

## RETIREE



When I preached my last sermon at St. Stephen's on the Hill in Sudbury on December 29, 2024, I referenced a poem. (And yes, Ted Harrison, you did read that correctly.... I referenced a poem!) The poem spoke about coming to an ending moment, holding the knowledge that your pockets are full, with the nectar of countless evenings and dawns, of numberless autumn and spring nights, the sight of endless fruits and flowers, and the touch of joy and sorrow's light and shade. At that last service, I told the folx that my pockets are filled with memories and stories of a long and good career. I had the chance to do so many amazing things!

I started in Manitou Conference in 1985, coming to the Powassan-Chisholm Pastoral Charge in North Bay Presbytery for a four-month summer internship. There was something about rocks and trees and generous people that made me want to be settled in Manitou. When the settlement chair called, in 1987, to ask me where I would like to be settled, I said "an island", and that is how I got to the Little Current-Sheguiandah-Green Bay Pastoral Charge on Manitoulin Island. After a short stint in Harriston, Bruce County, I returned to Manitou and served at St. Stephen's on the Hill in Sudbury for twelve years. The Personnel Minister at the time, Kay Heuer, was a significant influence in my life, and long talks with her persuaded me to try Intentional Interim Ministry. I worked with three communities of faith in Sudbury Presbytery, and then became Manitou's Personnel Minister until 2014. Returning to pastoral ministry, I shared ministry with both Bill Steadman and Dave LeGrand, and then when Covid came, and the church was struggling to pay two salaries, I returned to St. Stephen's on the Hill and brought my career full circle. 37.5 years is a REALLY LONG TIME! My pockets are filled with friendships, words of encouragement, memories of shared adventures, heartbreak, joy and above all else, gratitude.

Now, I am finding new pockets in the clothes I wear in retirement, not nearly as dressed up these days. These new pockets are being filled with grandson-laughter, choir music, piano lessons, time with Jack, and coffee visits with friends. My retirement plan, such as it is, is to bike and learn to cook and go to the beach and read books I want to read (not books related to next Sunday's sermon).

"I am now arranging for the last day; the day God comes to my door. I will bring Him my full pockets."

