

ST. JOHN'S



CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE 1988



LET'S PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

AWAKE! WATCH! LOOK! BEHOLD! on the horizon of our consciousness a strange and awesome figure is approaching. On Sunday, December 4 (Advent II) he will spring from the gospel text to tell us once again: PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD; MAKE STRAIGHT HIS PATHS.

John the Baptizer, as wild-eyed as the wilderness from which he emerges, is the last of the Old Testament prophets and one of the greatest preachers of all time. His preaching is powerful because in proclaiming the power of God, he is able to give those who hear him a sense of their own power as children of God. We are not helpless; what we do can make a difference.

Listen to the questions asked of John in the gospel of Advent III:

"...and the multitudes asked him, "What then shall we do? And he answered them, "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."

John does not speak in the comforting and safe concepts such as love God, repent and be saved. Rather, he tells us what shape loving God and repentance takes when it becomes a part of our living and reality of our beings. He tells us that we can do something and that in doing something, we can help to prepare the way of the Lord.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, indeed through the whole Christmas cycle ending on January 8th with the Feast of the Lord's Baptism the Jordan, we will celebrate the Word becoming flesh - God, not just speaking to us, but living among us. The Church - not a beautiful concept, but you and me - is an extension in time and history of God's word taking on flesh and entering totally and completely into human endeavour, experience and activity. On our part, as we are baptized into His body, we are baptized into His work and ministry.

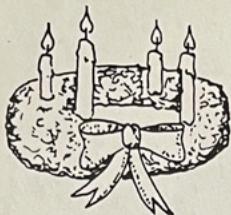
In the new year, we will have the opportunity through Day Care and through access for the handicapped of furthering our ministry and His. And though these projects seem big for a parish our size, they are only a beginning and a furtherance of the ministry of Jesus Christ that has gone on in St. John's Parish over the years.

Let us rejoice.

"Our Lord becomes incarnate in every human birth.  
Created in His image, we must make peace on earth.



## THE CUSTOM OF THE ADVENT WREATH



Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, to see the Babe lying in a manger.

-From A Bidding Prayer, Advent Festival, The Book of Occasional Services (American)

The Advent Wreath is a visual symbol marking the progress of the season of Advent. Like the Christmas tree, the Advent Wreath has its origins in pre-Christian festivals of light which celebrated the winter solstice. The custom of the lighted wreath came through the Lutheran Church in Scandinavia. In most Christian churches it has come into use as a reminder of our time of preparation for the coming of Christ, both at Christmas time and at the end of the world.

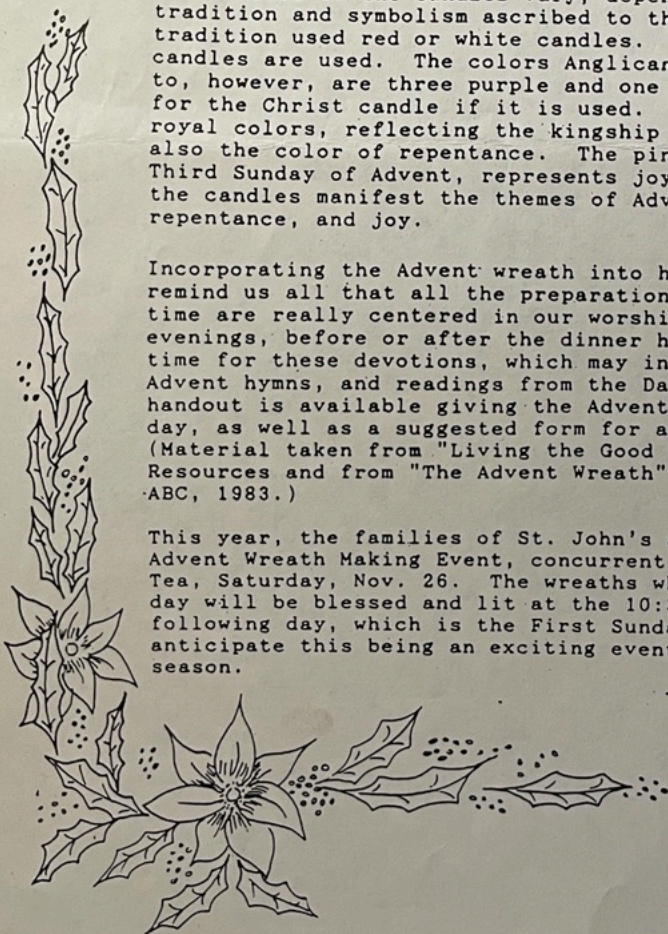
The wreath usually has four candles, representing the four Sundays of Advent, and sometimes a fifth candle, the "Christ candle" is added in the center. One candle is lit on the first Sunday and an additional one is lit on each Sunday until Christmas Eve, when the Christ candle is lit. (Sometimes all the candles are replaced with white or red on Christmas Eve, and the wreath is then lit daily until Epiphany.) The candles we use in the Advent wreath remind us that the Incarnation has transformed the darkness of hatred and evil into the light of joy and love.

The colors of the candles vary, depending on the particular tradition and symbolism ascribed to them. The early Lutheran tradition used red or white candles. Sometimes dark blue candles are used. The colors Anglicans are most accustomed to, however, are three purple and one pink candle, and white for the Christ candle if it is used. Purple or dark blue are royal colors, reflecting the kingship of Christ; purple is also the color of repentance. The pink candle, lit on the Third Sunday of Advent, represents joy. Thus the colors of the candles manifest the themes of Advent: kingship, repentance, and joy.

Incorporating the Advent wreath into home devotions can help remind us all that all the preparations going on at this busy time are really centered in our worship life. On these dark evenings, before or after the dinner hour may be the best time for these devotions, which may include short prayers, Advent hymns, and readings from the Daily Lectionary. A handout is available giving the Advent readings for each day, as well as a suggested form for a short prayer service. (Material taken from "Living the Good News" Seasonal Resources and from "The Advent Wreath" brochure, published by ABC, 1983.)

This year, the families of St. John's are gathering for an Advent Wreath Making Event, concurrent with the annual Holly Tea, Saturday, Nov. 26. The wreaths which are made on that day will be blessed and lit at the 10:30 service on the following day, which is the First Sunday of Advent. We anticipate this being an exciting event to start the Advent season.

-Maggie Muldoon





### Successful Mission



Our "Faith-in-Action" Mission was a success in the content, numbers and spirit. Bishop Joe Fricker's addresses on "The Christian Community: Gathering, Celebrating and Being Sent" will give the Staff, Wardens and people of St. John's much to think about in our future life together.

Each evening opened with hymns and a Liturgy form the B.A.S.: A Service of Light; A Service of Water; and a concluding Eucharistic Celebration with the congregation gathered around the altar for the Eucharistic prayer and Holy Communion.

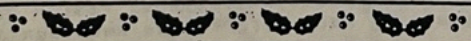
We come from many backgrounds and walks of life to be the "gathered Church," the Body of Christ. The Scriptures have their place within the life of the Church and flow from the Church. Anglican theology says "Yes, but" to the Scriptures; "Yes, but" to Tradition; "Yes, but" to Reason. Christians are called to participate in the Pascal Mystery and be baptizers; the Church is called to be a "Baptizing Community." We are called together to share in one bread and one cup which is far more than a memorial meal.

Bishop Fricker gave an excellent overview of what has been happening to our Anglican Church in Canada in recent years. Our Church has moved from a triumphalistic establishment to a church that is much smaller. Changes in our culture have had a major impact on the way we do things as Anglicans today. Since the time of Bishop John Robinson's book, "Nearest to God", published in the 50's, there has been firmament not only in theological schools but, also in the ordained ministry and the Book of Alternative Services as well as a new emphasis on the ministry of the laity and the inclusion of children in liturgy as well as the education are signs of "a church becoming".

Our attendance was seventy on Sunday night and about forty on each of Monday and Tuesday nights, despite rain and a busy fall season. For the final time in over a decade I saw a bishop of the church in the ancient vale of teacher. The last evening following the seminar in the Liturgy, the Bishop with staff and miter, came down into the midst of the gathered People of God and led the assembly in the renewal of baptismal vows.

Many thanks to Robert, O.H.C., Alan Waters and his committee, Sandy, Jennifer and the choir and Evelyn Butler as well as to all who attended our Faith-in-Action Mission. As one who has conducted many Missions over the past twenty years - I give Bishop Joe and those who attended the mission an A+.

William, O.H.C.



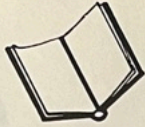
### Some Special People

Several times each month some friends and co-workers, along with Robert and William, meet with the parents of "special needs children" at the Priory. Most, but not all, are a part of our parish family. The others are highly supportive of the welcome feeling they have received in our parish community.

As a staff person, as well as a member of St. John's, I feel that we are richly blessed by the ministry of these "special needs people" to us, especially the "special needs children" in our midst. To paraphrase the gospel: "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

William, O.H.C.





## BOOK REVIEW

### THE VISION - Tom Brown Jr.

America's foremost wilderness survivalist, Tom Brown Jr., is not widely appreciated as a spiritual writer. Yet, *The Vision* is the most thought provoking book on the subject of spirituality I have read since *Seeking God*, and certainly the most emotionally involving book I have ever read!

Tom Brown Jr. was an American 7 year old living in New Jersey on the edge of the wild Pine Barrens when he met his best friend's grandfather, an old Apache scout. The story of his early training with *Stalking Wolf* is contained in his early books, "*The Tracker*" and "*The Search*". In and of themselves they are fascinating reading as bit by bit *Stalking Wolf* teaches all he knows of the native American way of life. Bit by bit Tom Brown learns the names, functions and values of the whole natural world of Pine Barren. He becomes a skilled Apache tracker. He learns how to live in the wilderness, in all seasons, alone and without anything at all but what nature herself provides. The essence of these natural skills is contained in his 5 part series of *Wilderness Survival* manuals. His book, *The Vision* deals with similar themes and events but in a spiritual context, as though by *Stalking Wolf*, the old Apache scout.

For *Stalking Wolf*, the natural and spiritual worlds are intimately intertwined. His word for the Supreme Being is "The Spirit that moves in All Things", and indeed he teaches us to relate to this spirit in his whole created order. Inanimate rocks, earth plants and all orders of animals all contain the divine spark, and in approaching any of it man must do so with the utmost reverence. In fact *Stalking Wolf's* very life is a moment by moment prayer to "The Spirit that Moves in All Things". In a moving section Brown describes *Stalking Wolf* taking a drink of water unseen. First *Stalking Wolf* stopped by the stream, bent over the water and gave thanks for the gift of pure water. Then he waded into the water and enjoyed playing in it, splashing and diving around. Finally he cupped his hands and drank as much as he needed. Such a simple act approached with spiritual rapture.

The implications of this spiritual view are enormous. Nothing in nature is "killed" unnecessarily, and all that is taken is used to the utmost. An animal that is killed is used in its entirety, for food, clothing, tools and shelter. Rocks, plants etc, are not disturbed except for a specific purpose. It is the ultimate ecological lifestyle.

At times of crisis or uncertainty *Stalking Wolf* directly seeks spiritual guidance through a series of spiritual exercises. The Sweat Lodge was a form of group fasting and prayer which often lead the individual on a more personalized journey called the *Visions Quest*. The *Vision Quest* required the individual to withdraw to the deep solitude of the wilderness for a fixed period of prayer and strict fasting. In the final chapter of the book the author describes a prolonged *Vision Quest* undertaken at a particularly holy site in the American South West.

The *Vision* that resulted is extremely unsettling in the view that it gives of the state of modern civilization.

This final *Vision* in the book is its highlight, in that it is a very powerful indictment of modern civilization. The book is valuable as well in that it speaks directly to the individual spiritual quest. After all, did not almost all our great prophets (Christ, Mohammed, Moses, Gandhi) withdraw into the wilderness for period of fasting and prayer? Not only must the physical and mental aspects of the personality be attuned with the spiritual, but the whole individual must be attuned to the natural created order. That being so, the individual can experience "The Spirit that Moves in all Things" at all times and in all the mundane things of life. How very Benedictine!

Jim Crumney





### PREPARATION

At this season of the year, most of us are busily preparing- cooking, shopping, planning, practising- for the great feast of Christmas. Most of us tend to wish, at times, that it didn't's take as much preparation with the accompanying costs, time and energy.

And yet, imagine waking up some day to have someone say that it is Christmas, and all the preparation has been done. Although we might breathe a sigh of relief initially, I would imagine that the enjoyment of the day would be considerably diminished as we have not had a chance to anticipate our part of the celebration. Our part of the preparation would be missing.

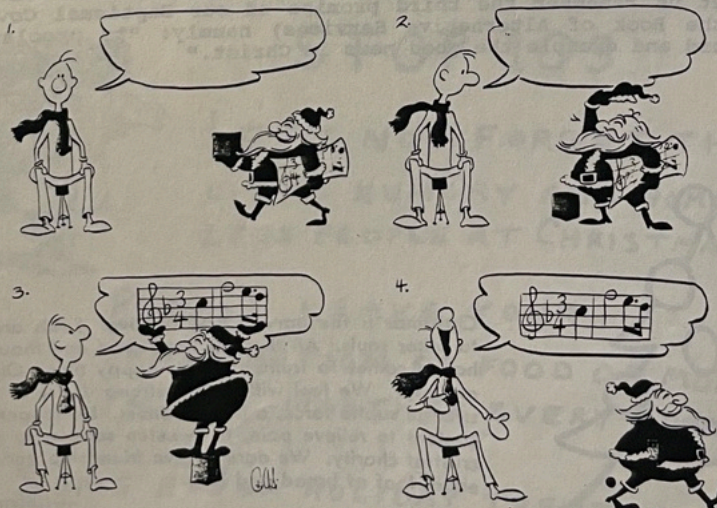
As we prepare for the weekly Eucharist, too, time is given for preparation. Hymns and other music are chosen well in advance to give adequate time for the music leaders to learn their parts. The anticipation is in the air as we look forward to the music for the liturgy. Teachers prepare to present the gospel to the children so that they too can understand it. Readers, servers and sidespeople prepare their part in the celebration. The hosts for the week may spend time baking bread to share.

All these preparations are essential to the smooth running of the liturgy, and our joyful anticipation of the Eucharist is an integral part of the weekly gathering of the community.

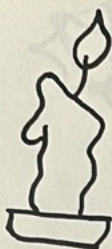
How does the person who participates by their presence in the congregation prepare for the celebration? Think about it.

(possible answers to this question are invited from anyone who reads this. Please write and give some ideas for the next newsletter.)

Sandra Nemenyi  
Choir Director







Anglican Church Women

From the office of the Diocesan President-Gladys McClellan

"As I write this article the Thanksgiving weekend has just come to a colourful finale. During the weekend, as we made preparation for the Thanksgiving dinner, my mind went back many times to a dear friend who used to say to me in my harassed moments of young motherhood, "Gladys, take time to sit down and count your blessings". I did that and have just reread the service for a Parish Thanksgiving on pages 668-673 of the Book of Alternative Services. The litany in the Prayers of the People expresses very well some of my thoughts which I believe you will affirm:

We thank you Lord:

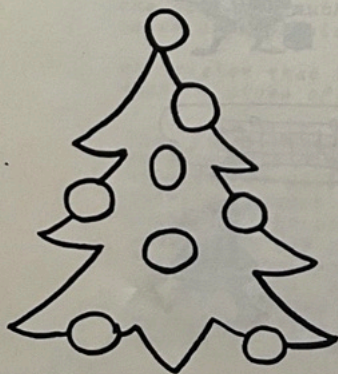
- For a church building where we may still know that you are God
- For the past and the vision of the future that lies ahead
- For the gift of the Holy Spirit and the new life in Baptism
- For the holy eucharist in which we have a foretaste of your Eternal Kingdom
- For the faith of those who have gone before us and for our encouragement by their perseverance.

As I gave thanks for the world around me and gloried in the colour of the passing season, I was brought to an abrupt halt in my reverie when I read two separate articles which claimed that if we did not arrest the ongoing pollution of acid rain, we would not have our beautiful trees within twenty years nor would we have a maple syrup industry. Truly a cause for prayer to ensure that the natural blessing which we give thanks for today will still be here for our grandchildren and great grandchildren."

Chancel News-Jean McCallum

In spite of our various background and personalities, Chancel workers share a common bond: their love of work in their parish sanctuary. Quite often congregations arrive before the commencement of worship unaware of our loving preparation and readying of the Sanctuary. This readiness allows worship in a dignified and beautiful setting.

As we continue to care for the sanctuaries of our churches let us remember the third promise of our Baptismal Covenant (the Book of Alternative Services) namely: "to proclaim by word and example the good news in Christ."



Christmas is the harvest time of love. Souls are drawn to other souls. All that we have read and thought and hoped comes to fruition at this happy time. Our spirits are astir. We feel within us a strong desire to serve, a strange subtle force, a new kindness. No longer are we content to relieve pain, to sweeten sorrow, to give the crust of charity. We dare to give friendship, service, the equal loaf of bread and love.

—Helen Keller.



## The Baptism of the Lord.



## Holy Matrimony



### PARISH REGISTER

#### Baptisms

Jessica Rae Bowman will receive the Sacrament of Baptism on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ on January 8, 1989.

#### Marriages

Reginald Bloxam and Deborah Ann Luther, on November 12, 1988.

#### Rest in Peace

Mable Lillian McGuire - October 14  
Jack Leonard Brittain - November 7  
Marjorie White - November 8



As often as you did it for one  
of my least brothers, you did  
it for me.



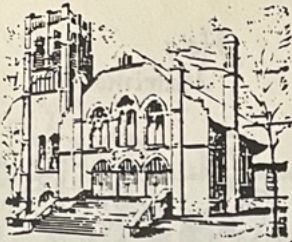
## STOP 103

LET'S NOT FORGET THE  
CITY'S HUNGRY AND HOME-  
LESS PEOPLE AT CHRISTMAS!

PLEASE LEAVE YOUR  
CONTRIBUTION OF FOOD OR MONEY  
IN THE NARTHEX EVERY SUNDAY.

SOME EXTRA HOLIDAY TREATS  
WOULD BE APPRECIATED!



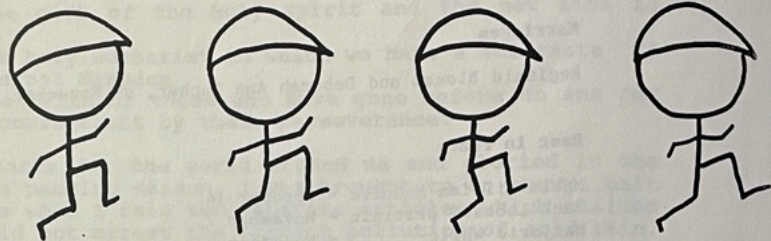


### Pennies for St. John's

What can you buy for a penny these days? Very little!! But - if we all put our pennies together, they can buy a great deal.

Several years ago, we began to collect our pennies to make "A Mile of Pennies", for a total of \$844.80. When that was completed, we didn't want to stop, so we began to climb a "Ladder of Pennies", which totalled \$500.00. The money collected in this way helps with some of the incidental expenses of the parish.

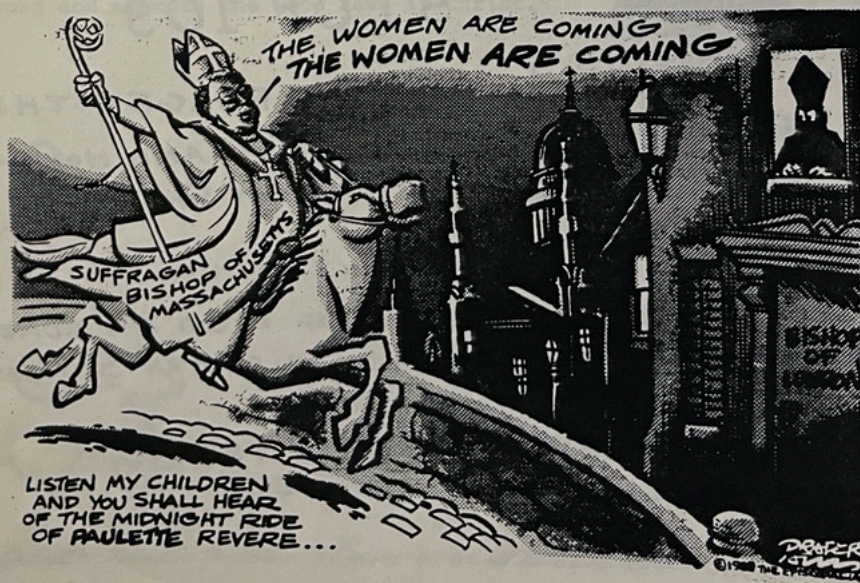
Now we are collecting "Pennies for St. John's", to help with some of the repairs and renovations which will be carried out in the coming months. Please save your pennies and put them in the jar outside the kitchen during coffee hour every Sunday, and watch the red bricks grow on the poster.



### SUCCESSFUL DEANERY DINNER

The Annual Dinner of West Toronto Deanery, which was held at St. John's for the first time on Friday, November 4, was a great success. Most of the credit for this goes to Stephanie McCullam and her "kitchen crew", who cooked and served a delicious meal which was enjoyed by a good number of clergy and laity from several churches.

The guest speaker was Mike Filey, local historian and author, who fascinated those present with his slides and witty tales of Toronto's growth from its early days as a meeting and trading place for neighbouring Indian tribes, to the present.



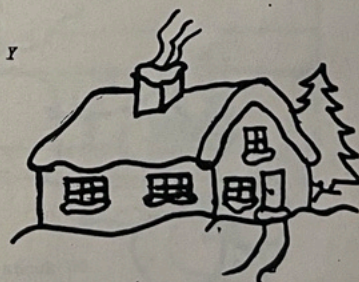


## IMPORTANT DATES

- Sunday, December 11 - Advent III  
High Park Girls Choir  
Christmas Concert - 4 p.m.  
Director: Eroll Gay  
Reception afterwards in Parish Hall
- Sunday, December 18 - Form 10:30 Eucharist  
Speaker: Gerrard Kennedy  
Director of the Daily Bread Food Bank  
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT  
DECORATING OF CHURCH, A N D  
POTLUCK - 4 p.m.
- Saturday December 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE  
10:30 p.m. - Carols and Music  
11:00 p.m. - Midnight Eucharist of the Nativity
- Sunday, December 25 CHRISTMAS DAY  
8:30 Eucharist  
10:30 Eucharist of the Nativity
- Friday, January 6 - EPIPHANY  
6 p.m. - Eucharist
- Sunday, January 8 Feast of the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ  
8:30 Eucharist  
10:30 Baptism and Eucharist
- Sunday, January 29 - Vestry after 10:30 Eucharist



There will be an  
**O P E N   H O U S E**  
and  
**C H R I S T M A S   P A R T Y**  
at  
Glendownwyne House  
(218 Glendonwyne)  
Tuesday Evening  
13 December 1988  
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.



Please, come to see the  
wonderful work that is taking place



## CHRISTMAS CAKE SALE

Once again, the Cubs, Brownies, and Pathfinders will be selling Christmas cakes to raise much-needed funds for their activities. The cakes will cost \$5.00, and will be available early in December. Please support the boys and girls!



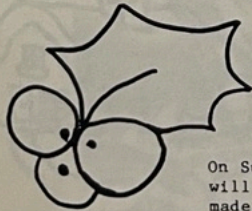
**A CHRISTMAS PRAYER:** *For the happiness of our earthly life; for peaceful homes and healthful days; for our powers of mind and body; for faithful friends; for the joy of loving and being loved; above all, for the gift of thy dear Son, we thank thee, O Lord.*

## A HAPPY NEW YEAR

New mercies, new blessings,  
New light on thy way;  
New courage, new hope,  
And new strength for each day;  
New notes of thanksgiving,  
New chords of delight,  
New praise in the morning,  
New songs in the night;  
New wine in thy chalice,  
New altars to raise;  
New fruits for thy Master,  
New garments of praise;  
New gifts from His treasure,  
New smiles from His face;  
New streams from the Fountain  
Of infinite grace;  
New stars for thy crown,  
And new tokens of love;  
New gleams of the glory  
That waits thee above;  
New light of His countenance,  
Full and unpriced;  
All this be the joy  
Of thy new life in Christ!

—F. R. Havergal

## Sing a Song of Christmas



## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

On Sunday, December 11, the High Park Girls' Choir will present a concert in our Church. The Choir is made up of 55 girls from some 15 different schools in Toronto, and is directed by our parishioners Ann Cooper Gay and Errol Gay. The concert will take place at 4:00 p.m., and you are invited to enjoy a "Welcome Yule" presentation by one of Toronto's foremost youth choirs. Tickets are available from Ann, Errol, Heather, or Erin Gay at \$8.00 for adults and \$5.00 for seniors and students.



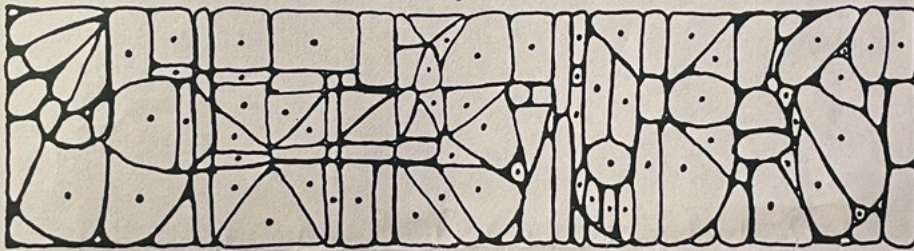




### *Bible verse*

Choose one crayon. Color each space that has a dot. Then read the Bible verse.

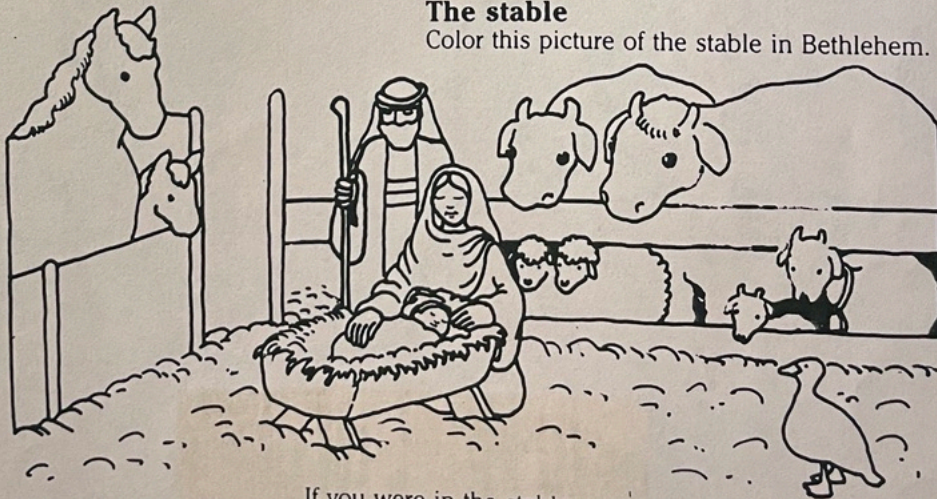
She will have a son, and you will name him



Matthew 1:21

### **The stable**

Color this picture of the stable in Bethlehem.



If you were in the stable. . . .

- What could you see?
- What could you hear?
- What could you smell?





Once again, the Cubs, Brownies, and  
be selling Christmas cakes to raise  
for their activities. The cakes will  
will be available early in December.  
the boys and girls!



(St. John's Church, West Toronto  
288 Humberside Ave.  
Toronto, Ontario M6P 1L5  
Church 763-2393

Mr. & Mrs. C. Weston  
19 Hillside Ave.  
Toronto  
M6P 1J4