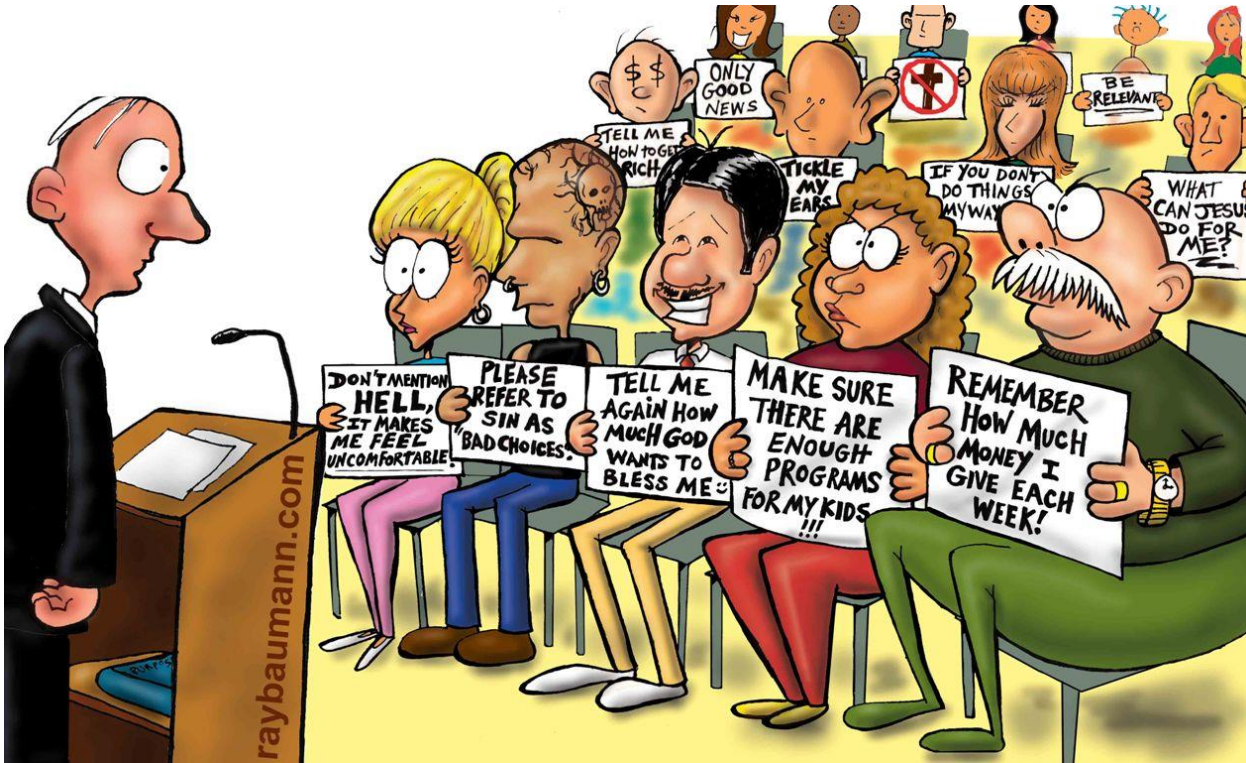


The Parish Light

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter – September 2017



Why People Aren't Coming Sunday Morning

So here we are! Back at it after the summer break. I hope it was a good summer for you. We have spent the last few articles looking at our missional context. We saw the importance of being welcoming and having a wide open 'front door' in our churches, while ensuring we close the 'back door' too. But what about the vast majority of the population who will not come through our doors at all? How can we connect with them?

To help aid us with this conundrum, a piece of research came out in the *Mission-shaped Church Report* (2004). This report swept across the Anglican Communion and, although somewhat dated now, it still contains good information. The research sought to identify those who no longer come to church. It described the situation using four headings:

The Fringe: These are the people who come along to church occasionally; Christmas, Easter and perhaps several other times during the year, but no more!

The Open De-Churched: These are the ones who used to come but have stopped. Perhaps this is due to a change of circumstance such as their work schedule, or they've had a new baby, that makes getting to Sunday morning worship too much of a challenge. Perhaps they have moved to a new neighborhood and simply haven't found a new church home. These are open to return given the right event at the right time or on the right day that works for them.

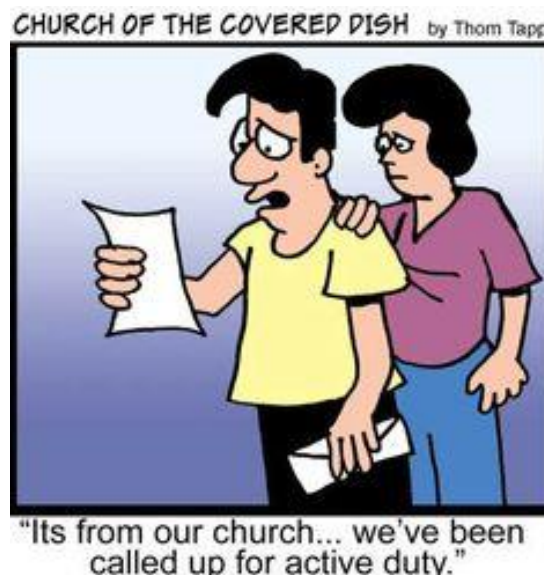
The Closed De-Churched: These people have stopped coming to church and for very serious reasons. Perhaps a crisis of faith, disillusionment with the church, an argument with a church member or the priest; something has resulted in hurt, pain and withdrawal. Going back to the place where the hurt was caused is unlikely without at the very least a great deal of love, care and reconciliation.

The Un-Churched: This is exactly as described. It's not that they choose not to come to our services. The idea simply does not occur to them. As each day goes by in our post-Christendom world, so the percentage of the Unchurched grows. I can perhaps illustrate this more simply by describing how I met someone last year who came along to a Christmas pageant. It was her first time in a church. It was the first time she had ever sung Christmas carols. She was 27 years old!

So when we think about arranging our church services and events in the hope that people will come, who exactly are we hoping will arrive at the door? The Unchurched won't – why would they? The Closed De-Churched won't, for they are hurt. The Open De-Churched won't if our services are the usual Sunday mornings. This just leaves the Fringe.

So as we can see, the old ways will not work anymore with the vast majority of people. This is why we must move toward ensuring that our discipleship is truly a fully missional discipleship in which each of us is living our faith and engaged with our family, friends and community. It is essential, along with exploring more inventive ways of being Church.

.....Taken from the Anglican Journal, The Ven. Richard King, Archdeacon for Mission Discipleship, Diocese of Edmonton.



I am starting a new series that I came upon by accident. I hope you enjoy it..... Jan

THE STORY BEHIND THE SONG

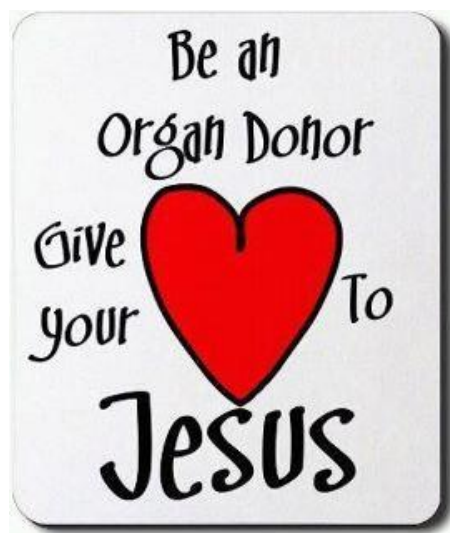
“How Great Thou Art”

This well-loved hymn, made famous by the Billy Graham crusades and George Beverly Shea in particular, has one of the most fascinating histories of any modern hymn. It was written in different countries and different languages over the course of 70 years with the input of several translators who never met!

The life of this hymn began in 1886 on a picturesque estate on the southern coast of Sweden. Carl Boberg, a member of the Swedish Parliament, was walking across the grounds of a well-kept estate and was caught in a sudden summer thunderstorm. Taking cover under some trees, he watched as the sky changed from angry blacks and grays streaked with flashes of lightning to clear, bright blue again. In the stillness after the storm, Boberg heard the birds begin to sing. After returning home, he put his thoughts to paper in a poem he entitled, “O Stor Gud” (translated, “O Great God”). This poem was later published and translated into German, then into Russian.

It was at that time the hymn fell into the hands of Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Hine, an English couple serving as missionaries in the Ukraine. Initially they would sing the hymn as a duet, and they were impressed with the effect it had on those who had never heard the Gospel before. They decided to translate it into English. So the first three verses of “How Great Thou Art” were written.

After World War II broke out, the Hines returned to the safety of Great Britain. There they ministered to the displaced people of the war. These people would ask, “When will we be going home?” That caused Mr. Hine to write the fourth stanza, speaking of that final Homegoing of all believers. The song was published in 1949.



A Message from Christ Church, Wandering River

On July 30 we celebrated a special anniversary.

I had requested a photographer to attend and take a snap or two. But no show!

I would like to advertise to all who attended to contact me and I'll send them a little souvenir after you publish September's Parish Light.

Use my business email address, write me a note or phone me [780-771-2286](tel:780-771-2286) and I'll send them a snap shot or two of a "little white church in the wildwood".

Our rectors warden Joyce has an almost complete list of the 87 people who attended.

I would like people who attended to give me permission to send / communicate with them in this way.

Blessings

Cecil (Harrison)

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### **The Legend of the Dogwood**

According to legend, the dogwood tree once grew straight and tall. But then it was used to make the cross on which Jesus was crucified. As a memorial of this event, the tree never again grew large enough to be used to this purpose.

In the spring, when the dogwood blooms, the four-petal arrangement of its flowers reminds us of the cross. Each white petal has an indentation on its outer edge – a symbol of the nail marks in our Savior's hands. Then, in the fall, the leaves of the dogwood turn a fiery red to commemorate the blood of Jesus with which our salvation was secured.



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# What's Happening

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**Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Nancy Appleby Theatre**

**RYAN MCALLISTER AND THE NORTHERN HYMNS**

**with Special Guests COALMONT CONCERT**

Tickets are \$10.00 each or \$20.00 for a family

Tickets can be purchased from Joanna Muszyka (780) 689-8053 or [joannamuzyka@hotmail.com](mailto:joannamuzyka@hotmail.com) or

Brian LeMessurier of the Athabasca Reformed Congregation (780) 213-1603 or (780) 675-4083



# YOUTH NEWS

**Youth Daze 2017** - "Know Your Heading" For all youth 12-20 (grade 7+). September 1-3 2017 at Teen Time Ranch near Dapp. Registration forms will be available at each point. This is a great way to start out the coming school year. Registration is \$100 per participant, the youth group will pay 50% of the registration so registration will only cost \$50 per participant, and we'd like as many youth as wish to attend to be able to attend. If you would like more information or have any questions please contact Joanna [joannamuzyka@hotmail.com](mailto:joannamuzyka@hotmail.com) If anyone wishes to sponsor a youth in our parish or diocese to attend please contact us.

Watch for coming announcements for Youth Group in the Fall.

Any questions please feel free to contact, Joanna - [joannamuzyka@hotmail.com](mailto:joannamuzyka@hotmail.com) or Cathie – [cathiemmaestro@gmail.com](mailto:cathiemmaestro@gmail.com)



## Service Schedule for September

**St Thomas:** Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Rev. Bill Creaser; Sept 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Mike Griffin; Sept 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Joanna Muzyka; Sept 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev Christobel Lines

**St Paul's:** Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ David Lines; Sept 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev Christobel Lines; Sept 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev. Bill Creaser; Sept 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Phil Sedgewick

**St Andrew's Zion:** Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Rev Bill Creaser; Sept 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Mike Griffin; Sept 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Joanna Muzyka; Sept 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev Christobel Lines

**Christ Church:** Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ David Lines; Sept 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev Christobel Lines; Sept 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Rev Bill Creaser; Sept 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Phil Sedgewick