

Residential schools litigation settlement Council recommends diocese participate



Archdeacon Jim Boyles (left), general secretary of General Synod and principal negotiator for the national church in the settlement negotiations, travelled from Toronto to attend an emergency meeting of diocesan council called to discuss diocesan participation in the settlement agreement. He spoke to diocesan chancellor Charles Ferris (centre) and vice-chancellor Clyde Spinney before the meeting began.

BY ANA WATTS

At an emergency meeting on Dec. 19, members of Diocesan Council unanimously passed a resolution recommending this diocese agree to participate in the residential schools litigation settlement negotiated by the federal government and the Anglican Church of Canada in November. The Diocese of Fredericton's share of the \$25 million/five-year settlement is \$762,000. Council also unanimously passed a resolution that most of the settlement funds (\$515,000) be taken from the diocesan Retained Earnings Reserve. Both resolutions will be presented to a special session of synod on February 8 at the Christ Church (Parish) Church in Fredericton. That body will make the final decision on the diocese's participation.

Archdeacon Jim Boyles, general secretary of General Synod and principal negotiator for the national church in the settlement negotiations, travelled from Toronto to attend the meeting and offered council a brief but thorough overview of the residential schools issue and the settlement agreement. "The agreement is not perfect, it's a compromise, but the negotiation team believes it is the best possible deal and worthy of support," he said.

Diocesan chancellor Charles Ferris also supported the agreement. The weekend before the council meeting he had met with chancellors from across the country. "Between 40 and 45 lawyers and clergy involved in the litigation went over the agreement

very carefully and there was a surprising consensus," he said.

Archdeacon Boyles and Mr. Ferris then addressed the concerns, fears and questions raised by members of council. Many of the concerns revolved around funding sources.

Diocesan treasurer Fred Scott responded to that issue with a report from a committee of the board of finance, which examined the issue and unanimously passed a motion recommending the diocese support the settlement. The committee looked at several options, including a financial campaign aimed at individuals or parishes, adjustments to the diocesan budget, and the disposal or mortgaging of real and financial diocesan property. Although they all had merit, they all had drawbacks as well. A suggestion to use the Retained Earnings Reserve in the Diocesan Consolidated Investment Fund (DCIF) to meet the bulk of the commitment was seen as a creative solution.

The investment fund is a collection of parish and diocesan investments. The capital gains realized in the portfolio are deposited in a reserve account which pays annual bonus interest credits. The reserve fund stands at about \$2 million.

The balance of the settlement funding would come unencumbered diocesan funds on hand (\$160,000) and from voluntary donations. A planned schedule of payments would see the diocese pay its portion within three years rather than five.

Being the Body of Christ An important message from the bishop

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In November, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Government of Canada reached an agreement on what Anglicans would pay to settle the claims for abuse in Residential Schools. This agreement follows several years of negotiation with millions of dollars spent on litigation. The settlement of \$25 million will end the continuing legal costs for both General Synod and the eleven affected dioceses (those dioceses that had Residential Schools). As well, the Government of Canada will assume the work of verifying all claims and making proper reparation.

As part of the agreement, all 30 dioceses in Canada are invited to participate in the resolution. This means that the 19 dioceses (including Fredericton) who had no Residential Schools are being asked to share the responsibility for the settlement. Our share in Fredericton is \$762,000.

It is essential we have the broadest possible consultation on this vital matter, so on Saturday, Feb. 8, the Synod of the diocese will meet in Fredericton. We will

discuss a resolution from the Dec. 19 Diocesan Council meeting, a motion that includes the question of participation in the settlement, as well as a financial plan to meet our share of the agreement.

The issue of abuse in Residential Schools has been a source of deep pain and shame for Anglicans for many years. It has strained relationships with our aboriginal brothers and sisters, questioned the integrity of the Church, and caused hurt for hundreds of former school employees whose only mission was to care and to serve. This resolution will make it possible to get past this time of pain and heartless litigation, and to do the work of justice for those injured, as well as rebuild our integrity as a Church. It will also be a time to support our General Synod structure, as well as our fellow Anglicans in Central and Western Canada, and bring an end to their fears of bankruptcy.

It is my hope that we in this diocese can meet our obligations without jeopardizing the momentum for diocesan mission that we have achieved over the last four years. Neither do we want to unload this settlement on our local

parishes, that are already facing escalating costs.

Synod will be asked to approve a plan that will both meet our obligations and ensure the continuation of our vital mission at both at the diocesan and parish levels.

St. Paul teaches us that "the Church is the Body of Christ and each of us a member of it. When one part of the body hurts the whole body hurts". We, as Anglicans, find ourselves in such a time as this, with an opportunity to share the pain of our sisters and brothers, and therefore bring a new unity as we continue the work of healing and reconciliation.

It is important that we keep members of Synod and Diocesan Council in our prayers over these next few weeks as we prepare to make this important decision.

Yours faithfully,

William J. Hockin is
Bishop of Fredericton

Change your calendar

In light of the need for yet another special synod on Feb. 8 to discuss the Residential School Settlement, the June 5-7 residential synod is postponed to Nov. 8.

The coadjutor bishop to be elected on March 15 will now be consecrated on June 24 instead of June 5, and installed on Nov. 7.

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Inside



Stephen Daniel was born to missionaries Kara and Nelson Mejia in Honduras on Oct. 4, 2002. Kara is the daughter of the Rev. Gordon and Belle Thompson of Saint John. See story on page 5.

Valley churches building community

In late November and early December, people in the parishes of the Lower St. John River Valley – Grand Bay, Greenwich, Ketepec and Westfield – attended visioning meetings to exchange thoughts and dreams for a new worship and community outreach facility and the ministry in a new parish. The three meetings were part of a six-stage plan for partnership among the parishes.

Mr. Bill Gerhardt of Shediac Cape was employed as a facilitator for the visioning process. The recent meetings were part of the fourth stage in the partnership *Building the Community of Grace*. During this stage the people of the parishes:

- * Examine the facilities that already exist in the parishes -- church buildings and their contents, including memorials and religious artifacts -- to see how some of these items could be incorporated in a new facility.

- * Explore the construction of new facilities by looking for land and building design. They have already looked at some land options and visited other church facilities to see what features would best serve their needs.

- * Build community through joint worship opportunities and activities, by addressing existing community divisions and issues, and promoting spiritual unity among the parishes as they exist today. This is an on-going program that has already seen the parishes worship together on four occasions, including an Advent Lessons and Carols Service in December, and meet for social occasions, like the corn boil at Mount Hope Farm in August.

- * Communicate with all the mem-

bers of the parishes through weekly news bulletins, church bulletins, regular newsletters, by telephone, even radio and newspaper messages. The object is to keep all those concerned aware and informed of the project's progress as well as assist in the development of a healthy focus on the spiritual journey.

- * Explore possible methods of financing a new facility. This has already led to a monitoring of current parish financial situations and their ability to fund a new ministry and work on the development of a fund-raising campaign. The aim of this part of the process is to ensure the establishment of a new parish is within the financial capabilities of the present parishes.

- * Create a new parish vision. The first step in this process was to create a mission statement: *To be a unified, faith-driven, growing Anglican Church proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, serving the community in traditional and innovative Spirit-led ministries.* This vision is being shared among the people of the parishes.

The Bishop appointed an archdeaconry commission in the fall of 2000 to explore the current situation in the Lower St. John River Valley and recommend options for the future. The archdeaconry commission released its report, including background and options, in March of 2001. In June of 2001, the vestries of the parishes decided to further explore a detailed partnership proposal made by Bishop Hockin.

The six-stage strategic plan includes exploration, feasibility, congregational decision-making, community building, leadership and building.



National Church wants your opinions

BY DAVID WATTS
COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD

General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, through the Council of General Synod (CoGS) wants to 'take the pulse' of this diocese. In the third component of an 'intentional listening' exercise begun in November of 2001, pew Anglicans are encouraged to express their views on information gathered in recent focus groups and through an Environics Research Group telephone survey.

The opinions already gleaned are presented in a list of statements below/to the right, and followed by four questions. Please take the time to review the statements and communicate your responses/comments/feelings on the state of our church to me through awatts@nbnet.nb.ca or (506) 459-5358. Your input is important and will be passed on to General Synod.

Thank you.

THE STATEMENTS

- Most important issue facing the parish
 - * declining membership (31%)
 - * attracting more young members (18%)
- Most important issue facing the national church
 - * residential schools litigation (28%)
 - * declining membership (18%)
- Most important characteristic of a parish
 - * reaches out to young people (90%)
 - * helps worshipers achieve personal spiritual growth (79%)
 - * concerned about the future of their parish (70%)
 - * in favour of making changes to increase membership, especially of younger people (most)
 - * unwilling to change (20%)
- hope sense of community in their parish will remain unchanged (21%)
- do not want to see any changes in the liturgical aspects of worship (14%)
- concerned about the financial health of their parish (74%)

- want church contributions used for outreach to the needy in their local communities (90%)

- do NOT want church contributions used on settlement of residential school lawsuits (63%)

- church leaders should
 - * do more to reach out to young people (75%)

- * attract new members (68%)
- * respond to the needs of the impoverished (49%)

- on the national level it is very important to
 - * reach out to young people (90%)
 - * attract new members (76%)

- it is very important to
 - * respond to the needs of the poor and dispossessed (71%)
 - * pressure government to spend more on social programs (43%)

- It is important for the church to help people achieve spiritual growth (79%)
 - * current efforts to help people achieve spiritual growth are satisfactory (more than 50%)

- Is it very important to become more welcoming to gay and lesbian church members
 - * yes (33%)
 - * no (29%)

- A majority of Anglicans
 - * want their contributions spent on local outreach rather than on overseas missions or aboriginal ministries

- * do not want their contributions spent on residential school settlements

- Roughly half the Anglicans interviewed feel church leaders
 - * provide hope/vision for the future
 - * keep in touch with parish concerns
 - * provide a timely response to important issues

- It is very important to reach out to aboriginal communities (just over 50%)
 - * most are satisfied with the church's efforts in this area

- There is a strong belief that church leadership should reflect cultural diversity

YOUR OPINIONS

1. To what extent do these figures

and survey results resonate with you and your parish?

2. Which of the above items interest you most and reflect your understanding of the church?

3. How can the church at the national level provide a sense of hope and vision concerning these issues?

4. What other comments would you make concerning the future of the Anglican Church of Canada?

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BUILDING BLOCKS

for Church School teachers, superintendents, and anyone who is interested

Both the workshops listed are in Saint John. If you would like to have one in your area, please call the Rev Pat Drummond, 460-8349,

or e-mail, anged@nbnet.nb.ca

Saturday, Feb. 22, 03

St Mary and St Bartholomew, Westmorland St., Saint John

9 a.m. – Registration

9:30 – Storytelling

11 a.m. – Easter ideas/crafts

noon – Lunch

1 p.m. – Some new curricula

3 p.m. – Finish

Thursday, March 13

St Mary and St Bartholomew, Westmorland St., Saint John

7 - 9 p.m.

The Old Testament with ideas for teaching.

For both the above workshops, please call

Joanne Fitzpatrick, 657 7808,

or e-mail the parish office, angels2@nbnet.nb.ca

BISHOP'S PRINCIPAL ENGAGEMENTS

JANUARY 5

Parish of Lancaster
10:30 a.m.

Parish of Musquash 3 p.m. *

JANUARY 6

Parish of New Maryland
7 p.m. *

JANUARY 8

Westfield United Church
Social Meet and Greet for
Parishes of Greenwich/
Wickham, Westfield, Grand
Bay and Ketepec

JANUARY 12

Parish of Victoria 10.30 a.m.
Parish of Carleton 7 p.m.
Combined Youth Service &
Commissioning of Youth
Worker, Michael Caines.

JANUARY 18

Ordination of Chris Hayes
to the Diaconate
Parish of Lakewood 11 a.m.

JANUARY 21-22

Ecumenical Retreat
Villa Madonna, Renforth

JANUARY 25-29

Mission
Stephenville, Newfoundland

FEBRUARY 1

Christ Church Cathedral
Mothers Union
Commissioning of chaplain
the Rev. Peter Mills

FEBRUARY 8

Diocesan Synod
Christ Church
(Parish) Church
* denotes Confirmation

Advent series 'congregation' responds

Bishop William Hockin's recent Advent series at the Playhouse in Fredericton proved a boon to a refugee family.

The bishop explored the text of Handel's Messiah in his Monday lunch-hour talks. He began with *Giving Peace A Chance*, exploring the Zechariah text 'He shall speak peace.'

"It was really about social justice," says the bishop. "Following the presentation a woman from the community who is working with a refugee family approached me. She said the family was freezing because it was unable to pay for heat. I invited her to offer a brief address to the gathering

the next week.

"She did. She outlined the situation and we placed some collection baskets on the tables. She collected \$2,500, enough to pay the family's heat for the entire winter."

Bishop Hockin considers those who attend his Advent and Lenten talks 'his congregation'. It is a ministry he intends to continue in retirement.

The 2003 Lenten series is already organized. It will be presented on Mondays in Fredericton and on Tuesdays in Saint John beginning Monday, March 10. He will once again look at the parables with *More Tales of an Ex-*

travagant God. The Fredericton lunch-hour talks are held at the Playhouse on Queen Street. The

Saint John location is the Mary Oland Theatre in the New Brunswick Museum, Market Square.

Ordination



The Rev. Julie Armstrong was ordained a priest by Bishop William Hockin at Christ Church Cathedral on Nov. 24. She is rector of the Parish of New Bandon.

Bishop to lead retreat

Bishop Hockin will lead a Christian Unity Retreat and an ecumenical mission later this month.

The theme for the Christian Unity Retreat during the week of Christian unity is We are earthen vessels, carrying God's treasure (2 Corinthians 4:15-18). It takes place at Villa Madonna Retreat House in Rothesay, just outside Saint John, on January 21 and 22. The bishop will deliver four addresses over the two days. Regis-

tration information is available at 1-866-783-3300 and villa@brunnet.net.

The ecumenical mission will take place in Steveston, Newfoundland from January 25 through 29. People from the Anglican, United, Roman Catholic and Salvation Army churches in western Newfoundland will gather each day in a school auditorium to hear Bishop Hockin speak on the parables.

Diocesan announcements

The Rev. Ellis Jagoe is on leave of absence from the diocese from Jan. 15 to Oct. 31. During this time he will serve as a chaplain with Canadian Forces serving in Bosnia. He has resigned as rector of the

Parish of Petitediac but will return to the diocese in the fall.

The Rev. Peter Mills is appointed Chaplain to Mothers' Union in the diocese effective Feb. 1. The Rev. Tony Bassett has

accepted an appointment to St. Margaret's Church in North Toronto in mid-March. He leaves the Parish of New Maryland.

The Rev. Gregory McMullin is appointed rector of the Parish of Coldbrook-St. Mary (Church of St. Mary and St. Bartholomew) in Saint John, effective April 1. Mr. McMullin was granted a BA by Acadia University and an MDiv by Wycliffe College in Toronto in 1986. He

served the five-point Parish of Liscomb & Port Bickerton in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island from 1987 until 1990. He has been rector of Trinity Church in Halifax since 1990. He also serves as a member of the board of directors of the South American Missionary Society and is chair of the North End Area Council of Churches in Halifax. He, his wife Vanessa have three young children.

Confirmation in Bright



Bishop William Hockin confirmed three candidates at All Saints' Church, McKeen's Corner (Keswick Ridge), Parish of Bright on Sunday, Nov. 24 at the 10:30 a.m. service. A new processional cross in memory of Eric Fanjoy was also dedicated that morning. Following the service a shared meal was enjoyed in the newly-finished church basement. Seen here following the service are back row; layreader Debbie Edmondson, Bishop Hockin and the Rev. Ian Wetmore, rector of the parish; front row; candidates Donna McKeil, Catherine Macdonald, and Ian McLellan. Photo by Frank Morehouse.

Youth Ministry Director Diocese of Fredericton

Reporting directly to the Diocesan Bishop and working with the senior ministry team of the diocese, the successful candidate will have a proven track record in youth related ministry with a degree or certificate in theology, preferred. At least 10 years of youth related focus would be considered a strong asset. This senior level position will require a self-motivated, creative, leader who understands current trends in youth culture and has a solid biblical theology.

Primary responsibilities will be to:

- equip Youth Leaders and Clergy for effective ministry to the generation between 16 and 25
- to give coordination to the ongoing programs of the diocese for this age group as well as to develop other ministries as required.

Applications stating full academic qualifications, experience and professional references may be forwarded to: The Diocese of Fredericton, 115 Church Street, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, E3B 4C8, Attn: Diocesan Youth Committee. E-mail: diocfton@nbnet.nb.ca.

Competition closes March 31st, 2003; Commencement Date July 1st 2003; 6 month probation period with a 3-year renewal contract. Salary negotiable based on qualifications and experience. This position is open to both clergy and laypeople.

Mission team headed for Honduras



In December, Bishop William Hockin commissioned members of the St. James Lakewood team for their February mission in Honduras. Back row: Dwight Stuart, Bishop Hockin, Sheryl Moore, the Rev. Bruce McKenna. Front row: Roger Ruddock, Valerie Green, Anne Marie LeGrand, Nancy Coleman, Julie Russell. Missing when photo was taken: David Hatfield.

BY NANCY COLEMAN

In response to a request from the Anglican Church in Honduras, and trusting in the Holy Spirit, a nine-member mission team from Saint James Lakewood will leave for Guaimaca, Honduras on Feb. 8.

Led by our rector, the Rev. Bruce McKenna, and with the help of the people of Guaimaca, a community about two hours north east of Tegusigalpa, the capital, we will build a security enclosure 200 feet. long and 6 feet. high around

their new church. We will also offer ministry through drama, music, mime and puppetry.

Working with our group from Saint John will be Nelson and Kara (Thompson) Mejia. Kara is the daughter of the Rev. Gordon



The Guild of St. Joseph in Lakewood supports the parish mission to Honduras with a \$500 donation. Guild president Francis DeGrace presented the 'big cheque' to the Rev. Bruce McKenna, who will lead the team.

and Belle Thompson of Saint John (see story on page 5).

Money for the materials and supplies needed to build the enclosure (about \$5,000) is being raised by the team. We're selling 500 'blocks' for the enclosure at \$10 each. The money will be forwarded to the Diocese of Honduras and used to purchase the materials we will need down there.

We have also purchased some Sunday school materials and 100 Good News Spanish New Testaments to take with us as tools of evangelism.

Honduras is the second poorest country in the western hemisphere, a land profoundly affected by poverty and corruption. Average people there often earn barely enough to stay alive, and have no access to education or adequate medical care.

The Anglican Church of Honduras reaches out to other parts of the world for help to do the necessary things it cannot do alone. The Honduras church is not self sufficient and depends on the help of other churches to reach its potential and future independence.

Jubilee celebrated in Upper Kennebecasis

New Brunswick lieutenant-governor Marilyn Trenholm Counsel recently traveled to Apohaqui to help the community celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee at an event sponsored by the Parish of Upper Kennebecasis. Parishioners, other residents of the community and visitors from Saint John, Fredericton, Moncton and surrounding areas filled the church and included such dignitaries as the Hon. Bev Harrison, Speaker of the Legislature; the Rev. Doug Cosman, MLA for Kings East; and Ms. Marje Harrison, New Brunswick chair of the Monarchist League of Canada.

The afternoon celebrations began with a service of celebration and thanksgiving which combined elements of the Service of

Thanksgiving held at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England in June and the 1953 Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey in 1953. The Rev. Leo Martin, rector of the parish, was assisted in the service by Mr. and Mrs. Harrison and five youth members of the congregation: Murray Gillies, Victoria and Philip Martin, Valri Bickerton and Jeff Halsall. The service was punctuated with music led by the parish choir as well as the talents of Jean O'Donnell at the harp.

Upon her arrival at the Church of the Ascension, the lieutenant-governor was warmly received by the congregation. She kept her audience captivated during her address, which encouraged people to be proud of their roots as well as to celebrate the diversity found within New Brunswick.

While the service was certainly marked with formality, there were a few moments of humour. One was when the rector suggested that since the lieutenant-governor had held the attention of the congregation so well during her remarks that she might come and preach on a regular basis. Another was when the lieutenant-governor was invited to sign the parish guest book. She turned to the congregation and said "This part of the service reminds me of my wedding day."

The lieutenant-governor



Above, Jackson Chamberlain and Lauren Stockdale presented the Lieutenant-Governor with flowers and a gift following the service to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee in the Parish of Upper Kennebecasis. Below, the Rev. Leo Martin, rector, watches while she signs the guest-book. Mr. Martin's daughter Victoria, an acolyte for the occasion, looks on.

took the time to greet each person individually following the service and before proceeding to a reception in the Centennial Hall where she again took time to mingle with the crowd. Before she left, she was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Lauren Stockdale and a gift from the parish by Jackson Chamberlain.

For many in Apohaqui, it was the first time they had met the lieutenant-governor and they could be heard making comments on her friendliness, approachability and the grace with which she represents our monarch in this province.



The Parish of Restigouche offers church pews

please contact
the Rev. Andrew Fraser 506
684-2150/
fraseran@nb.sympatico.ca
or
Linda Downs
506/753-2545
for more information

Happy 50th SJTB!

BY LYNNE MACEACHERN

Wasn't it a party? 250 members of the parish family of St. John the Baptist (SJTB) in Riverview gathered on Oct. 19 at the Riverview Lion's Club to celebrate their 50th anniversary with a dinner.

Like many modern families, the SJTB family is a blended one. We have forged such strong friendships with some people — like Mr. Jim West, the contractor who moved the church building from Waterside to Riverview Heights in 1951 and the Rev. Bruce Roberts, the minister of the United Church in 1973 when our Anglican community shared their facilities — are deemed part of our extended family.

At the dinner we were honoured with the presence of former parishioners and rectors whom we still consider family. Arnold and Rhona Piccott were with us. Arnold was one of the early wardens of the church building erected on its present site in 1976. He was Sunday school superintendent for 12 years and Rhona served as ACW president and vestry member. They no longer live in Riverview and said they miss SJTB.

Jan Maltby who (with Hazel Atkinson) readied the altar of our present church for that first service on Christmas Eve in 1976, was also among us. She and her husband, Blair, who was warden in 2001, are still parishioners.

We were pleased that Mrs. Jean Steeves, who began as parish organist in 1951 and retired in 1993, was able to attend.

We were also blessed to have so many of our clergy family come to help us celebrate our walk with God by sharing our walk with each other. Some of those who came miles to be with us were Archbishop Harold and Edith Harold Nutter, Archdeacon John and Cynthia Sharpe, Archdeacon Tom and Pat Crowther, the Rev. Richard and Rose Steeves (he was a candidate from SJTB ordained in 1998), the Rev. George and

Audrey Akerley (he was a student minister in the Parish of Hillsborough and Riverside in the summer of 1950-51), the Rev. Reg and Barb Stockall, and Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Sharpe.

The evening began with the talented Ms. Lorraine Pickett at the piano. Head-table guests were led to their places by our own piper, Mr. George Cooper. Following our anthems, grace was led by the Rev. William Forgrave, our retired priest.

Then came a delicious roast beef dinner, wonderfully presented by the men and women of the Lion's Club. Good food, good service and a choice of three kinds of pie!

Mr. Mac McConnell acknowledged our earliest parishioners, Bill and Rita Saunders, Russ and Rita MacFarland, Brenda Prescott, Bill and Peggy West, Jean Steeves, Herb and Verna Brand, Frank Cook, Doris Hamer, Marjorie Lewis, Alex and Bobbi MacLeod, Edna Brown, Charlie Webber and Bob and Connie Tremblay, many of whom were present to celebrate with us.

We were touched by the words of Mayor Bruce Fitch when he spoke about the strong values of the people of Riverview and how much SJTB has contributed to those values. We laughed with Herb Brand, Bruce Roberts and Laurie Beatty (warden in the mid-70s) when they related their humorous anecdotes. Jim West read from the original contract, which he had thoughtfully kept in his files these many years. Rosalie Brown reminisced about her family's nine years in the rectory when her late husband Keith was rector. John Sharpe was his inspirational self when he talked of the challenges in our Christian walk. Mary Marshall warmed our hearts with her story of turning down a teaching position she was offered in Miramichi; she just couldn't imagine belonging to any church other than SJTB. The final speaker was Archbishop Nutter, who has remained constant throughout our parish life. He is probably the only bishop in history who is thoroughly



On Sunday morning, October 20, following the Saturday night 50th anniversary dinner, Bishop William Hockin (left) joined The Rev. Albert Snelgrove and the people of the Parish of Riverview and planted an oak tree on the church lawn to mark the occasion.

loved for having put a hole in a church door.

It was an evening of good things and one of the best was the tribute paid to the late Nelda Goodwin by her sister, Verna Lefurgey, and her neighbour Flo Wood. They were on hand to represent Nelda because they knew how important this celebration would have been to her. Memories of Nelda and those dear ones that could not be with us, for whatever reason, were on many minds that night. The threads of their lives have woven themselves with the threads of ours to create the tapestry of what has become SJTB.

Toward the end of the evening, Audrey Dawe presented our rector, the Rev. Albert Snelgrove, with a Toronto Maple Leafs sweater. Rumour has it that his secret desire has always been to play in the NHL. He donned his sweater to shouts of "Albert! Albert!". We consider him a great leader, but perhaps more importantly, he is also a great follower. He is as comfortable in the church kitchen up to his elbows in dish water as he would be officiating at service in a grand cathedral. He is a 'man of the trenches' and that is his gift to us.

The evening came to a close with the presentation of our church story written by Audrey Dawe and Albert Snelgrove. We sang hymns pertinent to significant dates in



The children of the Parish of Riverview offered their own church-history skit during anniversary celebrations.

our parish history, accompanied by Carolyn Keirstead, our organist and choir director. A skit, ably enacted by our young people — Adam, Daphne and Melissa Cooper, Diana Duncan, Breanne and Melissa Miller, James, Patrick and Matthew Snelgrove, Amber and Kirsten Walley — was a delight.

We spent the evening doing what families do when they come together to mark a milestone. We sang, ate, talked, laughed, reminisced, and we did it for five hours. There we were, a family diverse in personalities and

opinions, each one as important as the next, even though due credit is not always publicly given. There we were, an extended family, not always seeing eye to eye, but genuinely caring for each other despite, or perhaps because of, our flaws and foibles.

So we close this chapter in our history book and begin to record the events of the next 50 years on a brand new page. We rejoice in the knowledge that — surrounded by our past, present and future — we are bound by that intangible but strongest of ties, the bond of love.

Wasn't it a party?

Happy Birthday baby son of ACW prayer partner

BY FRANCES MORRISEY
ST. MARK'S BRANCH ACW
SAINT JOHN'S (STONE) CHURCH

Congratulations to Kara and Nelson Mejia on their birth of their son, Stephen Daniel Mejia Thompson, on Oct. 4, 2002. Stephen is also the first grandchild for the Rev. Gordon and Belle Thompson. Mr. Thompson is rector of St. Luke's in the Parish of Portland, Saint John.

Kara is a former Mission Partner with the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) in Canada and a prayer partner for several branches of Anglican Church Women (ACW) in the Diocese of Fredericton.

She and Nelson now share a team ministry in Talanga and surrounding region in Honduras. Kara specializes in women's ministries and youth group development. Nelson is also studying for

the priesthood and his ministry focuses on church development and growth.

Kara and Nelson are well qualified for the work the Lord has given them. Prior to their marriage, Kara was attached to the parish of St. Mary where she was active in the Cursillo movement, taught at St. Mary's School and worked with youth throughout the deanery.

Nelson is a musician and

carpenter. Music plays a large part in his ministry.

In the autumn of 2001, Kara and Nelson spent some time with her parents in Saint John, where they were active in the parish and endeared themselves to the congregation.

During that time Kara was able to personally thank many of her prayer partners for their support and to introduce them to her future husband.

We hear they are doing well in their ministry and pray for their continued success and happiness as they serve the Lord in their new role as parents and in their churches and community.

SAMS Canada is exploring the possibility of entering into a new partnership with Kara and Nelson and the Diocese of Honduras in support of their work in Talanga.

MILLIGEN

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love and in purity."

1 Timothy 4:12

Youth ministry established in West Saint John

Congratulations Michael Caines, the new, full-time Youth Minister in West Saint John!

Michael started work for the parishes of Carleton, Lancaster and Victoria on January 1 and we pray God's blessing on you in this new ministry!

He grew up in Sussex, attending Trinity Anglican

Church and graduated from UNB with a degree in civil engineering at Christmas.

Over the years he has been involved in Teens Encounter Christ, he was the Director of Camp Medley last summer, in charge of Christmas in Cowtown this year and he plays in the band *Third Sunday 2000* which plays for the Cathedral youth services.

Exciting happenings

Youth Service @ the Cathedral
Third Sunday of Every Month @ 7:30 p.m.
Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton
Always a Good Speaker
Music by 3rd Sunday 2000

The January service is on the 19th and Barry Craig – Rector of St. Mary's Devon and a professor at St. Thomas University will speak and lead the worship.

ALL WELCOME!

for more info: 450-8500 or office@christchurchcathedral.com

"Undignified" Sunday Evening Worship

The Fourth Sunday evening each month.
Holy Trinity Hammond River, Quispamsis
Come join us for two hours of extreme worship.
Remember it's loud – it's not your grandmother's church service!

Upcoming Services:

Sunday, Jan. 26 January, Sunday, Feb. 24, 7:00 p.m.

For more info check out:

<<http://www3.nbnet.nb.ca/hamriver/xtreem.html>>

If your Church has got some cool Youth Stuff going on and you would like to let others know about it please let us know ... rachel_tapley@hotmail.com. We're all about getting the word out and this is our year!

Messages from Medley

Were you ever a Medley camper? Do those warm summer days ever feel like yesterday? If you have a memory/ funny story/ anecdote or pictures of the camp to share please let Rachel Tapley know by phone: (506) 433-1189, rachel_tapley@hotmail.com, or by mail: 4 Needle St. Sussex Corner, NB E4E 2Z4.

We're trying to compile a history.

Wanna work at Medley?

Do you love the Lord?

Want to share that with young people?
check out

<http://renforth.net/medleystaff/index.html>

If you don't have access to the web, ask your rector for a hand.

This happy new year is OUR year

Hey Everyone,

First off: How was Christmas? Second: Happy New Year! Are you ready to go back to school yet? I can hear the groans from here, ha ha. Well, I hope that everyone had a good, fun break. Are you guys excited for 2003? 'Cause I sure am! You don't have to imagine a year dedicated to you anymore ... it's here!

So here's your challenge....

Are you ready? Are you really ready for it? Ok, here it is ... Get involved! In your Church, at school, with your youth group and in your community. I know that it sounds like a lot. I even think that it sounds like a lot. So I had to ask myself: "self am I asking too much of New Brunswick's up and comers?" And guess what myself answered? "No way!" I was reminded of that commercial from a few years ago with Michael Jordan where the slogan was "I wanna be like Mike" and I thought "hey self, what a great idea only let's change it! "I wanna

be like Jesus!"

So guys, we've established that we have a new year, and now we have a new slogan "Wanna be like Jesus!" Woo Hoo! I'm excited! Can you feel the excitement? Are



you thinking who is this crazy person and where did she come from? And why is she so excited about being like Jesus because it's not very easy to be like Jesus in my school, or community, and sometimes it's not even easy in my youth group at Church?

If you're wondering those very thoughts I want you to
E - M A I L
ME <rachel_tapley@hotmail.com> or write me at 4 Needle St. Sussex Corner, NB. E4E 2Z4 because I want to tell you! I want you to be excited too! God loves you so much and He wants you to be excited about the

life that He has given you. So let's get out there and be like our Saviour. Not by shoving the Gospel down people's throats, or thinking that we've got the best secret ever, but with our actions! Check out the Ten Commandments (here's another challenge: Where are the 10 Commandments found in the Bible?)

Put a big 'ol smile on your face, thank God for the New Year, keep our theme in your head and head on out into the world. Now as I said before, I know that it's not an easy task that I have set before you. But I know that it is possible because I am not the first to give you this assignment. If God thinks you can do it, then I know you can do it.

Got questions about it? Then ask some Christian people that you trust, maybe your parents or your local priest or get in touch with me and we can be excited together! Take care, God Bless and I'll meet you here again next month.

Rachel

It's happening!

The diocese is advertising for a Youth Director to fill the position we told the bishop was so important when we had the consultation. Check out the specs on page 2

Check out these Cool Sites

Soul Survivor Canada
www.soulsurvivor.ca/index.htm
Youth With A Mission
www.ywam.org
Youth Alpha
<http://alphacanada.org/courses/youth.html>
Upstream
www.upstream.ca
Brio Magazine
www.briomag.com
Breakaway Magazine
www.family.org/teenguys/breakmag/

Teens Encounter Christ For All Those Who Have Heard Of It But Don't Know What It Is

What happens at TEC?

The main part of the weekend is filled with talks, group discussions, and live music. Talking, sharing, and getting to know those around you are important aspects of the weekend. Another important part of the weekend are the surprises (only good ones). These surprises are intended to make the weekend more fun!

Can I Go?

Anyone is welcome to attend. TEC is a non-denominational weekend for everyone, whether you go to church or not. The only restriction is age. You must be 16 – 21 to attend. If you are within this age range, all you have to do is fill out an application form and send it to the TEC Ministries Registrar. You'll find them at www.renforth.net/TEC. (No one reads your application except the registrar and the Core team.); at your nearest Anglican Church (applications are given out to all clergy; or write to tec@renforth.net or Teens Encounter Christ, c/o Diocese of Fredericton, 115 Church Street, Fredericton, NB E3B 4C8

When is TEC?

The next TEC weekend — TEC 10 — happens at Camp Medley on the Victoria Day long weekend.

From all accounts TEC 9 was another success! For more information about TEC, being a Candidate or Team Member please don't hesitate to contact the committee at tec@renforth.net or at the address above.

We give our thanks and praise to our awesome Father God for such an amazing weekend! And we continue to pray that we will be surrounded by His Love. (Jeremiah 29:9)

INTERCESSIONS

Pray for others overseas, in Canada, and in our own diocese

JANUARY

14: Parish of Musquash, (Vacant); Saint Francis of Assis Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Sao Francisco de Assis), the Rev. Severino Abel da Silva, S. Goncalo do Amarante, Brazil.

15: Parish of New Bandon, the Rev. Julie Armstrong; the Rev. Canon David Jackson (R); Saint Francis of Assis Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Sao Francisco de Assis), the Rev. Severino Abel da Silva, S. Goncalo do Amarante, Brazil.

16: Parishes of Newcastle & Nelson, the Rev. Richard Steeves; Sower Mission (Missao do Semeador), the Rev. Saulo Mauricio Barros, Olinda, Brazil.

17: Parish of New Maryland, the Rev. Tony Bassett; ; Sower Mission (Missao do Semeador), the Rev. Saulo Mauricio Barros, Olinda, Brazil.

18: Parish of Pennfield, the Rev. Keith Osborne; Redeemer Parish (Paroquia do Redentor), the Rev. Mitsuo, Noyama, the Rev. Nadja Maria Lins da Silva, Recife, Brazil.

19: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Pray for the World Council of Churches and all institutions and organizations promoting Christian unity and for the healing of all schisms within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; Diocese of Recife: Bishop D. Edward Robinson de Barros Cavalcanti & staff; Diocese of Yukon: Watson Lake - St. John the Baptist, Lower Post, Swift

River, the Rev. David Kalles, Alice Kalles & family; Bishop Terry Buckle, Blanche and family; William, our Bishop, George and Harold, Bishops Emeriti, and their families.

20: Parish of Portland, the Rev. Gordon Thompson; The Ven. J. F. N. Jones (R); Pentecost Mission (Missao de Pentecostes), Lay Ministry Jardson Tenorio, Jaboatao, Brazil.

21: Parish of Prince William, the Rev. Robert J. Barry; Zion Mount Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Monte Siao), the Rev. Leonides Menezes, Umburetama, Brazil.

22: Parish of Quispamsis, the Rev. John Tremblay; the Rev. Tom Knox (R); Resurrection Parish (Paroquia da Ressurreicao), the Rev. Luiz de Souza Franca, Joao Pessoa, Brazil.

23: Parish of Renforth, the Rev. Eric Phinney; Saint Paul Parish (Paroquia Sao Paulo), the Rev. Nadja Maria Lins da Silva, the Rev. Juciara Nascimento, Recife, Brazil.

24: Parish of Restigouche, the Rev. Andrew Fraser; Andrew Horne, Wycliffe College; Strong House Life Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Casa Forte), the Rev. Ricardo Mucio, Recife, Brazil.

25: Parish of Richmond, the Rev. Roderick Black; Holy Trinity Cathedral (Catedral da Santissima Trindade), Dean: Rev Paulo Ruiz Garcia, Recife Brazil.

26: Pray for the work, ministry and witness of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan D. Williams;

Diocese of Recife: Bishop D. Edward Robinson de Barros Cavalcanti & staff; Diocese of Yukon: Atlin - St. Martin, Deacon Vera Kirkwood and family, Licensed Lay Minister Dorothy Odian & family; Bishop Terry Buckle, Blanche and family; William, our Bishop, George and Harold, Bishops Emeriti, and their families.

27: Parish of Riverview, the Rev. Albert Snelgrove; the Rev. Lloyd Lake (R) Loch Lomond Villa & Saint John Regional Correction Centre Chaplain; Living Waters Mission (Missao Agua Viva), the Rev. Simea Meldrum, Jardim Brazil.

28: Parish of Rothesay, The Ven. Richard McConnell; Bethel Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Betel), Lay Ministry Evilasio Tenorio, Recife Brazil.

29: Parish of St. Andrew's, the Rev. Canon John Matheson; the Rev. Wilfred Langmaid, Chaplain, UNB, STU; Bethany Parish (Paroquia Betania), the Rev. Leonides Menezes, Recife Brazil.

30: Parish of St. Andrew's, Sunny Brae with Hillsborough & Riverside, the Rev. Brent Ham; Christian Love Mission (Missao do Amor Cristao), the Rev. Washington Franco, Maceio Brazil.

31: Parish of St. David & St. Patrick, the Rev. Canon John Matheson, Priest-in-Charge; James Duffett, Wycliffe College; Beatitudes Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario das Bem Aventurancas), Lay Ministry Armando Fiel da Costa, Timbauba Brazil.

FEBRUARY

1: Parish of St. George, the Rev. Mary Anne Langmaid; Good Shepherd Parish (Paroquia do Boom Pastor), the Rev. Josafa dos Santos, Salvador Brazil.

2: Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Province of the Indian Ocean; Diocese of Recife: Bishop D. Edward Robinson de Barros Cavalcanti & staff; Diocese of Yukon: Communities of Faro and Ross River; Bishop Terry Buckle, Blanche and family; William, our Bishop, George and Harold, Bishops Emeriti, and their families.

3: Parish of St. James, Moncton, the Rev. Donald Routledge; the Rev. Kenneth Legassick (R); Good News Mission (Missao Boas Novas), Lay Ministry Israel Cardoso, Caapora Brazil.

4: Parish of St. James (Saint John), the Rev. Robin Cuming; House of Hope Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Casa da Esperanca), Rev Miguel Uchoa, Jaboatao Brazil.

5: Parish of Saint John, the Ven. Stuart Allen, the Rev. George Trentowsky; the Rev. William LeGrand, Chaplain, Saint John Regional Hospital; Good Samaritan Parish (Paroquia do Bom Samaritano), Rev Filadelfo Oliveira Neto, Recife Brazil.

6: Parish of St. Margaret's, the Rev. Canon Jon Lownds; Christ Liberator Mission (Missao Cristo Libertador), the Rev. Jorge Aquino, Joao Pessoa Brazil.

7: Parish of St. Mark (Stone) Church, the Rev. Capt. David

Edwards; Chris Hayes, Wycliffe College; Communion Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario Comunhao), the Rev. Marcio Meira, Joao Pessoa Brazil.

8: Parish of St. Martin's & Black River, (Vacant); Calvary Parish (Paroquia do Calvario), the Rev. Adonias Ramos, Paulista Brazil.

9: Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Church of the Province of Burundi; Diocese of Recife: Bishop D. Edward Robinson de Barros Cavalcanti & staff; Diocese of Yukon: Haines Junction - St. Christopher's, Beaver Creek - St. Columba, Alaska Highway mile 918-1202, the Rev. Canon Geoffrey Dixon, Rosalind Dixon, & Lay Ministry Team; Bishop Terry Buckle, Blanche and family; William, our Bishop, George and Harold, Bishops Emeriti, and their families.

10: Parish of St. Mary's, the Rev. Dr. Barry Craig; The Rt. Rev. George C. Lemmon (R); Hope Mission (Missao da Esperanca), Lay Ministry Claudio Linhares, Joao Pessoa Brazil.

11: Parish of St. Paul's (Valley) Church, the Rev. Rufus Onyewuchi; The Comforter Missionary Station (Ponto Missionario O Consolador), Lay ministry Antonio Costa, Joao Pessoa Brazil.

12: Parish of St. Peter, the Rev. Ross Hebb; the Rev. Lance McAdam (R); Christ The Saviour Parish (Paroquia Cristo O Salvador), the Rev. Josafa dos Santos, Ilha de Itaparica Brazil.

Courage will give us a fresh voice

Our Society has not been more Christian for having sung carols. Our Church has not witnessed more convincingly for having enjoyed the ear of society.

The arrangements of composers of past generations have allowed us to bask in the faint pallor of Noma lights, tinsel and egg nog. Pews, swollen for a night with people familiar with the Story and the Song, have adjudicated us, and we have been found wanting.

Ignorance and Want, accompanied the Ghost of Christmas Present and Dickens, allowed Ebenezer's epiphany of the urchins. The recognition of Ignorance and Want even contributed to the curmudgeon's redemption. Fear and Greed attempt to isolate them, but they continue to attend every Christmas Present and persist in haunting us afresh daily.

Like Ebenezer, I thought myself capable of avoiding these hauntings. I distanced myself from the pain and anguish and, yes, even the threat of both Ignorance and Want. I saw them as apart from me. I



the penultimate  Word

BY JAMES IRVINE

was wrong. Now I know them as a part of me!

Shrouded in the wrappings of Christmas Present, I have discovered my Ignorance and my Want.

My suspicion is that Christmas presents are nothing but veneer unless we examine beneath the wrappings. There's nothing new here. It may come as news nonetheless. Asked what I'd like for Christmas, my list of presents has never included Ignorance or Want.

But Ignorance and Want were under a tree, waiting to be found, unwrapped, taken possession of.

I don't mean Ignorance as in, "I didn't know what to get for you". Neither do I mean Want as in, "I didn't know what you wanted". Those are others' guesses. Those are others' tentative, cautious oblations. We hope that even the most outlandish tie will find acceptance, and perhaps an occasion.

Rather I mean Ignorance as in "Of what am I ignorant?" I am ignorant of the opportunities missed to bring myself as gift to another's need: not gold or frankincense or even myrrh. I am suggesting other gifts. I am ignorant of my capacity to forgive and love. I am ignorant of my need to forgive, and love. My ignorance diminishes me. My recognition of Ignorance allows me to look within myself and face that part of me that so needs Christmas Presence.

Want is not far removed. Reluctant to produce a wish list that would disclose my greed, I fall back on the ubiquitous 'socks, tooth paste and scarf' list that dishonestly maintains my self-effacement. What I really want I almost don't dare to write or whisper:

faith, hope & love. Found present by wise men and women in every generation, awkwardly tripping over their jewel encrusted gold caskets bearing worldly baubles — the fruits of success.

But this is not exchange of presents. We have nothing to offer but ourselves, our presence.

Ebenezer's daily striving allowed for redemptive epiphanies in a London society with struggles different from our place and time. But quickened faith is no less in want now as then. The distinctions in class then have been replaced with other barriers today, and compassion is no less in demand. The political, economic and social challenges that separate and divide us are not particularly new. The consequences are no different. Excluded, exploited, lessened, we are the blind and the crippled, the imprisoned and impoverished. We need good news of a kingdom and a King who is prophet as well as priest.

Our recognition of Ignorance and Want, as in a mirror, has the capacity to

transform our Fear and Greed. Courage will give us a fresh voice. And others will add their voices. Old tunes will sound new. Courage will give us a fresh ear to hear a familiar Story. Others will listen as well. We will see with new eyes. Courage will renew our Will, reflect a Will that draws everyone to Himself.

As you dismantle your tree — the empty ornament boxes arranged on cushioned seats and end tables, the vacuum cleaner ready to pick up the spills — put a seasonal CD in the player for one last time. With Linda Eder or Kiri Te Kanawa for company, allow for one more reflective moment as you begin the domestic rites of Epiphany. But before you begin, take a moment and look around.

Any Presence left unwrapped?

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The Rev. Canon James. T. Irvine resides in Fredericton

From blessed event to daily grind

*After the ball is over,
After the break of morn,
After the dancers leaving,
After the stars have gone,
Many a heart is aching
If you could read them all,
Many the hopes that have vanished*

After the ball by Charles K. Harris

BY PAT DRUMMOND

This song kept coming into my mind as I thought about the events following the first Christmas. Now I don't think Mary and Joseph's hopes vanished, as I'm sure they could never forget the words they had heard from Gabriel, Simeon and Anna. I do wonder, though, if they felt forlorn, bereft and let down as they faced child-rearing, and all it entailed in first century Palestine, alone. According to what the Bible tells us about Jesus' life until he was twelve, God seems to have left them to it.

At the very least it was quite a let-down following the blessed event — the birth of a very special baby, the "Son of the Most High". It was quite a feat that he was born safely. Then angels came to sing, shepherds to worship. Great prophecies were made at his

circumcision — He was to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles" and the glory of the people of Israel. The visit of the Magi (which might have been as long as two years after Jesus' birth) was another glorious event, but it was followed by the terrible flight as refugees into Egypt, with nothing but what they could carry on a donkey. Then it was another journey back to Nazareth, a carpentry business to establish, the births of other children ... the daily grind of existence.

Child rearing today is not always easy, even with all our modern conveniences. The excitement and wonder of the birth, the ooh-ing and aah-ing of relatives and friends, and the gifts all give way to humdrum chores, sleepless nights and the never-ending feeding and changing.

When we had our first child

we lived far from family, I had very little experience with babies, and Robin had severe colic. He screamed for an hour or more between 5 and 7 o'clock every day for a couple of months and nothing would calm him. I can remember bursting into tears one evening when my husband came home from work, and sobbing, "We've got this perfect baby, and I can't cope and I'm ruining him." Well, he survived and turned out pretty well despite my fears and inexperience, but I can't help wondering how Mary felt when Jesus cried, or was sick, or misbehaved. What a responsibility must have weighed upon her young shoulders.

And yes, I do think Jesus may have misbehaved. Misbehaviour is a far cry from sin. It usually happens because small children don't understand, and it is our reaction to what they do that helps them to learn. They don't understand that stoves can burn and sharp objects hurt, so they touch them. They don't realize that running into the street is dangerous — even if the traffic is oxen, horses, donkeys and camel trains, instead of bicycles, cars and trucks. They don't know that some things break or the contents spill when knocked over or dropped.

Did Mary and Joseph ever wonder if they should discipline God's son?

Perhaps the miraculous thing is that God trusted them to do the raising. He had chosen them carefully and knew that they could be relied upon to be faithful to the task and to do the very best job they possibly could. In the amazing miracle of the incarnation, God so loved the world that he took the initiative and entered into our lives in an extraordinary way. But then he asked people to share in ensuring the continuation of his plan to save the world. The word became flesh and lived among us. Mary and Joseph were the first to receive it, nurture it and respond to it with all their hearts. But, in our own time, it is up to us to do the same.

Christmas is the time of year when God seems nearer, and it shows in happiness, generosity and a pervading sense of the magic and mystery of the moment. Then comes January with its cold, ice, snow and bills. It seems an impossibly long time until summer and our next holiday. We lose that wonderful Christmas spirit, just as new parents — faced with the incessant demands of an infant and the realization that this demanding little soul is their responsibility for the next twenty years or so — may lose the sense of wonder which surrounded the birth.

God asks us to remember the high moments when He was close — when we saw his face,

when the angels sang — then to continue to work with Him in partnership as Mary and Joseph continued to care for their child through the long years of His childhood.

The *gift* of Christmas is the Christ Child, but the *call* of Christmas is to respond to the love shown in that gift and to continue to be faithful to the task of nurturing it. God asks us to continue to listen to the cries of those in need, as we do at Christmas. He asks us to continue to remember the lonely, the sad, and the sick, as we do at Christmas. He asks us to be faithful to the daily work He has given us to do.

John's gospel says, "to all who received Him, to all who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God." *We* are Children of God, and He asks us to remember that He is still with us, through His Spirit, as He was in the person of Jesus.

There are millions of us and what a difference we can make in this world if we occupy ourselves with God's work, one caring act at a time, responding to this birth — to God's incredible act of love — with the gift of children raised in faithfulness and lives spent in His service.

The Rev. Patricia Drummond is diocesan director of Christian Education.

The best of both worlds ...

A lesson-in-God's-love Christmas and a don't-sweat-the-small-stuff' Epiphany

It's Epiphany and the only remnant of Christmas is a dried wishbone on the windowsill. Sometimes I feel like that wishbone, one part of me firmly fastened to Christian tradition and the other part dangling in the material world, pressured to be in two places at once but knowing I do not have dual citizenship. Christmas is a classic example of trying to eat from both sides of the plate. Christian families with young children know exactly what I mean.

I live with the Grinch. When the candle of hope is lit to signal the beginning of advent, all Christmas plans at our house become a covert operations. Decorations get crammed. When the Grinch senses the childlike excitement of Christmas mounting, it is always met with a cautionary sermon about the true meaning of the season. This dance in two worlds is built into our family preparation period. I call it the reciprocity twist.

Last year the unexpected happened. My mother, who had always lived on her own, became as helpless as a new baby. She required round-the-clock care. When she came to live at our home, plans for Christmas were just moving into high gear. Naturally everything changed to accommodate

DANCING IN THE RAIN

BY RUTH COLEMAN

this new family dynamic. I didn't have time to bake the cookies, or trim the tree or wrap the gifts for the kids. If my worth as a mother is dependent on what I had ready for that Christmas, I am worthless. If a really good Christmas is measured by how smoothly things run, ours was 'bedlam' (a reduction for Bethlehem). That Christmas in our house certainly would not work in Martha Stewart's world, yet we enjoyed one of the holiest seasons of our lives. My Mom became like Christ among us. Through her we learned how to pay attention to the 'baby' and take our eyes off the tree. I had the best of both worlds, a lesson in God's love and a 'don't sweat the small stuff' epiphany.

So you see the world and the kingdom of God can be experienced simultaneously. Like a border guard walking the Saint Croix Bridge, neither on one

side of the line nor the other, we are in the world, tree and all, but we are not of the world. If the tree falls, we don't 'hear' it. It's only an inconvenience. The trappings are nice, but for us it's really about the baby.

If the kingdom of God is within us as we celebrate, we have to ask the question: How do we move from the joy of Christmas with all the prospects of peace and good will, to celebrating life in minus 20-degree temperatures, with the symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder setting in and the misery of the flu? The truth is, having the light of the world live in us produces something that is neither seasonal nor circumstantial. It is the stabilizer that connects our sense of being to God's Being. When we live on both sides of the border, our joy can collide head on with despair. When the Visa bill arrives and the kids have returned to university, our sense of well being can be shaken if we do not know who we are and in what world we carry citizenship.

One of my favorite literary characters is Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Most of us know the story. Hamlet is in line to be king; but his uncle changes the plan and in a seventeenth-century version of *Survivor*, Hamlet gets 'voted off'

and must leave the island. He becomes melancholy, socially isolated and develops a strong sense of disease. He knows what is rightfully his but realizes he has been robbed of authority. When Hamlet poses the question "to be or not to be?", he is not talking suicide; he is pondering will, his sense of being. Does he have a will to act or, will he slide into passivity and despair?

There are times when most of us get lost between two worlds and we forget who we are. Our relationships and our roles get confused

Like the border guard, with one foot on each side of the line, straddling the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world, I ask my own 'to be or not to be' question. Is it really in God that I live and move and have my being? If my being, my identity is in Him — not in family, work, church, or performance — then in spite of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune must I, like Hamlet, take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing — end them?

As a Christian, my weapon of opposition is resistance. Since baptism I have been taught to resist the devil, to be positioned under Christ's banner to fight sin, the world, and the devil and to live in and with all the benefits of Christ's

passion. This is a position of authority available to all of us who choose to follow God in spite of the unexpected things that happen in our lives. Christ is the light of the world and it our responsibility to peel away the cataracts from those who are too blind to see it. There is nothing passive about this kind of resistance to darkness. It is an act of will. It is a choice between life and death. In making this choice we become what we are meant to be, and that's more than a wishbone. We have the flexibility to bend a little in this world, but if we allow ourselves to dry up, well, you know what happens to a dried-up wishbone.

Introducing Ruth Coleman — a poet at heart as well as an early childhood interventionist, clergy wife, mother of four adolescents/young adults — is exploring another creative avenue through this new column for the New Brunswick Anglican. In her busy life she — even in adversity — tries to find the joy of the Lord ... to 'dance in the rain'. She worships in the Parish of Hampton, where her husband Ed is rector.