

At Saint David's

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AN INFORMED FAITH

The fall Bible study has been exploring 'An Informed Faith'. The topic grew out of questions raised by the Canadian Council of Churches to be addressed by candidates during the recent federal election. At least two of the local candidates meetings explored such questions and received thoughtful answers from all participants of all parties.

But all this begs the question, "What do my religious beliefs have to do with my political views?" And that question is at the heart of the conversations we've been having on Thursday evenings. An informed faith is simply one that looks to the basic tenets of our Christian faith and seeks to apply them to the circumstances and situations that face us in our daily life – including our political outlook.

Unlike some traditions of the Christian Church, the Reformed (or

Presbyterian) approach to informed decision-making is that individuals, under the guidance of the Spirit speaking through the scriptures, are capable of making such decisions in their public and private life. The election resource offered by the Canadian Council of Churches stated: "For people of faith, religious convictions are not purely a private matter. Values, justice principles, and moral commitments inform all our actions. They guide us when we speak to politicians and when we vote on Election Day. Similarly, candidates representing political parties who arrive on our doorsteps or at our community centres speak from their principles and convictions when they ask for our votes."

Religious convictions are part of an informed faith, whether in the economic sphere (what do I do with

my money?); the electoral sphere (how do I determine who to vote for?); the health sphere (why do I eat certain things?); the public sphere (where do I choose to serve my community with my time and effort?). or any other sphere of your life. An example of this from the resource kit is in the area of welcoming the stranger – our response to the refugee crisis presently being experienced. "As Christians, we are urged to see the face of God reflected in every human being we encounter, regardless of nationality, creed, social status, or any other characteristics. In Romans 12:13, God calls us to "extend hospitality to strangers." Based on this we are invited to make a personal response to this unfolding situation.

Religious convictions are often motivators for mission and ministry

Merry
Christmas



Happy New
Year

An Informed Faith Cont'd

(action) at the local, national, or international level. Ask our volunteers at David's Place, for Sunday Suppers, Out of the Cold, and other volunteer activities. The CCC resource concludes with: "We encourage you to participate fully in this significant event, drawing on the deep wells of your faith, values and convictions to advance care for land, air and waters, affirm the life of all people, and work for justice and peace."

Kenn Stright

Presbyterians Sharing News

Our 2015 target for Presbyterians Sharing is \$22,000. As of the end of Nov., \$20,441 has been received, with \$1,559 to go.

We can probably make the target!

Property Redevelopment Update

We have very good news about our long awaited property development. The project has cleared two major hurdles in its application to the Halifax Regional Municipality. We received positive reports from the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Design Review Committee. The almost final hurdle is then clearly in sight – the presentation to Council on December 8.

Why has it taken so long when other projects seem to get going more quickly? The simple answer is that this is a unique project in one of the most complex regulatory environments imaginable. First we had to have the Provincial Heritage designation modified to remove the Hall building from the designation. This process was finalized at the provincial cabinet level. The municipality's heritage designation also had to be modified and this required the approval of the Heritage Advisory Committee.

The project also required re-zoning and this also had to go to HRM Council. On top of that we required some small modifications to planning

guidelines and other minor issues.

The Design Review Committee had to rule on all these, in addition to the building concept and detailed design, such as the selection of exterior materials.

Now that we have all these positive reports in hand, Council will need to approve the project in its entirety before we can apply for a building permit.

Once the project clears Council we will apply immediately for a demolition permit to allow us to proceed with the relocation of the Methodist Burying Ground.

That process is expected to take up to three months and will be conducted by a team of archaeologists. Therefore, on roughly March 1, we will be able to demolish the Hall and begin excavation for the new building.

All that remains to clear the project will be the subdivision of the property, but that is an administrative matter and should be

straightforward. I will be reporting in more detail on this in the future.

Mac Mackay
Maintenance Convenor

Mini-financial statement, September

Offerings rec'd	\$7,495
<u>Other receipts</u>	<u>\$6,080</u>
Total receipts	\$13,575
Total expenses	\$16,893

Mini-financial statement, October

Offerings received	\$8,735
<u>Other receipts</u>	<u>\$4,723</u>
Total receipts	\$13,459
Total expenses	\$16,400

For many years Saint David's has had insufficient income in the summer and early fall. Donations rise in Nov./Dec. by as much as \$20,000 (including donations from the Special Appeal). **Please help make this happen again.**

Receipts for IN KIND DONATIONS should be submitted to either Mac Fyfe or Davida Mackay by January 15, 2016. Receipts should be dated between Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 2015.

Mac Fyfe

The Halifax Disaster Memorial Services

New Year's Day 1918

By common consent of the churches, memorial services for the dead of the Halifax disaster (6 December 1917) were all held on Tuesday, 1 January 1918. The Presbyterian service took place at Fort Massey, the preacher being the Rev. Captain Robert Johnston, minister of Park Street (which merged with St John's in 1925). The Methodist service was held at Grafton Street, which was considered the cathedral among Halifax Methodist churches.

According to the account in Halifax's *Evening Mail*,

"The service for the Methodists of the city was held in the Grafton Street Methodist Church and was a deeply impressive one. On the platform were Rev. A. S. Rogers [minister of the church], who presided, Rev. A. C. Borden of Kentville, president of the Nova Scotia conference, who preached the sermon. * Mr Borden took as his text the words: "We count them happy that endure" [James 5:11]. Finally he set forth the

high truth of the words of the apostle – the thing which makes the disciple of Christ count them happy that endure, and stated that he came to Halifax as the representative of world-wide Methodism to bear his message of deepest sympathy and of a sense of fellowship in a time of deepest sorrow. He also came as a former pastor of the Charles Street church [J. Wesley Smith Memorial], which has suffered so grievously, and as one who knew the north end well. Earnestly and eloquently he urged that divine providence is the only satisfying interpretation of the mysteries of life and directed thought to Him whose compassion fails not."

Three days later the same newspaper ran an item entitled "Methodist Church Notes: The Explosion's Havoc": "The enumeration of those killed by the recent explosion who were members of the various Methodist congregations now stands as follows:

men, 28; women, 30; children, 29. Of these 11 men, 24 women and 22 children belonged to Kaye Street congregation; 12 men, three women and two children belonged to Charles Street; two men, two women and one child were of Dartmouth [Grace church]; one man, one woman and four children belonged to Brunswick Street; one man was killed from each of Robie and Oxford churches. Three persons who sang in Grafton Street choir but belonged to other congregations were killed. The buildings are nearly all in bad shape. Kaye Street church is in ashes. ..." (Among the casualties were the wife and son of Kaye Street's minister, the Reverend William J. W. Swetnam.)

*The Reverend Dr Arthur Cummings Borden (1858-1940) was a retired foreign missionary who had served in Japan.

Barry Cahill is writing a history of the Halifax Relief Commission.

Report from the Trustees of the Helen M. Watson Fund

Twice each year the Trustees of the Helen M. Watson Fund accept applications to support Missionary Work in Nova Scotia. This October the Trustees received four submissions and made our recommendation to Session on Nov. 10.

All of the applications were from organizations that the Watson Fund has been supporting for many years, and Session agreed to our recommendations as follows:

Saint David's Mission and Outreach Committee to support David's Place \$1,200

Korean Presbyterian Church of N.S. outreach program \$5,000

Coverdale Courtwork Society – trauma program \$5,000

Phoenix Youth Program – support for annual budget \$5,000

Trustees of the Helen M. Watson Fund, Mac Fyfe, Mac Mackay, Johannah Roberts

Daily Inspiration

"People who get used to (and insist on) only one way of worship should visit a dozen other churches!" So writes Joel Jongkind, a Presbyterian lay minister from Meaford, Ontario, and a regular contributor to the PresbyCan *Daily Devotional*. He draws his spiritual insights from a lifetime of everyday experiences, so they resonate with his readers who are going through difficult times with the same kinds of emotions. As a boy, Joel lived through the rigors of World War II in the Netherlands in a house without electricity during the last year. With his family, he emigrated to Canada after the war. He served as the project accountant for a pipeline construction company, and he and his family have moved to the United States, the Netherlands, Austria, England, and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman. Attending church services in so many different countries and denominations has

given Joel a unique perspective on fixed orders of service or spontaneity, communion served kneeling at an altar rail or seated at tables at the front, pipe organs and big choirs or keyboard, guitars, and drums. There is just no one standard way of worshipping!

Joel is just one of over 400 different writers who have contributed to the PresbyCan *Daily Devotional* since its inception in 1996. Each one has drawn inspiration from an everyday experience that has a spiritual application relevant to the lives of the readers, now numbering about 6,000. They receive their *Daily Devotional* by e-mail, or read it on Facebook or Twitter, or on the www.presbycan.ca website. It is fully supported by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, so there is no cost for subscribing, which can be done on the website.

There are responses from readers every day, which are posted on the website, like these:

"We are always blessed each morning when we read the *Daily Devotional*."

"Your devotional and timing were perfect. I've been procrastinating about getting back on track."

"I appreciate all the writers who inspire me and make me think."

"My day does not feel like it started right without my *Daily Devotional*."

"I have seen God work miracles through the power of the intercessory prayers of the prayer warriors associated with the PrayerLine."

"Words cannot begin to thank all the wonderful Christians around the world who make it possible to share the good news with people like myself."

*All through the month of December, the *Daily* features devotionals for the Advent and Christmas season. Because it's such a special time of year, it's one of the best times to be introduced to the *Daily*.

**Contributed by
Rev. Robin Ross,
Mission BC**

Musical Note

We welcomed Lisa Webb to the soprano section of our choir a few months ago. She is a godsend. She can reach those high notes!

Lisa is from Lower Sackville and is an elementary school music teacher and choral conductor. She also sings with the Halifax Camerata Choir, so you can see she is well qualified.

She used to have a small business making cakes. Maybe we could encourage her to start that again. Sounds good to me.

Lisa has four children ranging in age from six-12 years. They are all musical and enjoy singing and playing piano. That begs the question--How does she have time for anything else?!

More to follow on our new alto in the next newsletter.

Phyllis Morrison

Christmas Families Update

Saint David's is once again coordinating Christmas for 10 families this year. We always like to speak with the families to understand their needs before we reach out to Saint David's and our broader Christmas family community to make sure that we are doing our best to not just give them a hand out but also a hand up. I'm pleased to let you know that the mom to whom we supplied all the plumbing tools last year is on track to graduate in May and is one step closer to realizing her dream of becoming a sprinkler system inspector. That was \$750 well invested not only in her education but in getting her two small children off to a better start in life.

We hope to let you know next Sunday the specific requirements for each family and we'll have the angels set up at the back of the church. In the meantime we do know that we will need...

10 turkeys;

10 bags of potatoes;

10 bags of carrots;

10 boxes of stuffing

10 cans of cranberry jelly; etc.

groceries in general.

10 gift cards for groceries

Movies

In the meantime keep the following information in mind.

Please email your questions, concerns or comments to SaintDavidChristmas@minnikin.ca

We are tentatively planning to wrap and deliver on Saturday, December 19, 2015 from 10 until 1.

We have only two of the girls home for Christmas this year so we'll need extra hands for wrapping and delivery.

Thank you.

Paula Minnikin

Advent & Christmas Calendar



December 6

11 am: Advent 2 - Candle of Peace. Marking Halifax Explosion, Montreal Massacre, & Pearl Harbour

December 13

11 am: Advent 3 - Candle of Joy, Food Bank Sunday, White Gift Sunday & Communion

December 20

10:30: Carol Sing

11 am: Advent 4 - Candle of Love

4 pm: Choir Lessons & Carols Service

December 21

7 pm: Joint Longest Night Service hosted by First Baptist

December 24

4 pm: Family Service

7 pm: Candlelight Service

December 27

9 am: Communion

9:45 am: Potluck breakfast

11 am: Traditional service

January 10

11 am: Annual Covenanting Service

Transitions

Deaths

Gordon Brown, Jr.
Isabelle Mann
Mabel Pasquet
David Read
Blessed are they who die in the Lord

Congratulations to:

Bridget Lappin on her graduation from the University of Kent with an MA in dance..

Kenn and Jeanne Stright on the birth of their third grandchild, Dawson James Campbell, on November 16. He weighed in at 8 lbs 8 oz and is 21.75 inches!

Elizabeth Shaw, Kathy Large's daughter, on receiving the Hal Davies Offshore Sailor of the Year from Sail Nova Scotia.

Welcome to Gwen Lawson who has transferred her membership from Calvin.

Coffee Hosts Needed



There are Sundays available – see Val to sign up

A Great Game for Everyone!

Bible Puzzle - There are 30 Books of the Bible in the Following Paragraph. Can You Find Them? SOLUTION

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends...One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his johnboat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo, Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus, there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. Submitted by Anne Sommerville

DON'T MISS IT



SAINT DAVID'S CHOIR & FRIENDS

Annual Carol Service
Sunday, December 20 at 4 P.M.