



# 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](mailto:bishop@anglicanenl.net)

## Bishop's New Year Message January 2024

The beginning of a New Year often brings moments of reflection and anticipation. We reflect on the year that has just passed - our joys, sorrows, and crucial moments that have shaped our lives. And we look forward in anticipation for what lies before us - what this New Year will bring.

I thank God for the many ways I have seen God's goodness in the life of our Diocese in the past year of 2023, especially with the launch of our strategic plan, Set Sail. Our plan calls us back to Christian basics in deepening our relationship with God and with others, transforming our discipleship in how we live out our faith in Jesus daily, and renewing the stewardship of God's Creation through making personal and corporate commitments to protect and sustain the life of the earth; and to engaging in partnerships which bring God's Church out into the broader communities we live and in help bring dignity to every human being.

As we look forward to the year 2024, we have asked every Anglican in our Diocese to focus on the first two "ships" of Set Sail - **Deepening Relationships and Transforming Discipleship**. This means taking seriously and living intentionally the promises made at our Baptism. We hope individuals can grow and develop who they are and what God has called us to be as Christian disciples. As I said, it is about returning to the basics of living the Way of Jesus daily in our personal lives. To see more of Set Sail, visit our Diocesan website: <https://anglicanenl.net/set-sail-strategic-plan/>

Perhaps you might consider making a New Year's faith resolution as we enter 2024. Make it your commitment to regularly examine your relationship with God and how your discipleship is lived out in response. I will do that in my faith journey this coming year. I will look at the Baptismal Covenant weekly to see how my life and faith are going. I hope the more I do this, the more I will see God in my life, where God is calling me to be, and what God wants me to do in the world. It's a Godly habit I hope to form that will deepen relationships and transform discipleship. Maybe you will do the same.

One thing is assured in all this, whether in reflection of the past year or in anticipation of what lies before - that God loves us unconditionally. Even when we have fallen short in keeping baptismal promises or fail to respond in love to others, there is nothing we can do to stop God from loving us. And because of this truth - that God loves you no matter what - then we should love one another as God loves us.

I was deeply moved that one of our Diocesan priests, the Rev. Michael Carruthers, wrote a beautiful song based on this promise. His lyrics remind us of God's eternal love in our lives, and regardless of what life may bring, "there is nothing you can do to stop God from loving you." I thank Fr. Michael for sharing his gift of music. You can hear him perform it on our Diocesan YouTube site: <https://youtu.be/o7Ti7ojA9dA>

### **There is Nothing You Can Do**

(lyrics by M. Carruthers and S. Rose)

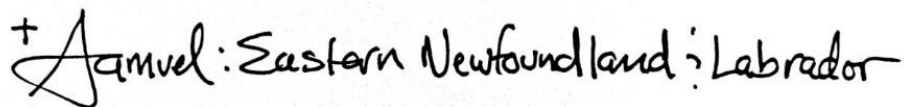
**The Bible tells us God is love, so we all know that's true.  
But have you ever thought about just what that means to you?  
There is nothing you can do, there is nothing you can do,  
There is nothing you can do to stop God from loving you.**

**So if you're feeling sad and blue, days seem long and life seems cruel,  
And there's not one thing you can do, remember this is true.  
There is nothing you can do, there is nothing you can do,  
There is nothing you can do to stop God from loving you.**

**Even when I fail to be the best that I can be,  
God's never-failing love for me can always see me through.  
There is nothing I can do, there is nothing I can do  
There is nothing I can do to stop God from loving me.**

**There is nothing I can do, there is nothing you can do  
There is nothing we can do to stop God from loving me and you.**

Blessings to you in 2024!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "† Samuel: Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross symbol at the beginning.

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