

WESTMINSTER BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SYDNEY, NOVA SCOTIA

'BUT THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH. THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES, THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY, THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT.' ISAIAH 40:31

OUR CITY ...

Sydney, the main city on the island of Cape Breton at the NE tip of Nova Scotia, is a city of just under 30,000 people. The population of the entire island being approximately 120,000.

Sydney is also a gateway city to the natural beauty of the Cabot Trail, with cruise ships regularly docking in the harbour from Spring through Fall. The population of the island has declined by over 8% over last 15 years, mainly due to the high unemployment rate of over 17% compared to national average of just over 7%. This decline is due mainly to the loss of the industrial base of coal mining and steel making over the last decades.

It is a city with many social needs and challenges: health care shortages, one in four families are single parent with one in three children living in poverty. The population also struggles with high rates of excessive drinking and opioid use.

WHO ARE WE ...

Ian & Rhoda Crooks were born and grew up in Northern Ireland. They've been married for almost 32 years and have three grown children and five grandchildren: Alison, who is married to Raymond (Katie (4), Ezra (2) & Asher (2)); Josh who is married to Meagan (Annalyn (2) & David (5months)); Ben who is graduating in June from University of Waterloo, ON and who will be moving to work in Ottawa.



After serving as a minister in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for 10 years, the Crooks Family emigrated to Canada to serve in Miramichi, NB in August 2000 where they assisted a core group in planting a PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) Church for 5 years. In 2005 they moved to Lethbridge, AB where they served in a PCA church for 13 years.

Ian & Rhoda recently accepted a call to the work of church revitalization with the congregation of Westminster Bible Presbyterian Church in Sydney, NS, a congregation of the PCA, and moved to Nova Scotia at the end of February



SPIRITUAL LIFE ON CAPE BRETON

The island has a large Roman Catholic population, 90,000+. Less than 1% of the population would be considered evangelical. This percentage of evangelical Christians is significantly lower than many of the missionary countries we historically send missionaries and resources to. Over 35 churches have closed over the last 10 years with many towns and villages having no evangelical witness. Most evangelical churches are under 50 in number and struggling to survive with aging congregations.

Contact Info ...

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WESTMINSTER BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ...

Westminster Bible Presbyterian Church is a 83 year old church in the heart of Sydney. It is a PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) congregation that has experienced gradual decline over the last ten years. Currently there are around 20 active members meeting for weekly morning and evening worship services. The leadership and congregation are committed to



seeking God's Spirit's work of revitalization of the church. We are seeking God's guidance for how to begin community outreach in our neighbourhood and as part of this planning we've begun a ten week series on prayer evangelism training. As elders we are looking to do a fall relaunch of our congregation.

HOW CAN YOU PRAY...

1. For wisdom for the leaders and congregation as we prepare for a September relaunch and begin outreach in our neighbourhood.
2. For the unity of the congregation, which has experienced many struggles over the last few years.
3. Pray for God's provision of new people, resources and financial support to enable us to fully function as a congregation in our city.
4. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with new friends and neighbours and that as a couple we would quickly adapt to our new culture.