

Have I Got e- NEWS for You!



News from the Communities in and around the
Old Barns and Hilden United Churches



No 20

February 2022

Message from Your Editor

What is the difference between a “Right” and a “Privilege”. A right is something that cannot be legally denied, such as the right to free speech, press, religion, and raising a family. A privilege is something that can be given and taken away and is considered to be a special advantage or opportunity that is available only to certain people. There is so much talk in the news today about what people can and cannot do and what they feel is being forced upon them. Sometimes I feel that people do not know, or perhaps understand, the difference between their rights and what are societal privileges.

COVID has certainly brought different things to different people. For many, it has increased their care and concern for those around them, whether family, friends or strangers; for others the sense of isolation. Time to do those things that have been parked on the back burner or too much time to get lost in our own demons. Time to experience new things – baking, gardening, books, or time to weep over what has been lost.

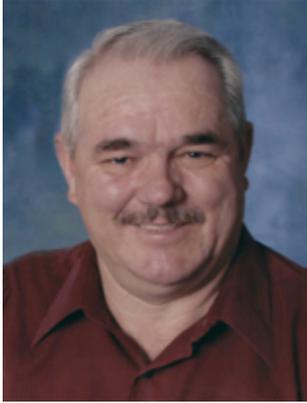
Now is the time to learn to live with COVID, to be thankful for those that have done what they can to help all of us to live in safety. A simple thank you will never be enough to show our gratitude to people like Dr. Robert Strang who has worked tirelessly to keep us all healthy in the midst of this pandemic. His wise words and guidelines have given us the map to continue our worldly journey onward. We will soon no longer need to “Stay the Blazes Home” as we slowly but surely begin once more to intermingle in society, keeping what we have learned in our minds.

Gather together once again, not throwing caution to the wind but adding careful caution to our daily lives. Church is once again opening to in-service worship and by summer, we should once again be able to hold joint services between our churches. We have been gone from one another, but not forgotten. Continue to hold hope in your heart and love for one another.

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22: 36-40

~ *Leslie*

Good Bye, Dear Friends



William Gordon "Bill" Masters
1947 – October 19, 2021
Old Barns



David Edward Woodman
January 15, 2022 at 63 years of age
Lower Truro



Sharon "Maxine" (Wyllie) MacDonald
July 28, 1943 – December 4, 2021
Princeport



Ardath Isabel "Ardie" Creelman
January 13, 1938 – January 29, 2022
Old Barns



John Howard Blaauwendraat
1954 – January 13, 2022
Beaver Brook

Sympathy is extended to those community members who have lost family and friends from within and outside our communities.

Always missed, forever remembered.

*"The journey does not end here.
Death is just another path,
one that we all must take.
The grey curtain of this world rolls back
and all turns to silver glass.
And then you see it.
White shores beyond.
A far green country, under a swift sunrise."*

J.R.R. Tolkien

Hello Babies!



Joleigh Bernadette & Murray Allan Yuill
Born: November 24, 2021
Parents: Tiffany & Stewart
Big Sisters: Sadie & Aidah

Happy Days!

80 + Birthdays:

March – Bob Hanna

April – Beth Saunders, Janet Kent

May – Millie McKim, Colie Brenton



50 + Anniversaries:

April – Merle & Carol Collins



Thanks!



A special thank you goes out to Reg Henderson for his faithful taping of worship services over the past two years when worship services were not possible and also during in-person services when our numbers were limited.

It has been appreciated by members of both congregations as well as by family and friends near and far.



A handsome pheasant has been taking advantage of the corn we leave for him near our bird feeders. We named him Hopkins as we think he may be a descendant of another pheasant we named Hoppy which had a limp. Both are wary but seem to sense they are safe around our house.

Submitted by Edith Selwyn-Smith



The West Family enjoying a Christmas skate on the fire pond at Twin Maple Farm.

Submitted by Ellen West

8-508-0727

GOD SAID NO!!

I asked God to take away my habit. God said, No. it is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up. I asked God to make my handicapped child whole. God said, No. his spirit is whole, his body is only temporary. I asked God to grant me patience. God said, No. patience is a byproduct of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is learned. I asked God to give me happiness. God said, No. i give you blessings; Happiness is up to you. I asked God to spare me pain. God said, No. suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me. I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, No. you must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful. I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life. God said, No. i will give you life, so that you may enjoy all things. I asked God to help me LOVE others, as much as He loves me. God said...Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.



**THIS DAY IS YOURS DON'T THROW IT AWAY...
May God Bless You.**

Serious Lockdown Advice

Everyone please be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home!

I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking a Pepsi, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine because she puts different spin on everything!!

Certainly didn't share with the fridge, because he's been acting cold and distant!

In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic....told me to just suck it up!

But the fan was very optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion.

The front door said I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip!

You can just about guess what the curtains told me: They told me to 'pull myself together'!



Jackson Hoyt skating on neighbours rink.

Submitted by Jacqueline Hoyt

Old Barns Library

Beckie Burrows, Librarian

There are some new books in the library. Surely before long, you will be able to look at these books in the church, in person. Until then, if you would like to borrow one, please let me know. If that book has already been chosen, your name will be placed on a waiting list.

An Everyday God by James Taylor

Interesting devotions on seasons and themes of the church year.

A Match Made in Heaven by Nancy Reeves

Deepening your relationship with God – includes a study guide.

The Emerging Church (revised) by Bruce Sanguin

Explores the characteristics of the new form of church that is developing and how it encourages it in congregations through leadership, visitation, hospitality, vision and mission.

Creative Aging edited by Karen Close and Carolyn Cowan

Creativity is a powerful force. Here are 50 stories of different forms of creativity. As they innovated, the artists changed themselves and their daily lives. Like creativity, aging is a process.

In the Face of Fear: On Laughing All the Way to Wisdom by Walter Moss

Humour was once a method to maintain perspective in such a way that we can overcome whatever hits us. Life can be funny. When we laugh at ourselves, all the world can laugh with us.

Enough: Lifestyle and Financial Planning for Simpler Living by Betty Jane Wylie

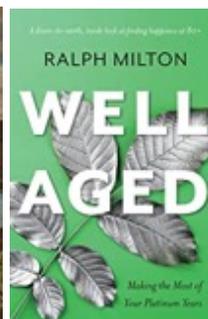
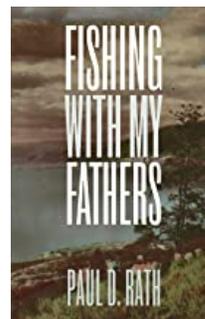
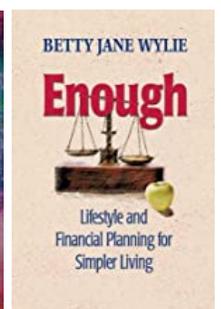
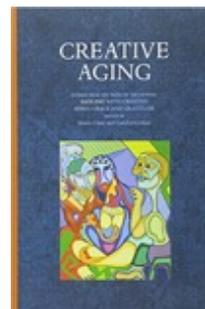
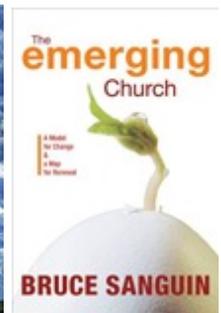
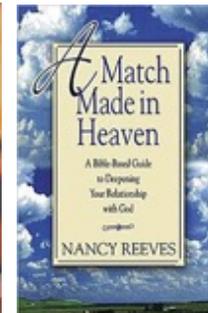
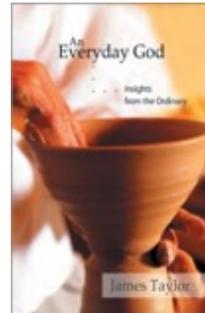
An interesting look at voluntary simplicity – not nearly as dry or dull as the title might sound!

Fishing with My Fathers by Paul Roth

Insights and life lessons learned through times fishing with his minister father and with his Father, God.

Well-Aged: Making the Most of Your Platinum Years by Ralph Milton

A down-to-earth, inside look at finding happiness at 80+, from the perspective of an octogenarian. A must read for anyone who needs to put out their birthday cake with a fire extinguisher, as well as for those who love and care for them.



“What really knocks me out is a book that, when you're all done reading it, you wish the author that wrote it was a terrific friend of yours and you could call him up on the phone whenever you felt like it. That doesn't happen much, though.”

— J.D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye

The Clifton Page Turners

by Barb Miller

Our community book club has upgraded our name as you can see, but we're still going strong with a group membership of ten ladies. Our fall session started off the year with in-person gatherings, but soon we were hunkering down in our own homes and connecting by Zoom! This is a wonderful way to stay connected when weather and/or COVID interferes with gathering plans.

It is especially appreciated when we are occasionally fortunate to have the author of the book join us from their respective homes, which was the case in November when Tyler LeBlanc joined the group to discuss his book entitled *Acadian Driftwood*. He managed to piece together his family history through archival documents back to his 8th great grandfather, Joseph (and 10 siblings), who were expelled during the Expulsion of the Acadians. His account of their deportation or escape gives a vivid insight into one family's experience of this traumatic event.

Of the six books we have read since September, three were non-fiction, including *Acadian Driftwood*; along with *The Three Mothers*, author Anna Malaika Tubbs; and *The Salt Path*, author Raynor Winn. The other three were fiction, some based on actual events, such as *Before We Were Yours*, author Lisa Wingate; and *The Last Garden in England*, author Julia Kelly; as well as the novel *Wrapped in Rain*, author Charles Martin.

The Three Mothers tells the stories of three unique and often little-known mothers: Berdis Baldwin, mother of James; Alberta King, mother of Martin Luther; and Louise Little, mother of Malcolm. These three strong, independent women raised their sons to live their best life and to never give in to oppression and racism and fear, but to persevere in the midst of the often violent discrimination of their lifetime. These mothers told of their experiences of racial discrimination and prejudice from their own childhoods, and as young mothers raising children to fight for equal justice and dignity in

such turbulent times. This book certainly shed some light on the role of these mothers in the shaping of such influential men of black history. It also led to some real and heart-felt discussion around the still present issue of prejudice which has plagued Canada and the US for millennia.

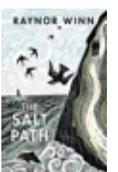
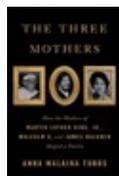
The Salt Path, written by Raynor Winn, began with the unimaginable loss of Ray and her husband Moth's home and farm, along with the unbelievable diagnosis of a terminal illness. While this news shocked the couple who were in their fifties with two grown children, it did not push them to despair...although they would come close to that as they made their journey, both physical and spiritual, along the 630 miles of the South West Coast Path, aka the Salt Path. Having no money, and advice from Moth's doctor to "not walk too far and be careful on the stairs", they packed their tent and backpacks and set off. The ordeal took more out of them than they ever expected, but also gave them back more than they'd ever dreamed. As 'homeless' people they began to recognize that the term held more stigma and prejudice than they'd thought previous to their plight, and from this realization the author brought attention to the actual numbers of homeless people in Britain. With this book discussion, I would say that our group unanimously agreed that these two "old people" had fierce determination and stamina to make this trek, healing their bodies and minds remarkably. Interestingly, from this book discussion, our book club members also learned a bit about the plight of the homeless in our area, and as a result have set up a volunteer schedule of 'partners' to supply the Truro Outreach Society with a meal once a month for the next twelve months.

The Last Garden in England, although written as fiction, does touch on some actual events of the period during WWII when homes and properties were requisitioned to serve the war efforts. A present-day woman who dedicates her career to restoring neglected gardens has an opportunity to restore one of the gardens designed by her long-time hero and in the process discovers several secrets which tie three generations of women together. Across three-time lines, and two continents, the story reveals how women have broken barriers and found ways to assert

their independence, along with ability and wisdom, in what was long considered a man's world. A lighter read, but enjoyable to take us from the doldrums of COVID lockdowns to English gardens filled with beauty and secrets.

The novel, *Wrapped in Rain*, I feel was my favorite so far in this reading year lineup. Many of our authors were women and this was a refreshing change for me to read Charles Martin's work (so much so that I have since read another of his novels). The story was very much one of redemption after a childhood of abuse that these two brothers suffered from their father. He was not a nice man! However, they were truly blessed to have a 'housekeeper' who not only kept the house in order, but also the boys' hearts and minds and attitudes ... about life and courage and accountability to God and their fellowman. A truly beautiful woman who opened her heart and her home to these two scared and hurting little boys. There were many quotes and 'bits of advice' highlighted or flagged or written down in our 'book journals' for discussion at our gathering on this one.

I look forward to our monthly gatherings, hopefully back in person soon, and appreciate the variety of books we read together. Often the book title is not one I would necessarily choose for my personal enjoyment, but the books submitted by our group members help me to stretch and grow, leaving me with a sense of having experienced something new by reading them. I thank all of the group members who add to the variety of discussion and reading material. Special thanks to Leslie and Karen who spearheaded this group and keep us on our toes as to what the next few months look like on our reading calendars! 'Till next time ladies....happy reading!



I Opened a Book

by Julia Donaldson (from internet)

English writer and poet Julia Donaldson has an output that might make you question just what you've been doing with your life. Not only does she speak English, French, German, and Italian, she's published more than 184 books. Before becoming a full-time author, she wrote songs for children's television.

In 2011, she was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to literature — then in 2018, she was upgraded to *Commander* of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. But to millions of kids, she's the lovely lady who wrote the rhyming stories they love.

In this poem, she perfectly captures the way exceptional books can transport us to somewhere new.

*I opened a book and in I strode
Now nobody can find me.
I've left my chair, my house, my road,
My town and my world behind me.*

*I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring,
I've swallowed the magic potion.
I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king
And dived in a bottomless ocean.*

*I opened a book and made some friends.
I shared their tears and laughter
And followed their road with its bumps and
bends
To the happily ever after.*

*I finished my book and out I came.
The cloak can no longer hide me.
My chair and my house are just the same,
But I have a book inside me.*



Clifton Provides

by Leslie Burrows

Clifton Provides was set up from a discussion at our Book Club as Barb mentioned above. We are providing a home cooked meal complete with dessert one Saturday a month to the Hub House, Truro's Homeless Shelter.

If you think you and a friend would like to help with this project just contact me through the newsletter email. I can let you know what it entails and set you on the path to helping those that need an extra hand.



Understanding the People Behind Homelessness

by Hannah Burrows

Note: the views expressed below are my own and do not necessarily represent those of my employer.

Until I started my counselling program, what I knew about people who experience homelessness came exclusively from TV and movies, and they did not paint a nice picture.

Lazy, dirty, addicts, and criminals, are just some of the ways they have been depicted in the media. Most of us have been fortunate to never be in a position where we face homelessness ourselves, so we do not understand the who's and why's around it. The counselling program I took shifted my mindset on people who are experiencing homelessness, and my eyes have been opened further as I've been working as a client support worker at the Hub House shelter since August. I thought I'd share a little of what I've learned.

You'll note that, excluding this sentence, I do not use more familiar terms such as homeless people, addicts and alcoholics. What those terms have in common is they place the condition before the person, which can make it hard to remember that you are talking about a very real human with a history and feelings. The language has shifted to a person-first approach. People who experience homelessness, a person with a substance use disorder, etc. puts the person first and helps to take the stigma away from their experience.

There are different types of homelessness. **Chronic Homelessness** is a person who has gone over a year without housing. Typically, there is an underlying reason for why they have not found stable housing in that time (eg. mental illness or a substance use disorder). **Episodic Homelessness** is a person who experiences several, shorter stints of homelessness. This can turn into chronic homelessness. **Transitional Homelessness** is when a person experiences a major change that may leave them without housing for a short period of time; think sudden job loss or a relationship breakdown. **Hidden Homelessness** is when a person does not have their own housing, but has enough of a support network they can couch surf for a time.

It's important to remember that no one actively chooses to be homeless. So, who ends up experiencing homelessness? The answer is anyone can find themselves homeless given the right (or wrong, I guess) set of circumstances.

A quick google search reveals that 59% of Americans are one paycheck away from becoming homeless, I suspect the number in Canada would be similar. With a growing gap between minimum and living wages (the minimum wage in NS is \$13.35 but a report released last fall says the living wage for the average person living in Colchester county is \$19.20), housing prices soaring, and the cost of groceries and other basic necessities rapidly climbing, the average person does not have the luxury to save money as they need every penny they have to survive. When you are living paycheck to paycheck, the sudden loss of a job

may mean you find yourself jobless and homeless practically overnight.

If you break up with your partner or your family kicks you out and do not have any other family or friends who are able to take you in, you may end up homeless.

Some people experiencing homelessness have mental illnesses and have been unable to get adequate support from the system or from their family so they find themselves in the streets.

Many, though by no means all, people experiencing homelessness have substance use disorders. But, like no one chooses to become homeless, no one chooses to have a substance use disorder. Often, excessive substance use is a result of trauma. The trauma survivor initially turns to substances as a way to escape the emotional pain they are in, and over time it can turn into an addiction and they can lose everything, including their homes and families.

When some people are released from jail they find they have nowhere to go rendering them homeless.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the circumstances leading to homelessness. Nor am I trying to paint all people experiencing homelessness as innocent victims of bad luck and circumstances, some of them have certainly made choices which have led to a loss of supports and homelessness. I just want to show that there are many paths to homelessness, that it can happen to anyone, and, like so many things in life, it is rarely black and white.

As a client support worker at the shelter I have seen people that fit all of the above circumstances, most fit more than one category. We've had a lot of guests come and go since I started working there, and I've had the opportunity to get to know a wide variety of people I never would have met otherwise. Most of them are truly delightful humans with good hearts. They are fiercely loyal to each other (until someone does something to break the bond) and will care for and protect their own, especially people who are older or more

vulnerable. That loyalty extends to the shelter and the staff working there; I've had guests tell me they'd take a punch for me (thankfully a situation has never arisen to test that). They make me smile and laugh on an almost daily basis. I've celebrated their successes, like when they are able to find a job or secure housing, and I've seen them at some of their lowest moments. I've listened to them talk with hope about their future plans and how they are going to make them happen. I've also heard the frustration when they talk about how much they want to get back on their feet, but the odds are so stacked against them it would be easier to go back to jail where they can at least get three hots and a cot.

Now I do not go to work with rose tinted glasses. The fact is most of our guests are, if not at rock bottom on their way there or back and it's important to not lose sight of that. People who are struggling and desperate do not always make good choices. They can, and will, look for any angle they can play to gain advantage, and there have certainly been guests passing through the shelter I would never turn my back on. There are nights that are a constant struggle with one crisis after another to be dealt with that leave me as frustrated with them as they are with me.

But at the end of the day, they are people first. They have a story, feelings, highs and lows, and hope and dreams, just like you and I, and they deserve to be treated as such.



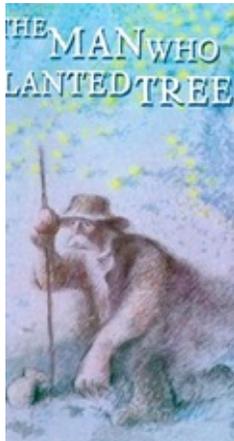
Image from Unsplash

Do You Remember?

by Leslie Burrows

One of the advantages of having lots of time at home is the time to dig up old movies and shows to enjoy. I will just mention a couple.

Do you remember the CBC/NFB production of **The Man Who Planted Trees**, narrated by Christopher Plummer?



This animated film is based on the true story of a man who transformed a whole region of France simply by planting one tree at a time. He found the perfect way to be happy by doing what he wanted to do, and the by-product is the creation of a forest which, in turn, saves the whole region.

The film won the Academy Award (1988) for "Best Animated Short Film. It also competed for the "Short Film Palme d'Or" at the 1987 Cannes Film Festival. The film won the "Golden Sheaf Award" for Best Animation at the 1988 Yorkton Film Festival. In 1994, it was voted number 44 of the 50 Greatest Cartoons of all time by members of the animation field.

You can watch it all the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYIsIZXCQa4>

A second movie that I watched was the 1967 **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner** starring Spencer Tracy, Sidney Poitier, Katharine Hepburn and Katharine Houghton. This was Spencer Tracy's final film, dying just 17 days after filming was completed.



The film was one of the few films of the time to depict an interracial marriage in a positive light, as interracial marriage historically had been illegal in many states of the United States. It was still illegal in 17 states, until June 12, 1967, six months before the film was released and scenes were filmed just before anti-miscegenation laws were struck down by the Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia*.

The film was the winner of 10 awards including Academy Awards for Best Actor (Tracy), Best Actress (Hepburn), and Best Story & Screenplay. It was also inducted into the National Film Preservation Board

You can watch this film on Netflix.





"Today"

by Kevin Little

Reprinted with permission.

Faith communities like ours are often consumed with memories of the past and hopes for the future. Speaking of the past may take a form of maintaining buildings and structures and passing on patterns of life and values from ancestors. Speaking of the future is often wrapped up in hopes for some far-off utopia and eternal life, desires for answered prayers, for the children to hold onto faith or "come back to church." Both past and future are important to vibrant communities; healthy and life-giving practices of honoring our ancestors and embracing a hopeful future derive from the witness of the whole biblical tradition. But both "past" and "future" as the primary location of faith have their shadow sides. Overemphasizing the past results in nostalgia--the belief that the past is better than either the present or the future--a disposition that is steeped in grief and fear. Overemphasizing the future--the belief that all that matters is that which is to come--often results in thwarted hope, doubt, and anxiety.

A recent survey from Public Religion Research discovered that the majority of churchgoers express high levels of both nostalgia and anxiety. By strong majorities, religious people, and without any significant difference between theological conservatives and liberals--believe that "our best days are behind us" and that the future of society is bleak. In particular, mainline congregations are caught between valorizing the good old days and a deepening sense of desolation that some promised future will never arrive. Evidently, most Protestants would rather look back with sadness than trust that a more

just and beautiful future beckons. As a result, today is lost.

But "today" insists that we lay aside both our memories and our dreams to embrace fully the moment of now. The past romanticizes the work of our ancestors; the future is an excellent delaying tactic, a spiritual procrastination. But "today" places us in the midst of the sacred drama, reminding us that we are actors and agents in God's desire for the world. "Today" is the most radical thing Jesus ever said. Jesus essentially told his friends, "Look around. See the Spirit of God at work, right here. Right now. God is with us. Just as I AM promised our father Moses at the burning bush, 'I will be with you.' This is the sign of God's covenant. The ever active, ever loving, ever liberating, always present God is here with us. Now."

By emphasizing the word "today," Jesus transformed Isaiah's words, Isaiah's prophecy, into a powerful invitation for the whole community to act on behalf of God's justice. Living in God's promise is not about yesterday. Nor is it about awaiting some distant Messiah and eternal life in the Kingdom of God. It is about NOW. Jesus' sermon remains as clear and poignant and important and urgent as ever: Today this promise has been fulfilled in your hearing--what we need is here. Today.



The Green Oak sky at sunset on January 10th