



# At Saint David's

Presbyterian Church of Saint David, Halifax, NS.....Fall 2014

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## We are Renovating!

As you will see, there have been some changes in the sanctuary! But there have been many other changes which you may never see!

As you will know we decided to make renovations to the sanctuary to provide some much needed facilities for the future when we no longer have our hall. There will also be an interim period after we demolish the present hall and before space is available in the new development. In order to get a permit to do this renovation work, we were required to bring many parts of the building up to Code.

Primary among these was the old wiring system, much of which dated from when the building was first electrified. All the old "nob and tube" wiring had to be removed and all new wiring installed. All the switches, outlets and electrical panels also had to be replaced. We also had to build a new electrical room in the basement and new underground electrical feed from Blowers Street.. Then it was the lighting fixtures, exit signs, and emergency lighting. There was also

new wiring and lighting required for the rooms we have created off the narthex and under the balcony.

Electrical work is the largest single expenditure in the project. Fortunately, our chandeliers had already been rewired. The fixtures under the balcony were restored, converted to fluorescent, and certified by ULC.

Hard as it is to believe, there has never been any plumbing in our 1869 building. In order to provide washroom, kitchenette, and janitor's facilities, we have installed new plumbing and a new sewer line out to Blowers Street. This was also a major expenditure, much of which will not be apparent once the large excavation on the north side is filled back in and paved.

As part of the work, we are building a new entrance door on the north side and new stairs to the basement. Also in the basement, we are building a new crypt. This has meant replacement of our oil tank – hence no heat for another week or two, but the new tank is on its way.



The rest of the work consists of four new rooms and new flooring, plus the necessary doors, frames, hardware, and other fixtures and fittings. Kitchenette cabinets are due this week, but completed plumbing is another week or two away.

You may well ask why all this is taking so long? First is that we got a late start. As you will recall it took much longer to be sure that the lease for the development was signed before we committed to this large project. Second, we took extra time to award each of the trade contracts for the work in order to get the best price. Some of the prices came in over budget, so we took the time to adjust other elements of the work to reduce them.

We have also had some unforeseen expenditures. Primary among these was the cost to run in a new telephone and data line. The old line to the hall could not be re-used, and will be lost when it is demolished. Fortunately we expect some savings in future, since the same line will service the new development.

The work progresses slowly, but the quality is very high, so with a little patience, we should be substantially complete by Thanksgiving.

**Mac Mackay**

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## **New Branches on an Old Tree**

I was reading the words of a long-time pastor this past week who reflected: *“Over 20 years ago when my religious life began in earnest, I thought I would change the world. As I finished the five years of graduate training to get this far, I thought, “Well, at least I can change the congregation I serve.” After putting a few churches behind me, I thought, “O.K., at least I can change a few lives.” Now that I have finished building a church which has taken a decade of my life, I say, perhaps with a bit too much cynicism, “At least I will change myself”.* It may seem a far cry from the new heavens and the new earth portrayed in Revelation 22, but it’s still a new beginning, with all the hopes and possibilities that every new beginning contain.

We are collectively at a wonderful new beginning here at the Presbyterian Church of Saint David. We’ve started a new fall season with worship, Sunday School, Session, and our various programs like David’s Place all beginning again but, in every case things have changed – new locations for some, new surroundings for others, new opportunities and new challenges for all. This can be daunting as we enter an uncertain future. As we face the dreams and the possibilities of a new beginning together, we need to encourage one another about the

direction we are taking, and the hopes and dreams we embody and the place we want to end up. You've all heard the Newfoundlander tell the city man when asking for directions that "you can't get there from here." Well, we can get there from here. We will get there from here. We have a future before us, a new beginning together. So it begins – today.

Theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said that beginnings have an "essential fragility" about them. They are recognized in the light of "what is going to be". We don't quite know what's going to be. We are carefully watching and listening to determine how this new way, this renovated place of worship, and this new start will affect our desire for the future and the plans God has for us. This 'essential fragility' suggests that there are no guarantees ... only the promise of God's presence.

T.S. Eliot said: *"What we call a beginning is often the end, and to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from."* May every adventure before us begin in hope.

*"I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for."* Jeremiah 29: 11

**Kenn Stright**

## David's Place

Where would we go? How would we continue to operate? Could we continue to provide food and fellowship to our guests? These were all serious questions which ran through the minds of our volunteers and our guests last spring as the time for the closure of the hall drew nearer. We now have the answers. We have a place, and yes, we can still run this ministry!

As the hall closed at the end of August and it was obvious that the servery and sanctuary were not yet ready to welcome us, we reached out to the community and found a new temporary home at Fort Massey United Church. Rev. Cleveland-Thompson, staff, and volunteers have all been most welcoming and helpful as we worked to be ready to open up there on September 5.

We handed out cards on August 29 telling our guests where we would be, and prayed that they would join us. With smiling faces they wandered in over the morning so happy to see us and be back together with friends. Many of our regulars were there and some new folks found us, and all enjoyed a meal of chicken pot pie with strawberry shortcake for dessert. The next week as word got around more of

our regulars appeared. As one of them said, "You are not abandoning me, so I am not abandoning you. I will come wherever you are."

Each week nine or 10 volunteers, from within Saint David's and without, join together to provide a meal, visit with our guests, offer health care and just make sure there is a safe and friendly place for our guests to gather. Feed Nova Scotia comes by and drops off food items, some of which we distribute to our guests that day and some we keep for future meals. The third Friday of the month is birthday cake day. The second Sunday of the month is Food Bank Sunday. We appreciate all the donations that the congregation brings to help with David's Place. Kenn has provided us with lettuce from their garden on several occasions. This fresh vegetable was much appreciated. We also have several folks baking for us each week, which is a wonderful addition to our sweet tray. Thanks so much to all who help out in this way. If you have been putting up preserves or jams, or knitting scarves or mitts and would like to donate them to our food bank table or Christmas project at David's Place, we would be happy to receive your donation. Due to space constraints, we no longer offer a clothing bank.

David's Place is supported by the Watson Fund and individual donations. As the return to Saint David's will bring new challenges with the food we will be able to offer, likely we will be looking to the congregation to help us out with cooking at home and bringing in hot food, such as we do for Sunday suppers, or we may be making arrangements with another institution to help us provide the meal. If that is the case, our expenses will increase dramatically. David's Place has always evolved over the years, and will continue to do so. No matter how we work out that aspect of things, we will continue to offer friendship and fellowship in a safe environment for all who come to us.

David's Place has been one of the main avenues for mission of Saint David's for more than 10 years. Please keep the work of the volunteers and the welfare of our guests in your prayers as we move through this time of transition.

***Valerie Macdonald***

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## **Memories of the Past**

In the early 1950's, a Saint David's team of dedicated ladies led by Agnes Leaman, approached then minister, Frank Lawson, with the idea of starting a mid-week Sunday school. Rev. Lawson was not enthusiastic about the idea; however, the ladies' determination

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swayed him in allowing it on a trial basis. I was attending near-by Acadian Elementary School in grade 1 when Agnes Leaman met with our principal, Carl Taylor, inviting the students to come to the Wednesday School.

The school's existence was a resounding success with at least 50 in attendance each week. The mission statement of the school was to expose us first to biblical instruction, while providing an opportunity to interact with fellow students, high-lighted with a movie and light lunch. Even the reluctant Mr. Lawson would drop by for an occasional visit and he soon learned the Wednesday School was a good thing.

Many relationships developed with the leaders of that school, and I am grateful to this day for the personal kindnesses of Allen and Agnes Leaman, who by their influence, enabled me to take piano and later organ lessons through community and private sponsors and to Norman and Morna Anderson, who introduced me to the world of art in cathedral architecture and metal crafts. There were many others at Saint David's who helped us kids from working-class backgrounds at Acadian School, who otherwise would never have had the exposure and opportunities that Saint David's offered.

These kind people saw potential in us we didn't realize and used their influence within the community to help us on our way. Coming from a staunch Anglican background at that time, and with my mother's approval, I allowed Saint David's to envelope me through the Wednesday School, and later joined the junior choir under Audrey Farnell, Professor Harold Hamer, and later Ross N. MacLean, who was my first organ teacher as well.

Is there no wonder then, that I joined the church, under instruction from Reverend Lawson, and Roberta Shaw. It was ironic for me, because when I received my first communion at Saint David's, it was from a common chalice, while kneeling before the communion table, which is the centuries old practise in the Anglican Church. I kept in touch with the Leamans and the Andersons until their lives ended. Incidentally, I was privileged to the play the organ at Agnes Leamans funeral.

I would be remiss not to mention St. David's faithful sexton at that time, Ernie West, who faithfully set up the hall, showed the movies and even found the time to play "batta ball" with us.

I will never forget them or Saint David's. I have since returned to the church of my roots, but Saint David's

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will always have a special place in my heart. The neighbourhood surrounding Saint David's has changed greatly over the years, which I am sure, presents its own challenges.

I sincerely wish you all well in your place as a city-centred church.

*Cheers and God Bless,*

**Roy Currie**

PS: I am still a close friend of Betty (Hatfield) MacAulay, who also attended the Wednesday School and eventually served on the Kirk of Session.

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## **Women's Interchurch Council**

Three years ago I took on the role of Saint David's representative for the Halifax chapter of the Women's Interchurch Council of Canada. The other Metro Presbyterian churches all had representatives but Saint David's had not had one for several years. The group meets four times a year and consists of several committees which liaison with organizations such as the Elizabeth Fry Society, Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA), Phoenix House - programmes similar to those supported by the former Saint David's Auxiliary. It is under the WICC that Saint David's supports the 'Food for Phoenix Program' in the spring.

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Two major programmes which the WICC undertakes each year are the annual Fall Rally which includes the Fellowship of the Least Coin and the World Day of Prayer in March.

This year's Fellowship of the Least Coin takes place on October 20 at 7 p.m., at the Church of the Holy Spirit (1 Regency Drive, Dartmouth). The theme is 'Caring for Others' and the guest speakers are Heather McKenzie, Community and Provincial Outreach Support Coordinator for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia and Kate Matheson, Women's Service Coordinator for Coverdale Courtwork Society in Halifax. Refreshments will be served and everyone is invited.

The programme for the World Day of Prayer which takes place in March is prepared by women of a different country each year. This service is observed by more than 170 countries when Christians around the world worship "together" guided by the same programme. Again, the World Day of Prayer service is open to everyone.

Throughout the year I will have notices in the Sunday bulletin or newsletter about upcoming activities of the HRM WICC.

If anyone wishes to know more about the WICC and its programmes, please

talk with me or contact me at  
[annesommerville@me.com](mailto:annesommerville@me.com).

## **Anne Sommerville**

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### **Transitions**

#### *Deaths*

Sheila Bashow

Carl Doty

Betty Fullerton

Helen Geddes

Scottie Marshall

Janet Irving Ozon

Bayne Shaw

George Shaw

*"Blessed are they who die in the Lord"*

#### **Congratulations to:**

- Alissa Taper and three of her fellow students at The Convent of the Sacred Heart were awarded a \$5000 grant from the Toskan Casale Foundation Youth and Philanthropy Initiative for their "hard work and dedication" to the Phoenix Youth Program. The girls were one of several groups of students from the Sacred Heart who volunteered with various charities. The girls presented the money to the Phoenix Youth Program.
- Jamie Campbell, on his elevation to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.
- Brian Macdonald on his re-election to the New Brunswick House of Assembly. (Brian has placed his name in contention to become the interim leader of the PC Party in N.B. on the Hon. David Alward's resignation as leader.)

### **Where Are They Now?**

*An update on some of our youth*

Saint David's has been blessed with wonderful young people, many of whom have left the province to study or work. We are happy to share a bit of information about some of them.

**Kathryn Blaikie** is still at Queens University, now in her third year. *She recently shared the following with John Wamboldt: "I am currently in a coffee shop that reminded me of Saint David's, it has a peculiar charm. Queen's continues to be an adventure. I have started some work in Gender Studies that I am truly VERY passionate about. I have been working with Sexual Health Centers and Women's Shelters and I hope to continue that work in Halifax this summer (tentatively). That's the goal."* Kathryn's sister **Laura** is in Calgary where she and her husband welcomed a new daughter last winter.

**Gordon Brown** works for Sport Nova Scotia as a sport co-ordinator and **Graham** is employed at Mount Saint Vincent University as an HR assistant.

**Margaret Campbell** is at Acadia, starting her fourth year of a B.Sc. in Biology, while **Katie** is in her first year of a B.A. in Political Science.

**Rob Fyfe** is taking the Health Information Management course at NSCC. His brother **Stephen** is working full time at Dalplex, partly with the

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lacrosse and hockey teams. He was a coach with the NS lacrosse team and went to the nationals in Edmonton with them

**Cara Lappin** just started a B.Sc. in Psychology program at Western, and **Bridget** has returned to England to complete her Masters in Dance Performance at the London Contemporary Dance School. **Andrew** continues to work on getting into Medical School.

**Sarah Macdonald** has moved to Grande Prairie, AB to teach elementary school and do some tutoring. **Neil** continues his doctoral studies in Chemistry at McGill.

**Caitlyn MacKeigan** has moved to Ottawa to study Interior Design at Algonquin College. Her brother **Patrick** is the assistant chief steward at the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge.

**Simon McCormick** has started his first year law at Dalhousie and **Emily** is in her first year of a combined Health Administration and Law Program at Dal.

**Amy Minnikin** has joined the Campbells at Acadia, where she is in the first year of a B.Sc. in Biology program. She worked as a receptionist at Thumpers this summer.

**Erin and Ian Palmeter** are both at Queens—Ian in third year Engineering and Erin in first year Commerce. Ian spent the summer as a life guard and was part of a team that saved a life at the beach.

**Lesley Roberts** is an R2 in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Although she is based in Halifax, she is currently on a three-month rotation in Saint John, NB

**Amanda Saoud** is in her fourth year of a BSc in Biology at Dal. She is thinking about Medical School.

**Elizabeth Shaw** is a program consultant at the Oakcliff Sailing Center in Oyster Bay, NY, while her brother **Neil** is the assistant to Shawn Piller, one of the producers of the hit series *Haven*, shot here in Nova Scotia.

**John Sommerville** is working at Dal on a long-term national survey on health and aging. **Will** is currently living in Dublin, Ireland.

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**The congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Saint David's is called to meet immediately following the morning service on October 5 to consider approval of the financial matters relating to the renovation of the Sanctuary space and related projects. This meeting should be very brief and yet is very important.**

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