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# ST PAUL'S

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA



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# JOURNAL

PENTECOST 2002

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## FROM THE RECTOR

*John Newton*

Once again the Anglican Church has been in the newspapers. I wish the stories had to do with growing churches where the power and love of Christ are manifest. Instead they are about the recent decision of the synod and bishop of the diocese of New Westminster (comprising about 80 parishes in Vancouver and the lower mainland of British Columbia) to move ahead with the blessing of same-sex unions.

The immediate result was that the lay delegates and about a dozen clergy representing nine parishes (and something over 20 percent of the diocesan population) immediately walked out of the synod in protest. Since then there has been a continuous volley of responses within the Anglican Church of Canada, throughout the worldwide Anglican Communion, from other denominations and in the secular media. Needless to say, all sides are making themselves heard. The end result has been to leave many people confused, some disillusioned, and few seriously considering leaving the Anglican fold.

I have stated my own views on this subject before—and I realize that in doing so I tread on dangerous ground. This is a controversial and explosive topic, and no matter what we say we run the risk of offending someone—not the least those living in same-sex relationships at the present moment. Yet not saying anything is even more offensive. Far more importantly, by focussing on a single issue such as this we can give the impression that other concerns of morality

*Please see next page.*

## THIS SUMMER AT ST PAUL'S

### WORSHIP

We shall follow the usual year-round pattern with the following exception:

**On July 14, 21 & 28 there will be no 8 a.m. service.**

### RECITALS

**12:15 p.m. Thursdays**

July 11	Robert Paddock	Organ
July 18	Alice Fairbairn	Piano
July 25	Shawn Whynot	Organ



August 1	Brian Start	Organ
August 8	Cathy Naugle	Mezzo Soprano
August 15	Sandra Britten	Flute
August 22	Robert Paddock	Organ
August 29	Melanie Redmond	Piano

### KEJIMKUJIK CAMPING WEEKEND

Once again we have reserved the group camping area on Jim Charles Point for Labour Day weekend. The atmosphere is relaxed, there are lots of things to do, and there will be an outdoor worship service on Sunday morning. Information/registration forms are available at the church.

and justice are not as important. From my perspective this issue pales in comparison to those of the poverty, disease, starvation and violence facing millions in the world today.

That being said, let me jump in. First of all, there are a few points at which the Bible clearly addresses the issue of homosexual practice (*e.g.*, Romans 1:26,27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We need to see these texts in the wider context of the whole Bible. There we observe that sexuality is a part of God's good creation, and that his plan involves the faithful, life-long covenant union between a man and a woman in which they become 'bone of my bone' and 'flesh of my flesh'. This is the only form of sexual union that Scripture recognizes—not because God is some kind of killjoy, but because he desires only the very best for us.

Through the centuries the church has held to this biblical standard. I am well aware of times and places where we have fallen below it. The charges of sexual misdemeanours on the part of church officials now in the courts make this impossible to deny. It is clear that we have ample reason for repentance. However we do not have licence to change the rules!

Much of the debate around same-sex blessings centres in the nature/nurture issue. In my own understanding this is an area that is far from settled. Meanwhile there is tremendous pressure for the church to bend its views. We need to keep in mind what we read in Romans 12:1,2:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to

test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Here we learn that as Christians what we do with our bodies must be brought under God's rule. We are not to bend to the predilections and pressures of the world around us, but to let our opinions and convictions be formed by the Holy Spirit and under the guidance of Scripture. We are called to be counter-cultural.

In relation to the developments in New Westminster, thirteen bishops of our Anglican Church have spoken out, declaring them to be 'in conflict with the moral teaching of Holy Scripture and the tradition of the universal Church'. The Archbishop of Canterbury has stated,

I stand firmly by the resolution passed at the Lambeth Conference [of 1998, which ran, 'This conference ... cannot advise the legitimising or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions']. For this, I have been criticised as homophobic. I am not. But I do not accept that homosexual relationships can be treated as being on a par with the man-woman ideal portrayed in Holy Scripture.

The issue will be a major item for discussion at the world meetings of primates (national archbishops) of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council this summer. Yet I do not expect to see it resolved in either direction in the immediate future. In the process it will no doubt lead to the further disunity and fragmentation of the Anglican Communion. Meanwhile we need to recognize that we live in a fallen world—that in so many ways we come short of the glory of God. Yet we do not accede to that fallenness or affirm or celebrate it as some would urge. Instead we seek to bring the redeeming, transforming love of Christ to bear upon it.

## THE KIDS' CORNER

*Yvonne Messenger*

**We have a great God!** During the month of May, the children have been learning all about God's character and his awesome qualities, about God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. During the month of April, we look at different characters in the Bible who had something to teach us about how we spend our time. We learned that God wants us to worship him in many different ways and not just on Sunday, but every day of the week. We will be celebrating and sharing some of what we have been experiencing and learning in the 9:15 service on June 23 when the children will help to lead the service. Please plan to join us.

Parish House is a very busy place this spring. We have moved the Nursery from the Memorial Room to the Parish House for the duration of the renovations. This move made it necessary for some other classes to be shuffled around. The kids are enjoying decorating their new rooms.

A special event will take place on Sunday, May 26 at 10:15 in the Parish House. The children will be hosting a Children's Tea for those who attend the 11:00 service. We hope that you will join us for tea, coffee and some yummy baked treats. You will also have the opportunity to see all the beautiful work that the children have created this year. See you there!

As we begin to think about winding up our Parish House program for the year, I would like to thank all those people who have helped to make this Sunday School year fun and exciting. We have had a fantastic team of adults and young people who have brought creativity, enthusiasm, dedication and an outpouring of their love for God to the kids and we have all been greatly blessed. Our final Sunday School day will

be June 23 and we will begin our Summer Garden Program on June 30.

As always, I am looking for volunteers. If you would be interested in teaching Sunday School in the fall, please let me know. We will be starting up our classes at the Parish House at the end of September. If you think you might like to share your gifts with the kids but are unsure of what it entails, come and join us one Sunday to see what it is like or contact someone who has been teaching this year.

I am also looking for people to help lead the Garden Program this summer. If you could commit to helping on one Sunday in July or August (Children's Talk, one or two activities and supervision) let me know. All the preparation is done for you - the program will run the same as it did last year. We will also need a volunteer in the Nursery each Sunday so if you can spare one day to supervise the babies let us know! Thank you in advance for your help.

Please pray for the children and their leaders as we finish up the year, that we may all feel God's love and presence in our lives, not just on Sunday but every day.

## "THE FISH"

*Michael Amirault*

The Fish coffee shop is St Paul's newest mission/outreach initiative. And yet, it looks like St Paul's is not in this endeavour alone. Five pastors from five other churches in Halifax have been shown The Fish vision, and all were very enthusiastic and supportive of the vision. And it is our plan to be in contact with more churches in the city in order to build a greater support basis for The Fish.

Currently, painting and decorating is underway at the Parish House (the present home of The Fish). And encouragingly, people have been offering musical talent, dishes, appliances, table cloths, art, beverages, baked goods, and furniture. I pray that this much needed and much appreciated support will continue to pour in.

Funny thing. In the last week I have been hearing about people, both clergy and lay, who have heard about and are excited about The Fish vision. You're going to ask, Mike, why is that funny? It's funny because I didn't tell these people about The Fish, not one on one, and not in a congregation. Some of these people I have never before. So, what does this mean? It means that support for The Fish is building, word is getting around, people are starting to get excited about the vision and they're telling their friends. Praise God!

What I pray for now are volunteers. We need people who love Christ and who love other people. We need people who, with guidance, support, and training, can help us to build *koinonia* at our coffee shop. One, two, three, four hours a week—whatever you can manage. All Christians are called to be ministers, to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed, so please do not see yourself as inadequate, or be under the false belief that ministry is not your job.

Perhaps The Fish is not the ministry that you are called to, but certainly, there is a ministry that you are called to. I encourage each of you to look and pray about what ministry God is calling you to.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to this power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21)

If you have not yet viewed The Fish vision statement, are interested in learning more about The Fish, are interested in donating something to The Fish, or wish to become a volunteer, please contact Michael Amirault at:

Office: 429-2240  
Home: 469-8351  
Email: michael.amirault@utoronto.ca

## PARISH RETREAT 2002

*Mary Lynch, Bill Lord,  
Jennet Bowdridge & Jane Bureau*

Forty St Paul's parishioners spent the weekend of May 4 and 5 at the Agritech Conference Centre in Bible Hill at the Annual Parish Retreat. We were challenged by Linda Tripp, a Vice President at World Vision, to look closely into the topic "What is God saying about injustice?" and to examine the issues of global justice from an informed biblical perspective.

Despite the daunting topic, we were encouraged by Linda's suggestion that we each concentrate on our own "small slice of the pie". On Sunday we split into four groups/workshops and the following are submissions from each.

1. Child Sex, etc. from Mary Lynch
2. The Sudan from Bill Lord
3. International Trade from Jennet Bowdridge
4. Palestine / Israel Conflict from Jane Bureau

### **1. CHILD SEX TOURISM Or Child Abuse And Rape On an International Scale**

Growing up as a girl on this planet is more dangerous than ever. For many years it has been known that in many parts of the world prenatal diagnostic procedures are used to determine the sex of the fetus and this information is used to abort unwanted females. Girl children are breast fed less, weaned earlier, are fed less nourishing food after weaning and are immunized less and taken for hospital care later and in worse condition than boys. Girls have significantly less access to education, and are forced into slave labor and prostitution. There is now a very active network that is being called "child sex tourism". This involves men from North American and European countries who

travel to Asian locations in order to have sex with girl children. In this way they live out their sick sexual fantasies without fear of being caught. Many of these perpetrators are seeking younger and younger children with the misguided notion that the younger the child the less likely she will be infected with HIV or other sexually transmitted disease. This has resulted in a situation where impoverished families are selling their girls into prostitution. The sale may take place in infancy and the dealers will come back and take the children when they reach 8 or 9 years of age.

We also learned about a Canadian man named Francis Kerr, a retired doctor from British Columbia who, just prior to his trial for gross indecency and indecent assault involving several children aged 8-13, escaped and turned up in Cambodia. He had been discovered by workers with World Vision, the man had married a Khmer woman and opened a European Guesthouse in a town called Siem Reap. Kerr told reporters that the charges against him had no foundation and that his relocation to Cambodia had been carefully planned "I needed to find a country which did not have an extradition agreement with Canada... if I ever go back to Canada, I'll be arrested upon arrival, but here in Cambodia I should be fine".

There is much we as parishioners here at St. Paul's can do:

We can continue to support the excellent initiatives such as those of World Vision who are working hard to improve the situation for girls and all children around the world.

We can continue to support initiatives right here in Canada assisting in working with girls working the street or at risk of

prostitution. St Paul's Home assists in providing housing for Sullivan House a residence specifically assisting girls at risk of prostitution.

We can insist that our political representatives advocate for extradition agreements with countries such as Cambodia so that alleged perpetrators are brought to trial.

We can raise our own children to be loving and empowered to advocate for themselves and others in need.

We can continue to pray.

## 2. THE SUDAN

One of the case studies Linda presented was "Oil and Sudan", the Canadian connection being Talisman Energy. Talisman Energy, a major Canadian oil and gas producer, has been the subject of public concern and criticism because of its operation in southern Sudan, where there has been widespread conflict for many years. While there are many factors in the conflict, control of oil-rich lands in the south has become a central issue. Talisman Energy, a business partner with the northern-based Government of Sudan (GOS), is extracting oil from contested lands in the south and, in fact, as a report by an independent investigative mission to Sudan recently documented, an airstrip maintained by Talisman Energy and its partners has frequently been used by GOS helicopter gun-ships to attack and terrorize villagers in the region. While Talisman has consistently attempted to defend its presence in Sudan, the overwhelming evidence is that *"the oil operations in which [it] is involved add more suffering"* (Harker Report, Feb. 2000).

Among the questions we were asked to consider in our workshop were the following: What can we do about the rule of oil companies like Talisman in conflict zones? How can we support the people affected by this war? Is there anything Canadians can

do to influence more interest and action by our Department of Foreign Affairs?

As we debated these questions, I realised there was something I could and *should* do. Up until a few months ago, my pension portfolio included a number of Talisman shares. Because of my concern about Talisman's rule in Sudan, I sold the shares in March; however, I had not given my Portfolio Managers my reasons for doing so. Immediately following the retreat, therefore, I decided to write them a letter, with copies to the President of Talisman Energy and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, explaining why I had taken this action and asking them to *"employ whatever means [they] deem most appropriate to encourage Talisman to withdraw from its operations in Sudan"* and, failing such action by Talisman, that they *"seriously reassess the inclusion of Talisman stock in [their] portfolios"*.

It may be argued that a single letter will not achieve anything. However, if I learned one thing during the retreat, it is that I need to take more seriously Christ's command to love my neighbour as myself . . . hopefully, my letter was one small step in that direction.

## 3. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

In the International Trade workshop, we discussed a number of important issues of global trade, and what we can do as a parish to bring about changes. We felt there is a need to balance wealth and poverty so that we have enough to help those who are less fortunate, but not so that the quest for wealth and material possessions becomes the focus or that they are achieved on the backs of the poor or at the expense of other's well being. One participant noted that if everyone in China lived at the same standard of living that is currently enjoyed in North America, there would not be a tree left on the planet -

perhaps we need to rethink the sustainability of our standard of living? The group felt that information and knowledge of the issues surrounding international trade, and particularly Canadian companies' involvements, were crucial to making informed decisions. We need to hear all voices, including those of the people most affected by international trade: the poor. These conversations led us into a discussion of the ways in which the people of St. Paul's, both as a parish and as individuals, might be involved in bringing about changes:

- Become informed about the issues so that we can make informed decisions;
- Support advocacy agencies that reflect our values and address our concerns;
- Participate in child- and/or community-sponsorship programs to give a personal "face" to the crises;
- Make local connections with immigrants and refugees to understand the concerns in their homelands; and,
- As consumers, change our buying patterns by purchasing items that are from fair-trading networks.

Some of the participants of this workshop (and anyone else who would like to help) will be compiling information to help parishioners make informed choices about Fair Trade.

#### 4. PALESTINE / ISRAEL CONFLICT

Our case study:

A Palestinian child is playing soccer in a field with his friends near a refugee camp. Tanks suddenly appear and the boys' friend is shot. He is alive but only just. An ambulance arrives but is stopped at one of the checkpoints and is left waiting. The boy dies.

An Israeli teenager and her friends go out to a discotheque one evening. She steps outside for a breath of fresh air and a sui-

cide bomber comes into the disco and her friend is injured. She gets to a hospital in a matter of minutes and is saved.

We decided, as a group, that living standards and medical care were different for different people in the same country. Access to resources both medical and educational were unfair. As a result, both sides suffer the constant danger and uncertainty of life.

We felt that both sides needed their own country.

We wondered why the Jewish lobbyists had not spoken out about other genocides (Rwanda, Cambodia, etc.). They certainly keep the holocaust in people's memories. Israel should withdraw from disputed territory as per agreements made some years ago.

Some of the actions suggested:

- New leadership is needed. We also discussed why Arafat did not accept 95% of the land back. This was agreed to last year. We now know why. The Israeli's wanted to keep all the access roads and the checkpoints leaving isolated and unconnected pockets. When the Israeli's take back land they always build major access roads.
- Arranging for young people on both sides to meet on mutual ground. Could have art shows emphasizing love not hate.
- Important for tourists to visit non-tourist spots and get a clear picture of the country not just the religious heritage.
- Twinning with a Christian church (like Hakodate) in both Palestine and Israel. This could bring about an exchange of people.
- Please pray for both sides.

## FRIENDS OF ST PAUL'S

*Dot Kelly*

As we enjoy the abundance of summer flowers everywhere, we thought that we would share with you the Easter setting at St Paul's.

In the narthex was a beautiful arrangement of lilies, yellow spray roses, larkspur, freesia, and alstromeria. The pedestals on the chancel steps contained white lilies, baby's breath, white tulips and mums. The abundant memorial flowers on the communion table carried out the same theme with added large white mums, statice and genista.

The three tiers of potted lilies surrounding the pulpit, and the large arrangement on the baptismal font, of white flowers as well as in the two small brass vases in the Chapel were all a wonderful influence as we celebrated the glory of Easter Day.

Tinker McKay, the flower secretary, and members of the chancel guild carried out the lovely theme.

Phyllis Redman joins me in sending greetings as we celebrate the church's birthday at Pentecost.

## IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

(GOD LOVES TO BRING HIS PEOPLE TOGETHER)

*Margery MacIsaac*

My husband Rob and I often spend the first of July weekend in Prince Edward Island. It is always a wonderful opportunity for refreshment and for seeing new sights in Canada's smallest province.

We usually attend St Paul's Church in Charlottetown on those visiting Sundays and we did so on July 2, 2000. The church is small but beautiful and the congregation that morning was proportionately modest. However, much to our surprise we were well acquainted with two other visitors that morning. There in the congregation were two friends from yet another St Paul's, St Paul's-in-the-Valley Church, Saint John, NB. They were equally surprised to see us but agreed that the world is indeed a small place and the Anglican Communion brings us all together in often the most unexpected ways.

## IN PRAISE OF HABITS

*Carol Bruneau*

I have a friend in the funeral business, and she and I agree—somewhat morbidly—that the best way of ensuring a good send off is by becoming a regular at church. It helps if the minister knows you. This applies equally to life's other landmarks—christenings and weddings. Obviously, this kind of thinking overlooks the steps in between, what I keep discovering are the real bonuses of faithful attendance.

I've been coming to St. Paul's since 1995—after a somewhat checkered past when it comes to church attendance. Raised Roman Catholic, I was made to go to mass every week. By the time I became a teenager for some reason I found it preferable to sit out that hour each Sunday in the woods—rain or shine, sleet or snow.

During this rebellious phase, my mother became seriously ill and after a long struggle eventually died. If anything this experience only increased my cynicism for “religion” and what I considered to be its platitudes. Soon after, I got married—in an Anglican church because it was old and picturesque. But it wasn't till I had my first child that my feelings about God and “religion”—which had been on ice for so long—began to thaw. That wondrous event—the birth of my son—wooed me back to church, sort of, because I wished to have him baptized. I chose an Anglican cathedral, because it was big, old and grand.

But it wasn't till 1995 that I consciously began to seek God. And even then it started as a subconscious, flukey sort of thing. My husband and I thought it would be nice to take the kids to church that Christmas. We were attracted to St Paul's because, well, it was old.

That was seven years ago, and I'm still coming.

I work as a writer and have been writing fiction for roughly the same length of time, only a year or two longer. The longer I write and the longer I try to be a practicing Christian, the more I find these paths are intertwined. The creative process mirrors my experience of the spiritual, and a lot of the metaphors seem interchangeable. I read somewhere recently that the equipment God gives us for seeking and following him is the very equipment he's given us for living in this world. Either way, both creatively and spiritually speaking, the path is initially a personal one, a singular and solitary one. While this is exhilarating, it can also be isolating.

As part of my work, I teach creative writing. One of the first things I tell students is: you don't write a story to hide it under your bed. A story isn't quite finished until it finds a reader, nor is the creative process complete. The reader makes the story bigger, gives it a life of its own that goes beyond the author or the author's ego. (The more readers, the bigger the book—so I've observed about other people's bestsellers.)

The point is, stories aren't written to be hoarded or hidden. They're meant to be shared. Faith and worship are exactly the same.

I know lots of people who say, oh I can find God at the beach, or on the squash court—and this is valid. For me God is vastly present in nature—and so I start each day with my morning fix: walking my dog around the Frog Pond just after dawn. The woods and sky make a magnificent cathedral, especially at that hour before the traf-

fic starts and people begin rushing to work. I live for this daily, solitary, quiet experience, when I can just breathe and look and listen, and be very present and aware of God's infinite creative spirit.

Solitude is good: it is essential—the only means of approaching God in a meditative, silent way. But the woods are pretty big, and the sky is bigger—and it is kind of hard to stay focused on God in such a vast arena. And I think that many of us are a bit like dogs on those retractable leads. It's very easy to meander and get off track, even get wrapped around bushes and trees. In order to stick to the path, every now and then we need to be reined in.

For me this is the role of regular church attendance. The weekly hit. The weekly reality check, orientation, pep talk: whatever it means to you, week by week. I find without it, it is all too easy to get distracted and start wandering and, before you know it, lose direction.

Now, as much as writing is a creative process, it is also a discipline — when you're lucky, a discipline unfettered by obstacles and/or laziness. The same goes for the spiritual path. It's a discipline, but a joyful one, one that is win/win, that is so rewarding you don't think of it as work, or seek ways to avoid it.

But, just as with writing a book, there is more to it than the discipline, this aspect of habit and practice. A book needs to connect with a community. As does one's faith. One's recognition of God is so magnified—made so much bigger—when it takes place in the company—the community—of others linked intuitively by faith.

Stories are gifts; they come out of nowhere, in the most unexpected yet serendipitous ways. Some of us call this grace. And in the same way stories grow, the sum of many seemingly random parts, so grace grows when individuals unite in a single, worship-

ful voice. It doesn't matter that we are all a collection and maybe even an odd assortment of very different people—if anything, diversity adds richness. Despite our differences we are linked by our recognition of God, and by God's recognition of each of us. The more voices raised in song, the louder and stronger the praise, and the more we are affirmed and built up one with another, and as individuals. Of course there is strength and comfort—yes, and safety—in numbers. But as someone who is not really a “joiner” (in either the squash club or Club Monaco sense of the word), and who thrives on solitude and looking at the world in the skewed way of a writer, I have to say there's nothing that matches the feeling of belonging to a spiritual community. Unconditional acceptance and automatic inclusion—you'd be hard pressed to find these elsewhere in the world.

The longer you walk the spiritual walk, the more you appreciate this. Being a Christian is challenging, yes; it is a responsibility. There is a lot more to our living than walking in the woods in peace and solitude; as we all know, this is a picnic.

And like writing, like walking, like any practice you hope to benefit from, faith requires perseverance. Stick-with-it-ness: this is everything. You can have the best dreams and intentions on the planet—but without perseverance you won't get far.

It's in persevering that we grow most as Christians—when you leave the shelter of the woods and hit the highway and are forced by situations to ask the question: what would Christ do? Practising what you believe is challenging—but when you have the support of a like-minded community, you are sustained by your faith.

This spring I've been dealing with one of these kinds of challenges—my father is elderly and has serious health problems. In the midst of a recent emergency, one of the first

# NEIGHBOURHOOD PRAYERS

*Gretchen Gillis*

Over the past several months a few of us from St Paul's have been meeting at home, to pray for the neighbourhood we live in. We try to meet every second week to consider the needs and blessings of our neighbours, known and unknown; we also take time after our prayers for socializing—it's called "getting to know you!"—with a cup of tea and maybe a cookie.

One of the difficulties we have at St Paul's is in getting to know one another; this is not a problem in a small church community but it is in a church like ours, mainly because we live in so many different neighbourhoods.

Getting together in small groups for neighbourhood prayer is one way to resolve our problem, and in doing so, we are also obeying God's call to "seek the welfare of the cities" in which we live. We pray for families and children; people living alone; our immediate neighbours; those in need of our prayers through illness or other needs; fellow parishioners in our neighbourhood; any other concerns, and often thanksgivings!

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people I saw at the hospital happened to be a young woman from St Paul's—Liisa, a medical resident, who sings at the 9:15 service. In the midst of an emotional meltdown, for me to see her face at that moment was truly like seeing an angel. And I will never forget the comfort she gave me. Just by her presence. Just knowing she *knew*. It was medicine, our simple, unspoken sharing of faith in God's goodness. His limitlessness.

In the scheme of things I've got a long, long way yet to go on my Christian walk, and no, it doesn't get easier. But it is addictive, I can tell you that much, and it is a part of my life I could not survive without.

Recently we have welcomed a neighbour from another parish to our group, and we hope to add another one or two as time goes by. We all enjoy the fellowship involved in getting to know other Christian neighbours; at the same time we recognize the need to be prepared to reach out to other neighbours of whatever faith, or none, as God presents them and their needs to us - He will, from time to time!

There is so much more I could say about neighbourhood prayers! God is blessing us in so many ways! I do want to include a couple of prayers; and I will be happy to speak with anyone who is interested in starting a prayer group for their neighbourhood (ours is Regatta Point—and beyond, for the time being). You may phone me at 477-2781, or email [gillis@chebucto.ns.ca](mailto:gillis@chebucto.ns.ca); just, please, do not send attachments!!!

## PRAYERS:

**For the Neighbourhood**—O Lord our Creator, by your holy prophet you taught your ancient people to seek the welfare of the cities in which they lived. We commend our neighbourhood to your care, that it might be kept free from social strife and decay. Give us strength of purpose and concern for others, that we may create here a community of justice and peace where your will may be done; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**For Home and Family**—O God whose desire is that all peoples of the world should be one human family, living together in harmony, grant that our homes, by their worship and witness, may help to hasten the day when your will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

## SUMMER, MOST PEOPLE'S CHOICE

*Denise G. McKay*

Right off, I'll say that summer was never my first choice,  
 Though I'm sure the vast majority say, "Yea! Summer's here! Rejoice!"  
 However much I loathe the heat, God sends it for a reason,  
 In all his works he's timed things right, precisely for each season.  
 I must admit that summer is a restful time for all,  
 Specially in the work force, vacationing before the fall.  
 Certainly there's beauty in the country all around,  
 With the many shades of greenery and flowers to be found.  
 There's beauty everywhere you look, an artist's paradise,  
 And canoeing down a river, I'm sure the scenery would be nice.  
 I'm not activity minded, but from all I've seen and done,  
 Valleys, rivers, ocean, hills, rock ridges, must provide some fun.  
 Even just in travelling by railway, car or bus,  
 Makes me gaze and wonder, what God has planned for us  
 When we depart this planet, and leave this beauty here,  
 What incredible magnificence God must have for us 'up there'.  
 No summer heat, or rain of spring, nor cold and damp of fall,  
 No winter snow and icy blast of wind to chill us all.  
 God's promised us more beauty and perfection ever known,  
 We'll live within his kingdom, and forever be his own.

*Written and composed by with God's help for summer, year 2002.*

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the  
 heaven ... he hath made every thing beautiful in his time..." (*Ecclesiastes*  
 3:1,11, King James Version)

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