

ST. JOHN'S



CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE 1989

The Infant Who Illumines Our Darkness



Preparation
Celebration
Darkness of Days
-advance
And yet
-not by chance
A light
-a star
-in distance far
To give us sight
To show the way
Proclaiming a birth
A time of mirth
-and mystery
O happy three
The ones who followed
That light
-that star
-from distance far
And found
O happy morn
Jesus Christ Our Lord is born



"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen"

A writer once described a Christmas Eve he had spent with his wife in a drab little cafe in Paris. Everyone was eating in stony silence. An old flower woman came through the door. She went from table to table. No sales. She sat down to a bowl of soup. Into this sad scene a young sailor rose from his table where he had been smiling and writing a letter. He went to the flower lady's table. "Happy Christmas," he said as he picked up two corsages. "How much are they?" "Two francs, Monsieur." He pressed one of the corsages flat and put it into his letter with a kiss, and handed the woman a twenty franc note. "I don't have any change, Monsieur, I'll get some from the waiter," she said. "No, Ma'am," said the sailor, leaning over and kissing her ancient cheek. "This is my Christmas present to you." The sailor then went to the writer's table: "May I present these flowers to your daughter?" he asked. He gave them the corsage and wished them a Holy Christmas, and departed. Everyone had stopped eating to watch the sailor. When he left there was a deep silence. Then suddenly Christmas exploded throughout the restaurant.

A sailor, a letter, flowers, a kiss, a gift, a compliment, a greeting - all from one person to transform a dull drab place into a glowing and joyful place. Because of Jesus and his joy in one heart. All it takes is love and the risk of showing that love by giving it to others.

Happy Christmas

Robert Hayler & Co.



"Some people always have to bring religion into Christmas!"



We are fortunate this year to have two Trinity students doing their field work with us at St. John's. Though most of you have met them, I've asked Jim and Gary to write a brief introduction of themselves for the newsletter. These are given below:

Hello, I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself to those of you whom I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet. My name is Jim Lever and I am one of the two divinity students who will be working this year at St. John's as part of my studies. I am presently working towards establishing a young persons group here at St. John's. I am also doing some parish visiting and hope to do some work with the Sunday school. If you have a question about any of these things or if we simply haven't had the opportunity to get acquainted yet please feel free to grab me by the arm and introduce yourself on Sunday or call me at 978-2517. I look forward to meeting each of you this year.

Yours in Christ,
Jim Lever



I am originally from Brockville, and after studying history at the University of Toronto, I stayed in Toronto and worked for two years in business. I began the MBA program last year, but after considering where I would want to apply what I learned, I transferred to Trinity College to pursue my interest in ministry. I hope to complete the MBA after the Master of Divinity. My home parish is St. Thomas's Huron Street, and I am in the process of becoming a postulant for the Diocese of Ontario. My interests include cycling, hiking, storytelling, and photography. I am pursuing my interest in the environment, socially responsible investment, and international debt as a member of the Public Social Responsibility Unit and the ecumenical Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Social Responsibility.

At St. John's, I will be involved in two main areas: First, as part of the support group for John Harvey, I will be spending time with him each week, and helping him get to and from church on Sundays. Second, as I am not a "cradle Anglican", (I was raised in the Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian Churches) the experience of a rich liturgical tradition is new to me. To learn more, I am participating on the Liturgy Committee, and I assisted in the Christian Education unit on the Eucharist, which led to the Instructed Eucharist.

GARY VAN DER MEER



The Christian Year

WE STAND AT THE HEAD of the Christian year. I am not sure that there is anything quite like it in the world; this composite of sanctities, this interweaving of story and prayer, of song and color, by which Christ is portrayed and brought before us. It is a solemn pageantry which effects association with Him whose life is being traced. It is a solemn processional in which we actually move in spirit. It is an annual miracle, the marvel of which we only miss because we are so familiar with it.

It seems to me that, standing at the head of the Christian year, we might well stand back, for a moment, and think in the large of our Lord and Saviour, whose steps we are once more about to follow as the sanctities unfold themselves.

—Miles Lowell Yates



Prepare
the way
for the
Lord

A Prayer for Faithfulness

When our lives are empty, our hearts unsatisfied, our spirits waiting,
Christ of the Bethlehem stable, be born in us.

When we find temptation, and the seduction of power, and wealth
and ease and pleasure, hard to face,

Christ of the desert wilderness, pray with us.

When we rejoice in health, happiness and well-being, and feel the
warmth of God's love on our faces,

Christ of the Roads of Galilee, walk with us.

When we seek our own interest,

our own good before that of others and of God,

Christ of the Temple cleansing, deal with us.

When our decisions are hard, our paths stoney and we cannot see our
way,

Christ of the Garden of Gethsemane, weep with us.

When we face the bitter paths of suffering and loss,
and our hearts cry out "Why me, Lord,"

Christ of Calvary, stay with us.

When at the last we end our journey and bring our lives into thy
keeping,

Christ of the empty tomb, welcome us.



ADVENT SEASON and THE SCRIPTURES
(Bible Study)

There is some uncertainty as to what the dominant theme of Advent should be. Is it focused upon the traditional "last things" - the end of the world, the general resurrection, the last judgment, and the new heaven and new earth? Or is it a period of preparation for the feast of the incarnation? Does it place us back in the period of salvation history prior to the coming of the Messiah?

The first Sunday in Advent ties up the old future-eschatological themes. From the second Sunday in Advent on, we are introduced to themes in preparation for the incarnation.



Advent I: Isaiah 2: 1-5
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

Theme: How do we become aware of the nature of our age in such a way that we are enabled to live creatively and responsibly as Christians?
What primary values should we seek for our society? (Isaiah)
For our personal lives? (Romans)
How do we learn to see the hand of God in the events of our time? (Matthew)



Advent II: Isaiah 11: 1-10
Romans 15: 4-13
Matthew 3: 1-12

Theme: The future holds great hope both for our personal lives and for human society, but it can be achieved only if we offer ourselves to the Lord of the future for its fulfillment.
That self-offering is shown as:
servanthood (Isaiah)
reconciling community (Romans)
willingness to be stewards and walk with God to build the future. (Matthew)



Advent III: Isaiah 35: 1-10
James 5: 7-10
Matthew 11: 2-11

Theme: We wait anxiously for a time of less threat. We long to have seemingly unanswerable questions answered. How do we think and act in such an age of mingled fear and hope? We envisage the transformation we long for. (Isaiah)
We realize that all social structures are under God's judgment. (James)
We look beyond the prison of our own limitations for signs of the activity of God in history. (Matthew)



Advent IV: Isaiah 7:10-16
Romans 1: 1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

Theme: Seeking and discerning signs of God's activity in human events, then responding in faith. Recognizing that God opens the future by constant birthing of human gifts. (Isaiah)
Acknowledging the ultimate embodiment of human gifts in Christ. (Romans)
Recognizing the necessity to accept God's work as it changes our world. (Matthew)

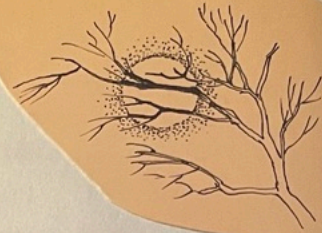
The above is adapted from: Preaching the New Lectionary by Reginald H. Fuller; and Child of Peace, Lord of Life by Herbert O'Driscoll.



REFLECTIONS
ON
FAITH AND ECOLOGY

by

Gavin Miller



REFLECTIONS ON FAITH AND ECOLOGY

A good deal of attention is now focussed on the ecological crisis. Environmental items such as the greenhouse threat and tropical deforestation appear daily in the news. We are always hearing about "sustainable development". Things seem to be great for those people such as myself who have been concerned about the environment for a long time. Then why do we feel a certain degree of skepticism?

Much of the environmental rhetoric these days has a tone that is reassuring to our current world view. It appeals to human self-interest. For example, "sustainable development", an idea first propounded in the Bruntlandt report, tends to give people the idea that we can have our cake and eat it, too. That is, we can continue to grow and consume endlessly, provided we do it more efficiently, co-operatively, and scientifically. I am not intending to knock the Bruntlandt report here, which does offer some very important points, especially as regarding the need for international co-operation and concern for economic justice and improved standards of living in the Third World.

However, everyone is on the bandwagon now. Ecology has now become marketable. I have seen "green" disposable diapers for sale in Loblaws, and McDonald's plastic park furniture made from recycled Big Mac containers at an environmental trade show. Urban sprawl continues to expand over southern Ontario's precious farmland, although the new subdivisions sometimes have storm water retention ponds that reduce impacts on streams and ravines. Urban planners still operate on the 1950's assumption of universal automobile use.

A clean-up of pollution is not enough. A car that pollutes less still takes up an incredible amount of land for roads and parking lots; it still uses up great amounts of metal and other resources. There has to be a deep look at the roots of the problem. What is the world-view of western civilization? Were we created to be infinite consumers? Is there any real hope?

I believe that we need to look at the ecological crisis from a faith perspective. This is what has been lacking so far. As a society, we no longer look at ourselves as God's creatures, but as an aggregate of wants and demands. There is little sense of the Absolute. Instead of looking to creation for guidance in how to live (lilies and sparrows are great teachers, as Jesus knew), we are busy "creating values" and engaging in "time management". Sin is, perhaps, the human tendency to deny our own limitations and pretend to be omnipotent.

Somewhere at the bottom of all this, we also need hope, and this hope can be found in our faith. This gives us the strength to continue to protect the earth. The reality of Jesus confers hope and assures us that love is stronger than death.





A CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

MAGGIE ROSE DANIELS MULDOON

AND

FLOYD PATRICK BURR

A large number of St. John's parishioners joined the family and friends of Maggie and Rick to celebrate their marriage at Trinity College Chapel on Sunday November 26th. The service was a joyous occasion, enhanced by traditional and contemporary music. The reception which followed in the College's Seeley Hall was great fun, with wonderful food and fellowship. The presence and participation of a large number of children added to the happy atmosphere. We will long remember the cutting of the wedding cake, at which the bride and groom were so forceful that the table collapsed! The cake survived and tasted delicious!

Thank you, Maggie and Rick, for sharing your happiness with us.



MINISTERING AMONG PEOPLE

1120 OSSINGTON AVENUE, 588-1963

A Charitable Organization No. 0649004-01-13

Dear friends at St. John's, West Toronto:

Thank you very much for your donation to STOP 103. The many supporters who keep us supplied with food, clothing and household articles are a vital and essential part of our ministry to the needy. Not only do you provide us with a ready supply of urgently needed items, but you eliminate the necessity for us to buy them, thereby saving money for the items that must be bought.

God bless you for your generous help. We appreciate everything that you do for us.

Sincerely,

Rick Myer
The Rev. Rick Myer,
Executive Director





HEAR YE!

HEAR YE!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
&
POT LUCK SUPPER
SUNDAY DECEMBER 17
4 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CAKES
\$5.00
available from
Beavers, Brownies, Cubs,
Guides, Pathfinders & Rangers
They make great gifts
for neighbours, teachers, etc.
Get yours soon!

CHRISTMAS SERVICES
DECEMBER 24
9 p.m. - Hot cider, wine & cheese
in the Parish Hall
10:30 p.m. - Eucharist
December 25
DECEMBER 25
10:30 a.m. - Family Eucharist

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT

The Christian Education Committee has had a very busy fall. We have now completed the first two units using the alternate plan for curriculum which we had decided upon for this year. In addition, we have had to adjust to our new surroundings in the renovated space. Both changes had their joys and their frustrations.

Instructed Baptism and Eucharist

It was very exciting and great fun to finish off our units on Baptism and Eucharist with the instructed services. (It was also very timely as I was studying both sacraments in my History of Liturgy and Pastoral Liturgy courses. Contrary to a rumor being spread by Brother William, my wedding will not be an "instructed" service as you will know by the time of publication.) I hope that the whole parish benefitted from this instruction. I want to thank all the teachers and students for their cooperation in these efforts, and to especially thank Dean Samaras and Cynthia Stoddart-Webster for their leadership on the Eucharist unit.

Upcoming Curriculum Units

The next unit in the Sunday School curriculum is on the Story of Creation, through Noah. Anne Ruta will head up the team for this unit. Our Christmas program is tied to this theme.

After Christmas, we continue with the Old Testament, doing a unit on Abraham and Sarah and the prophets, which will be headed up by Sheila Crumme. After that we focus on the life of Jesus for two units, then two units on church history.

New Format for the "Focus"

In prior years the "Focus" was usually done around the lessons for the day, which provided a link between what was being heard by both congregations during the Liturgy of the Word. That was when we were using the "Living the Good News" curriculum, which was based on the lectionary. This year, because we are not using this curriculum, we decided that a better way to create the link between both communities was to provide a "Focus" that introduced our Sunday School topic for the week. Therefore, we have talked about water, the Jewish table blessings, etc. during the focus. We hope these are informative for both the children and the adults.



OH! FRUSTRATION

The Sunday School class had studied all about Noah and the Ark. Suddenly one boy whispered to another, "Hey, wouldn't it be great, all that water and no people? It would be great fishing!"

"Yeah - maybe," replied the other,
"But remember, they only had two worms."

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WARDEN'S REPORT

Our major pre-occupation during the summer and fall of 1989 has continued to be the creation of the Early Enrichment Day Care Centre. We have, with many others, been busy helping this outstanding facility in its birth pangs and feel greatly rewarded. Official opening day, November 8th, was a landmark occasion. We thank you all for your patience during all the disruption throughout the spring and summer months. The second exciting change is the completion of the elevator access in the tower. We are delighted to now have this welcome improvement to our facilities. In our on-going efforts to overcome water seepage problems, the eavestroughing on the west side of the building has been replaced and further work will be done in the upper-tower floor area where water damage has occurred.

In preparation for 1990, the Stewardship Committee will be sending a letter and commitment card for your consideration. We ask that you respond to this annual appeal as generously as possible so that we may prepare our budget realistically for next year. Dennis Richardson, deputy warden, has agreed to act as nomination chairman for election of officers in January at the Vestry meeting.

We are sure that most of you are aware that there have been recent staff changes. John Bateman, after yeoman service in the office as both secretary, manager, computer expert and source of information, has stepped down. We miss him in these capacities and wish him well in his retirement from office duties.

Lynda Woolrich has taken on the newly created position of administrative assistant for both Day Care and the Church office - a challenging undertaking which she is handling well.

Brother Orlando who looked after our building and grounds has moved on to an academic program and cannot continue as our sexton. We wish him every success in his endeavours. Wally Barrett has been appointed to this position and works also as caretaker for the day-care centre. We welcome him to our midst and appreciate the extra duties he has undertaken so enthusiastically during the transition period in our building.

Another staff change of a different nature also must be noted. Our energetic church school supervisor Maggie Muldoon's marriage on November 26th was a very happy event which many of us were able to attend. Best wishes from us all.

We look forward to a busy Christmas schedule at St. John's and wish everyone of our parishioners A Very Merry Christmas!

Kathie Gower - Rector's Warden
Joan Devitt - People's Warden
Evelyn Butler - Deputy Warden
Dennis Richardson - Deputy Warden



TRUST FUND UPDATE

Just to let you know that we have a new name which is: **WEST END SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT GROUP**. Also, a very big thank you to all our friends who, once again, so generously supported our October 14th. Garage Sale. Thanks to your contributions of goods, we were able to raise \$1049.31! As Fr. Robert mentioned in his sermon on All Saints Day, we can't thank you all by name but thanks to all the Saints who gave of their time to bring items, to price them and to sell them - to bake items and to buy items - to set up and to put away - and to Br. William Sibley, O.H.C. and all the brothers at Holy Cross Priory for the splendid location!

LITURGY AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE

LITURGY - "the work of the people" - is an act performed for the good of the community. It should bring together all the elements of our life, both individual and corporate. The effect of the Liturgy must not stop at the door of the Church building, but should enable every member of the congregation to integrate the blessings of the Eucharist into his or her daily life.

This has been the focus of some very lively discussion at recent meetings of the Liturgy and Worship Committee. Some of the topics discussed include: the effect of the Liturgy on the lives of those participating; the entrance rites; the prayers of the people; the Advent and Christmas services. A successful workshop for readers was held on a recent Saturday morning, and the improved quality of the readings has shown the benefit of it.


The committee will continue with its effort to make the Liturgy meaningful in the life of the parish and in the lives of all parishioners.



ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

St. John's ACW would like to express their thanks to those who contributed home-baked goods and crafts and all those who assisted in so many other ways to help make our Holly Tea, held on December 2nd, such a success.

PENNIES FOR ST. JOHN'S



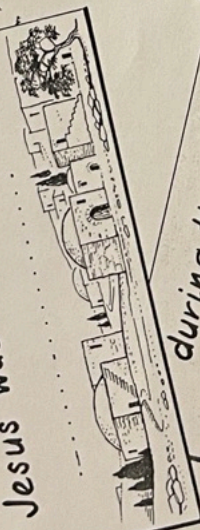
Our thanks go to Nancy Weston for the original idea expressed in the new Chart which is now available on a trolley outside the kitchen every Sunday. As we are only half way towards our goal of \$200 in 1989, we urge you to bring in those pennies which you have been saving for us. We do thank you in advance.

(From the "Money Counters")

Picture Quiz

Matthew 2:1, 2
TEV

1 Jesus was born in



2 during the time that

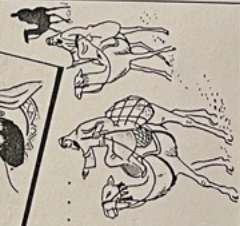


3 Soon


afterwards some

came

from



KIDS' KORNER

4 They asked, 'Where is the baby born to be King of the Jews?' We saw His  and have come to worship Him.

5 One of the prophets in the Bible wrote that Jesus, the Messiah, would be born in Bethlehem.

6 Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem saying,

'I have heard that you have found the child, and now you wish to worship him. So tell me where he is, and I will give you a reward.'

You can read Herod's message by holding up the page to a mirror.

What do you think King Herod really meant to do? Did he want to worship Jesus?



RECIPE FOR THE NEW YEAR

Take 12 fine, full grown months. See that they are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, rancour, hate, jealousy; cleanse them completely from every clinging spite. Pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness; in short, see that these months are free from all the past.

This batch will keep for just one year. Do not attempt to make up a whole batch at once, but prepare one day at a time as follows:

Into each day put 24 parts of faith; 23 of patience; 20 of courage; 18 of work; 6 of prayer; 4 of meditation, and 1 well-thought-out resolution. If you have no conscientious scruples, add these four parts—a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play and a heaping cupful of good humour.

—Selected

“Think on these things . . .”

It was when Lucifer first congratulated himself upon his angelic behaviour that he became the tool of evil.—*Dag Hammarskjöld*.

God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please, but you can never have both.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

“Your task? To build a better world!” God said. I answered, “How? This world is such a large, vast place, So complicated now, And I so small and useless am, There’s nothing I can do!” But God in His great wisdom said, “First — build a better you!”

— *Selected*

The church has halted someplace between Calvary and Pentecost.
—*Anonymous*

