



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

The Right Reverend Samuel Rose, B.A, M.Div (Hon)
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

CHURCH HOUSE
22 Church Hill
St. John's, NL A1C 3Z9
Telephone: (709) 576-6697
Fax: (709) 576-7122
Email: bishop@anglicanenl.net

Bishop's Lenten Pastoral Letter February 15, 2023



Dear friends and relatives in Christ,

If you own a vehicle, chances are you've seen the dreaded **Check Engine** light flash on your dashboard. If you are like me, you get anxious when that light unexpectedly appears when you start your car. That's because you know that your vehicle needs to go to the garage for some much-needed maintenance. And you are a busy person, and finding the time to check the vehicle's engine can be an inconvenience to your schedule.

I remember a funny episode of the cartoon "*The Simpsons*" where the character Homer Simpson is driving with his family when his Check Engine light flashes and a loud beeping noise sounds in the car. His daughter Lisa says, "Dad, that light says 'check engine.'" Homer looks at the light and says, "Uh-Oh. The tape must've fallen off." He then picks up a piece of black electrical tape that's fallen on the car floor and sticks it over the flashing Check Engine light. "There," Homer says, "Problem solved." A few seconds later, the car engine begins to smoke, and with a loud backfire, the car completely shuts down.

Our spiritual lives can be compared to a vehicle's Check Engine light. Just as it illuminates a car's dashboard when something is not functioning correctly, our spiritual lives may also have warning signs or signals that something is not right. These warning signs can take the form of feelings of spiritual emptiness or a sense of disconnection from God and others.

Lent is a time for us to check our spiritual engines.

Spiritual renewal is a concept that is important to many religious traditions, including the Anglican tradition. In the Anglican faith, spiritual renewal refers to deepening one's relationship with God and strengthening one's commitment to living a life following the teachings of Jesus Christ. We can achieve this through practices such as prayer, meditation, worship, the study of the Bible, and service to others. Spiritual renewal is particularly emphasized during the Season of Lent, which is a time of preparation for Easter and a time to focus on repentance and spiritual growth. Anglicans may seek spiritual renewal in various ways, such as participating in special Lenten devotions, attending retreats or spiritual conferences, or engaging in acts of service and charity.



Our Diocese has launched a *Strategic Plan* to help us refocus on the "why" of all we do and are as Anglicans. We have called it **Set Sail: Charting the Course for Christ's Church**.

The focus is on - what I like to call - the **SHIPS of Faith**:

- **Deepening Relationships**
- **Transforming Discipleship**
- **Renewing Stewardship**
- **Engaging Partnerships**

It is a plan to help us see where God is in our own lives, the life of the Church and out in the local community and broader world. You will be hearing more about "Set Sail" throughout the coming months. Members of the "crew" and I will travel to your local area to discuss how you can play a role in this. We can realize our full potential as part of Christ's Church in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador. **You can keep updated on this Strategic Plan by visiting: <https://anglicanenl.net/set-sail-strategic-plan/>**

Perhaps you might consider deepening your relationship with God and others as a focus this Lent. Before we can do anything in the Church, the first step is looking at ourselves and asking: *How is my relationship with God?* In other words, *'Do I love Jesus, and how do I show Jesus' love in my own life?'* These are personal questions, but ones that are so important.

As part of **Set Sail**, we have proposed **two specific goals** (there are six goals in total) for individuals and congregations to consider as we deepen our spiritual lives and relationship with God and others:

Goal #1: To invite every baptized person to renew their own personal faith through regular examination of the Baptismal Covenant.

Goal #2: To further develop our congregations as inclusive, supportive, and non-judgmental communities of faith as we continue to seek and serve Christ in all persons: those already identifying as part of our faith communities; those looking for connections with our faith communities; those against whom wrongs have been done in the name of our faith communities; and the broader community outside of our faith entirely.

We are all called to have a personal faith in Jesus Christ, but we do not need to keep our faith personal. As Christians, we can embrace our personal relationship with God in Jesus Christ and renew our baptismal faith regularly. When we do so - when we become active participants with God - we see our churches and communities transformed into inclusive, supportive, and non-judgmental centers of God's love and grace.

As Anglicans, we are called to follow the example of Christ and to seek to live out his teachings in our daily lives. This means being faithful to God and one another and showing love and compassion to those in need. It also means being willing to confront the sin and

injustice in our lives and the world around us. This is about deepening our relationships with others within the Church and those on the margins.

When that dreaded Check Engine light comes on in our vehicle, we know we will eventually have to go to the garage and get it fixed. Our spiritual Check Engine light is no different. We can do this spiritual check-up during this Lenten Season by looking at what we are called to be and to do as baptized Christians. If a core value is deepening our relationship with God and one another, then this needs to be at the very centre of the life and ministry of every Anglican in this Diocese.

So, my dear friends, if your **Check Engine** light is flashing, I invite you to use this Lent as a **tune-up for your faith**. Let us look honestly at our spiritual engines, and we may go deeper with God and one another.

Lenten blessings,

† Samuel: Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador

The Right Rev. Samuel Rose
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

