

Have I Got e-NEWS for You!



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

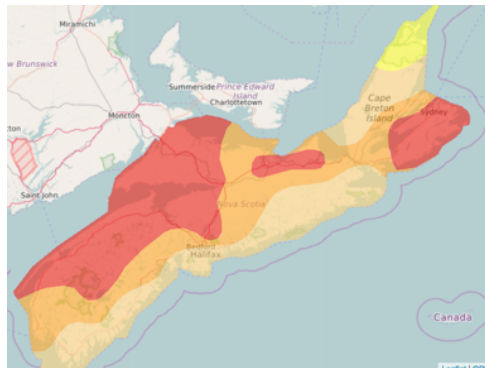


No 31

October 2025

Message from Your Editor

What a summer we just had! Sunshine, sunshine, and more sunshine – and a lack of rain. According to the Canadian Climate Institute, a drought is a period of abnormally dry weather that lasts long enough to cause serious water shortages for natural ecosystems, agriculture, and people. According to the Nova Scotia Drought Report, approximately 96% (71035 square kilometers) of Nova Scotia is under drought conditions and 3% (2434 square kilometers) is abnormally dry.



We are in Extreme Drought (red), the orange is Severe Drought, the lighter beige is Moderate Drought, and the yellow Abnormally Dry (or least amount of drought).

Many in our area are dealing with wells run dry, reservoirs greatly reduced, agricultural areas producing 40 – 50 % or less of what is “normal”. Apple and blueberry crops are not what they should be, even the bees are suffering. Farmers are purchasing water for their cattle. Ration changes are being discussed as it will be next summer and fall before the next crops come off the fields.

Please join in a prayer for rain!

Song “Praying for Rain” by RaeLynn

*I plant my seeds in these dirt roads ~ I see myself in these cornrows
I learn about love, I learn about pain ~ Talking to God, praying for rain.*

~ Leslie

Good Bye, Dear Friends



Arthur Gordon Hennigar
November 5, 1947 – June 16, 2025
Beaver Brook



Katherine "Chick" Hanna
March 19, 1945 – July 5, 2025
Lower Truro



Grethe Kathrine Baird
July 12, 1937 – July 29, 2025
Lower Truro



Gerald Percy McLeod
June 27, 1928 – July 15, 2025
Lower Truro



Rosemary Fitzgerald
August 13, 2025 – Age 78
Lower Truro



Verda Eloise Louise Logan
September 10, 2025 – Age 84
Hilden



Roger Joseph Hunka
September 20, 2025 – Age 78
Princeport

From the family: Roger passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by his loving family. Roger was a proud resident of the area since 1986 and is remembered by his children, Robert John and Rebecca Julia. Roger enjoyed wood working, gardening, reading and spending time with his grandchildren, Lily, Aimee, Lane, and Lavender.

Roger is remembered for his advocacy work with the Mi'kmaq community for over 50 years and he had been awarded the Aboriginal Order of Canada and the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal for his work with the Aboriginal People.

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*When we lose someone we love,  
We must learn not to live without them  
But to live with the love they left behind.*

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

*Always missed, forever remembered.*



## Happy Days!

### 80 + Birthdays:

October Wayne Fisher (H)  
Reg Loughhead (OB)

November Sybil McCurdy (OB)  
Glenda Kent (OB)

December Marnie Smith (H)  
Sylvia Patterson (H)

January Fran Fiddes (OB)

February Bob Wynn (H)  
Wayne Smith (H)  
Mervyn Dickie (H)

### 90 + Birthdays:

October Kathie Chisholm (OB)

November Gary Saunders (OB)

February Jean Burris (OB)

### 106<sup>th</sup> Birthday:

October Ana Stokdijk



### 50 + Anniversaries:

October Harry & Darlene  
McCormick (OB)  
Bob & Sandra Francis (OB)  
Nancy & Glen MacKinnon (OB)

January Fred & Julia Blois (OB)





## Babies



June 22 Baby Shower for Gillian Blackburn  
accompanied by Grandmother-to-be Jane  
Blackburn



Left: Isla Jane      Right: Maeve Elizabeth  
Born August 5, 2025  
Parents: Gillian Blackburn and Nickolas Tonet  
Grandparents: Jane & Andrew Blackburn



Anna Stokdijk will be celebrating, with her family, her 106<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 31<sup>st</sup>, the Lord willing. She resides at Wynn Park and is in good health. (formerly from Beaver Brook)

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Song by Frank Sinatra – **Young at Heart**

*And if you should survive to a hundred and five  
Look at all you'll derive out of being alive  
And here is the best part,  
you have a head start  
If you are among the very young at heart.*

*... just add a year to the song!*

## Up-Coming Services

Information about our churches, and when our services are, can be found on our website. Most Sundays, the Old Barns services are either live-streamed or taped and can also be found on the Charge website:

[cliftonpastoralcharge.ca](http://cliftonpastoralcharge.ca)

October 12 and 19      9:30 a.m. in Hilden  
11:00 a.m. in Old Barns

October 26 – Joint Service      9:30 a.m. in Hilden

First Sunday of each month:  
9:30 a.m. in Old Barns  
11:00 a.m. in Hilden

Remainder of Sundays of each month:  
9:30 a.m. in Hilden  
11:00 a.m. in Old Barns



## Clifton Childcare Society

In response to the community's need for a childcare centre, the Clifton Childcare Society has been born. We are in the midst of registering with joint stocks and can then begin the process of applying to the government for approval to operate a child care facility. We've got a way to go but things are officially in motion! Stay tuned going forward for opportunities to support us through fundraisers or potential renovation/construction help. If you are interested in getting involved please reach out to any of our board members.

Hannah Burrows – Chair  
Karen Archibald-Waugh – Vice Chair  
Jenna Burris – Secretary  
Maria McCurdy – Treasurer  
Chuck DeBay – Director  
Tiffany Rudderham Yuill – Director

## Loneliness

From a September blog by Kevin Little  
Used with permission

We live in a time where barriers between people are coming down, misunderstanding of difference, still very visible, are being addressed. Gender roles are expanded (my late mother was told she could be a secretary, teacher or nurse), sexual orientation is no longer described as a mental illness but as healthy expression of love, and skin colour is less and less judged as “less than” or “more than” but rather as a visible sign of God’s wonderful, diverse, Creation. If you are a woman, a person of colour, a member of the Queer community, things are better.

But one thing is worse today than years ago, community. The transient ways we migrate to employment, technologies that mean we spend a lot of time alone on our devices, and the weakening need for community for outright survival, all conspire to make us less connected, more lonely.

Consider all of this when you imagine the promise and possibility of a church, based in large part on God’s design of a diverse Creation, a Saviour who reaches out, and appears, as a stranger, and a Spirit that comes alive when people come together. We have much to offer.



Loneliness Awareness Week happens in June



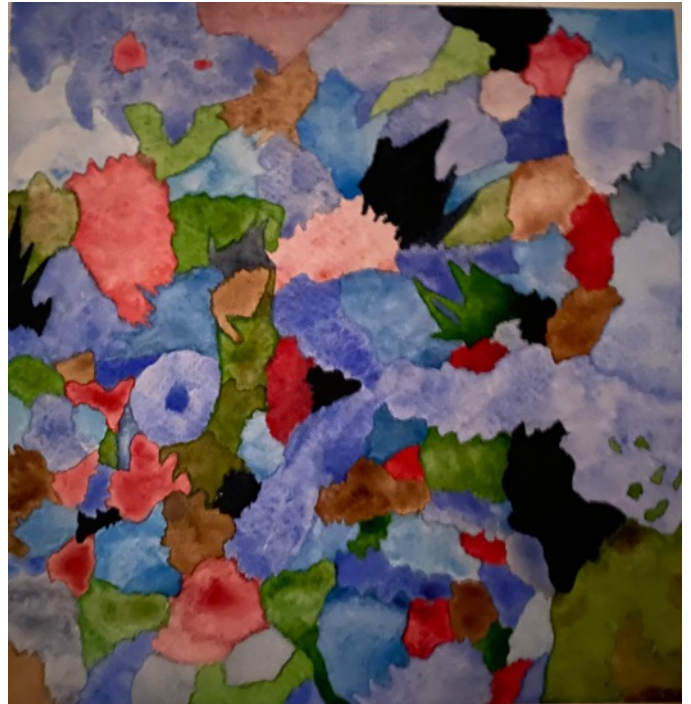
## *Local Artist*

Submitted by Catherine Vallis

The Cardinals, the Mushrooms and an original that James calls The Watery Mind, are examples of the Watercolour Paintings of my son, James Vallis.

James lives here in Princeport on the farm and spends time helping me, Cathy Vallis, with farm work. James also works for some sheep farmers on the Noel Shore when they have to work with their animals as James is experienced in the do's and don'ts of sheep handling.

However, James' other occupation is studying and making Watercolour Paintings. Since his graduation from High School in 2020, James has taken an online evening class in Watercolour Painting in the Autumn, Winter and Spring sessions at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He was inspired to study Art by his late Great Auntie Rosemary. She had studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London during World War Two. As a talented Watercolourist herself she enjoyed supporting and encouraging James in his newfound love. "Watch this space" as James continues to hone his skills.





## *Hockey Star in the Making*

Austin Hoyt, grandson of Jeff and Patricia Yuill had a very exciting and memorable summer. Jeff, Patricia and parents Jason and Jacqueline and younger brother Jackson all traveled with Austin to Quebec City in June for the QMJHL (Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League) 2025 draft in early June. Austin was expected to do well in the draft after a great season with the U18AAA Weeks Majors (Pictou County) finishing 4<sup>th</sup> overall in the league with 56 points as a 15-year-old. The draft was an incredible experience and the excitement and nerves were high. Austin ended up being drafted 67<sup>th</sup> overall in the 4<sup>th</sup> round by a team in Northern Quebec, Huskies de Rouyn-Noranda. Austin and his father Jason, made the 18-hour drive to Rouyn-Noranda in mid-August for training camp. Austin had a great tryout, making it past the rookie week but eventually being let go for this year. Once he was home, more exciting news where he was drafted by the local Jr. A Truro Bearcats. Austin went through training camp in late August and was happy to be selected on the team made up of players all over the age of 18. Austin has had a great start with the Bearcats this fall and had his first goal and assists early in the season. He will look forward to going to Huskies training camp again next August with the goal of making the roster. Please come out to a Bearcat Jr A Hockey Game this season and cheer on the local team; along with watching the game, you will meet up with neighbors, friends and colleagues.



## *Pictures from the Summer*



July 13 – Mini-Pilgrimage Walk on the Cobequid Trail



July 21 Clifton Federation Barbecue  
Anthony Waugh, Colie Kent, and Lloyd Yuill



July 21 BBQ Attendees





July 21 BBQ – Clifton 4-H members and Leaders who helped in the kitchen



Sign in Lower Truro welcoming people as they pass through installed this summer.



August 3 Outdoor Service



August 3 Outdoor Service – The Musicians



August 3 Outdoor Service – Story Teller Gary Saunders



August 10 Service in the Gazebo

Photo Credits: Karen Archibald-Waugh, Jim Burrows, Leslie Burrows, Sandra Dill, Brian Hagell, Garry Matthews, Tasha Stokdijk, Catherine Vallis, Jacqueline Yuill



## Colchester Food Bank Garden 2025

Submitted by Garry Matthews and Jeff Yuill

The Food Bank Garden harvest is finished for 2025! Thanks to all the workers from the Knights of Columbus, Old Barns Men's Club and community members who came out faithfully to the garden, to plant, till, weed, harvest and transport fresh garden produce to the Colchester Food Bank.

We grew lettuce, Swiss chard, kale, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini, squash, pumpkin, carrots, beans, tomatoes, peppers, parsnips, turnip, and cabbage; a total of over 13,000 pounds.

Our thanks to Jeff and Pat Yuill for providing land for the garden, and space for workers to park vehicles. Thanks also to Duncan McCurdy for manure, and to Blair Kent who did the plowing and tilling the garden in the spring.

This amazing community project goes back many years; and we are planning to be located in the same area next year.

Here is a historical perspective on this project, prepared by Jeff Yuill:

The Feb / 1992 Old Barns Men's Club minutes read:" Jeff brought up in new business that his father in law Joe MacGregor who is a Knights of Columbus member of the Catholic Church in Truro had contacted him regarding a Food Bank Garden project that their group of men were considering (but did not have any land). I was considering donating some farm land for the garden plot, and wondered if our Men's Club might have interest in participating in such a project. After a very short discussion, all agreed to enter into more formal planning discussions...."

And so it began, a very successful interdenominational effort between like-minded men of faith with a desire to help those in need. 33 years later, (2025) the project remains strong and of great benefit to the Colchester Food Bank, as well as the added factor of fostering fellowship and connection with a purpose.



## NICU Awareness

Submitted by Hannah Burrows

There were a lot of things about my pregnancy and postpartum journey I had never imagined until they became realities for me. One of those things was what a NICU was like. I've seen the E.R. and Grey's Anatomy NICUs, but tv and the real world tend to differ. It never crossed my mind that my baby might need a NICU, much less that ending up there would be the best-case scenario for us. In many ways I was fortunate. Most parents who end up in the NICU don't get a chance to prepare, I did. I had 16 weeks of knowing it was coming and hoping we'd make it to the NICU. 11 of those weeks I was inpatient myself and I was able to ask questions of my nurses, have consultations with Neonatologists, and even get a tour of a NICU room. Even then, landing there post-surgery with a baby was jarring.

The NICU at the IWK is set up in a family centred way and, to my understanding, is one of the best setups in the country. Each baby has their own room and there is a portion of the room dedicated to the parents. It's small, and whoever designed the bathroom was not thinking of postpartum or post C-section bodies, but it does the job and allows you to stay with your baby the entire time they are in hospital. Not all parents are so lucky.

September is NICU awareness month. I wrote the following for a Facebook post because I think it's important we talk about the hard things that are too often glazed over. The very few times I've interacted with people who don't know our story and they ask about my pregnancy or birth experience I have to decide whether I give an honest answer and risk making them uncomfortable or give a more socially acceptable answer of "oh it was fine, a few bumps along the way but he turned out ok." In the past year I've heard from a number of people who have their own NICU experience, either from when they were a baby or with their own child. One in ten babies ends up in the NICU. Some are there for a few weeks like Clifford was, others a few days, and others for months. I'm sharing a snippet of my experience to give

others a reference point for what a real world NICU experience is like. I knew from 18 weeks on that as a result of my water breaking so early spending time in the NICU would be our best-case scenario; it was just a question of when and for how long.

What did the NICU experience look like for us?

- It's 16 medical staff in the OR for his delivery.
- It's not holding your baby when he's born because he needs immediate support. I only saw him briefly before he was moved. It was 9 long hours before I was able to hold him.
- It's not just holding your baby, but the breathing tubes and leads and IV lines and feeding tubes and blue light blankets attached to him too.
- It's needing a nurse to pass you the baby and only holding him a few times a day (but for hours at a time) because moving causes him stress.
- It's learning to navigate the arm holes in the incubator, plus all the things attached to his tiny body, to change a diaper.
- It's seeing your tiny baby poked, prodded, and tested and not being able to hold him to comfort him, just using those incubator holes to touch and calm him.
- It's learning that breast feeding does not come easily (or at all) when your baby can't feed through their mouth. Clifford's first taste of food was a colostrum dipped Q-tip touched to his mouth.
- It's people coming through the room at all hours of the day and night and learning to sleep through it.
- It's monitors and alarms, not just in your room but nearby ones.
- Its furniture meant to be easily cleaned and not for sitting for hours holding a baby or sleeping on after major surgery.
- It's becoming obsessed with weight loss/gain and food intake.
- It's rounds every morning with a team of people you see briefly and struggle to remember the names.
- It's emotional and exhausting and frustrating.



- It's also a place of hope and love where you see strangers treat your tiny baby with such incredible kindness and care.
- It's where you fall in love with your tiny miracle and marvel at their strength and resilience.
- It's gratitude that the knowledge exists to give babies a fighting chance.
- It's sharing tears and laughter, milestones and triumphs with strangers who, for a brief time, are family.
- It's finally getting to take your baby home and realizing you don't have a call button or a nurse on the other side of the door which is both freeing and terrifying.
- It's being so incredibly grateful to be bringing home a healthy baby and also having a pile of trauma to work through.

Clifford and I were lucky, he only needed 22 days in the NICU.

One in ten babies will spend time in the NICU. We were that one.



Clifford is cuddled on Mum while covered in the blue light (jaundiced)



Little 5 pounds 5 ounces Clifford is in the middle of these wonder workers.



Mum learning how to care for Clifford



And here is Clifford 13 months old and ready to take off walking.

## *Song for Autumn*

By Mary Oliver

*In the deep fall  
 don't you imagine the leaves think how  
 comfortable it will be to touch  
 the earth instead of the  
 nothingness of air and the endless  
 freshets of wind?*

*And don't you think  
 the trees themselves,  
 especially those with mossy,  
 warm caves,  
 begin to think of the birds that will come  
 – six, a dozen –  
 to sleep inside their bodies?*

*And don't you hear  
 the goldenrod whispering goodbye,  
 the everlasting being crowned  
 with the first tuffets of snow?*

*The pond vanishes,  
 and the white field over which  
 the fox runs so quickly  
 brings out its blue shadows.*

*And the wind pumps its bellows.  
 And at evening especially,  
 the piled firewood shifts a little,  
 longing to be on its way.*

## *Autumn Haiku*

Autumn colours flame  
 Sunset leaves drift slowly down  
 Winter's quilts in place  
 – Chris Marcic

Nature takes a sigh,  
 The air lets out a deep breath.  
 We reach for blankets.  
 – Judy Collis

She calls us outside  
 To tumble in crunchy leaves.  
 She's here! Autumn's here!  
 – Angela Heffer

**Cartington Farm · Follow**  
 Nov 3, 2021 · 🌐

In 1950 there were  
 10.6 million cattle in the UK  
 50,225,000 people in the UK  
 4 million licensed vehicles on the roads

In 2018 there were  
 9.9 million cattle in the UK (with an annual average population of  
 10.9 million since 1950)  
 66,460,000 people in the UK  
 38 million licensed vehicles on the roads

There were no records of commercial flights in the 1950s but ...  
 in 2004 there were 23 million commercial flights  
 in 2018 there were 38 million commercial flights  
 (this doesn't include private or freight flights)

I really would love to see the data that conclusively proves that  
 cattle are the game changing contributor to global warming that the  
 media would have us believe.

From Facebook, some Global Warming Facts in favour of cattle.



*Pictures from this Autumn*



Hornet nest in Beaver Brook



Shubenacadie Wildlife Park



Shubenacadie Wildlife Park



Shubenacadie Wildlife Park



Autumn Colours on Black Rock Road

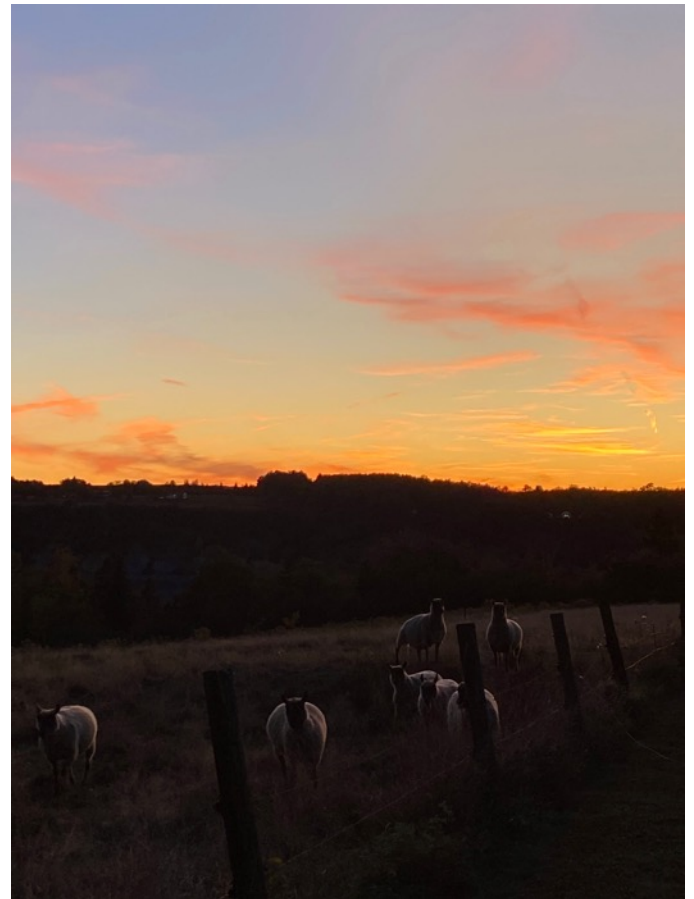




Autumn in Green Oak



Geese in Green Oak



Princeport Sheep at Sunset

### *Pictures from the Past*



July 1986 – Bette Chisholm's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Back L to R →  
 Ann Cox, Howard Propper, Carl Rundy, Greta Stewart, Marilyn Henderson,  
 Sybil McCurdy, (Pat) Padmanthran, Jack Ryan, Betty Russell, June Yull  
 Reg Henderson, Bette Chisholm, Charlie Yull, Stewart Russell, Carl Dickie,  
 Frank Cox.  
 Front → Vena Dickie, Kay Rundy, Florence Yull, Carolyn Ryan, Emily Ruthenford,  
 Holly Ruthenford, Bill McCurdy, Don R Chisholm, Andrew McCurdy,  
 Gail Denstone.  
 July 1986  
 60<sup>th</sup> B'day  
 Bette





**C.G.I.T. GROUP & LEADER**

1981

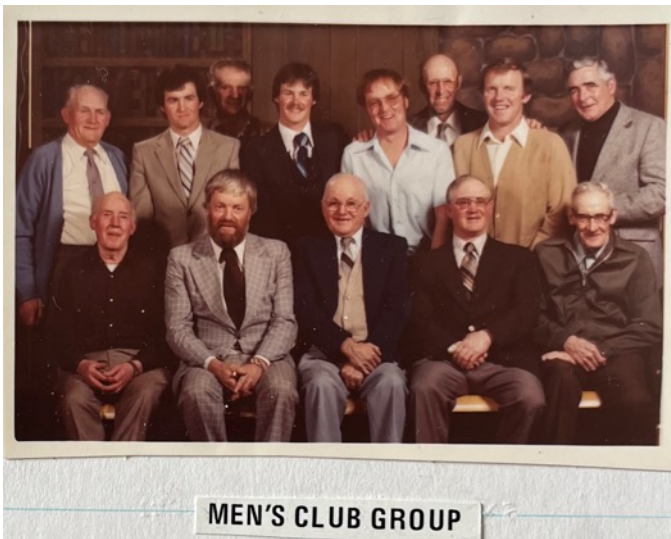
Back Row: Margie McKim, Karen Henderson, Beth Pearo, Nancy Kent, Laurel Stewart  
Front Row: Melanie Blois, Cathy Loughhead, Cynthia Weatherbee, Anna Burns



**EXPLORER GROUP & LEADER**

1981

Back Row: Wanda Kent, Joanne Rushton, Pat Loughhead  
Middle Row: Lisa Gracey, Jennifer Byers, Christa Loughhead, Kristy Gracey, ??, Susan Rushton  
Front Row: Allison Patton, Heather Hobson, ??, Gillian Macumber, Tracey Semple



**MEN'S CLUB GROUP**

1981

Back Row: Charlie Yuill, Barry Yuill, ??, Jeff Yuill, Fred Blois, Harry Farr, Bill McCurdy, Don R Chisholm  
Front Row: Carl Yuill, Reg Henderson, Stan McLellan, Jack Yuill, ??



**BABY BAND GROUP**

1981

Back Row: Inez Creelman, Debbie Rutherford, Betty Burns, Lynne Miller, Beth Saunders, Heather MacPherson

If you happen to know any of the unidentified people in the pictures, please contact Leslie and let her know their names.

If you can ID these babies, let me know!

## *A Feel Good Moment*

submitted by Gordie Miller

On a Wednesday morning by 9 o'clock, eight people, along with power saws and a wood splitter, had gathered to help good friends whose husband had some medical issues.

They heat their home with an outside furnace, and had a large pile of wood that needed to be junked, split and piled.

We did about half the wood and were treated to hot or cold, drinks; apples, oranges, bananas and blueberry muffins. Went back to work and were soon finished. By this time, we were joined by three more people.

Then the feast was presented: beans, salads, rolls, biscuits, sausages, wieners, and more. Again, hot and cold drinks, and then dessert. I think there were four kinds of pies, and blueberry cake.

This was truly a 'feel good moment'.

It took me back 60+ years to when I was a young boy and the wood-sawing or grain-threshing team, which was a group of neighbouring farmers, would travel from home to home.

Life truly is about those feel good moments. Friends helping friends.



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.  
EVEN IF THEY DON'T  
LOOK LIKE YOU.  
THINK LIKE YOU.  
LOVE LIKE YOU.  
PRAY LIKE YOU.  
SPEAK LIKE YOU, OR  
VOTE LIKE YOU.  
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.  
NO EXCEPTIONS.

## *Love Your Neighbor*

Poem by ulle-kaye

It has been said to  
"Love our neighbours as ourselves."  
When we extend  
the same grace and compassion that  
we bathe ourselves in,  
we have shown love.  
When we offer the same water that we  
ourselves would drink  
and are refreshed by  
then we have shown love.  
When the world keeps dividing  
and we stitch ourselves together instead,  
we have shown love.  
When we do not give based on our  
own assessment of whether someone else  
is worthy or not,  
we have shown love.  
This kind of love does not ask  
how to give the least thing by which we would  
still be considered 'good'  
but rather  
what sacrifices we are willing to make  
for those who think, look and breathe differently  
in order to be more  
like the author of all goodness.



## *Message from September 14 Joint Service*

submitted by Barb Miller

I was asked if I would share this Message in the newsletter, so here goes:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves: who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

"As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others." (Marianne Williamson, from her book *A Return to Love*) I have always attributed this quote to Nelson Mandela. However, in doing a bit of research, I discovered that, indeed, it is from Marianne Williamson's book. Either way...it's a pretty powerful message.

I recall moving our son to an apartment in Montreal to begin a new and scary journey into the world basically alone. He'd never lived in a city. He'd never lived alone. He knew literally no one who would be attending National Theatre School with him. He taped this quote on his door where he would see it each morning as he left his apartment. I felt a measure of peace that he would take these words of affirmation with him each day as he headed out to school.

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." Rev. Wade Allen quoted this scripture in church one Sunday and said that it was, in his opinion, the scariest verse in the

Bible. I've since realized, many, many times, just what he meant when he said that.

Do you remember the last time, or the first time, or the many times in between, when you heard, felt, sensed, knew, that God was inviting you, nudging you, gently pushing against your hard rock resistance, to do this 'thing'? To speak to a group; to write a prayer, a story, a song; to join a new group that you didn't quite know was 'right for you'; to attend a retreat for the first time, or maybe even help develop and present a retreat; Remember that feeling when you somehow found the nerve to do that 'thing'.

So how does your mind, body, spirit handle it when you have an important decision to make or a commitment to carry out? Does that kind of thing stress you out? Do you lose sleep? Get cranky, maybe?

I toss and turn at night. I eat more carbs and sugar. I don't get that daily walk in. I tend to watch tv or scroll FaceBook, rather than read something meaningful or listen to music. Honestly, I get into a state sometimes that kinda scares me... I mean Yes, some days are a little hard to get through, but I need to get a grip here. And then, on top of that decision, or as that commitment draws near, maybe you, which really means me, have a minor inconvenience in your life such as plugged ears that need some attention before they can be flushed out... it's causing some discomfort with that strange whooshing noise in my head, but it's not causing pain, it's just irritating. I don't know about you but when I'm irritated and/or stressed, that usually translates into "I'm cranky!" I know, right, poor, poor me!!

Gordie and I often refer to a story from one of Robert Fulghum's books, at times like this. The title of the story is Sigmund Wollman's Reality Test. Sigmund is a night auditor at a resort Inn just coming on for his shift when the young person who's shift is ending is full tilt into a rant about the working conditions, the wieners and sauerkraut served every night for a week, his boss, and on and on. Sigmund listens long enough and then tells the young man his thoughts on what's wrong ...

"You don't know the difference between an inconvenience and a problem. If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire – that's a problem. Everything else is an inconvenience. Life is lumpy. And a lump in your oatmeal, a lump in your throat, and a lump in the breast are not the same lump. One should learn the difference."

It's a great reality check, don't you think?

So, what's your go to method(s) to relieve stress? And do you procrastinate actually doing those things that are your stress relievers? I do, yup! I know if I just go for that walk; if I just make that simple meal and salad; if I just read that inspirational message that comes to my inbox every day and listen to some beautiful music; or visit a friend; or talk to my hubby; or hang a load of laundry out on the clothesline (I so love to see clothes on the line!) I will feel much better! But there it is...some days....i just can't get out of my own way.

99% of the time scriptures like those we heard today, (Proverbs 3: 5-6; John 14: 12; Philippians 4: 13) and other favorites, will lift me out of that funk. I know that. So why doesn't it work 100% of the time? Or how do I reach that point of stress and worry in the first place? Human nature, I suppose. Aging plays a part too, I'm convinced of that.

The Bible tells us that worrying cannot add a single day to our lives, and yet every one of us gets on that worry train at times, right. Life is hard. It's a real struggle for many people a lot of the time.

Wow! What an uplifting message today Barb! Well it's getting there, trust me, I hope!

So, backing up a little, I'm feeling a little wonky, can't hear properly, and just want to curl up with my book. So, I spend a few hours – maybe a day or two - withdrawn, having my little pity party. Then guess what? We, mostly Gordie, made applesauce! The nice, red apples were given to us from our neighbour's tree and, as I said, mostly Gordie, decided it was time to do something with them. Well I have to say, it was the prettiest applesauce I've ever seen! Sounds

ridiculous, I know – but those jars of beautiful pinkish red applesauce just lifted my spirits! It tastes delicious – it's healthy - it's a quick and convenient snack. I'm not sure how to explain it, seeing it bottled and lined up on the counter - it just 'made my face happy'!



Then we gathered with friends for an evening of card playing and visiting, and that lifted my spirits as well.

The next morning...

I had a serious talk with my inner cranky pants self.

I tidied the house.

I made some biscuits to share with friends.

I received a lovely bouquet of flowers from a friend, just because she sensed I needed them. And I sat down to write this message...One of those commitments that had been creeping up on me. Just get started, I said. Just write what's on your heart.

So, I wrote, and then as I re-read what I'd written, keeping in mind the scripture verses and the Marianne Williamson quote, I began to realize that we, as a community of faith, have been dealing with some very big issues, commitments, decisions, in the past year or so. And it's been hard sometimes to be optimistic about our future, hasn't it? I think we've all felt it at one time or another. Let's just curl up and let whatever happen, happen. Let's just close for the summer and take a break from the stress of filling the Sunday morning slot that we call worship.

I know I've been there a few times. And then someone, lots of someones, had some ideas! "Let's get together and sing songs and tell stories"



“Let’s gather at the Spirituality circle, have a prayer and go for a walk, chatting with our neighbours as we go.”

“Let’s get a local band to play some gospel songs, and have an old-fashioned church picnic with ice cream sundaes”

“Let’s come to our house, sing, pray, and dance if you feel the spirit, and have cookies”

And call that worship – or not – just call it ‘getting together’, ‘staying connected’, ‘gathering’ in church or at a trail or at someone’s home!

Well when you think about it – that is worship! We connected, we prayed, we sang, we joined in fellowship – and God was there throughout it all!

I think what folks are craving is the connection, the conversations, the music, the coffee and cookies. I think we sometimes focus too much on the long range forecast, if you will, the big picture...as important as that is, all we can really do is be present in the now...listen for what God may be inviting each of us to do today, each day, each and every one of us.

Yes, we have some major decisions to make in the coming months. It won’t be easy, and folks are getting tired, and maybe a little cranky at times. But let’s not take lightly the commitment we’ve seen, and shown, during this summer of ‘closing our doors’, and how it lifted our collective spirits.

When we struggle with our tough decisions, our shrinking committees and congregations, let’s try to remember to do something fun, get together for social connection, stay in touch with each other, and with God. Lean not on our own understanding, but trust in God.

And remember that we were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us – not just in some of us, but every one of us.

Thanks be to God.



The church is wherever  
God's people are praising,  
singing God's goodness  
for joy on this day.  
The church is wherever  
disciples of Jesus  
remember his story  
and walk in his way.

The church is wherever  
God's people are helping,  
caring for neighbours  
in sickness and need.  
The church is wherever  
God's people are sharing  
the words of the Bible  
in gift and in deed.

