

At Saint David's

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Arisen light, another day
 what faith can convey
 may peace portray
David MacEachern

Merry
 Christmas



Happy New
 Year

Thank YOU Tristan

A congregation experiences an organist/music director as a wonderful gift, someone who takes us to a lofty place where we can hear and sing and experience the wonderful gift of praise that God has given us. Our denomination continues to use 'The Book of Praise' endorsing our focus on God, on offering to God the praise that rightly belongs to the Creator of all. Our chief end remains on glorifying God! The music director is entrusted with a sacred task – to lead our music ministry in a way that is consistent with our mission, values, and theology.

The Minister stands in a radically different position regarding a

music director. The relationship needs to be complementary. Actually it needs to be synergetic. The music director needs a deep sense of worship and the purpose of worship and the expression of worship through the spoken word, the message of scripture, and the purpose of prayer. This doesn't happen automatically. A deep personal spirituality is at the heart of Tristan's music.

For six plus years I've simply thanked God for the relationship that has grown between Tristan and me especially in the preparation of worship... I find this especially true in the 9 am service that tells me worship can be expressed in many

ways. I find it in the service music, the selection of prelude/postlude, the Anthem (I'll never forget 'It's Not Easy Being Green' chosen after an earnest plea from the minister!) He even had the choir sing the hymn I wrote (Come now friends and worship) for our anniversary with all its musical faults and failings!

Thank you doesn't do justice to the past seven years Tristan has occupied the position of music director at the Presbyterian Church of Saint David. Tristan, thank you. It has been a pleasure serving with you – may God bless you as you make the journey from 'the Book of Praise' to 'Voices United'.

Kenn Stright

Sunday School Update

Saint David's is extremely fortunate to have a successful Church School under the very capable direction of Susan Lappin, who displays insightfulness, enthusiasm, and empathy towards 'her' children - and that enthusiasm is returned in the joy displayed in the lessons and activities undertaken.

We give thanks for the equally enthusiastic and dedicated support that the Church School receives from Lisa Glennie, Elizabeth Cameron, and Graeme Hicks. Lisa and Elizabeth provide regular assistance to Susan. As well, Lisa supplies when needed.

Graeme Hicks as Secretary-Treasurer is a constant in the life of the Church School, recording attendance and offerings each week.

Saint David's is truly blessed - and gives thanks for its Church School staff and for its children.

Worship & Church Life

The Church of Jesus Christ

*The church of Jesus Christ is where a child brings a balloon...
is where old women come to dance . . .
is where young men see visions and old men dream dreams.
The church of Jesus Christ is where lepers come to be touched . . .
is where the blind see and the deaf hear . . .
is where the lame run and the dying live.
(Anne Weems)*

“Being the Church” was the adult study just concluded by an enthusiastic group packed like sardines in what was once a corridor, presently a study and often a meeting place. Five themes expressed what it means to be the church in the 21st century. The study asked: “What does the church offer - what *can* it offer - that is not available in our communities? What essential teachings of the gospel are at work in congregational life

that are not present in our communities because the teachings have been lost or contradicted?

The study was intentionally chosen to reflect our present state of being here at the Presbyterian Church of Saint David. Have you noticed how often I've said: “Our main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.”

How do we maintain our focus on those things that are truly important to being the church of Jesus Christ while all around us are the sights and signs of construction and destruction? The Bible time and again encourages us to keep focussed: Proverbs 16: “Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

So, here we are yet again drawing to the close of another year. But before we get

there we need to pass by Bethlehem and the unfolding plans of God for this world... and plans can be messy - as messy as a baby's birth, as fraught with danger as magi meeting Herod, as full of awe as shepherds meeting the angel heralds. It can be hard to see the hand of God in the events around us. It can be even harder when such plans don't live up to our dreams and expectations. The Bible again has a word for the church of Jesus Christ when all we seem to do is watch and wait:

*do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you...
Isaiah 41:10*

Kenn Stright

Saint David's Christmas Families

We will have seven or eight families this year. We have spoken with the first six.

We have one mom who has a small business and needs a logo and business cards. We have taken care of that already. We have another family who needs a skill saw to be self supporting and we're working on that as well.

We have a 13-year old girl who is an excellent student who needs a laptop for school.

We are working our way through both the Christmas wishes and the things we can do, as a broader community to give both a hand up as well as the Christmas hand out.

The first of the angels have been on the tree since the first Sunday of Advent. Please feel free to take as many as you'd like. The rest will be there in the coming weeks.

The wrapping party will start at 9:30 am on Wednesday, December 21st.

We need canned foods and non-perishable items such as cereal, mac and cheese, beans, soups, tuna, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, etc.

All food and gift (new and unwrapped with the angel attached please) donations should be returned to the church or 5960 McCulloch Court by Sunday December 18th.

Contact:

Paula M. Minnikin
(t) 902-483-0390
Paula@Minnikin.ca

David's Place This Christmas... and Beyond

David's Place provides a good place for 50-70 guests each Friday morning: a warm lunch, the company of friends, something useful to do – uniquely filling many needs. Above all, it is our congregation's clear demonstration of love for our neighbors.

How do we show that love? Providing a consistent home for visits. Sharing friendship with our guests. Ensuring they have a warm meal on Friday mornings, often homemade food and baked goods, and consistent support from the Watson Fund.

David's Place is our congregation's main mission to our community. It works hand in hand with our support of Sunday suppers, organized by Ark Ministries at St. Andrew's Church, and of the Out of the Cold Shelter at St. Matthew's.

The Mission and Outreach Committee

invites the congregation to join in this work. That might mean dropping in for coffee and a conversation one Friday morning, or it might mean preparing and dropping off soup or baked goods. David's Place welcomes everyone. We look forward to seeing you.

On Dec. 16, David's Place is hosting a Christmas dinner for our guests. We invite you to this celebration. As well, the David's Place team is creating small treat bags for guests, and we welcome contributions. We are also looking for warm outerwear, like socks, mittens, hats and scarves, men's coats, and ladies' (larger) coats to distribute through the winter. If you would like to join us, or contribute to our work, contact Johannah Roberts or Val Macdonald.

**Nicole Watkins-
Campbell**

With the End of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission - What Next?

In 2015 Rev. Kenn Stright, Valerie and Roderick Macdonald, and Katie Campbell (youth representative) of Saint David's attended the closing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In previous months Kenn, Valerie, and Rod have attended many TRC sessions.

Recently, I attended a talk on 'Racism and the Indigenous Perspectives' at St. Mary's University, one of a four-part series on racism presented by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (joint SMU/AST) and the ENRICH Project.

Senator Murray Sinclair, former Chair of the Indigenous Residential Schools TRC, was the guest speaker. In his quiet, sometimes humorous but also serious manner, as a follow-up to the conclusion of the TRC, Senator Sinclair focused his message and audience discussion on the future - "Where Do We Go from Here? - What Next?" Given that Senator Murray receives 400 requests per month to speak, conference

organizers felt honoured that he accepted St. Mary's invitation.

Much of Senator Murray's talk focused on the problems of the current First Nations youth and included the following:

Through the Residential Schools system, First Nations children were forcibly removed from one culture to that of another - resulting in the loss of participation in their own language and culture, and in the creation of a sense of 'not belonging' - a situation having many repercussions for years to come. There are now more First Nations children in child welfare today than there were in residential schools. Children are being placed in a government system that is overworked, overloaded, and one with a high level of stress.

"A sense of purpose gives one a sense of importance, a sense of responsibility - but the current generation of First Nations youth experience loss, sadness, and anger." First Nation violence and suicide is considerably higher than that of non-First Nations. Dropout rates

in school remain high. The life of First Nations young people is a question of 'where do I come from; 'where am I going', and the lack of knowing how to 'ask' and where to look for answers. 'What does the future hold' is a huge question in the lives of these youth.

What are the tools the government/legal system needs to enable future generations to move forward? When he was asked what he saw as the major hurdle in the TRC, Senator Sinclair replied, "There are still far too many issues to say that there will be Reconciliation any time soon - or Truth.

We need to recognize that situations of violence and suicide are not a mental health situation but rather a cultural and identity issue.

We also need to ensure that our leaders really understand the issues and plan well - ensure that non-First Nations be given enough information to enable respect - "Will that change the conversation - a conversation to, with, and about each other?" "Racism is

based on misunderstanding, misperception, and misdirection. It will take generations.”

Ensure that government agencies for First Nations children be adequately resourced so that the child welfare system is able to put children within an extended family environment and develop a proper monitoring of children in provincial care. One perspective is to leave the children “at home but remove the parents from the support system, paying “support families” to work with youth.

Residential schools in themselves are not bad - it is how they are run. Residential schools in the future can still be a solution for children living in remote areas with few resources. Winnipeg's Southeast Tribal Council operates a residential high school which works at being culturally sensitive and appropriate. First Nations teachers are sensitive to the Reconciliation environment and offer emotional support - but it is important that such a setup does not

degenerate into instances of abuse.

What Can Individuals Do?

For a start - “Read the Report” - the Report has been downsized from 400 to 140 pages to a 60-page summary in order to reach a wide audience. Read the Calls to Action - focus on those that feel close to you - and make it happen.” (www.trc.ca)

Another concern expressed was for Atlantic higher-education institutions to recruit First Nations academics, particularly as there is a very evident need for emotional support for First Nations students attending those institutions. Western Canada and Ontario are far ahead in this respect - there is also a need to build up a Centre for First Nation Studies in Atlantic Canada. If we don't, Western Canada will continue to be ‘The Centre’.

Senator Sinclair ended his talk using humour in the recruiting of First Nation staff - “talk about your wonderful weather, your seafood, your affordable housing, and your collegially.”

Anne Sommerville



Out of the Cold

Mission and Outreach has committed Saint David's congregation to providing lunches once a month for the Out of the Cold shelter, which opened Dec. 1.

Out of the Cold is an emergency shelter and shelter of last resort during the winter. It serves people who cannot be accepted at other shelters in Halifax.

From Saint Matthew's Church Hall on Barrington St., staff and volunteers provide programming a couple of nights a week and offer counselling to guests.

On the first Saturday night of December until April, we will provide 15 lunches. Any additional food that can be prepared, such as hot soup or casseroles, will also be welcome. Like David's Place, Out of the Cold has seen a reduction in support from Feed Nova Scotia.

If you would like to prepare and deliver lunches or other food to Out of the Cold, contact Nicole Watkins Campbell.

Meet Your New Elders

Colin Roop

Our family moved to Halifax a little over four years ago from Charlottetown. My wife, Pauline, is a pharmacist and I hold a senior Human Resources position with the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia. We have three children: Madeleine (10), Hannah (7), and Gabriel (5). When we aren't at school or working, our busy family enjoys playing basketball, soccer, singing, and volunteering with our industry associations.

When we lived in Charlottetown, we attended the Kirk of St. James and we felt very welcome by the congregation. For me, it was a return to my church roots as I attended the Kirk when I was younger. Like at Saint David's, I read on Sundays but I haven't had any other experience in church life. I am excited about being an

elder at Saint David's and look forward to using my experience and skills in any way that will help the sustainability of our church.

Nancy Tindall

In the fall of 1977, I moved to Halifax and shortly after adopted Saint David's as my new Church home. Over the years my participation in the church's life was mainly with the children of the church or as a pew member. Just about 2 ½ years ago, I became involved with David's Place and continue working alongside Mary Lou at the food bank table. Our task is to pass out food stuffs from the congregation and Feed Nova Scotia plus non-food items needed by our guests.

My goal as a new elder is to find a way I can serve the people of Saint David's and to learn more of what makes the people of Saint David's so unique.

The third new elder, Susan Lappin, will be profiled in the next edition.

Transitions

Congratulations to Ben and Mirren Harris on the birth of their son Anderson.

Schedule for Christmas Season

December 18

4th Sunday in Advent
9 am Early Service with Communion
11 am Traditional Service
Candle lighters: Heidi Schaefer/John Hope and Jillian, Erin and Allison
3 pm Choir and friends Carol Service

December 21

9:30 am: Christmas Families Wrapping Party

December 24

4 pm Family Service
7 pm Christmas Eve candlelight service

December 25

11 a.m. Traditional Service

December 29

7 pm Auld Lang Syne

December 30

10:15 am Northwood Communion Service

January 1

11 a.m. Traditional Service

January 8

9 a.m Early Service with Communion
11 am Traditional Covenanting Service

Lorne Clarke, Dalhousie University, and Saint David's

No one connected with The Presbyterian Church of Saint David over the 30 years preceding his death in May 2016 could have failed to know the Hon. Lorne O. Clarke QC, a member of the congregation, and of the kirk session from 1953 to 1959. Whether as kirkman, lawyer, judge, chief justice, or public citizen, he was as great and as good a man as this province has ever produced. One of only two chief justices of Nova Scotia with a serious claim to historical significance, he also possessed a unique degree of moral authority. It is small wonder that Budge Wilson devotes an entire section of her epic poem, *After Swissair* (2016), to "Judge Lorne Clarke" – a Christian gentleman if there ever was one.

A cradle Presbyterian from the small salt-mining community of Malagash in Cumberland County, Lorne Clarke was a farmer's son and not yet 17 when he arrived at Dalhousie in the

chaotic autumn of 1945. Though Lorne was too young to have been a veteran himself, the campus was bursting with returned veterans, resuming or taking up higher education.

To complicate matters further, the university was just emerging from a prolonged governance crisis; Dalhousie had recently taken the retrograde step of firing, without cause, its distinguished long-time president, Carleton Stanley. His successor, the Reverend A. E. Kerr, was a United Church minister then serving as principal of Pine Hill Divinity Hall. He was not interested in the job, which was only offered him because no one else would take it. It was the first time since 1911 that the region's largest and most prestigious university had been run by a clergyman.

But the veterans in their hundreds accomplished what Alec Kerr could not; they pulled the university, kicking and screaming, into the 20th century. Lorne Clarke was there among them, fully experiencing the winds of change.

His arrival at Saint David's neatly coincided with that of the congregation's new minister. The Reverend Frank Lawson was inducted on September 7, 1945, while registration for arts classes at Dalhousie took place later that month.

In those bygone days of patriarchal paternalism, when the university was deemed to stand *in loco parentis*, Dalhousie's calendar included, under General Information, a section entitled Church Attendance: "All students not residing with parents or guardians are invited to report to the university office on or before October 19 the churches which they intend to make their place of worship during the session. Intimation will be made to the various clergymen of the city of the names and addresses of the students who have chosen their respective places of worship."

One suspects that Lorne had diligently chosen his place of worship and that he duly complied with the invitation to report it to the authorities. He was received into membership of Saint David's on

Communion Sunday, April 13, 1947.

Lorne received his BA in 1949 and LLB in 1951. The university medal in law was not awarded that year – it would have had to be divided among four prospective recipients, including Clarke - but in 1952 he was appointed assistant professor in the faculty of law, an unheard-of elevation for a recent graduate who was not yet even a member of the bar.

In November 1953, exactly one week after his 25th birthday, Lorne Clarke was ordained and inducted an elder of Saint David's. Rev. Lawson (whose Ulster brogue Lorne could famously mimic) preached one of his characteristically didactic sermons, entitled, "Christianity is in the keeping of the laity, not of the clergy." According to a newspaper account, the sermon dispensed advice directly to the three new elders, the other two of whom were old enough to be Lorne's father.

By 1953 Lorne had been called to the bar and was teaching in Dalhousie Law School, where, on the strength of his Harvard

LLM (1955), he became a tenured professor in 1957. Two years later, however, he changed direction completely: he married social worker Mary Louise MacLeod (a Dalhousie contemporary), he abandoned law teaching for good, and he relocated to Truro, where he joined the firm Patterson, Smith, Matthews & Grant and commenced what would prove to be a very successful two decades of mainstream law practice.

The Clarkes returned to Halifax and Saint David's in 1985 when Justice Clarke, as he had become in February 1981 on appointment to the then trial division of the Supreme Court, was promoted chief justice of Nova Scotia. They were received into communicant membership in December 1986, by certificate of transfer from St James, Truro. Dalhousie University conferred on Lorne Clarke an honorary LLD in 1986 and he afterwards served as a member of the university's board of governors. Saint David's benefited immensely from the exemplary Christian

fellowship of Mary Lou, who died in December 2007, and of Lorne, who, simply put, inspired everyone who had the privilege and pleasure of his company.

The author is grateful to the Clerk of Session for assisting with the research for this article.

Barry Cahill

Carols for Christmas

Presented by The Saint David's Choir and The 19

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18TH

3:00 PM

Full Choir
Small Groups
Solos
Readings

A concert NOT to be missed.

Freewill offering to Music Fund



For Auld Lang Syne

Come to Saint David's on Thursday, December 29 at 7:00 p.m. for an evening of memorable music and a tribute to Tristan Cleveland-Thompson, as we say farewell after seven years of wonderful musical leadership.