

The Parish of St. Peter (Upper Gullies)

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“You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.” Matthew 16-18

Sunday, January 21, 2018

PATRONAL FESTIVAL OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH



810:30am Book of Alternative Services

LECTIONARY: I Peter 5:1-4; Psalm 23 (p731); Matthew 16:13-19

COLLECT Almighty God, who inspired Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God. Keep your Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, so that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior

Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS Living God, accept the offering of your holy Church. As Peter confessed Jesus, the Messiah and your Son, give us courage to follow him, the Lord who reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION Keep us, gracious God, in this fellowship of faith, the Church of your Son Jesus Christ, and help us to confess him as Messiah and Lord, in all we say and do. We ask this in his name. Amen.

Hymns for Today

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| Opening | (#160) By All Your Saints Still Striving |
| Youth Choir | Peter is the Rock |
| Gradual | Do You Really Love Me? (Praise Book #5) |
| Offering | We are the Church |
| Communion | Jesus You Have Come to the Lakeshore |
| Choral Benediction | Make me a servant |
| Closing | (584) The Church of Christ in Every Age |

*I am the church; you are the church.
We are the church together.
All who follow Jesus, all around the world;
Yes, we're the church together!*

The church is not a building. The church is not a steeple.
The church is not a resting place. The church is a people.

We're many kinds of people with many kinds of faces,
All colours and all ages, too, from all times and places.

I count if I am ninety, or nine, or just a baby.
There's one thing I am sure about, and I don't mean maybe!

Sometimes the church is marching; sometimes it's bravely burning,
sometimes it's riding, sometimes hiding; always it's learning.

And when the people gather, there's singing and there's praying;
there's laughing and there's crying sometimes, all of it saying:

Today's Short Message

A Patronal Festival is a birthday celebration of a church. The birthday of St. Peter's is celebrated near the special day that is named in honour of St. Peter our patron saint (January 18). When did St. Peter's begin? You could say it began in 1904 when the men began digging a trench for the walls "between caplin and hay time," or on June 20, 1905 when the foundation stone was laid.

If you agree that a "the church is a people" then our church began when the first settlers in Hopewell began gathering as a congregation for prayer and spiritual support. Today we give thanks for our founders and pray that the good work they began will continue to be an effective church for today and tomorrow.

I have gathered a few facts from a short history of St. Peter's that was written by Merve Rideout a few years ago and from publications of the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel which paid the salaries of most Church of England clergymen who served the people of this province in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In 1832, when the Church of England in Newfoundland was administered by the Diocese of Nova Scotia, Bishop Inglis appointed Rev. Thomas Martin Wood to be in charge of the St. John's outports which included Topsail and the communities on the south side of Conception Bay. The first resident clergyperson was Rev. Benjamin Fleet, who was ordained by Bishop Spencer in 1842 and appointed "Missionary for the South Shore" (Mission of Topsail) in 1845. Rev. Fleet served in that mission until he died in 1876 when he was buried in the new cemetery of Hopewell. His headstone can be viewed near a spruce tree just west of St. Peter's Church.

In "List of Missions of the Church of England in Newfoundland and Labrador" compiled in 1877 "The Deanery of Avalon" has six missions. The Mission of Topsail has three churches listed as follows:

1. Topsail. S. John Evangelist (1861) – Population 785 (321 Church of England, 483 Roman Catholic), 1 clergy, 2 school houses, 1 consecrated cemetery.
2. Foxtrap and Long Pond. St. Paul's (1848) – Population 1047 (935 Church of England), 1 Licensed Lay Reader, 2 school houses, 1 consecrated cemetery.
3. Hopewell. All Saints Church (1875). Population 930 (387 Church of England), 1 Licensed Lay Reader, 2 school houses, 1 consecrated cemetery. [Footnote attached to 930 – "At Hibb's Hole."]

From the early records it is clear that women did not attend the meetings of the church and had little say or no say in the administration of the church. But they were often the backbone of the church and from early days met as a group to do church work. The church bell, for example, was given to the church by the "Hopewell Sewing Class," and dedicated on September 17, 1912.

Before 1909 the "church dues" were collected by the clergymen as he went from door to door visiting each family. That year Rev. Colley suggested that this work was more appropriately the responsibility of lay people and he organized a committee for this purpose. In 1919 Rev. Facey introduced the practice of using weekly envelopes to encourage "payment of dues."

Electric lights were first installed in the church in 1922. Although inadequate, they made do with them until the Women's Association of Seal Cove paid for extra lights in 1934.

Around 1920, it seems, a "horseless carriage" was purchased by the congregation for the use of the clergyman. A new car was purchased for Rev. Heber Gosse in 1939. At a meeting in 1947 Rev. Gosse spoke about the "old car and her faithful service" and said that he would have to have her "overhauled or buy a new one." The minutes recorded that there was \$1873.80 in the car fund at that time.

Providing education and the building and maintenance of schools was the responsibility of the church in those days. In 1948 Rev. Elliott thanked St. Peter's Branch of the C.E.W.A. for their assistance in finishing the school. At the 1959 Annual Meeting of the parish it was noted that St. Peter's Church was "setting the pace in allocating money to the schools." (Bishop Mark Genge, who died on January 17th and was buried from St. Mark's Church yesterday, was the incumbent at that time.)

St. Peter's was granted permission by the Diocesan Synod in 1976 to become a separate parish. It was called the Parish of Upper Gullies (Hopewell), the church for Kelligrews, Upper Gullies, Seal Cove and Holyrood. The Rev. Fred Rowsell became the first rector of the new parish on September 1, 1976.

I've run out of space and will have to place a very interesting and historically important letter written by Rev. Benjamin Fleet in 1870 as a bulletin insert. May his soul and the souls of all those who have served this church faithfully through the years rest in peace.