

THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST **MESSENGER**

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Thanksgiving and harvest



*For peaceful homes and healthful days,
For all the blessings earth displays,
We owe thee thankfulness and praise
Giver of all!*

*To thee, from whom we all derive
Our life, our gifts, our power to give,
O may we ever with thee live,
Giver of all!*

Blue Hymnal 296

This test reveals three things about the nature of faith.

First, faith involves trust. Abraham loved his son Isaac dearly, yet God commanded he sacrifice him. Hadn't God promised that through Isaac he would have many descendants? In spite of this, Abraham trusted God.

Second, faith involves ongoing struggle. Abraham learns there is no such thing as "getting the faith" and never again having to struggle with it. Just when he thinks he "has the faith" it is tested to the breaking point.

And thirdly, faith involves periodic darkness. Abraham learns that faith is a lot like the sun that shines in the sky. Sometimes it shines so brightly that we never think of doubting its presence. Other times

it disappears so completely and for so long that we wonder if it is still there.

It is not known who wrote Hebrews but it is generally believed by scholars to be a sermon delivered by a Christian preacher to his congregation. No doubt this author surprised his readers by his conclusion; these mighty Jewish heroes did not receive all that God had promised because they died before Christ came. In God's plan, they and the Christian believers would be

rewarded together. There is a solidarity among believers. New Testament and Old Testament believers will be glorified together. Not only are we one in the body of Christ with all those alive, but we are also one with all those who ever lived. It takes all of us to be perfect in Him. Rev. Robert Fulgham said this; "To look this way is to see. To see is to have vision. To have vision is to understand. To understand is to know. To know is to become. To become is to live

Faith and Belief

Faith and belief mean two distinct things.

Faith is internally driven, the *leap of faith*, the step one takes with no obvious evidence for taking that step. Given to us because we are created. Belief on the other hand, is an expression. Abraham believed the Lord and in Mark 9:24 we hear, "the father of the child cried out, I believe; help my unbelief!" To have faith is to love God as it is a gift from God. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."

Theology is *fides quarens intellectum* meaning theology is faith seeking understanding. There is an aspect of trust involved in what Christians call faith. That leap of faith — it's that thing you do first. Faith comes first, then comes understanding. Knowledge comes after faith.

For example, Abraham's life was filled with faith. At God's command he left home and went to another land — obeying without question. In obedience to God, Abraham was even willing to sacrifice his son Isaac.



(Continued overleaf)

(Faith and Belief, continued)

fully. To live fully is to matter. And to matter is to become light. And to become light is to be loved. And to love is to burn. And to burn is to exist." So faith is a gift from God, our Father Almighty in Heaven. As we approach Advent, it is good to remember that God became human, in order that humanity might become divine.

From a sermon by Lay Reader Angela Deslauriers, August 2016
DLP, Editor

Vicar's Vignette

What is the Reason you walk?

*"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries."*



The above quote is taken from a poem titled "Aurora Leigh," written in 1857 by the English poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

It's a quote that for me captures the wonder and reality of God heralded in creation, much like the Apostle Paul writes in Romans 1:20, "Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made..." (NRSV).

It's also a quote that in a wonderfully expressive way describes God's clarion call to all humanity to take notice; notice of God's eternal power and divine nature, even if just for a moment. Because when we do we get a glimpse of a new reality, a reality that compels us to take off our shoes as it were; to express in some way an "inner reverence and humility through an outward act of worship" to the majestic and holy God of all things. And when we do grasp the testimony of God's reality, majesty and holiness expressed in creation, we also begin to grasp that there is a greater reason for our being than "sitting around and plucking raspberries," or as Paul has written than to "...eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32, NIV).

This greater reason I think is summarized well in the book "The Reason You Walk" written by Winnipeg author Wab Kinew. In it he writes, "After a feast, we closed the ceremony with the Anishinaabe travelling song that we use to close all our gatherings in the Lake of the Woods country. I explained the lyrics "Ningosha anishaa wenjii-bimoseyan"

- "I am the reason you walk."

"...there are four layers of meaning to these words. They are from the perspective of the Creator, as though God himself were singing to you. The first meaning of "I am the reason you walk" is "I have created you and therefore you walk." The second meaning is "I am your motivation." The third meaning is "I am that spark inside you called love, which animates you and allows you to live by the Anishinaabe values of kiizhewaatiwin." The fourth and final meaning is "I am the destination at the end of your life that you are walking toward."

The meaning of these Anishinaabe lyrics essentially carry the same meaning as Paul's words in Acts 17: 28 where he writes, "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Thanksgiving is a reminder not only of God's goodness towards us, but also a call to take notice of who God is, who we are and the reason we walk and worship.

May God bless you with a deeper sense of His presence and a generous portion of His bounty in this harvest season and in the seasons to come.

Yours in Christ, Corne



Creation Calls

I have felt the wind blow, whispering your name;
I have seen your tears fall when I watch the rain.

How could I say there is no God
When all around creation calls –
A singing bird, a mighty tree,
The vast expanse of open sea

Gazing at a bird in flight, soaring through the air;
Lying down beneath the stars, I feel your presence there.

I love to stand at ocean's shore
And feel the thundering breakers roar;
To walk through golden fields of grain
'Neath endless blue horizon's frame.

Listening to a river run, watering the earth
Fragrance of a rose in bloom, a newborn's cry at birth.

Brian Doerksen



On the Road • Summer Journeys

On Safari With André

Premier Joey Smallwood once said during an interview with CFCF TV's Don McGowan (remember him?) in response to a wrong pronunciation of his province's name. It is "Newfound-land! Understand?"

A 4,400 kms mid-July road trip through Western Newfoundland was an unforgettable, and a very different experience, from visiting other parts of Canada, in all respects, weather included of course, although it was mostly sunny and cool and rained amazingly only a few times at night.

After disembarking from the Maritime Atlantic ferry at Port Aux Basques, we proceeded on the Trans Canada Highway along the Western coastline toward Gros Morne National Park, Rocky Harbour being our destination. Much of the coastal and mountain scenery on the way was breathtaking. After arriving there we unloaded our "stuff" into a spacious 3 1/2 room log cabin which was equipped with a kitchen and a barbecue which we used every night to cook our fresh cod or halibut. The view of the harbour from our window shows where the fish was brought in by boat and where we bought it at the dock. Visiting and chatting in stores with the very friendly locals in Rocky Harbour was fun.



There was almost everything in one place convenience stores, where one could buy locally made wool socks, hats and mitts or "Screech". Interestingly most of the goods are locally made. I suppose they have lots of time during the winters to prepare for the tourists.

One of the attractions that is really worth visiting in the area is "Western Brook Pond", a Canadian Fjord located in the Long Range Mountains, the most northern section of the Appalachians, about 25km from Rocky Harbour, where we took a 2 hour boat trip through what may be similar to the Norwegian Fjords. The word "Pond" is a bit misleading... More like a fairly large lake by mainland standards, 16 kms long by 23 kms in size. To take the boat trip we had to walk 3.5 kms along a narrow trail, to the boat, across marsh land which was partially boardwalk.

Another place on our list is "The Arches Provincial Park" which is on the Viking Trail 70km North of Rocky Harbour in Portland Creek. The magnificent geological formations caused by millions of years of erosion are worth visiting. On the way we stopped at Cow Head which is a small coastal village 40km from Rocky Harbour with a population of 475 and a small Anglican church, St. Mary the Virgin, well known in the parts for its beautiful botanical garden. It is looked after by the local youths.



There were no encounters with moose, etc. on the road, although we just missed a nice moose supper at a local Anglican Church.

André Hammond



Obviously, someone had an encounter! Ed.

Surviving the Big Apple

At the end of last month, Margaret and I had occasion to visit New York City for a period of ten days. This was the longest period we had spent in that bustling metropolis. I say this after an experience which emphasized both the advantages of a longer stay but also underscores the challenge which may face those of more senior years!

Somehow, our travel plans to NYC have always resulted in us arriving at Penn Station just around rush hour. This is the time of day when those arriving have to confront thousands of individuals whose only intent is to leave, to catch their train to New Jersey, Long Island or points north. A "sea of people" is just that, a tide of humanity flowing against any flotsam which happens to have washed up inadvertently at an inappropriate hour. Leaving Amtrak behind, forget about a taxi – walk or take the Subway, if you dare!

Putting this another way, we were forced to ask ourselves several times, "How does anyone manage to get around day by day in this city?" Using a car, for the most part, is an exercise in futility; using public transport is efficient, that is if you do not mind standing for half an hour or more in the intimate company of many closely packed New Yorkers! Or negotiating staircase after staircase to

(Surviving, continued)



“huddle with the masses”! This *crush* is a perfect example of a syndrome which teaches a lesson about forbearance, patience and fortitude. It can never be easy to get to work – or anywhere else at any time of day, it seemed – but seldom did we hear grumbling or bad-tempered outbursts. Maybe it could be summoned up by the slogan on the cap worn by an elderly black commuter, “JESUS IS THE BOSS. AMEN.” Or by the musician attired in concert dress carrying a seven-foot tall double-bass. He got on; somehow space was found for this traveller and his ungainly companion!

While the first few days of our stay were taken up with personal responsibilities, we had some time at the end of the week to check out why so many people find living in this city such an irresistible attraction. There is no end to the “sights” that New York has to offer, whether in the imposing scale of the architecture or the well-used parks; then there are the cultural institutions, galleries, theatres or concert venues, the glitz of Broadway or the ‘funkiness’ of Soho and the West Village. Our feet managed to experience a cross-section of these but we found the perfect antidote in a hop-on, hop-off trip by water taxi! This was not only a respite, but it meant that I finally managed to



take my wife on that cruise I have been promising – no expense spared obviously! And I paid for both of us!! Our seafaring adventure was also testament to the modern world’s narcissistic obsessions where scenes and sights

are only important if one can prove that “I was there”! It is amazing how many stand with their backs to the view!!



There was less of this human trait in evidence when we visited the memorial museum to the 9/11 tragedy. Perhaps this was due to the steady downpour; however, hopefully people were humbled by this extraordinary tribute to those who died that day. The memorial is tasteful and a poignant reminder of the evil which can be manifest at any time. The usual cliché is to say that these things happen when and where we least expect them; however, a lesson has been learnt and, as anyone who has flown in the years since will testify, we live with that lesson every day. Put in the context of New Yorker’s resilience, good still seems to triumph over bad – or, at least, hold its own. Alice Greenwald, the Museum’s Director describes its role in this way:



“...we recognized that a core responsibility of the Museum was to undercut the very presumption of terrorism, that victims of such acts – in this case, mostly civilians who neither signed up for active combat nor were they that terrible morning in any way aware of the grave threat facing them – become nameless abstractions.”

Would it be crass to suggest that attitudes found in crowded New York subways and other public spaces are everyday reflections of that spirit?

David L. Paterson, Editor.

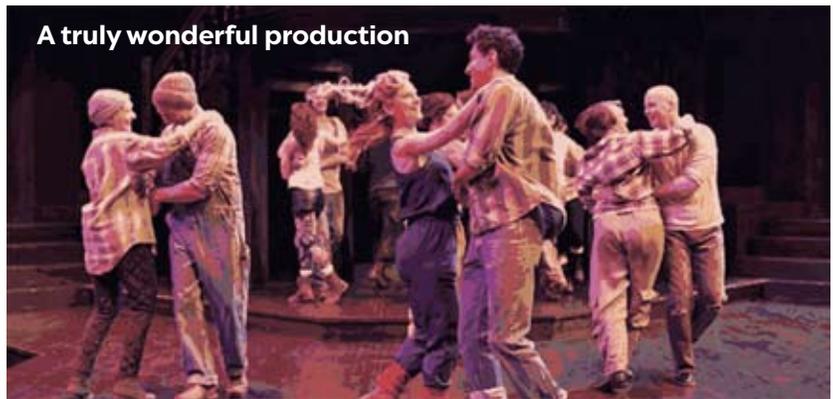
The Thespian As Newfie!

Recently, I visited the Stratford Shakespeare Festival on a bus tour. While there, I attended six plays – three matinées and three evening performances.

I saw “Macbeth”, “As You Like It”, “Bunny”, “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”, “A Little Night Music” and “Shakespeare in Love”. “Macbeth” was special because Ian Lake, who played the title role, is a grandson of a teacher I knew at Wagar High School. I loved all the plays – such talent, such vivacity. My favourite, however, was “As you Like It”. One of Shakespeare’s most popular comedies, it was my favourite because it was so different from what I was expecting.

In the foyer, upon arrival, we were presented with a small white bag in which there were several items. An artificial branch of a fir tree, a fan, a paper hat, a poem and a wooden clothespin.

The Director had decided this year to set the play in the 1980’s in Newfoundland. On stage, even before the play began, we were given skeets, scullies, laymen and townies



A truly wonderful production

in a traditional dance called “Running the Goat”. Accompanying this is a fiddle, a guitar, a button accordion and percussion. This was an audience participation production so we all had to wave our fir tree branches as the players are going into the Forest of Arden. Our poems are then attached to our Fir branch with our wooden pins for Rosalind to find in the Forest. When the play is set on the ocean, we all had to wave our blue fans to make waves. Lastly we donned our paper hats, for the wedding in the final scene. I must admit they did keep to the script most of the time – and the Newfie accent was easy to understand.

Sheila Knott

Being *WELL*

Having been asked to write about wellbeing is really a subject that makes me think where do I start? If 60 is the new 40 you might automatically conclude that wellbeing is improving dramatically but is that the case?

For me, wellbeing starts with being at ease with yourself. Feeling quiet in your mind, fit in your body and spiritually strong. This gives a clue to how many component parts there are to wellbeing and how individual it is. Disease and not being well, can be manifest both physically and emotionally. Wellbeing is something we all have to work at and try not to take for granted. As the body is a finely-tuned organism it needs continual care. The process of resting, cleaning and nourishing the body is really important to maintain your health. Eating and drinking properly, mentally and physically using your body and resting and repairing are equally important. When you’ve addressed your own wellbeing, you then can positively help others and in turn create a positive spiral.

The Church, I believe, has a tremendously broad spectrum in assisting people with their wellbeing, from the regular church goer, who feels renewed and revived by attending a service or group, meeting their church family and supporting one another, to those who come to Church for many other reasons.

Look at the range of activities our churches make themselves available for. They can accommodate Brownies and Guides – bringing young people together to learn new skills and share lots of fun experiences, also a range

of exercise classes, including pilates, yoga and dance classes. Doors are also open for entertainment too from barn dances to touring theatre groups and many different things in between. So it is important for the churches’ own wellbeing that they are a place where individuals and groups feel welcomed and warmed by coming along.

For whatever reason people come to be with us, I think a measure of success is, ‘Do they feel better when they leave than when they arrived?’ I hope (and think) my yoga class would unequivocally say ‘Yes’. Why not ask yourself, your friends and indeed someone you meet for the first time in church if they’d agree?

Naomi Smith, from ‘Five Alive’, July 2016



Lots and lots for which to be thankful!

André and Friends

After many years of chasing spiders and dust bunnies around St. J. the B., our long-time caretaker decided that the time had come for him to retire. André has served the parish in this capacity for many years and, in September, the congregation honoured him, wife Susan and sidekick, Broomhilda, with cake and congratulations. There was no word of plans for this hard-working trio but, perhaps, more travels in the Canadian hinterland are in the works!

Meanwhile, many thanks, André.



Have you noticed how many baptisms there have been recently?

June's Almond Chocolate Cherry Bars

1 cup butter softened	250 mL
1 cup granulated sugar	250 mL
1 egg	
½ tsp almond extract	2 mL
2 cups all-purpose flour	500 mL
1 tsp baking powder	5 mL
¼ tsp salt	1 mL
2 cups chocolate chips	500 mL
1 cup maraschino cherries coarsely chopped**	250 mL
½ cup slivered almonds	125 mL
Optional: ½ cup shredded coconut*	125 mL



*I do not add this

** I blot the cherries in paper towel to absorb some of the liquid

In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy; beat in egg and almond extract. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; stir into creamed mixture, just until blended. Stir in chocolate chips, cherries, almonds and coconut.

Spread evenly in a 13 x 9" (3.5L) ungreased cake pan (mixture will be very stiff and you will need to spread it firmly in pan.)

Bake in 350 deg. (180°C) oven for about 30 minutes until golden brown. (My oven is very hot so it did not take so long and I reduced heat to 340°C). Let cool completely on a rack, must be cold before cutting into bars.

Freezes beautifully.

June Mace

If you have a recipe or household tip that you would like to share, don't be shy! Send it to the Editor.

A Cautionary Tale

A priest dies and is waiting in line at the Pearly Gates. Ahead of him is an individual who's dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket, and jeans.

Saint Peter addresses this person, "Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?" The guy replies, "I'm Jack, retired airline pilot from Toronto."

Saint Peter consults his list. He smiles and says to the pilot, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom." The pilot goes into Heaven with his robe and staff.

Next, it's the priest's turn. He stands erect and booms out, "I am Father Bob, pastor of Saint Mary's for the last 43 years."

Saint Peter consults his list. He nods and says to the priest, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom."

"Just a minute," says the good Father. "That man was just a pilot and he gets a silken robe and golden staff and I get only cotton and wood. How can this be?"

"Up here - we go by results," says Saint Peter. "When you preached - people slept. When he flew, people prayed."

