

News for Scattered Pews

January 2024



Val's Voice

It's the season after the Epiphany... the star has risen, the Magi have just managed to make the trip to the place of Jesus' birth and are on their way home again...

... and we, God's people, are in the midst of a whole new set of stories - Jesus' baptism, invitations to his followers, confessions of faith, as well as a whole variety of stories from the Hebrew Scriptures - God bringing light from chaos, God calling Samuel, a young boy to a life of service, Jonah hearing a word of repentance and grace, and refusing to pass it on, and so on and so on.

The stories that we hear in Scripture are not ordinary tales, but ones that capture the huge variety of what it means to be humans who are in relationship with God.

Where does the star that rose in the world, and caused the Magi to follow it, lead us? Are we interested in the adventure of listening to God, and trying to discern where God is taking us? (Or are you just trying to make it through the day - which is also fair!)

Life can offer challenges aplenty. Part of our lives as Christians is to navigate those challenges with grace and love. The lovely artwork of Seraphim of Sarov's famed encounter with the hungry bear by modern iconographer Kelly Latimore reminds us in image and word that: "Whatever you do, do it gently and unhurriedly, because virtue is not a pear to be eaten in one bite."

As a community I think that the people of St. Mary Magdalene do a great job living

unhurriedly... of sharing the love and care of God in our own little community. We also do a good job of sharing some of what we have with our



Credit: Kelly Latimore

neighbours. Our invitation is to discern where it might be that we, God's people and Jesus' friends can be of service in broader ways. Are we passing on our faith to the kids among us? Will those who come through our doors, looking for God or a place to feel at home, realize that they have found both? A place to encounter God and a home where they are welcome to live and grow, heal and stretch?

The season after Epiphany - the season named after that star - is a great time to consider how it is that in our still dark winter, we can learn to live in and share God's light in gentleness and love...

Val

Vestry Notes from December 19

As we come to the end of the year, we need about an extra month of offering to break even... not a surprise, as we passed a deficit budget at our AGM in February. Yet, it seems that with the generosity of parishioners, we always come through. **It will be so appreciated if you are able to help the parish end 2023 with balanced books this year end!**

We look forward to hearing more stories from our community at the next **"Where are you from and what is your church experience?"** potluck lunch on January 21 right after service. Enjoy the warmth of community in January, and plan to join in!

Barbara Jalibat has agreed to be the **parish's PWRDF (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund) rep.** She will be looking for 2 or 3 people to assist her. If you are interested in a small job where you will learn a bit about the work of the church, please speak to her directly.

We are hoping to have a **PWRDF Mapping Event** on March 3 or 10. A mapping event is a 3-hour workshop where we learn the story of this land: its original inhabitants, and those who arrived - or whose ancestors arrived - as immigrants. Together we will consider how we can live well together on this land. Please plan to attend this event as we work together for reconciliation! Visit <https://pwrdf.org/mapping-exercise/>

Caroline and Ben are starting a **youth group/discussion group/luncheon** in January. There will be two age groups: 13-17 and 18-30. The first gathering will be on Sunday, January 14 during our Sunday worship service. If you are a young person, or are connected to someone who might be interested, please speak to Ben or Caroline. They are excited about young people having a place to connect with each other!

We received \$2,400 for the **Christmas Hamper** offering: \$997.65 was used for parish hampers, \$600 was given to One Just City for gift cards, and \$600 will be used to support the West End Drop In in 2024. The remaining \$200 will be used to put \$100 worth of food in our parish food hamper and \$100 to purchase gift cards for parish use.



Our Annual General Meeting is **Sunday, February 11**, following the service. Please plan on attending as your input is important.

From the **Nominations committee**: currently 8 people have agreed to let their name stand for Vestry 2024, but it would be great to have more. If you are interested please speak to Rev. Val, Caroline or Carey. (Vestry is a good way to get to know other parishioners better as members make decisions and plans that shape the future of the church.)

We currently have six people who have agreed to stand as **synod delegates**. Delegates will attend a weekend Synod (meeting of the Diocese) on the evening of Thursday Oct 17, Friday Oct 18, and part of Saturday Oct 19. The slate of 3 delegates and 3 alternates will be finalized at our AGM.

Yvonne Van Dam has resigned as **office administrator**, effective Dec 29 after a year and a half of service. We are working to hire a new office administrator as soon as possible. Therasa Hunt has offered to take on the role until it is filled permanently, and so she will be in the office Tues, Wed and Thurs afternoons.

The **budget** is still being worked on and will come to the January 23 Vestry meeting to be approved for presentation at the AGM on February 11.



We welcomed ELCIC Bishop Jason Zinko on December 10.

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

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St. Mary Magdalene Church Calendar

January 2024	February 2024
1 Mon New Year's Day	4 Sun Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany Eucharist 10:30 am
7 Sun Baptism of the Lord Eucharist 10:30 am	11 Sun Last Sunday of Epiphany Eucharist 10:30 Annual General Meeting 12:00 pm
9 Tue Vista Park Lodge 2:15 pm Dakota House 3:30 pm	13 Tue Vista Park Lodge 2:15 pm Dakota House 3:30 pm
14 Sun Second Sunday after the Epiphany Eucharist 10:30 am	14 Wed Ash Wednesday
18 Thu River Park Gardens 10:30 am	18 Sun First Sunday in Lent Eucharist 10:30 am
21 Sun Third Sunday after the Epiphany Eucharist 10:30 am Potluck lunch 12:00 pm	22 Thu River Park Gardens 10:30 am
23 Tue Vestry Meeting	25 Sun Second Sunday in Lent Eucharist 10:30 am ACF Service 7 pm
28 Sun Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany Eucharist 10:30 am ACF Service 7 pm	27 Tue Vestry Meeting

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