

# News for Scattered Pews

December 2020



## Val's Voice

I am going to admit it. I have been asking Paul when I can put up 'my Christmas tree' since close to the beginning of November.

I don't usually have such a possessive attitude to the tree, nor do I start asking quite so early. (I was joking, but I will admit the feeling was real.) I don't know how you are feeling these days, but I am feeling these Covid days wear on me... and so I am also feeling a need to do what pulls me towards hope.

For me, there is a real acknowledgement that I need light these days. These darkening days of November weigh. (I imagine it must be the same for at least some of you...)

And for me, that is a big part of the reason why I love Advent.

I love Advent because in the midst of a world with so much darkness around all the time, we are reminded that night is not all. We are reminded that a little light makes a difference, and more than that we are reminded that God is the source of light

...in stars falling from the skies, so God can make something new, we hear this first Sunday of Advent. God is the source of the light in the sparks created by John the Baptist, sparking off the unrepentant and unjust to invite a turning of lives, which we hear of the second and third Sundays in Advent. God is also the source of light in the eyes of the young woman Mary, in the third and fourth Sundays, who knew in her heart of hearts that God was coming to throw the mighty down from their thrones and lift up the lowly, and more than anything give hope to her people by the birth of her son, their Saviour.

The sparks of God are everywhere, offering new light, and upsetting what is normal. And as disconcerting as that is, I do find it to be a hopeful thing... I pray that you also find this season of light in the midst of our darkness, and song in the midst of stillness, to be a time where your spirit can find both footing and solace.

Because the truth is, of course, that both the darkness and light of our world were created by God. God is present in both stillness and song, grief and joy, uncertainty and familiarity, community and solitude. And the hope of Christ which dawns, and for which we wait, moves through our world even now.

I pray that you will find ways to know and celebrate Christ's presence in our world and within your own self these dark and lightening days of Advent, and that the joy of Christ's birth will bring renewed hope to your lives even and especially these days... God's peace be with you all!

*The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:9)*



## In the Spirit of Giving

Our parish's major commitment at this time of year is assisting our neighbours with hampers. As you'll read elsewhere in this newsletter, this Christmas season we will be collecting monetary donations instead of food items.

Here are just two of many other options for monetary gifts at this time, if you are able:

- St. Matthew's Maryland toy store, by donating on the [CanadaHelps website](#).
- A [Friends of the Bishop appeal](#), which allows Bishop Geoff to assist clergy and others in the Diocese at his discretion.

## Vestry Notes from November 24, 2020

Following Vestry's motion last month, Judy Asker transferred \$10,000 from parish savings in the Integra Fund to our parish current account, so that we can meet our financial commitments to the end of the year.

Because parishioners have been giving faithfully through the year, even in the midst of the pandemic, and also increasing giving to try to beat the deficit, this should allow us to finish out the year in the black. Thank you so much for your generosity. If you are able, one extra month's offering from each household would take care of our deficit and allow us to transfer some of that money back!

The budget committee has begun its work on the 2021 budget. Challenges are ahead, as we look to another year in which we cannot plan on rental income or funds from the garage sales. Please remember those doing this work in your prayers, and if you have ideas for fundraising online please bring them forward.

In recent weeks, we have had several people previously not part of our parish (or unable to get on Zoom) join us at our Sunday evening worship. It is so lovely to see our ranks swell! If you know of someone who might like to join in worship on Zoom, please offer them whatever help you can, or call Val or another attender to help with directions. It is easier than you might think!

You can also participate in the Sunday evening Zoom service using your **home telephone**:

1. Call **1-204-272-7920** at about 6:55 pm.
2. When prompted, type the Meeting ID number **891 4271 8972** using your phone's number pad.
3. When prompted, type the Passcode **323893**.

Vestry noted that during these days of isolation, it is more important than ever that parishioners can connect with the Anglican community:

- The [Anglican Church of Canada](#) regularly puts out news from General Synod. Interesting journalism relating faith to life!
- The Diocese's [Rupert's Land News](#) comes out weekly, focusing on local news and events as well as spiritual reflection.
- And technology lets us watch worship and other educational events from around the world. Check out offerings from Anglicans and others in God's church around the globe!

This month at Vestry we also discussed Bishop Geoff's second point in his charge to Synod. At his urging, we considered the question of *how we can follow the leading of the Indigenous Church, reputable science, dismantling racism groups, and all who act for peace and justice to learn how better to care for our world.*

The Bishop notes climate change and human greed (including our own) need to be dealt with so we can resolve the struggles of vulnerable and impoverished people around the world. As we proclaim God's reign it is essential we become more aware of our interdependency with God in all creation. PWRDF is one way the Anglican Church is involved in this work. Barbara Jalibat has agreed to look for some film resources on climate change, that we can look at online together. Having a "watch party" in 2021 would be another thing for us to learn to do together!

Our parish and co-sponsors of ACF and a parishioner are waiting for the arrival of three more refugee families. If you are curious about what would be involved in being part of a refugee ministry committee that will assist these newcomers to settle in Winnipeg, please speak to one of the Wardens, Marlene or Val.

### Advent and Christmas Services\*

Sundays in Advent Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13, Dec 20	7 pm on Zoom
Christmas Pageant**	Sunday, Dec 20
Christmas Eve Service**	3 pm on Zoom
Christmas Carol Service Christmas 1 - Dec 27	7 pm on Zoom

\*At this time, all services are planned to be online.

\*\*These services will be pre-recorded for viewing at your convenience. More details to come.

## Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF)

[PWRDF](#) is the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for sustainable development and relief. With the support of Anglicans across Canada, PWRDF partners with organizations working to increase healthy pregnancies and births, reduce gender inequality, relieve hunger, and break the cycle of poverty in the world's most vulnerable communities.

Against a backdrop of climate change, PWRDF strives to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

**"Working towards a truly just, healthy, and peaceful world"**

From the 2019–20 PWRDF Annual Report: "our world is hurting and hungry. Our work and the work of our partners is all the more important, needed and compelling.

In this past year, with the gifts of Canadian Anglicans, we were able to respond to the effects of Hurricane Dorian in the Anglican Diocese of the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos. We worked with Anglican Alliance partners in the Philippines to respond to a series of earthquakes in Mindanao region. We raised money to help the Anglican Board of Mission respond to devastating wildfires in Australia. PWRDF funds to support families in Zimbabwe affected by Cyclone Idai were matched fourfold by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank".

Closer to home, PWRDF supports initiatives in suicide prevention and counselling in the Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. Grow Hope Manitoba brings together urban and rural parishes to end hunger. For the second year in a row, St. Luke's, Pembina Crossing hosted hundreds of worshippers for Rogation Sunday. They blessed the fields of the Rev. Chris Lea, who donates the profits from a portion of his crops to PWRDF's equity in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The Rev. Canon Dr. Cathy Campbell, Associate Priest at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, volunteers for the Grow Hope Project.

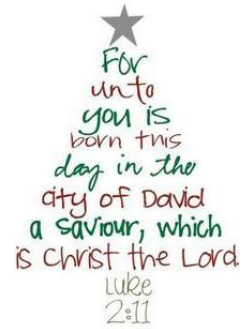
Our parish representative is Abid Munir. A link to PWRDF can be found on our website under the tab "What we do".

*And what does the Lord require of you?  
To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk  
humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*

## Christmas Hamper Program

Dear Members and Friends of St. Mary Magdalene:

Our church has decided to continue our support of the Christmas Hamper Program. However, as COVID-19 restrictions do not permit us to gather together to collect the items needed to physically fill and deliver hampers, we will be following the recommendation of the [Christmas Cheer Board](#) and providing food vouchers to this year's recipients. With these vouchers, recipients will be able to purchase their own 'Hamper' items.



Therefore, we are requesting monetary donations to support the purchase of food vouchers.

Donations can be mailed as cheques, or sent as e-transfers to [stmary@mts.net](mailto:stmary@mts.net). Donations of any amounts are appreciated. Cheques are to be made out to **St. Mary Magdalene Church** and designated for "HAMPERS". Please forward your donations to the church office, to be received by December 8.

We will try to provide food vouchers in the approximate amounts of the costs/hamper printed in the Christmas Cheer Board pamphlet:

Single: \$86.00  
Family of 2 to 3: \$126.00  
Family of 4 to 5: \$160.00  
Family of 6 or more: \$226.00

(Note : Any donations received in excess of the amount required to purchase food vouchers for St. Mary Magdalene recipients may be used to support other food security programs, including the monthly Church food voucher program, Winnipeg Harvest, St. Matthews Maryland Community Ministry, etc.)

Thanks for your consideration - your support of this program is greatly appreciated.

Jeannie McClory  
Coordinator, Hamper Program

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