there will be challenges. Yes, there is sometimes fear as we step out in faith. Jesus tells us not to worry and not to be afraid and to invest in his purposes.

We are all one Body serving the living God who has called us to be the Church in this time and place!

Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson, from the Bishop's Charge to Synod 2015

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*Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.*

Mother Theresa

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## A bit late for Thanksgiving but...

A young man named John received a parrot as a gift. The parrot had a bad attitude and an even worse vocabulary.

Every word out of the bird's mouth was rude, obnoxious and laced with profanity. John tried and tried to change the bird's attitude by consistently saying only polite words, playing soft music and anything else he could think of to 'clean up' the bird's vocabulary.

Finally, John was fed up and he yelled at the parrot. The parrot yelled back. John shook the parrot and the parrot got angrier and even more rude. John, in desperation, threw up his hands, grabbed the bird and put him in the freezer.

For a few minutes the parrot squawked and kicked and screamed. Then suddenly there was total quiet. Not a peep was heard for over a minute.

Fearing that he'd hurt the parrot, John quickly opened the door to the freezer. The parrot calmly stepped out onto John's outstretched arms and said:

*"I believe I may have offended you with my rude language and actions. I'm sincerely remorseful for my inappropriate transgressions and I fully intend to do everything I can to correct my rude and unforgivable behavior."*

John was stunned at the change in the bird's attitude. As he was about to ask the parrot what had made such a dramatic change in his behavior, the bird spoke up, very softly:

*"May I ask what the turkey did?"*

## Pondering the Meaning of Life

*As I was lying around, pondering the problems of the world, I realized that, at my age, I don't really give a rat's rear anymore.*

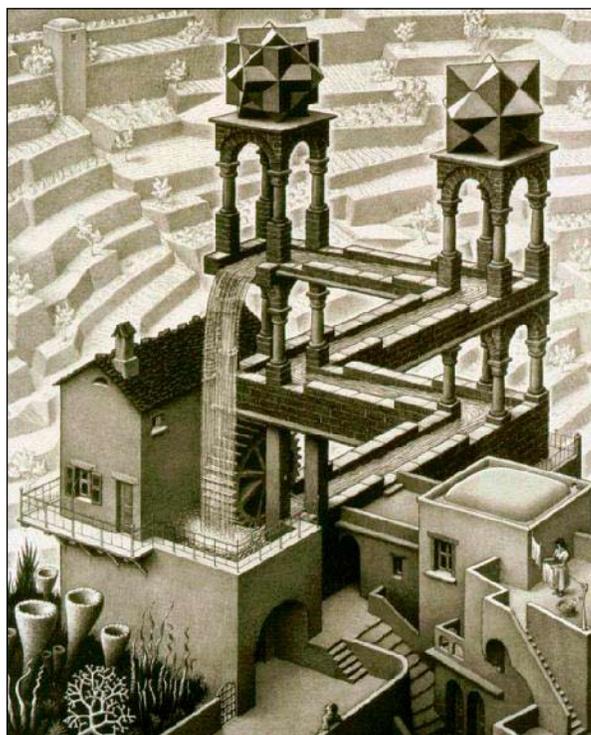
After all, if walking is good for your health, the postman would be immortal. A whale swims all day, only eats fish, drinks water, but is still fat. A rabbit runs and hops and only lives fifteen years, while a tortoise doesn't run and does mostly nothing, yet it lives for one hundred and fifty years.

Just grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to remember the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

*Now that I'm older here's what I've discovered...*

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and all-bran.
3. I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
5. If all is not lost, then where the heck is it?
6. It was a whole lot easier to get older, than to get wiser.
7. Some days, you're the top dog, some days you're the hydrant; the early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
8. I wish the buck really did stop here. I sure could use a few of them.
9. Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
10. Accidents in the back seat cause kids.
11. It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
12. The world only beats a path to your door when you're in the bathroom.
13. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he'd have put them on my knees.
14. When I'm finally holding all the right cards, everyone wants to play chess.
15. It's not hard to meet expenses... they're everywhere.
16. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
17. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter... I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm "here after".
18. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.

Geezer



M. C. Escher: Waterfall