



ADVENT / CHRISTMAS 2018

The Parish Window



Quarterly Newsletter

CHRIST CHURCH SCARBOROUGH VILLAGE

PONDERINGS FROM PASTOR PAM



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Looking Ahead

"Advent becomes a time of listening and discovery along with its preparations of joy and wonder."

I wrote this Advent/Christmas poem before reading this quote from a dear Professor friend of mine, Bob Sweetman. They fit together. May you have a meaningful Advent and a blessed Christmas.

"Advent is a time of waiting and preparing for the coming of the Christ-child; a time of newness, of looking forward with hope, and of trying to make space to welcome (again) Christ into hearts. In terms of using the liturgical calendar as a way to experience various forms of spiritual disciplines, Advent also stands in a place of "not yet understanding," of "not yet knowing," of mystery. Of course we "know" that Christmas is coming. We know that we will celebrate the birth of Christ, and we already have the stories of his life. We know the adult before meeting the baby. The gift that Advent brings us, however, is a chance to practice, to some extent "not knowing" -- to practice a sense of hope and wonder, and fitful, even nervous, preparation for the

birth of a long-awaited child. It is a time to prepare ourselves for a new year where, when we start out by standing in a place of "not knowing" and mystery, we open ourselves to learning more about the Word we hear. In opening ourselves to really contemplating the mystery of the Incarnation, Advent becomes a time of listening and discovery along with its preparations of joy and wonder".

From Bob Sweetman's book *Changing to Stay the Same, Advent*

Advent/Christmas poem
December 4, 2018

**Am I ready?
Ready for what?
For Christmas.
Gifts bought. Check!
Cleaning done. Check!
Baking baked. Check!**

**We wait.
Maybe, for a bus
For our birthday,
or our kids or our grand-
kids birthdays
We wait for a medical
report.**

**At Advent
What do we wait for?
We wait for the birth of
Jesus.**

**Why do we wait?
When we know it has
already happened.
Why does it matter that
He was born?**

**Is it that He wants to
continue to be born
In our hearts
In our lives
In the lives of all, in fact?**

**His birth shows us how to
live
trusting the Father of us
all.
Helpless babe.
His birth helps us know
what it really looks like
to be fully human
to be a child of God.**

**And, it helps us know that
God is for us
when we fail or fall down
when we are not fully alive**

**Jesus came to live with us
Emmanuel..God with us
So that we can be new
and live with him.
Through Him.
For Him.
In Him**

**Advent.
Getting Ready
to be born anew in the birth
of the Christ-child.**

Are you ready?

Your Priest and Pastor
Pam



A BABY FOR CHRISTMAS

A few months ago, Roy and I were invited to dinner at our daughter Janet's house. Her son Patrick (our youngest grandson) and his wife Riley were there too. That's when we learned that we were to be great-grandparents for the first time! Their baby will be born at Christmas time, maybe on the day itself.

Of course, there are thousands of babies born every day all over the world. They are black or brown, yellow or white. Their mothers are young or older, wealthy or poor. Their fathers are supportive or uncaring, loving or, sadly, not there at all. The little ones are firstborns or one of several in a family. Some are safe and secure, but others are refugees.

This child of our grandson, this herald of future generations in our family, has already made a difference. There's a new kind of maturity in the father as he takes his wife's arm carefully in case the street is slippery. There's a new serenity in the mother's eyes when she senses the movements of the private miracle within.

As we watch this lovely story unfold, I think of Mary and her husband Joseph. They too waited many months while a baby came to fruition. Joseph learned to be a protector when people advised him to deny Mary the honour of marriage. Mary knew that she could not count on the help of neighbour women when her time came to

give birth. In fact, she had to travel more than 100 kilometres away from home on a donkey during those last uncomfortable weeks and then bear her son in a cold and damp cave, with only Joseph to ease her struggle.

But when the birth is over for Riley and her child, she and Patrick will look at the face of a new human being created out of love in the image of God. Then they will begin to understand in that tiny baby their own place in the cycle of life to which we all belong.

Mary too looked at the face of her child, but she saw something quite different. Hidden in human flesh, sleeping quietly in a feeding trough in a barn, was God, the Creator, the Almighty One who made the universe, the great I Am, the One who would be the Redeemer, the Messiah, come to teach the world how to live, come to die so we could finally understand how much we are loved.

Angels sang, shepherds worshipped, sages came from far away, but in the midst of it all, Mary looked at the face of her baby and saw God.

Audrey Shepherd



2018 Finances

Thank you to everyone in the congregation for your financial support for our parish. Our capital campaign has gone very well. We have pledges so far totalling \$129,680 towards our renovation projects and to date we have received \$84,932. This is terrific! Your contributions have allowed us to complete important projects on our list: Tuckpointing of the outside brickwork, painting and redecorating of our front entrance and offices, installation of 2 new high efficiency boilers to replace our 40 year old furnaces. To date, we have spent \$40,571. More projects are in the planning stages.

With all the commitment to the capital campaign, the offerings for our regular operating expenses have held up well, but are down slightly from last year. While we have been able to hold operating costs to about the same as a year ago, we currently have a deficit of \$11,400 after payment of our operating expenses.

If you are able to make an extra offering in December to help reduce this deficit, it would be very much appreciated.

All donations for a 2018 tax receipt must be received by December 31st.

Ian Campbell



A Word from Father Roy

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

Luke 17: 15

As a boy growing up in Montreal, I looked forward every year to the Christmas holidays, particularly the days after the twenty-fifth, until we went back to school in January. My friends and I would make snow forts, toboggan on Walkley Hill, skate and play hockey at the 'Y' and sometimes ski on Mount Royal.

But there was one thing that spoiled the good times. Every day my mother would say the same thing. "Have you written your thank-you notes yet?" It was during the Depression, and I really appreciated any gift I received, but I hated writing thank-you notes. My standard reply was, "I'll do them when I get home tonight." Of course, my 'tonight' always seemed to be put off until tomorrow night ... but tomorrow night never came. My mother even got me some special thank-you notes, but they didn't change things.

One Christmas, she forgot the special notes, and didn't keep bugging me about them. So I forgot, too, and threw away my list of gifts. About the middle of January, my Uncle Ian was visiting. He said to me, "Did you like the present I gave you for Christmas?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "I was just crazy about it!" "May I see what you did with it?" he asked.

I was stumped. I could not remember what he had given me. I apologized. "I'm sorry. I guess I

didn't appreciate your gift enough to write a thank-you, and now I can't even remember what it was." He looked into my embarrassed eyes and said, "Do you remember the story you heard at church a few weeks ago? The one about how Jesus healed ten men who had a terrible skin disease called leprosy? Nine of the men ran off to tell the priests. Only one stayed to thank Jesus. To whom did the healing mean most?"

I got the message. "The one who said thank you," I sheepishly replied. "I really am sorry, Uncle Ian." "I know," he said. "I forgive you, and so does Jesus."

The end of this story should be that I never had trouble writing thank-you notes again. But I do, and Jesus still forgives me.



Receiving Gifts

The older I get, the more I dislike receiving gifts.

Giving gifts is a different story entirely, but *receiving* them makes me break out in a cold sweat and fight the urge to retreat into a shadowy corner.

For the most part, my discomfort for receiving gifts stems from the feeling that I simply do not deserve them. And this is true – for instance, why should I be given something for turning a year older? It just doesn't make sense.

But it is always during Christmas time when I am reminded of the greatest gift we can ever receive. Long ago in the town of Bethlehem, in the crispness of the night, yet in the warmth of a manger, Jesus was

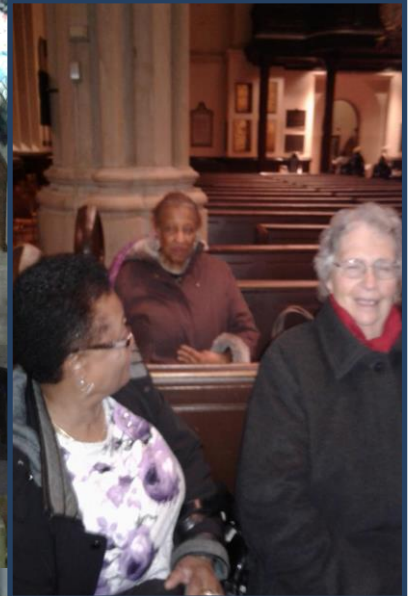
born into this world. This was God incarnate. This was a gift in and of itself – to have our God, our Father, come down to earth in human form and live amongst us. As if that wasn't enough, Jesus would go on to die for the forgiveness of our sins. He would redeem us from our lives of sin through his death and resurrection. As Peter says, it is not through material things like gold and silver that we are redeemed, but through "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1: 18-19, NLT). We are not deserving of this gift; we sin and ask for forgiveness, and sin again and ask for forgiveness again, repeating the cycle over and over often for the same mistakes. It takes time for us to learn. But because of Jesus' sacrifice and because of God's mercy, we are forgiven.

Jesus gave us the greatest gift even though we did not deserve it: He gave us forgiveness, a chance to be right with God, and eternal life with our Father. Paul truly said it best in his letter to the Corinthians: "Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!" (2 Corinthians 9:15 NLT). Now *this*—this love and truth of Jesus the Messiah—is a gift I can receive with open arms and an open heart. It is a gift too precious to hold onto alone; it is a gift that must be shared!

R. Luther



THE PARISH WINDOW



THE PARISH WINDOW





at the **Metro** grocery store
(at the exit).

Please sign-up and join in.

Sat. Dec. 15 at 2pm

Sun. Dec. 16 at 12:30

Sat. Dec. 22 at 1pm

Join us in a



at

**Cedarbrook Lodge on
Thursday, Dec. 20
3:15p.m.**

The afternoon begins with caroling
in the main lounge.

The more voices, the merrier.
Refreshments following.

A



**Farewell
Celebration**

for

**Archbishop Colin Johnson will
take place on**

Sat. Dec. 15th from 1-4pm

**at St. James Cathedral,
King Street.**

It will conclude with a Choral
Evensong, with the Archbishop
preaching.



Dec. 16

- **10:00a.m. - Lessons
and Carols**

Hear the story of God
working in history and
sing Christmas carols

Dec. 20

- **7:00pm - A Blue
Christmas Service**

For those who have lost
a loved one recently or
who find Christmas a
hard time.

Dec. 24

Christmas Eve

- **7p.m. - Family
Service with Sung
Eucharist**
- **10:00p.m -
Communion Service**

Dec. 25

Christmas Day

- **10:00a.m.
Quiet Eucharist**

Dec. 31

New Year's Eve

- **5:00p.m. Service**

**O COME LET US ADORE
HIM!**

MILESTONES

If you or any of your loved
ones have had a birthday, an
anniversary, or any other
reason to celebrate since the
last issue of the newsletter,
here's to wishing you



We remember with love and
in prayer those to whom we
said goodbye this past year
and are no longer with us:
May they rest in peace and
rise in glory.

We uphold in prayer their
loved ones as they miss them
at the dinner table this
Christmas.

Let us also uphold in prayer
those who are battling
loneliness this Christmas
Season; those with no one with
whom to share a word, a
laugh, a memory.

May the Lord bless each one
and lighten their burden with a
companion, a friend, someone
who cares. Amen.



Excerpts From A Message Worth Repeating

***O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guard while
troubles last,
And our eternal home.***

For centuries, the words of this hymn have been of great comfort for Christians all over the world. God was our HELP and He was our GUARD, helping soldiers and citizens on both sides to bear the uncertainties of war, of not knowing what the next day or night would bring. He was our HELP and GUARD, so that we could cope with the mental and physical suffering from bombs, from not knowing when the footsteps on the pavement would stop and hear that knock on the door, from the rounding-up of people, young and old, to be sent off to the concentration or labour camps. And God was our HOPE that someday this would all end and we could again live free from oppression.

I was barely six years old when, that day in May 1940, the German army invaded my home town. Sitting in the bay window, heavily taped to prevent the glass from being shattered by exploding bombs and grenades, I watched as the armoured vehicles, soldiers on foot, horse and bicycle, went by. Because I was so young and did not fully understand what was

happening, I was not scared. That would come later.

God has given us many wonderful gifts. One of those is our ability to remember. Don't you often think of the years you were a child, a happy child, playing with friends, enjoying a birthday party, a walk in the park. We remember falling in love, getting married, the birth of our children and grandchildren. These are the happy moments that are engraved in our memory. But there are also sad memories; an accident, a serious illness, a break-up, the death of loved one. And as long as our memory continues to function, we keep these things in our mind. Sometimes though, we don't want to think about an unhappy memory of the past, so we try to forget.

WHY IS REMEMBRANCE DAY SO IMPORTANT?

There are many reasons why we should remember. The Israelites soon forgot their liberation in the **Exodus** from Egypt, just as we today forget God's mercies. This is why Remembrance Day is a necessary tool to remember what we have done, what has happened and what we should be doing today. For those of us who have lost loved ones in a war, this day will have special memories, but for others it is a necessary reminder of the sacrifices by ordinary men and woman for their country and the values they stood for.

Sacrifice means: *the giving up of a valued thing for the*

sake of another that is more important or more worthy.

The value of a human life is so high that the value of other things can only be compared to it....

John 1:14, & 15: 13 are both examples of sacrificial love. The greatest act of sacrificial love was when Jesus willingly sacrificed His life to free us from our bondage to sin. Jesus laid down his life for us and calls us friends.

Not all who made the ultimate sacrifice were soldiers. For me Remembrance Day includes civilians such as sailors in the merchant marine, those serving in positions of duty, notably firemen, doctors, nurses, the men and women serving in the home guard and those who risked their lives in the resistance movements.

One of those many civilians, who laid down their lives for friends and for total strangers, was a Polish priest by the name of Maximilian Kolbe, who was killed on August 14, 1942 in Auschwitz. When a prisoner had escaped from the camp, the Nazis selected 10 others to be killed by starvation in reprisal for the escape. One of the 10 selected to die began to lament: "My wife! My children! I will never see them again!" At this point, Maximilian Kolbe stepped forward and asked to die in his place. His request was granted. And there are so many more.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

I think of the people who were caught hiding Jews on their farms, in attics and other secret places and were executed on the spot or sent to concentration camps from which most would not return. And I think of those who were rounded up just because they were young and healthy and of use to the Germans in their labour camps or because they were simply Jewish.

We must remember and honour their sacrifices because if we don't it will lead to a failure to preserve the very things for which they died.

We have to pay for freedom. Those who recognize the cost of freedom will continue to pay the price so that it will be preserved, while others, who do not, will not, and so will lose freedom.

Louis Van Gulick



(For full article please visit our website)



Sunday school has restarted and we thank the teachers and everyone involved in this ministry. Though we might not want to assist in the teaching aspect there might just be other ways that we may be able to contribute to this ministry.

We have welcomed some of the students at their baptism and others when they started coming to Christ Church, be it from other countries or from the city. While not the officially named godparents on the baptism certificate of any of these children, we, both as individuals and as a church, all answered yes to the questions asked at their christening.

So here's an idea.

The children were asked in a class recently to make a list of their hopes for the future. Below is a list of their responses. Can we commit to helping them realise their hopes in whatever ways we can? Here are 2 ways: prayer, encouragement.

Juliet:-

To become a neurosurgeon
To help people
Spend more time with friends, family, and at church
To get higher grades in all my courses.
Keep going with song and dance, and the biggest hope that I really want from my heart is to learn to play soccer.

Krystal:

To come to church more.
To be kind and help my friends, and to pray every day

Zenet:

To be a Vet
To help people
To donate stuff for orphan children
To get good grades
To come to church a lot.

Elma:

To graduate from the I.B program at Wilfrid Laurier Collegiate successfully
To build my relationship with God in the coming years.

Amma:

I hope for continued success for not only myself, but my friends and family as well. I also hope for resolutions to issues like climate change, violence and poverty.



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to make the 2018 Christmas Bazaar the best in several years. It is always a fun event and brings the community in to see what a welcoming church we are. For the first time in memory, all three raffle prizes were won by members of the congregation. Thanks again for all your support.

Beverly Baird



JUST A THOUGHT...

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Ellen Cunningham

Please call the church office to
be directed to any member of
staff or committee member.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.christchurchscarborough.com

'Just when life tries to overwhelm you, God's grace is there to pick you up.'

BibleGodQuotes.com

A few days before writing this article, I was enshrouded in such deep darkness which was tantamount to what the author of Psalm 88 must have experienced. Getting ready for my devotion was no easy task that morning. Written somewhere in my journal were these words, "don't put a barrier between yourself and God in your hours of weakness and suffering. That is when He is needed most."

(Whether quoted or unquoted, these are words I had heard in a sermon some time ago.)

I knew that these are the moments on which the other guy strives, and that he was standing ready to bring on the lies. So resolving not to open that door, I cried out to God. This was not so much about the 'whys' but more like a reminder of the limited or even lack of qualification for His

assignment(s).

A tad less disturbed, it was on to devotion and what a shocker. Grace upon grace flowing in abundance from the very first lesson to the very end.

First off the start up title... ***'You are chosen'*** as introduction to one of the lessons from ***Isaiah 41:8-20***. Next the reflection placed emphasis on verses 9 and 10. And if that wasn't enough to have me weeping, the thought or maybe I should say, encouragement for the day were scrabble tiles spelling out the words, ***'do not give up'***.

This was and still is certainly a keen reminder that the struggles may be real but they are redeemable. Not only does it makes me think of a quote from St. Rosa de Lima. "...The gift of grace increases as the struggle increases"; but it makes these words from *The Dialogue* of Catherine of Sienna seep into my entire being.

'Do you know daughter who you are and who I am?... You are she who is not; whereas I am he who is.'

So as advent makes way for Christmas and we look beyond the infant in a manger to the return of the King, may we hold on to this hope from Isaiah 41:10 no matter what our struggles. ***'Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand'.***

Thanks to all our contributors to this edition of the Parish Window.



TO YOU AND YOUR
FAMILY!

Hyacinth

**Please pick
up your**



**For 2019
on December
24**

