

News for Scattered Pews

December 2021



Val's Voice

Fifteen or so years ago, for a time I preached fairly regularly in a little country parish east of Saskatoon.

I drove out to the country every second Sunday morning. The landscape was

beautiful, with hills and valleys, trees and even a few tiny lakes nestled in the curves of the road. During the season of Advent, I would leave home in the dark, and drive for a couple hours mostly in the dark.

When my winter trips began, the sky was dark, but over time it gradually lightened into a deep rich dark blue - what I have come to know over 30 years or more as Advent blue - the lovely colour created by light dawning into the beautiful darkness of our world.

A few years ago, after that time, I recall flying back from Toronto to our home in Saskatoon as winter descended on the land. As often happens, my plane left early - in the dark - and it chased the sun all the way across the country. The sun



remained just ahead of us for the entire trip, a warm orange glow underneath the horizon. And the sky was a rich deep dark blue for the entire length of my flight.

We flew over little hamlets and busy towns, limitless lakes and snow-covered fields. And all along the way, I could imagine God's light rising on this land which we know as home...

When you live closer to the ground, as we do, we see the imperfections of this world... imperfections and struggles which God would also know... But as I flew above, I could imagine God's light of hope, God's love and longing for healing, God's forgiveness and wisdom washing over this land, as the sun rose and its inhabitants felt the same love and longings.

There is so much sorrow and struggle in our world these days, so much anger and injustice. Advent is a season when the world (at northern latitudes anyway) can seem wrapped in darkness. But God's grace is, of course, present in darkness. In the midst of this season of deep darkness we can both long for and find the wonder of God's love for all creation.

I pray for each of you this sacred season, and for those you love. I also invite all of you to join me in praying for the needs of our city and our world, seeking God's wisdom, and God's healing and forgiveness in our world and in our own lives, so that with generous spirits and hearts of compassion we may be part of the goodness with which God blesses us all...

Val

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1



Vestry Notes from November 23

Vestry met via Zoom for our November gathering. The topic 'What opportunities can you think of to further what our parish can do, big or small, to further God's call?' occupied us for quite some time and it was decided to form a group to further the discussion.

The **financial report** indicates that we are on track for this time of year. The Budget Committee is now formed and due to meet soon to start preparing next year's budget.

A decision was made to use some of this year's **Christmas offering** to aid the people of British Columbia (details on page 3) and retain the rest for our own Parish funds.

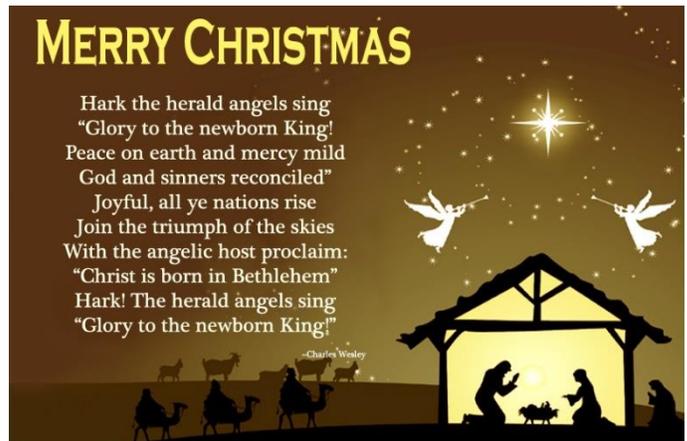
The **Nominating Committee** has begun its work. Carol McPhaden and Barbara Jalibat will be happy to hear from anyone interested in offering their time and talent to Vestry membership, being a Warden or being a Synod delegate.

Details regarding practical assistance to the **work of reconciliation** offered through the Diocesan Ministry of Wechetowin were reviewed and accepted as something our own parish can contribute to. See page 4 for more information.

We received the **committee reports** with grateful thanks for all the hard work of their members. Darryl Melnyk's words from the Wardens' Report are important to share:

"As we continue the journey through this pandemic, it is interesting to reflect on Mary's journey, this Advent. Her life never returned to the way it was before Gabriel's visit. It was forever changed as God sought to relentlessly love and redeem our world. On our journey there are two phrases from Gabriel's message which can be great travelling companions: "Do not be afraid; you have found favour with God" and "For no word from God will ever fail". Let us carry these messages with us in hope as we journey together towards His Kingdom."

Heather Birtles



Financial Update

As we near the end of 2021, it is an opportune time to provide parishioners with an update on our finances. As we began the year, we passed a budget which projected a deficit of around \$25,000. For the most part, we have been close to our budget projections on many items. Despite all the limitations this pandemic has thrown at us, parishioners have been consistently generous throughout the year. Thank you.

We have also been blessed with some unanticipated revenue from several provincial and city grants, as well as funds from our fall garage sale. This money has been a great help to address our projected deficit.

As we head into the final month of the year, our envelope giving is a bit behind our budget projection. We are still hopeful we will meet our envelope-giving target, as we usually see an increase in giving during December. Our recent efforts to raise funds for Christmas hampers and the Christmas store have once again demonstrated the generosity of our community.

As a reminder, giving can be done in-person during Sunday services, through the mail via Canada Post, by e-transfer or by pre-authorized deductions (PAR). Feel free to contact the office if you have questions or wish to make changes to your PAR.

Darryl Melnyk

The Parish of St. Mary Magdalene is on Treaty 1 territory.

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Advent/Christmas Schedule

At this time, we aren't requiring proof of vaccination to attend worship, but our parish definitely values vaccination - we don't know of anyone in our parish who isn't vaccinated. Further conversations may be coming up in the future. We continue to social distance and mask for the safety of all. Please email the church if you have questions and we will be in touch!

Sundays in Advent:

November 28, December 5, 12 and 19
10:30 am in church; 7:00 pm on Zoom

Our **Christmas Pageant** will be recorded and incorporated into worship on December 19 at both our morning in-church service and on Zoom in the evening. If you'd like to participate, simple parts will be available at church or by email on December 5 and short, completed videos must be received by December 12. Stay tuned!

Christmas Eve Eucharist:

December 24
3:00 pm in church; 7:00 pm on Zoom (live)

Christmas 1:

December 26
10:30 am in church - a joyful morning service with plenty of Christmas carols

At this time, our services are planned to be in-person and/or on Zoom, as noted. If public health restrictions change we will update our website and email those on our email list.

Christmas Offering 2021

At our November meeting, Vestry decided to support the people of British Columbia during their very trying times, by splitting 2/3 of our Christmas offering for the benefit of two groups in that province. The remaining 1/3 will be used to support our parish.

Part of our offering will be donated to the Sorrento Centre, located on Shuswap Lake in central BC. This Anglican Retreat and Training Centre has been housing and feeding people evacuated from their homes due to the flooding crisis.

For more information: sorrentocentre.ca/blog/you-can-help-us-help-here-s-how

Part of our offering will be donated to support the Wet'suwet'en peoples, who continue to defend their rights and land against the Coastal Gas Links pipeline project. The pipeline's route starts in Dawson Creek and crosses through the mountains to Kitimat, where the gas is to be exported overseas. The route passes through several First Nations peoples' traditional lands, and is opposed by the hereditary chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en, other First Nations peoples, and environmental activists.

For more information: [Yintahaccess.com](https://yintahaccess.com)

Turkey-Cranberry Monte Christo Sandwich – a great use of holiday leftovers

- 8 slices bread
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 10 ounces thinly sliced cooked turkey
- 6 ounces smoked Gouda cheese, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 3 large eggs
- 1/3 cup 2% milk
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 teaspoons butter
- 3 teaspoons canola oil

Preheat oven to 350°. Spread 4 slices of bread with mustard. Layer with turkey and cheese. Spread remaining bread with cranberry sauce; place on cheese.

In a shallow bowl, whisk eggs, milk, salt and pepper. In a large skillet, heat 1½ teaspoons each butter and oil over medium heat until butter is melted. Dip 2 sandwiches in egg mixture; add to skillet. Cook until golden brown, 2-3 minutes per side. Repeat with remaining butter, oil and sandwiches.

Transfer sandwiches to a baking sheet. Bake until cheese is melted, 4-5 minutes.

Wechetowin: “People Helping People”

Wechetowin, a Cree word for “people helping people”, is a grassroots organization formed in 2006 by the Indigenous Anglican Elders with the Rupert’s Land Aboriginal Circle. We work together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people supporting each other.

All of the programs designed by Rupert’s Land Wechetowin are intended to address healing, wellness and reconciliation. This is done holistically by ‘people helping people’ connecting in a variety of ways, giving people hope in times of transition.

We welcome you into our circle of caring and respectfully ask to consider contributing to the initiatives of Rupert’s Land Wechetowin. Would you be willing to provide a donation in kind or a monetary donation? Tax receipts are available through the Diocese of Rupert’s Land.

We would be most appreciative for any items of generosity towards our efforts:

- Care/Blessing Resource Bags: gifts for children, youth and women who find themselves in transition. We distribute items to make a small difference and a healing point of contact. Various items are welcomed – see list below.

This would be a great Advent project for a parish, and one that could continue into the year ahead.

Related to this project is a request for cloth care bags to help women in transition who come to Velma’s House. We have some on hand but will need more this season. There are [instructions](#) for the bag on our website to assist people who would like to contribute their talents as sewers. Material is available or sewers can donate their own.

- Liaison with community organizations: in urban and rural areas we partner with those who provide services to Indigenous people in times of transition and need. We search out opportunities to get involved in the greater community, being advocates and links to supports.
- Visit with people in hospitals and connecting in community places: providing pastoral care or sacramental ministry if requested. We offer friendly visits to Indigenous people from our North who come to Winnipeg for medical procedures and care, staying in hospital or receiving homes, while they await treatment or convalescence.

- Prayer Ministry: the “Prayer Blasters” team lifts up those in need, prayers for organizations who work tirelessly in the community, Indigenous Leaders and our Elders who are a strength and joy in our communities.

Thank you for considering contributing to reconciliation efforts. Blessings to you.

Rev. Deacon Tanis Kolisnyk
Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church, Winnipeg
St. Bartholomew’s Anglican Church, Wpg Beach
Rupert’s Land Wechetowin Co-ordinator
204-663-5453 tanis_kolisnyk@shaw.ca

Website: rupertsland.ca/mission-and-ministry/indigenous-ministry/pages/wechetowin

Resource Bags Wish List

These items can be dropped off at St. Mary Magdalene every Sunday during Advent.

Suggestions for Care/Blessing Resource Bags for the Women’s Shelter, helping people during a time of transition:

Gloves / Scarf
Multi-purpose wipes
Chapstick
Facial wipes
Moisturizer
Comb
Toothbrush & toothpaste
Grooming kit
Women items for self-care
First aid kit (band-aids etc)
Water bottle
Journal & pen
Stationary
Stamps
Chewing gum
Mints
Pre-paid phone card

Suggestions for Blessing Care/Resource Bags for children in transition:

Colouring books
Crayons
Fun activity packs
Small toys
Stuffedies
Books
Pencils
Mittens/Scarves
Comfort snuggle blankets