



Men's Soup Contest -
March 2, 2014

At Saint David's

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

Saint David's Friday Drop In Opens

On February 7, St. David's Mission and Outreach Committee began a Friday morning drop-in and 34 guests enjoyed homemade soups, egg sandwiches, and homemade sweets. It was wonderful to see so many of our friends back at St D's. The community of fellowship and caring begun under David's Place will continue, as will the provision of nutritious food.

Friends, neighbours, and volunteers from David's Place lent a hand.

The new development on our property will mean changes for our church. But we can continue to provide a caring, nurturing place for our guests, as we explore new opportunities to show that we love our neighbour.

We are providing a warm meal and something sweet, as well as a food bank, clothing, and health care.

Mission is an essential part of our Presbyterian denomination, and this service to our neighbours is as important to us as it is to them. We will look for new ways to meet the many needs of those who visit us on Friday mornings.

The Mission and Outreach Committee will continue to consider how to make our drop in work well for our guests. We are also asking for your help and God's through this time of change.

If you would like to support this service on Friday mornings in some way, please contact Nicole Watkins Campbell, at 422-5878, or Shelley MacDonald Parsons, at 876-0906.

Nicole Watkins Campbell

Editor's Note

Something that appeared on my Facebook page seems to sum up this newsletter. "When Plan A fails, there are 25 more letters in the alphabet." The plan was to delay the usual Christmas newsletter until January to celebrate the 10th anniversary/closing of David's Place.

Then a few things kicked in and the plans changed again. David's Place closed down for a week and then regrouped as the Friday Drop In, as you read in Nicole's piece on the front page.

So, this edition will be a bit of a hybrid – a combination of our regular 'features' plus a tribute to the work of David's Place over the past 10 years. Thanks to Valerie Macdonald, Phyllis Morrison, Kenn Stright, and the David's Place family of volunteers for contributing their words and pictures.

Carol Dobson

Gentlemen...

Fire up Your Soup Cauldrons...
The Silver Ladle is up for Grabs



Annual Meeting and Soup Contest
Sunday, March 2nd following the service

*The rest of the congregation is invited to
bring sandwiches & sweets*

Sunday Suppers Update

During 2013, members of Saint David's and couple of other friends prepared 48 very large casseroles and helped to serve them at Sunday suppers at Saint Andrews Church. Our church successfully meets the need for 16 casseroles three times a year, and has done so for many years now. Our next opportunity to serve people through this mission, of which we have been a reliable part for 27 years, is May 4.

Nicole Watkins Campbell

Transitions

Deaths

Chris Miller

Florence Dunlop

James Ellis Seary

Dr. Gwen Service

Blessed are they who die in the Lord

Baptism

Annabelle Olive Chisholm (Mary & Marc Chisholm)

Suffer the little children to come unto me

Congratulations to Ken and Gloria Mader. Their 60th wedding anniversary was celebrated in the hall on Dec. 30

Easter is Coming!

Maundy Thursday Service

7 PM @ Saint David's, April 17

South End Churches Joint Good Friday Service

10:30 @ Saint David's, April 18

Easter Sunday, April 20

Sunrise Service at Point Pleasant Park @ 6:00 A.M.

Early service @ 9:00 A.M. followed by Easter Breakfast

Holy Communion @ 11:00 A.M.

Choir Updates 2013-2014

This year we welcomed three new choir members, all in the Alto section, although Kate is very versatile and often sings soprano when we need her.

Kate Kempster-Harper

Kate is a Halifax native. She and her partner, Charles Lavery, are parents of three year old Olivia and 10-month old Owen. You often see Olivia joining the choir until the children's story.

Kate is a stay-at-home mom and is also a private voice teacher and Music Pups instructor at Leading Note Studio.

She has been in many choirs over the years including the Symphony Nova Scotia Chorus and Camerata Xara.

Kate's all round musical talent includes playing piano, flute and guitar as well as other instruments for fun.

And it's not surprising that she loves musical theatre.

In her "free" time she loves to cook and bake—calorie free stuff only.

Kaitlin Wilson

Our second alto is from Fletcher's Lake N.S., and is the oldest of three girls. She is a music teacher at Burton Ettinger Elementary School.

She also works part time at the Gap. I guess that's how Tristan knows her and convinced her to join our choir. Besides having a great alto voice, she plays piano, clarinet, and the saxophone.

Kaitlin relaxes by watching movies/TV and hanging out with friends.

Our third alto is the elusive Caleigh Davis – information to come at a later date.

Phyllis Morrison

Presbyterian Record

Saint David's has paid the 2014 bill for the Record, \$2,269 for 86 subscriptions. If you have already paid St. David's for your 2014 subscription, thank you.

If you have not paid, please pay Saint David's \$22.95 plus HST (\$26.39 total) in one of these ways:-

1. If you have collection envelopes, put your payment in the Presbyterian Record envelope and put this in the collection plate.
2. If you do not have the official envelope, put your payment in ANY envelope. Mark it as your Presbyterian Record payment with the amount and your envelope number (or your name) and place the envelope in the collection plate.

If you are paying in cash, consider increasing the amount to \$26.50 or \$27.00 to minimize the number of coins to be counted.

If you are paying by cheque, make it out to "ST. DAVID'S CHURCH".

3. If you are away, you can mail your payment to St. David's at:

1537 Brunswick Street
Halifax, N S B3J 2G1

4. If you use PAR, you can pay \$2.20 per month. Arrange this with the Finance Convenor.

Thank you,

The Finance Committee

A Brief History

During the early years of the new millennium, Saint David's held special services honouring the health professions, and particularly the Victorian Order of Nurses—the VON. Out of this relationship came the idea for a joint venture in the downtown. Discussions in 2003 led to the plan to open a Wellness Clinic one day a week to reach out to the homeless and “at risk” people in the neighbourhood. The VON would provide the nurses and Saint David's the volunteers and the space. Thus, on January 16, 2004 a group of eight volunteers and VON nurse, Mary Anne, eagerly awaited our first guest. No one showed up. The following week we rejoiced when one gentleman appeared. He got lots of attention!

Slowly the word got around—not the least due to the work of Melvin Calkin and Mary Anne who spent part of each Friday morning roaming up and down Spring Garden Road telling folks about the clinic, the food being offered, and handing out bottles of water or sunscreen. We had little business cards printed so we could pass them to folks we met.

Over the next year the average attendance rose to 20 guests per week and now we often see 40-50 friends on a Friday, with many more enjoying our big dinners in December or January. We always strove to ensure the people

who came were accepted, respected, and felt comfortable in their surroundings.

We offered a snack, chat, and friendship. We started to offer shoes, toiletries and clothing thanks to generous donations, particularly from the VON. Over time our selection in the “clothing” bank included linens, sleeping bags, and household goods. As it still is today, some folks would come and stay all morning, while others would just pop in for a bite, perhaps a word or two, and then head back out.



When David's Place first opened, we offered coffee, toast, and sweets that we baked right there to give the hall a homey atmosphere. By late 2004, we had added soup made by the volunteers and rolls, along with the sweet things, and the monthly birthday cake.

We had a summer BBQ and a Christmas dinner, which were both very popular. Having started out with funds from the VON and Councillor Dawn Sloane, in 2004 we also made an application to the Watson Fund. David's Place certainly met the criteria. Over the next year,

we invested in a freezer and became a member of Feed Nova Scotia, both of which increased the variety of food we could offer to our guests. Our group of volunteers grew to 14! Some of them came to us from other churches and some from the VON. Our guests continued to tell us how unique David's Place was and how comfortable they felt coming each week. We were friends!



As we chatted with our guests we came to realize how desperate some of their situations truly were, and often merely as a result of some bad luck or government red tape. The nurses and our ministers advocated on behalf of our guests, offered them counselling, and in some cases accompanied them to or visited them in the hospital. The nurses provided foot care, wound care, medication management, and basic medical assessments such as blood pressure checks. The weekly drop-offs from FeedNS provided a much-needed boost to the larders, which in time Saint David's began to supplement with monthly Food Bank Sundays. More than anything we came to realize how much the respect and friendship meant to those whose lives were often broken and painful. We are called to "do justice, love kindness and to

walk humbly with (our) God" (Micah 6:8). A warm welcome, a hug, a handshake, and being called by name meant so much to our guests and has come to mean just as much to us when they are returned. It has been a two-way street.

Our volunteer base continued to grow and we saw some of the young people from Saint David's, the community, and as far away as Truro become involved either on a regular basis or with some of our special events. Some of them continue to drop in when they are able. At times we have had families help out with special events—or members of some of the businesses—such as ScotiaBank and Assante Wealth Management, which have supported David's Place at various times. By a rough count, at least 40 individuals have volunteered on a regular basis on their own initiative.

Over the years the number of VON nurses attending each week increased from one to two and, in some instances, three when a new staff person or a nursing student came along. The contributions from the VON have been incredible—in staffing, in clothing and other material donations, and in financial support. It has been a true partnership.

The year 2008 brought the death of two of our regular guests: Terry and Kelly. There have been others over the years: Richard, Jim, Rick, and Peter come to mind. They were unique individuals and added much to the atmosphere of David's Place.

In our 10 years of operation, David's Place never missed a week, including Good Fridays. In 2009, when Christmas and New Year's fell on

Friday, we had 25 volunteers and 40 guests come out to enjoy brunch together. We opted not to hold our big dinner until January and that has been the practice ever since.



We have been an integral part of our downtown neighbourhood, although our guests have come from as far away as Dartmouth, Spryfield, and even Bedford. We have been on tv –at least three times- written up in the *Presbyterian Record*, reported on in the *Chronicle Herald*, featured in the VON newsletter, been the subject of a graduating thesis, and even lauded in *Frank*! We have had 10 wonderful years of ministry in downtown Halifax. That is surely something to celebrate!



On an Open Road

I've happened to have seen my
place
Where living has great
measures of grace

I found a friend, who gives life,
Proof shall come when the time
is right,

Once all believe and carry their
cross,
No way will such show any loss,

Having no regrets for what
hasn't been,
It's God's love in me defeating
sin,

Delving in might, showing no
fight,
I'll attain my goal through
blessed insight.

Do you see what I see?

David MacEachern
David's Place's poet in residence

David's Place: A Snapshot

Community. Sharing. Laughs. Tears. Hugs. Names. Food. Birthdays. Good Times. Bad Times. Stories. Life .

Those are the words that come to mind when I think of David's Place.

David's Place is Community, and that means most of all that we care for each other. Some families have a tradition of Sunday dinners together. Our Community has Friday lunch together. The Community expands and contracts as new guests come—and each week there is usually someone new—but there is a core group of both volunteers and guests who care very deeply for one another and for each new person who comes through our doors. It is a very enriching experience to be there each Friday. Yes, we all take the occasional week or longer off (except maybe for Hilarie—she's incredible!), but otherwise we wouldn't think of being anywhere else on a Friday morning. We have been there for each other in the good times (weddings, graduations, successful job hunts) and the not so good times (illness, fires, deaths, job loss, brushes with the law).

We have celebrated together, laughed together, eaten together, and cried together. In all cases we have come through it together. That is how a Community supports each member.

Memories of David's Place



Volunteer Phyllis Morrison contacted several people who were involved with David's Place for its 10th anniversary. Here are the messages she received.

Betty MacDonald VON Volunteer

David's Place has been for me a very rewarding experience for the past 10 years. I've enjoyed meeting all the great and dedicated volunteers and the wonderful guests we have been happy to meet and get to know as we sit and share coffee.

Listening to them chat with me has helped me to realize how important David's Place is to them and how much they will miss it. I know I will miss it too.

Tommy, VON Volunteer

With reference to volunteering at David's Place, I would like to thank Margaret Craig, along with the VON, for having me as a member of their team for the past few years. As I enjoy assisting in the "kitchen capacity" and like to give back for my own blessings, it is very satisfying to work with a team of volunteers

who so willingly give of their time and efforts to help out and offer a little ray of hope for those less fortunate in order to provide meals and fellowship for the patrons.

Have a nice day.

Vic – a VON Volunteer

My dear friends:

It was out of God's glory that David's Place was given to each of the guests and the volunteers. The guests who came on Friday had their personal reasons for being there as did the volunteers. However, I believe the main underlying reason of everyone involved (either a guest or volunteer) was the desire to have a closer relationship with Jesus.

My short tenure with David's Place lasted a little over a year, one-tenth of the time it was open. During that time, I have estimated approximately 2,000 meals were served, again, one-tenth of the total. The most impressive thing that happened, or did not happen was that David's Place was never referred to as a "soup kitchen." It was and is much more than that. To God goes the glory.

Jesus' ministry on earth lasted three short years and David's Place has gone on for 10. During his ministry, Jesus fed the multitudes, healed the sick, and clothed the naked. Similarly, David's Place provided countless meals, bags of groceries, provided healthcare, and clothing, and like Jesus' ministry, David's Place did so without proselytizing. It was through Jesus' actions that we see his love, and it has been

through the actions of the guest and volunteers that we began to see Jesus' love in each other.

At the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, he prepared one last meal, the Last Supper, at which all of the Disciples were gathered together for one last time as a group. Jesus told the Disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith in me, also." (John Ch. 14:1) As the final meals are being planned and served at David's Place, I pray that no heart is troubled and all have the faith to continue doing God's work. After the Last Supper, Jesus endured much sorrow, pain, and suffering for each one of us, but then came, his glorious resurrection and ascension into Heaven. As the ministry at David's Place comes to a close, I am sure there will be sorrow and pain. Only God knows the plans he has for each one of us, but we can rest assured His plans will be glorious.

I regret I will not be able to be there on January 24. However, it is with great joy that I will remember my time as a volunteer and the relationships and new friends I made. There has not been a Friday that has gone by, since I moved, that I have not reflected on and prayed for David's Place.

May the peace and love of our Lord and Saviour be with each and every one of you.

God Bless.

Peggy McCalla – Saint David's Volunteer

Ten years ago I was in the administrative position at Saint David's and greeted many of the folks at the door on a regular, if not daily,

basis before David's Place began. Credit goes to Laurence DeWolfe and Donna Hanczaryk who addressed a need in Halifax. I proposed the name David's Place to downplay the religious aspect but to associate it with a very caring congregation and location that suited our purpose. I always tried to emphasize the inclusive and non judgmental opportunity. There were few problems that needed to be overcome over the decade.

Over the years there was both laughter and tears when everyone came together both in the kitchen and in the Hall. Be it a belt that was requested and came several inches too short or soup concoctions that surprised even the chef! I recall making many bunches of bananas into both loaves and muffins to celebrate my husband's 64th Birthday at David's Place. He helped when he could but on that day it was a command appearance.

To all the visitors remember the volunteers received as much in return as they were able to give or to share. This included the listening ear as well as the actual food, especially after Feed Nova Scotia's support.

So thank you all.

Dorothy Jackson, Saint David's Volunteer

When we began David's Place, there were six or seven of us that met that first Friday, waiting for street people to drop in. The coffee was ready and we waited and waited. Then it dawned on us that we had not told the street people that we were there. Mary Anne, the first VON worker, said that we had better go out and tell them. So we did.

One man that I spoke to said "You mean to talk about Jesus and all?" I was nonplussed but managed to say that we were there for the hospitality and a cup of coffee or tea. Then we saw Jim sitting on the library wall with his false leg beside him. We gathered him in and Jim was our first guest and a long time one as well.

Phyllis Morrison, Saint David's Volunteer

When I thought about volunteering at David's Place I was a bit apprehensive. I had never done any mission work outside of cooking for Out of the Cold or the Sunday Suppers. I wasn't sure what to expect and, like many, I had a preconceived idea of what type of person I might encounter--tough, pugilistic, foul mouthed, unclean, on drugs etc. Boy was I proved wrong!! There has been little to no trouble any days I have attended.

The guests who come to us each week are some of the nicest people you'd want to meet. Many are very thankful and come to express their thanks at the kitchen door each week as they leave. Many are well read and talented in writing, violin, drawing, etc. They just enjoy being in a place where they are not judged and can relax as long as we are open.

We call them by name and get to know their likes and dislikes. Some days they just like having a meal and a chat. We have been so fortunate to have a partnership with the VON and they counsel our guests as need be.

One of my regrets is that more members of the church haven't come to experience David's Place, and learn, as I did, about the unemployed, the underemployed, and the

people struggling for food and lodging. There for the grace of God go you and I.



Carolyn MacDonald, Saint David's Volunteer

The work of David's Place was what initially attracted me to Saint David's Church itself. Considering its location, this effort to be of service to, and to connect with, the people who live in the downtown area seemed especially appropriate.

That David's Place was attempting to offer a practical program that included nursing consultant services via VON, a warm meal, a clothing depot, and weekly food bank assistance was ideal. The volunteers also offered listening ears and a personal interest in the people who regularly came on Friday mornings.

The special Christmas celebration, where gifts could be chosen from the supply room and wrapped to take home as presents for family/friends, and the turkey dinner held early in the New Year were highlights for the visitors and also for volunteers themselves.

We found ourselves forming bonds with the folk whose life concerns became part of our own areas of prayer and care. The time spent with many of the volunteers was also a time for making friends, and caring for one another in our own life journeys. The presence of the minister, the Rev. Kenn Stright, was a very positive connection for us and the guests, who found him so approachable and lots of fun!

That the work of David's Place continued for 10 years, and served a purpose in forming a sense of community for so many guests, is cause for rejoicing. Marg Craig, whose vision and energy as organiser and director over the years deserves our admiration and gratitude.

Congratulations to the David's Place crew on a job well done with love and devotion! Other groups have more recently "picked up the torch" in this area, offering daily meals, clothing, and shelter assistance. But, David's Place was there when there were not many others...and was a pathfinder when the local churches began exploring this kind of service. BRAVO!

God's blessing to all as this chapter closes and another opens!



JUST ANOTHER DAY...

at David's Place

The first call of the morning was from the hospital. A regular guest at David's Place- a downtown drop-in/soup kitchen/food bank/clothing store/VON clinic/ counselling centre – was in the hospital and wanted to connect with someone/anyone who would listen. As the call progressed from her health, we ended up in a deep conversation about her husband who had just died and she wanted to know how to have a memorial service for him.

In the last three years I have found a community of people open to my presence in their lives and accepting of my profession (minister) as part of the person. I answer dozens of phone calls, have people drop in Monday to Thursday as well as Friday, engage in short term and long term counselling, make house calls and give referrals and transport furniture, and act as an address for one and a referral for another.

And then there is Friday. Friday is full of conversations and laughter and tears and stories and adventures. I've been deeply depressed after hearing of unnecessary disease and death and a devastating diagnosis and been elated to hear of home and family and friends and new beginnings and new dreams for the future. I've been a bit leery when meds haven't been taken or have yet to kick in. I have been open and frank about my own life and what I see in another's.

Let me just share a brief story about how I feel regarding David's Place.

Tom Long teaches at the seminary at Princeton and was visiting us here in Halifax a few years ago at Synod. At one point he lived in Atlanta, and attended a Presbyterian Church in the downtown much like our own. Like most downtown churches, it had to cope with the problem of the homeless. They opened up their gymnasium in the winter as a shelter. People from the church serve as hosts and hostesses including Tom. One night he invited a friend to come and join him. His friend was not a member of that church. In fact, he wasn't a member of any church. But periodically, in their conversations about religious matters, this friend would say, "Tom, I'm not a theologian, but it seems to me..." and then he would express his opinion and such conversations helped pass many nights.

One night as they were hosting at the shelter, they met the men as they arrived, saw that they had something to eat, and hung out with them for a while. Then as the men began to prepare to retire, Tom's friend said, "Tom, you get some sleep. I will stay with them the first watch, then I'll wake you up, and you can come and stay with them for the rest of the night."

So the friend stayed up and mingled with the guests, listened to them, asked questions about who they were, what had happened to them in their lives that they were now homeless. At 2:00 a.m. he went in and woke up Tom. He said, "Tom, Wake up! Wake up! I want you to come and see this. Granted I am no theologian, but I think that Jesus is down there." And folks,

we find Jesus in the faces that meet us at David's Place ... "Wake up, wake up! I think Jesus is down there!"

Kenn Stright

David's Place Final Luncheon



On Friday, January 24, 2014, David's Place celebrated its 10th anniversary with a special lunch.

We served a wonderful ham dinner with mashed potatoes, and a variety of vegetables. We had a selection of desserts and the VON provided a special cake. Volunteers from past years were invited and several of them were able to attend. Also in attendance were members of the VON including Janet MacLeod and Mary Anne Seward.

We decorated the tables with colourful table cloths and the centrepieces were bouquets of balloons. As well, several Happy Anniversary balloons adorned the walls at various intervals.

We didn't have as large an attendance as expected. In the past we sometimes had approximately 100 guests at our after-

Christmas or anniversary dinner. This year we probably had 60.

The guests were very appreciative, but some were concerned that David's Place was closing. As they left we gave each one an invitation to a new incentive starting February 7. It will follow much the same as David's Place but is now under the management of the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Although we will lose some of the long time volunteers, a core will continue, and several new volunteers have stepped forward to help in this very worthwhile mission.

LOVE

A February Poem

Roses are red.
Violets are blue.
Jesus does Love me.
And so do you.

The earth is round.
We live on the ground.
My love for you is found.
All you need to do is look around.

Love is in the air.
It's everywhere you do.
You just have to say hello.
To smile to someone you know.

Flowers are pretty.
Chocolates are sweet.
Students are helpful.
We like them a lot.

Rose are red.
Violets are blue.
Church is a place to worship.
About God's love for you.

Marie Wamboldt
