

# News for Scattered Pews

December 2023



## Val's Voice

My living room is dark, just one lamp and a candle, and the glow of my computer. I wait... for words.

Others wait as well. For hope. For healing, of heartbreak, of fear, of

whatever it is that ails them. For work. For groceries. For their child to call. For their parent to love them for who they are. For the drugs to stop. For the drugs to kick in. For peace. For their loved ones to be found. For heaven. For snow. For spring!

These days of Advent, as we wait, we do not wait for something small.

We humans who wait for so many things, wait sometimes for our own individual lives to change. For us to see a way forward where one hasn't been clear.

Sometimes though, we wait for the world to change... for peace and hope to come in a world which longs for them. For love and faith to be born within us and change everything.

These days of Advent, we may not exactly know it, but we wait for God, creator of all things, to come and remake the world. To turn the lights around, so that they don't just light the sky, but so that they light corners of fear. So they light places of judgment. So they give hope to everyone who needs it. So they offer something different to us when we think we can just wait.

These days of darkness, I invite you to light small lights in your homes. Candles in the darkness,

that calm your fear or your anger, candles that remind you of hope for yourself or anyone who needs it.

These days of Advent, I also invite you to pray for big things... days when God's justice will come and right our world. Days when those with billions will give their fortunes to those who need them. Winters when there will be homes for all the people in our world.



Mornings when the Earth is loved and cared for as family... something, someone to honour and protect. Seasons when all God's children are also known as beloved, and we see their difference also as beloved, something to stretch our minds and hearts, to hold more of the ones whom God made...

Because our God for whom we wait, the baby whom we love because he is small, the Spirit that gives us life, promises to come not only with comfort, but also transformation, recompense, and something new for us all. A new heaven and a new earth.

Love to you all these days of Advent... as we wait and watch and pray... and live for God's new world.

Val

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## Vestry Notes from November 28

**Financially**, the parish has had a good year, but with our deficit budget we need about an extra month's offering to ensure our books balance at the end 2023. That being said, the end-of-year generosity of parishioners has already begun! Many thanks to those of you who are offering extra if possible. With parishioners' generosity we will finish the year to the good...

One-third of our **Thanksgiving Offering**, \$550, was sent to the PWRDF Grow Hope project, which will allow farmers in Manitoba to plant crops that benefit the Foodgrains Bank.

Our October 26 event **"Where do we come from?"** was thoroughly enjoyed by all! So we will do it again on Sunday, January 21 with 3 speakers from our parish and a potluck lunch after service.

The presentation from Rev. Susan Smandych about **PWRDF** was also a great learning opportunity. We are looking into doing the mapping exercise in March 2024. Watch for more information.

The updated **church photo directory** is getting closer – we hope to see it soon.

**Youth group luncheon/class** will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month starting January 2024. There will be 2 classes, one for ages 13–17 and the other for those 18–30. If you are interested in getting involved or have friends who may be, please contact either Carolyn Olagbuji or Ben Girgis.

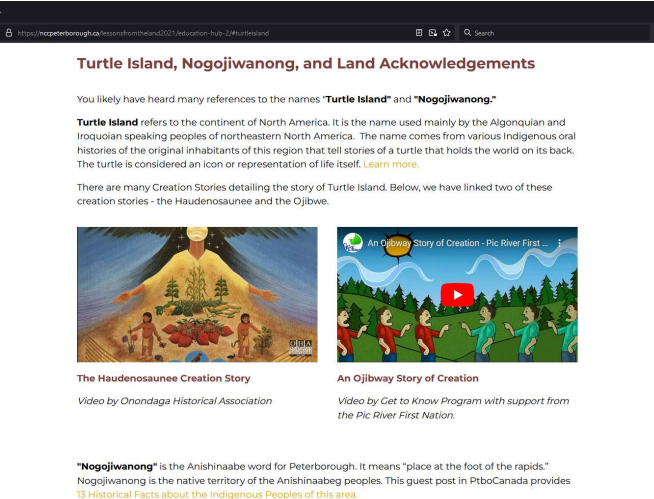
**Poinsettias** have been ordered and will be picked up December 20 to display in the church; parishioners are free to take theirs home after the Christmas services.

Vestry decided that one third of the **Christmas Offering** will be sent to **Fearless R2W**. This local group helps people who have aged out of the Child and Family Services system (generally once they turn 18). "R2W" refers to the postal code of an area in the North End where in 2014 – when the group began – 1 in 6 households were involved in the foster care system. That year 365 babies were apprehended at birth in that postal code area. Our parish support will help Fearless R2W provide a way forward through housing for families reuniting, and advocacy and proactive support in job training for young people.

**Interested in joining Vestry?** The Nomination Committee for our annual general meeting has been formed. If you are interested in being an active part of the decision-making process for the parish and the Diocese, please speak to either Caroline Olagbuji or Cathy Mondor and allow your name to stand for Vestry, Corporation or Synod Delegate. The AGM is February 11, 2024.

## Resources for Learning More About Reconciliation

The website [nccpeterborough.ca/lessonsfromtheland2021/education-hub-2/](https://nccpeterborough.ca/lessonsfromtheland2021/education-hub-2/) is a wonderful source of varied information, including short videos, on reconciliation. Although it's designed for newcomers to Canada, it's a great resource for everyone. Check it out!



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://nccpeterborough.ca/lessonsfromtheland2021/education-hub-2/>. The page title is "Turtle Island, Nogojiwanong, and Land Acknowledgements". The text explains that "Turtle Island" refers to the continent of North America and is used by the Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples. It also mentions that the name "Nogojiwanong" is the Anishinaabe word for Peterborough, meaning "place at the foot of the rapids". Below the text are two video thumbnails: "The Haudenosaunee Creation Story" and "An Ojibway Story of Creation - Pic River First".

## Centre for Christian Studies (CCS)

The Centre for Christian Studies is a national theological school that prepares people for ministries in the United Church and the Anglican Church, and offers lifelong learning for anyone who wants to deepen their faith-in-action.

"CCS Fridays" are free 1-hour online workshops that help us respond faithfully to emerging issues in local contexts. The next workshop is this Friday, December 8 at noon and the topic is **Engaging Youth in Climate Action**. Special guest will be Amy Crawford, team leader for Faith Formation and Mission with the General Council of the United Church of Canada.

Go to <http://ccsonline.ca/event/ccs-friday-youth-and-climate-justice/> for the link to the workshop, or just to learn more about the CCS.



*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Matthew 1:23*

## Christmas Hamper Program

As we have done for the past few years, this Christmas season we will not be preparing physical hampers at the church. Instead, we will purchase food vouchers to give to folks in our local community. A financial contribution will also be made to West End Drop-In (previously St. Matthews-Maryland), to purchase food vouchers for recipients in their service community.

From now until December 12 we will be collecting **monetary donations only** to support these Christmas programs. Donation cheques must be made out to St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church and designated "Hampers". They can be put in the offering plates at Sunday morning service and/or forwarded to the church office, to be received no later than Dec 12. Thanks for your consideration - your support is very much appreciated.

Note: Any donations received above the amounts needed for Christmas 2023 may be used to support other programs, including our monthly Church food voucher program, Christmas Cheer Board, Harvest, etc.



## Celebrating the Season

Our joyful preparation to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ includes a variety of things to do. Please join us for some or all of them, and remember to invite friends and neighbours too!

- **Christmas-themed Bingo** is back! If you haven't already got your bingo card, email Caroline (colagbuji@yahoo.com) or Darryl & Lois (wpgfish@mymts.net) today so you can join in the fun. Each day 4 words are drawn and shared by email. The first five people to fill their bingo card (all squares) will win a small donated prize.
- **Sundays at 10:30 am:** Each week the morning service includes lighting the Advent candle (4 candles marking our time waiting for Jesus' birth and God's healing of our world, with one lit each Sunday).
- **Wednesday Night Advent Soup and Prayer** on December 13 and December 20. A calm and lovely midweek service with music. A simple meal of soup and bread at 5:30 pm is followed by a half-hour evening prayer service at 6:30.
- **Caroling around our outdoor Christmas tree** on Sunday, December 17 at 4 pm. Songs, cookies and hot chocolate or tea for everyone!
- **Christmas Eve:**
  - 10:30 am Advent 4 Eucharist
  - 2:30 pm Christmas Eve Pageant, Eucharist and Tea
  - 8:00 pm Christmas Eve Eucharist
- **Christmas Morning:**
  - 10:30 am Service and Celebration

## St. Mary Magdalene Church Calendar

| December 2023   | January 2024  |
|---|---|
| <b>2 Sat</b> Grief Support 1:30 pm  | <b>1 Mon</b> New Year's Day   |
| <b>3 Sun</b> First Sunday of Advent<br>Eucharist 10:30 am   | <b>7 Sun</b> First Sunday of Epiphany / Baptism of Christ<br>Eucharist 10:30 am   |
| <b>4 Mon</b> Confirmation Class 7:00pm  | <b>14 Sun</b> Second Sunday of Epiphany<br>Eucharist 10:30 am                     |
| <b>10 Sun</b> Second Sunday of Advent<br>Eucharist 10:30 am   | <b>21 Sun</b> Third Sunday of Epiphany<br>Eucharist 10:30 am                      |
| <b>17 Sun</b> Third Sunday of Advent<br>Eucharist 10:30 am<br>Outdoor Caroling 4:00 pm  | <b>28 Sun</b> Fourth Sunday of Epiphany<br>Eucharist 10:30 am<br>ACF Service 7 pm |
| <b>19 Tue</b> Dakota House 3:30 pm  |   |
| <b>20 Wed</b> Vista Park Lodge 2:15 pm  |   |
| <b>21 Thu</b> River Park Gardens 10:30 am   |   |
| <b>24 Sun</b> Christmas Eve / Fourth Sunday of Advent<br>Eucharist 10:30 am<br>Pageant, Eucharist and Tea 2:30<br>Eucharist 8:00 pm |   |
| <b>25 Mon</b> Christmas Day<br>Eucharist 10:30 am<br>ACF Service 1-7 pm   |   |
| <b>31 Sun</b> First Sunday after Christmas<br>Eucharist 10:30 am<br>ACF Service 7 pm<br>New Year's Eve                              |   |

ACF = Asian Christian Fellowship service in Urdu

### Weekly Activities

|                      |                   |                    |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Bible Study          | Wednesdays 1 pm   | Contact: Val       |
| Christian Meditation | Thursdays 7:30 pm | Contact: Barbara B |
| Choir Practice       | Sundays 9 am      | Contact: Nancy     |