

Monthly Prayer

Loving God, this fragile world cries out, and is ignored. We are Earth's custodians, entrusted with its care, and we have been reckless, more concerned with self and what we can extract, than what might be left to pass on to our children and to theirs. Forgive us, renew our sense of purpose, and may each one of us play our part in making this world a more fitting legacy. To the glory of your name

-John Birch

faithandworship.com

Inside this Edition of E-News

Projects Around the Diocese

Upcoming Events

A Reflection on Capitalism and Christ

Community Events in Pictures

The Environment Network monthly e-news endeavours to share events, stories and tips for caring for creation. Photos and stories welcome. If you would like to contribute to future issues of E-News or have an event to share, please contact us at:

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK E-NEWS



Environment Projects around the Diocese

CHURCH OF SAINT ANDREW IN COLE HARBOUR

From our Facebook Page: The Church of Saint Andrew in Cole Harbour has been collecting bottle caps for 5 months now. This is our second lot to go to the recyclers. 42 pounds diverted from the landfill – that's 3 large garbage bags full. Wow!



THE PARISH OF BLANDFORD

The Parish of Blandford has also been busy! Check out their article in April's edition of the Diocese E-News. Here is a sample:

A Green Parish: Continuing our journey toward our goal of being one of the greenest parishes in the diocese, our tiny communities in our Parish have become known for their environment projects. **Earth Day Events.** For seven years we

Upcoming Events

- **May 11, 2019** – Green Burials free information session at the Ecology Action Centre
- **May 23-25** – Check out the Diocese EN display at the upcoming Synod
- **September 14** – Eco-Justice Fair at the All Saints Cathedral in Halifax - More information yet to come!

held a planting night in the community sponsored by the parish, the rec group, the community center's board of Directors and a local business association (HABA). This year we are taking planting to the community by making planting kits. The kits themselves use the ideals of repurposing, reusing, and reducing. Work nights are loosely planned. The kits will go to the seniors, the 4H and the Guiding groups so far. If all goes well a second set of kits will be made to give away on compost day, where a local company gives away compost each year.

Community Gardens. In the back of the community are a set of boxes for community gardens. The Parish gets first pick and then the community, to have a spot to grow.

Pens, Markers and Highlighters Project has been steadily growing. The Municipal Office first reported that a gentleman



from Hubbards had passed in 1656 used pens he had saved for 49 years. They estimate another 200 are in their boxes. Our box is half full so I can brag we kept well over 2000 writing instruments out of the landfill. We now have eight collection spots in Hubbards, Chester and Blandford.

What one thing can you do this week to help the environment? It doesn't have to take hours or change lives, but one thing will make you think about the environment and be part of saving our planet.

Submitted by: Claudia Zinck, Enviro Rep, Parish of Blandford. www.grandmasgoinggreen.com

The sky is my prayer, the birds are my prayer, the wind in the trees is my prayer, for God is in all.

– Thomas Merton

Day Retreat on the Sacredness of Water



Highlights from the Diocese Environment Network/Kairos Day Retreat

St. Paul's Church in Charlottetown, PEI, April 27, 2019

A Reflection on Capitalism & Christ

In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple; and he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered what was written, "Zeal for thy house will consume me." (John 2:14-17, RSV)

I'm certain this passage from John is familiar to many of you. It is one of our favourite to reflect upon as a denunciation of the prioritization of material things over spiritual ones. However, I would endeavor to say that this passage also speaks deeply to the reality that is capitalism in the modern world. What is the meaning of Jesus' driving trade from the temple?

First, we should think through the significance of trading in the temple at all. Rightly, Jesus presents the temple as the house of God. What then is the effect of trading in the house of God? To trade in the temple is to trade in God; it places trade, or the economy, at the centre of faith. The temple is a place of worship, a place for the faithful to connect with their faith, their tradition and with God. Trading therein thus positions the economy in faith. The object of our faith is money. I am very much claiming that the setting of this passage is not merely saying that we value money more than our faith but that we, collectively, value money *as our faith*. This is what provokes such a visceral reaction from Jesus; not simply that people are trading but that trade replaces God. This is a reading that I can't help but to locate at the heart of our modern world. Capitalism has become the god of modernity.

Capitalism is an unquestioned truth of our contemporary society. I don't believe it controversial to state the majority, and possibly everyone, cannot fully conceive of an economy other than capitalism. We have collectively come to the conclusion that there are only three economic-political systems: capitalism (which is democracy), fascism and communism (when considered a form of fascism). This has the effect of equating democracy and freedom with capitalism such that any critique of capitalism is automatically an affirmation of communism/fascism without even a clear distinction between the two. At the present moment, I feel it necessary to clarify that I am not, in fact, advocating either of these systems over capitalism. Instead, I hope to show that it is possible to find a new sustainable economy. To begin, I argue that capitalism is a radically unfree economic system. Under

capitalism, economic stability is rooted in a doctrine of constant growth. The economy is only stable insofar as it is constantly increasing. The irony of this is, of course, that constant growth is actually totally unstable! However, as I already mentioned, the only alternative we understand is dictatorship. This baseless dichotomy remains silent with regard to the dictatorship of Capital. In our current system, the only end-goal is the accumulation of greater wealth for the wealthiest in the hope that we may also one day be wealthy. This accumulation is carried out in production that is absolutely dehumanizing. The perpetual production of wealth which the producers have no access to renders them as mere machines; producers produce endlessly for a select few who hold in their hands absolute power over their livelihoods and thus their lives in general. This is the general thrust of Marxist critique (which is not to be equated with communism under Stalin in the USSR). What's more, this is how capitalism masks itself as a god; with a seemingly omnipotent power over the lives of producers such that they must devote themselves entirely to the maintenance of perpetual growth for the Capitalists. Money is the ruler of the people. The wealthiest among us are devoted to money for its own sake inextricably tied to their own pride in being the wealthiest while the producers are necessarily devoted to it for their very survival because they have been stripped of any alternative means for survival.

I wouldn't blame you if you began to feel discomfort at this point. It took me several years engaging with critiques of capitalism before I could conceive of it as at all reasonable. It is very difficult to unlearn what we have been taught, it's the only good, but I truly think we are called to do just that. By Jesus, by the gospel, by the environment, by any value we hold for humanity. Capitalism is a great danger lying in wait while we hurl ourselves headfirst into an environmental catastrophe so that we can maintain 'stability'.

Now I should say that I have not forgotten that I am writing this in an Environmentalist newsletter. In the spirit of this, I hope a brief relation of the critique of capitalism to our environmental work will be sufficient to show you how it is relevant. As I already said, capitalism is based on perpetual economic growth. This is the centrality of profit. If we are not making more money than we have, we aren't doing capitalism right. This spells disaster for the environment in its finitude. It is an objective fact that the world we live in is not infinite; we can run out of resources. Keeping with capitalism, the only possible outcome is running out. Perpetual growth literally means always taking more. In finite world 'more' can only last for so long until there is no 'more' left for us to take. This is the reality we are rapidly approaching.

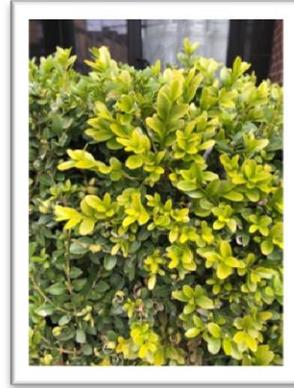
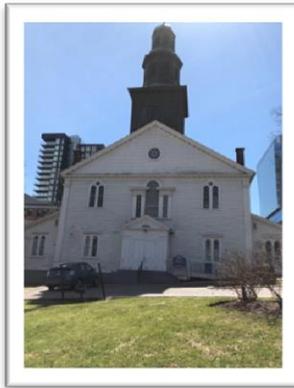
So, I think it would now be wise to begin our conclusion at our start; with the gospel passage quoted above. In light of what I have hitherto argued, the act of Jesus driving the traders from

the temple has profound significance in our modern economy. I do not think its meaning is as straightforward as saying that selling in a church is wrong. I am not convinced that Jesus' central motivation is that churches should not have any kind of sales. Instead, I think it can be read as debasing capitalism in the modern world. By casting traders out of the house of God we are removing capitalism's ground; it is no longer the god of the modern world. Even more, the house of God is open. We have the space to fashion new ideals uninhibited by the capitalist need for excess. We are free to rethink the economy through a cortical lens. No longer is there merely one option among three by which we can live unsustainably. We can begin a redistribution of wealth and a resetting of the economy as truly stable, producing what is needed for an everlasting existence of all nature rather than unrestrained, necessary growth. This opens for us the heart of the gospel message that is Love in every sense of the word.

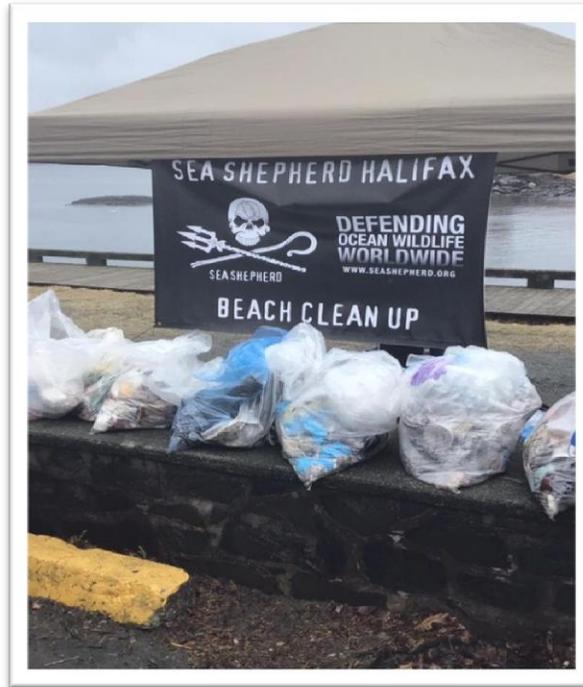
- Submitted by Cory McConnell



Community Events in Pictures



City Nature Challenge- Halifax walking tour April 28, 2019 Left to right: Old Halifax Public Library site, St. Paul's Church in Parade Square was highlighted as one of Halifax's oldest buildings, some signs of spring on the roof of the Law Courts, Lower Water Street



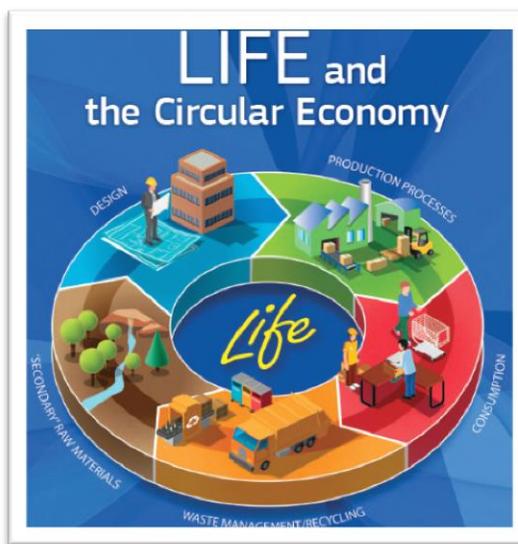
Beach Clean-up at Point Pleasant Park hosted by Sea Shepherd Halifax on April 13, 2019



School Strikes 4 Climate! Across Nova Scotia May 3, 2019: Extinction Rebellion NS on FB

For more information on Extinction Rebellion go to their Facebook page or to join the action go to <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/join-extinction-rebellion-nova-scotia>

Tips For Sustainability



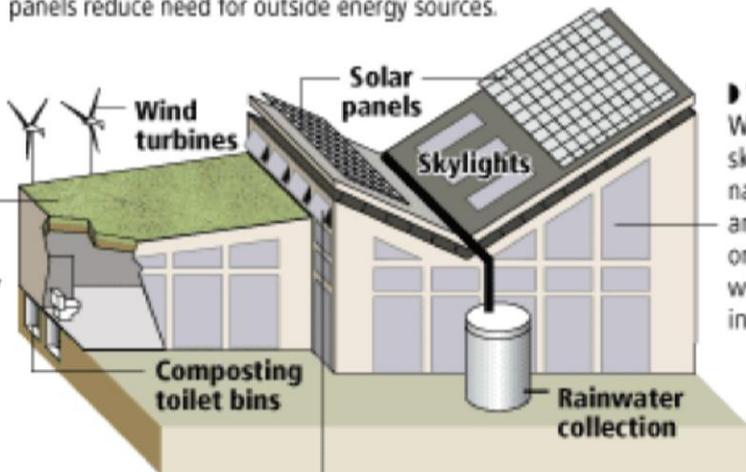
ECOFRIENDLY CONSTRUCTION

With 32 "green" buildings, Seattle has become a leader in environmentally sensitive building and design. Green construction aims to reduce pollution and reduce dependence on power plants and logging.

▶ **GREEN ROOFS:**

A thin layer of plants and soil on rooftops provides insulation, reduces stormwater runoff, absorbs carbon dioxide and creates oxygen.

▶ **ALTERNATIVE ENERGY:** Roof-mounted wind turbines and solar panels reduce need for outside energy sources.



▶ **WINDOWS**

Windows and skylights provide natural lighting and heat. Glazed or double-paned windows provide insulation.

▶ **WATER EFFICIENCY**

Cisterns collect rainwater to use for landscaping irrigation. Low-flow, waterless or composting toilets help reduce water use.

▶ **VENTILATION:** Vents and operable windows assist in heating and cooling by circulating air better.

▶ **BUILDING MATERIALS:** Recycled building materials reduce waste. Building with certified lumber helps protect forests and using non-toxic paints and carpets creates a healthier interior space.

Source: P-I reporting

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

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HOLD THE DATE

ECO JUSTICE FAIR ON SEPTEMBER 14TH!