

The Messenger

Advent 2019

Reverend's Reflections - The Living Compass

The Celts have a tradition of a "Caim" prayer which asks the holiness of God to encircle all we love, keeping fear and danger outside of the circle and hope and calm within. Margaret Rizza has a recording of this prayer set to music *The Celtic Collection, Sarum Voices*, directed by Ben Lamb. It's a prayer that seems to find its way into my day regularly as I consider the different situations and responsibilities and complications and blessings that arise.

The circle of our liturgical year is another type of "Caim", a reminder of how God's presence encircles the seasons and cycles of our lives. Each year we begin again with the waiting, watching and preparation of Advent, and grow with Jesus through his journey.

Another "Caim" I've recently encountered is through the Living Compass program, which seeks to help people live into their faith holistically. I attended a training course in Chicago, Illinois earlier this Fall, and found it very helpful as we seek to love God with heart, soul, strength and mind and to love neighbour and self. I look forward to introducing it to our parish and our diocese. You can learn more about the program or take the inventory at their website:

<https://www.livingcompass.org>



Art by Valda Kitching

The questions help identify the areas of our lives that are flourishing and those that need of watering. Most of us are probably a bit anxious, worrying that our lives are way out of alignment, but I found the process a helpful reminder of Jesus' words, "do not worry about your lives, what you will eat or what you will wear..." The garden of our lives may need some weeding, some replanting or pruning, but overall it's reassuring to know that there are many good things happening in us that reflect the glory of God. It's easy to forget as we sometimes berate ourselves or feel we are less than God would have us be.

During Advent our study group will explore the Living Compass Resource, *Living Well through Advent: Practicing Peace with all Your Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind* (see page 6). As we learn more about our faith journeys and how we are living faithfully as individuals, I think we will begin to see how we live together as a parish and how we might explore our communal compass and how we together, are loving God with heart, soul, strength and mind.



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Caim

(n.) lit. "sanctuary"; an invisible circle of protection, drawn around the body with the hand, that reminds you that you are safe and loved, even in the darkest times.



Outreach Outcomes – Faith in Action

St. John the Divine Food Bank

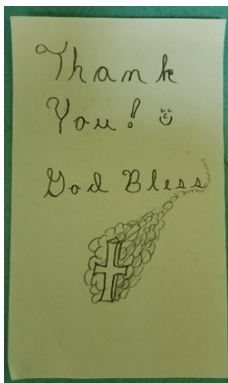
Where does my food donation go? The simple answer is “to the needy”.

More specifically, to local people who need help, to the homeless, the working poor, the unemployed and those who just found themselves marginalized and unable to support themselves. Two years ago we teamed up with St. John the Divine and joined several churches in the area to support their food bank with donations of food and money. The food bank, located on the corner of Quadra and Mason Street, is an essential inner-city resource and is broadly supported by the community. The Rotary Club provides a program where fresh vegetables and fruit supplement these donations and bread is donated weekly by grocers and bakeries. Extra support comes from some schools who have declared the Food Bank as their charity. St John’s also holds semi-annual concerts and choral events to bolster funds. The Food Bank spends approximately \$35,000 to 40,000 on food annually to supplement donations.

Gerry Melville, the food bank coordinator, says that she learned that St John’s supports approximately 1,000 clients overall, with around 400 clients weekly. Each client registers and comes in once a month where they are given a list of available resources. Clients can select options among the supplies to meet their individual needs. Gerry says that clients only take what they need, and leave additional items for others.



Volunteer Team



Note from a Client

70 volunteers keep the Food Bank running; help sort, separate and bag food donations into individual portions as well as assist clients. Gerry says that there is a good range of items that flow through the Food Bank but there are some client favorites including pasta and sauces, canned meats, cans of sardines, cereal, and canned fruit. There is always a need for hygiene products such as shaving cream, toothpaste and tooth brushes, travel soaps, and toilet paper. This almost sounds like a giving list...

Gerry and the staff at the Food Bank are extremely thankful for our support. When I deliver the food I am greeted by helpful clients who assist unload, support each other and truly appreciate the gifts they receive.

After two years of regular visits to St John and the Food Bank, I am convinced we are supporting a worthwhile and sorely needed service in our greater community.

For more information: <https://www.stjohnthedivine.bc.ca/ministries/food-bank>

Submitted by Stan Willow

The Five W's of Pastoral Care

In August 2019 a Pastoral Care Commissioning ceremony was held in which Our Rector, Dawna, welcomed and blessed the newly formed team. Here are the 5 W's of Pastoral Care: What; When; Where; Why and Who.

What is Pastoral Care?

Pastor is a Latin word meaning 'Shepherd'. A Shepherd sees to the well-being of the flock with concern and watchful attention. Pastoral Care provides emotional, social and spiritual support to anyone in need in the congregation.

Where does Pastoral Care take place?

Wherever you may need us. In your home, at the hospital or a care home, or on the telephone.

Who is on the Pastoral Care Team?

- ♥ Jo Ellen Schoblom is the team leader and an RN and Nurse Practitioner for nearly 30 years. "Being able to care for others, in body and in soul, was a great gift in my life. Pastoral Care provides me a way to continue that calling".
- ♥ Nancy Whysker is the assistant team leader and also was an RN. She has served and continues to serve in our congregation in so many ways. She "feels comfortable talking and listening to folks who may be experiencing isolation or loneliness."
- ♥ Nancy Paxton has also worked in the medical field, most recently at the Cancer Agency, where she learned to understand the journey that the patients were on. She "feels a calling towards pastoral care within St. Michaels' to help and listen to others, to let people know they are not alone in some of their struggles."
- ♥ Christine Eschman writes "Life has taken me through ups and downs, triumphs and joy and heart wrenching sorrows, and it helps when there is someone who can support me. She feels called to offer comfort of ear and presence to others during their times of loss, pain or anxiety and to sit with them. The patience with which Jesus listened to people was instrumental in their ability to live through their days. I hope I can offer similar to others."
- ♥ Marion Edgar tells us "I have always liked helping, listening and supporting folks through their most difficult times. To this end, I took the 2-year Stephens Ministry course on Pastoral Care with Rev Lewis and Norma Meggit and this summer's update course taught by Katherine Parker."
- ♥ Catie Oates- Hill says "My work as parish secretary brings me into contact with many parishioners and their families in times of both happiness and sadness: being a member of the Pastoral Care team seems a natural fit."

Two other members of the team are Barbara Forsyth, a retired Social Worker who lived and worked for many years in the Yukon helping those in need, and Rosalind Taylor, who endeavors to keep our bodies fit so we can more joyfully love one another. Dawna, as Rector, oversees and guides the team.

Who will visit you? You can request a specific team member or we will carefully select the person who seems to be the best fit for you. Finally, to answer your question "How do I request a confidential visit from the team?" There are several ways to reach the team:

- ⇒ Call Jo Ellen, the team leader, at 778-265-2675.
- ⇒ Use our new Pastoral Care email: pastoralcare@stmikes.ca

When is Pastoral Care Provided?

Whenever anyone feels they are in need of support, encouragement, prayer, or help with a difficult time such as dealing with loss. Pastoral care is for good times and hard times. Visits can help celebrate new beginnings, or support endings. Whenever a caring, listening presence is needed, Pastoral Care is available.

Why do we provide Pastoral Care?

As members of the body of Christ, we are called to love one another, by action as well as in words.

Guild Goings On

The months of October and November contained numerous Guild activities including two Guild meetings—one with a guest speaker; a Memorial Reception; a BAC Dinner; our Ninth Annual Christmas Sale, and a Purdy's Chocolates Fund-Raising Campaign. Many people have worked in so many ways to make all these activities successful. Somehow, saying "Thank You" seems to not be enough! As a Parish, we certainly work well together and our outcomes help others in so many ways!



Fall Guild Donations have been made to Threshold Housing, 1UP Single Parent Resource Centre Christmas Emergency Fund, Northern Christmas Help, and a Local Family with a critically ill infant daughter. We have also made our contribution to the overall operational budget of the Church. It has been a profitable year owing to much hard work.

Our hall and outside grounds are now decorated for the holiday season as this is always done prior to our Christmas Sale. Thanks go to Gordon English for the work, and Louise [Phyllis Fatt's daughter] for the cedar wreaths that are hung on the two doors of the hall.

We conclude 2019 with our "Scarf Luncheon" on December 10th. All the women of the Parish invited and encouraged to bring a guest. Attendees are asked to bring a salad or a dessert to share, but the main entrees will be catered. We will be collecting warm scarfs to be donated to "Cool-Aid" after the event, and will also have the popular Scarf-Exchange. This exchange is always fun, as we all bring scarves to add to the mix and look forward to going home with different ones!

In 2020, the Guild's first scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, January 14th at noon.

Blessings to all and my heartfelt thanks to the Members of the Guild plus the Parishioners who support the Guild's Purpose: To give Women of the Parish the opportunity to unite in a fellowship of worship, study and service to support the Parish in its activities and its mission and outreach.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Submitted by Lenore English



Wardens' Window

As you read, this new edition of the Messenger Advent is beginning to prepare us for the celebration of Jesus' birth just 25 days from now. This is a time of renewal and preparation for each of us. Our booklet, **Living Well Through Advent**, from Living Compass, helps us prepare to receive the gift of peace this Christmas. Stan and I encourage you to check the calendar on our website, smaaac@telus.net, for upcoming special services and events. Sharing Advent with each other will support you as you try to bring peace into each day. Just one example is the beautiful morning service called Lessons and Carols on December 15. Plan to come hear this beautiful, peaceful and inspiring music. Tony, our Music Director and the church choir began to prepare their musical offerings over a month ago.

The **Food Bank** donations continue to augment the work of St John the Divine's Food Bank program. As always, there is a need for volunteers to assist once a month with delivery to the Food Bank. If you can take a turn please contact Stan Willow at 250-744-6786.

Work on our **Outdoor Worship** area paused this Fall while we waited for equipment to get back on site. With the advent of Christmas it is best to postpone the moving of the bricks to the labyrinth site. We want to do this when they can be promptly installed on site. Our new goal is to complete the labyrinth prior to the Walk Through Holy Week. The search continues to locate the ideal company producing benches appropriate for our outdoor area. We hope to offer you the opportunity to order a memorial bench early in the New Year.

The **Diocesan Transforming Futures** initiative will involve our congregation in the New Year. We will all make sure our compass allows us a path that deepens our understanding of what the future of St Michael's may look like with our support and enthusiasm. In the meantime we encourage you to think about your vision for St Michael's.

Financial Report

Offerings tend to be a bit behind budget at this time each year and expenses tend to be greater than budget as many yearly expenses are paid in the first half of the year. It has been our good fortune in the past, through parishioner generosity, to achieve a balance by year end. We hope that in the final three months of the year the Offerings will increase so that we again balance our annual budget. 2019 has followed the previous trend. The following shows a comparison of actual income and expenses compared to the budget to the end of October. Also shown are the comparable amounts for 2018.

	2019 Total Operating Budget	2019 Actual to October 31st	Percentage of Annual Budget	2018 Actual to October 31st
Income	\$197,600	\$142,900	72.3%	\$135,700
Expenses	\$197,600	\$169,600	85.8%	\$155,700
Net Income / Deficit)	\$0	(\$26,700)		(\$20,000)

In addition to the Operating Budget, we have been carrying out our Outreach Campaigns throughout the year. Giving for these, to the end of October, is shown below. Our final campaign, known as Christmas Help, is now underway and we hope it will be generously supported again this year.

PWRDF	\$6,325
Sisters of St. John	\$2,055
South Island Centre for Counselling	\$1,164
Threshold Housing	\$1,610
Threshold Housing Tea Sales	\$1,420
Christmas Help	\$1,000
Total	\$13,574

To conclude, Stan and I hope you find that balance between preparing for the celebration that is Christmas and making time for peaceful contemplation during Advent this year.

May the peace of the blessed Trinity be with you
Christine Eschman

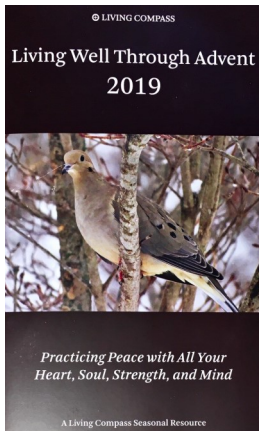


Advent and Christmas Services

- Dec 15th 10:30 am Lessons & Carols Service
- Dec 24th 4:00 pm Family Eucharist Service
10:30 pm Carol Singing
11:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Eucharist
- Dec 25th 10:00 am Christmas Day Eucharist
- Dec 29th 10:00 am Eucharist



Advent Study Group "Living God's Peace"



During Advent our study group will explore the Living Compass Resource, *Living Well through Advent: Practicing Peace with all Your Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind*. The books are available at the church in hard copy and you can also download the resource at the Living Compass Website. The resource is free and has accompanying questions and reflections for incorporating the practices into our lives.

As we learn more about our faith journeys and how we are living faithfully as individuals, I think we will begin to see how we live together as a parish and how we might explore our communal compass and how we together, are loving God with heart, soul, strength and mind.

Dec 3rd, 10th and 17th 10:30 - 12:00 pm Advent Bible Study



Choir Notes

First of all I would like to thank Bev Rippin for doing such a wonderful job in my absence. She is an excellent musician and the choir and I really appreciate her skill and her warm personality. She prepared at least three anthems in my absence in October, and any credit for the quality of recent choir performances must go to her. Plus - she is an excellent singer and fortunately is very happy to help us out by singing in the choir. One of the pieces Bev worked on is 'Mary Had a Baby', a spiritual which we plan to sing at the carol service on December 15th. She even coached the choir in clapping on the off beats, something which doesn't come naturally to all Anglicans!



St. Nicholas meets Santa Claus



If you would like a preview of some of the carols we are learning for the 15th you should come to our show 'St. Nicholas meets Santa Claus' at 2.30pm on the afternoon of December 7th. The first half of the show will be about St. Nicholas, and feature your suitably hirsute male organist. The second half will be about Santa Claus and will feature the choir. There will also be a carol sing-along in the second half (with free coaching on syncopated clapping!)

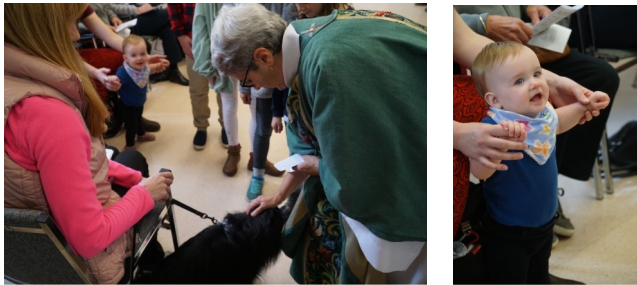
Admission is by donation at the church door.



Submitted by Tony Booker



Animal Blessing - October 6th:



With Dawna away, Adela Torchia stepped in to perform the annual animal blessing which was well attended by the furred members of the congregation and is now little Alma's favorite service.

Orange Shirt Day



As we remember every Sunday, with Dawna's welcome to our service, we acknowledge that for thousands of years the Coast Salish, Nuuchahnulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw peoples have walked gently on the unceded territories where we now live, work, worship and play. We seek a new relationship with the First Peoples here - one based in honour and respect, and we thank them for their hospitality.



One way that we have demonstrated our commitment to reconciliation is the recognition of Orange Shirt Day in our parish. Thank you to Rosalind Taylor for helping to sell numerous orange shirts and for the beautiful display on September 29th.

For more information please go to <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/>

Thanksgiving Service - October 13th:

The Alter Guild out-did themselves again with the beautiful seasonal decorations for our Thanksgiving Service.



Remembrance Day - November 10th:

A moving tribute to our armed forces and remembrance of sacrifices made. The Choir sang Kontakion and Colleen Lissamer led the Children's Reflection.



Trash Matters

Saturday May 18th saw the focus of the Education Committee placed firmly on aspects of Trash. With first-rate professional assistance from Kayla Siefried (Victoria's Compost Education Centre) and Avril Gilmour Ford (Environmental Education Liason, CRD), we learned the ins and outs of composting just about any kind of item, and how to manage things that cannot go into a CRD "blue box" [yet].

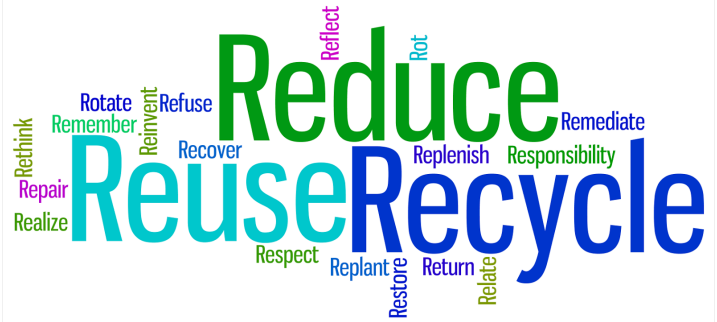
A keen and qualified sustainability activist, Kayla practices a wide variety of types of composting, organic gardening and permaculture in the Compost Centres gardens and in her own urban backyard, bringing practical knowledge harvested first-hand from sources worldwide. In complementary mode, Avril (whose programmes include a variety of initiatives from garbage and recycling, watershed protection and drinking water) constituted a fount of practical knowledge regarding tidying up one's own trash and that of communities. Fired by her enthusiasm for disposing of trash correctly, we quickly learned the rationale of classifying it, and the hard truth of neglecting to do so. It is now up to us to take on the challenge of reducing our waste as well as recycling it.

But dealing with waste appropriately is not the whole answer to today's trash problems, but rather a last-ditch activity. The three R's – **Reduce**, **Re-use**, **Re-cycle** – still encourage the disposal of waste as a growing industry instead of a shrinking one. The real challenge is to avoid the need to dispose of any waste in the first place. One solution to incorporate into daily living before Reduce is a new R – **Refuse** – under which we eschew or boycott the acquisition of products that include unnecessary wrappings, particularly soft plastic ones. We can also practise openly numerous small efforts that avoid needless use of Earth's resources: turning off every light that is not serving any purpose, collecting rainwater and saving domestic "grey water" for non-hygienic uses, giving garden waste to someone who can compost it if you can't yourself, making more use of public transport (greater demand should result in expanded services), obliging institutions to use the back-sides of paper rather than purchasing special pads, etc., and in all things setting an example and not shying away from explaining why these changes are beneficial.

And they will be beneficial. Any move that results, even in a minuscule way, to reduce our carbon footprints is a move in the right direction. Enough minuscule improvements generate macroscopic ones, and that is the what these analyses of disposing of trash are all about. Climate change, now referred to as the **Climate Crisis**, is a looming menace; we are smothered in pollution of many kinds, and it is up to each and every one of us to begin to tackle the problem. **Reduce**, like love, begins at home, and it is only love of our matriarchal planet Earth that will

spur us to treat this matter with the depth, energy and fervour that it requires if we and our children are to survive. Wanton destruction of the Earth's environment has become an ethical issue, activated by base ends for economic gain. Though that is not an Anglican problem per se, it is one whose solutions can be addressed effectively by communities, and where better for us to start than the community of our Parish?

Submitted by Elizabeth Griffin



Reading Room

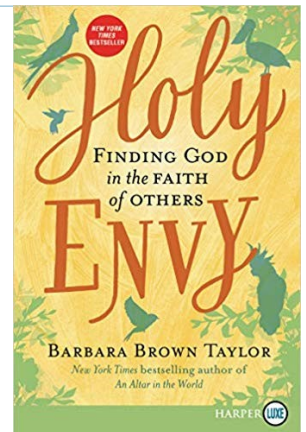
Holy Envy - Finding God in the Faith of Others by Barbara Brown Taylor

Who would have guessed when our group began reading 'Holy Envy' that we were in for such an interesting journey through so many other faiths and cultural traditions?

We have progressed very slowly through this very readable book as we have found ourselves in so many deep discussions concerning the issues it raises. In addition, with the help of Parminder Virk, a guest speaker representing the Sikh faith, we learned about the dynamics of this very generous and welcoming religion where all are equal. They hold free picnics during the summer at Beckwith Park for all who wish to join them and learn about their culture through their food.

Besides learning about God, one of the main goals of their faith is to teach people how to meditate to increase their peacefulness. One of the highlights of our book study group was our visit to the Sikh Temple on Graham Street on October 29th to further investigate further how they worship God. They were so congenial and explained a little of their beliefs to 13 of us who attended. We were dazzled by their talk, and then we were all treated to lunch consisting of pakoras, an apple, sweets and chai tea. There will be an interfaith conference on Feb. 9th at Commonwealth Place and many of us plan on taking this opportunity to learn more about so many different faiths. Our next field trip will, we hope, be to a Jewish Synagogue.

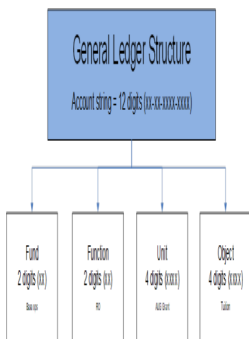
If you are interested in our book study, we meet every Tuesday morning from 10:30 to noon in the vestry meeting room, after Mediation. All are welcome to come.



Submitted by Marion Edgar

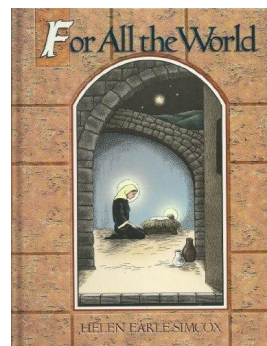
Sophia's Advent Book Recommendations

The Christmas Mystery by Gaarder Jostein

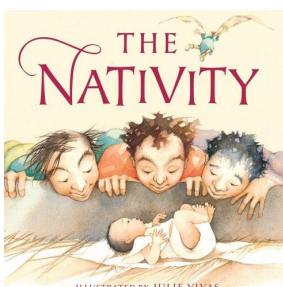


This book is a written Advent calendar with a chapter for each day of Advent and which travels back in time and across continents to Bethlehem. A favourite tradition of our family is to read the final chapters under the Christmas tree lights while calling out to one another, "Fear not!!"

For All the World by Helen Earle Simcox



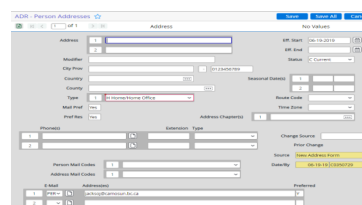
Beautifully conceived, this book illustrates how God with us could look quite differently based on all the diverse and lovely people in the world.



The Nativity by Julie Vivas

Watercolour illustrations add whimsy and wonder to the poetic King James Version of the Nativity. Mary and Gabriel meet over coffee to discuss God's request, while a chicken looks on.

Christmas by Dick Bruna



A charming, delightful and gentle interpretation of the Christmas story.

Submitted by Sophia Wall

Christmas fun

Match the words to the correct pictures to complete the crossword. Then find a secret message.

bells
 candle
 candy cane
 card
 chimney
 Christmas tree
 elf
 gingerbread
 holly
 letter
 lights
 ornaments
 presents
 reindeer
 Santa Claus
 sleigh
 snowman
 stocking
 wreath

The secret message is _____

iSLCo | lead home.

Tricky Christmas Quiz

1. Name Santa's reindeer
2. Which ocean is Christmas Island in?
3. Name 3 things people put in a Christmas tree.
4. What do people do under the mistletoe?
5. What does a "white Christmas" mean?
6. What is Frosty the Snowman's nose made of?
7. Name three Christmas carols.
8. Name three animals that live near the North Pole.
9. Where was Saint Nicholas born?
10. Which continent is the turkey from?
11. What is checked twice?
12. What kind of tree is a Christmas Tree?
13. Name a Christmas movie.
14. Name 5 parts of a snowman.
15. Name three typical kinds of Christmas food.

Art by Lauren Tuckey



Q: Why was the porcupine sent home from the Christmas party?
 A: Because he was popping all the balloons.

Q: What do elves learn in kindergarten?
 A: The elf-abet.

Q: Did you know that Santa had 10 reindeer? Can you name them?
 A: Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and Rudolph... that's 9.... And don't forget ...



Olive the other reindeer

Cautionary Christmas Tale

Four days before Christmas, my father suffered a heart attack and was admitted to a rather antiquated hospital in a small town in Southern Germany. On Christmas eve, as was tradition, trees were placed in each patient room, decorated and adorned with slender white candles. Confined to his bed so unable to attend the ward's Christmas party, Dad's nurse kindly lit the candles on his tree to cheer him up. Dad gazed at his tree, enjoying the soft glow of candlelight and listened to the distant hubbub of the party.



Gradually he noticed one candle seemed to burn brighter than the others. Looking more closely, he realized a branch was alight! Imprisoned in his bed by tubes, lines and side rails and with no call button Dad quickly noticed the absence of sprinklers or smoke detectors in his room. He started to yell at the top of his lungs, "hilfe hilfe feuer feuer!" (help, help, fire, fire!) but his only reply was the increasingly raucous party music and laughter. As the fire spread to other branches he began to extricate him from the medical equipment attaching him to his bed realizing that escape and raising the alarm was up to him.



As he struggled to break free, through the haze of smoke a figure appeared at his door reaching for him with outstretched arms. "This must be the end for me," he thought, "for surely that is an angel of God." As the figure drew closer and emerged through the smoke, he realized it was his roommate and in his outstretched hands were two large mugs of beer. Quickly taking in the scene, the old man carefully set down the beers, spilling nary a drop, picked up the bedside water pitchers and doused the fire.

Later, once the tree had been removed, the room aired and cleaned and Dad's doctor had attended ensure he was fine, Dad and his roommate sat together and enjoyed their beer. First, thanking God for the divine inspiration that led his roommate to bring beer at the very critical moment of need.

And a thanks for Dad's very strong heart that had endured the ordeal of the flaming tree without missing a beat.

Fortunately, the practice of candles on Christmas trees came to an end in that hospital on that day!

As we all put up our candle-less trees this season, do please make sure your lights are all in good working order and your smoke detector batteries renewed! And as you gaze at your non -flaming trees, think about the wonder of trees and what a gift from God they truly are.

Did you know that one of the solutions to combat climate change is to plant 3 billion trees around the world? Why does this help? Our breath takes in oxygen and expels carbon dioxide; the cause of global warming. A tree does the opposite. Each of us needs one mature tree for metabolic equilibrium. Moreover, our average lifestyle (burning fossil fuels as in gas for our cars, coal or natural gas for heating etc), requires 101 trees. Do you have 101 trees? Can you reduce that number by lifestyle changes?



Would you like to contribute to the movement for the global tree planting? What a great Christmas gift to offer the Planet and all of Gods creatures. Have a look at Replant Amazon and Tree Canada for more ideas.

Wishing you all a Merry and Safe Christmas!

Submitted by JoEllen Schoblom

Education Event - Driving Matters

On November 5th our Education Committee hosted a presentation by well-know driving instructor and newspaper columnist **Steve Wallace** from Wallace Driving School. The 50 or so attending were treated to an informative and very useful account of how best to prepare for the mandatory driving assessment on reaching their 80th birthday. If the doctor is in any doubt, what follows is a demanding 90-minute driving test. Steve's advice was that everyone should be prepared and avoid the driving test if possible. Before the doctor's appointment, download a copy of both your driving record and provide evidence of any claim's free insurance status as documentary evidence for your doctor to review. If possible, book your medical appointment with your family doctor rather than with a locum or at a walk-in clinic. A doctor who knows you is much less likely to recommend a driving test!

Steve was certainly not a fan of the provincial program noting that an inexperienced teenager gets a 45-minute road test while seniors with many years of driving experience are subjected to a 90-minute test. In addition, the \$200 cost of the medical assessment demanded by the Province must be borne entirely by the senior driver.

Steve also recommended the Life-Long Driver on-line training program for anyone who wants to sharpen their skills (<https://www.lifelongdriver.com/>) . Most doctors will consider successful completion of the course as a major plus when making their recommendation.



Although there was no cost to attend the session, donations were accepted to support The Rotary International fund to eliminate Polio worldwide. Polio only exists in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nigeria. Bill Gates and The Rotary Foundation match any donation from others multiplied by 3 times.

All in all, a very good evening much enjoyed by all in attendance.

Submitted by Jim Kempling

Walking Group

Walks take place every Friday morning, weather permitting starting promptly at 10:30 am and last about an hour. Everyone is welcome to join for a stroll and chat. Please phone Linda @ 250-479-0113 or email ricky.love@shaw.ca if you plan to join in one of the walks.

6th December Gorge Rd Walkway. Meet and park at the Craigflower school end of Gorge Rd.

13th December Glendale Trail loop. Meet and park at Laritz parking, lot off Wilkinson Rd. Turn at the little white Church at Glyn Rd and then R to Laritz park.

20th December Christmas Hill Walk. Meet and park at Swan Lake parking area.

Future walks will be posted on the parish calendar.



Take Faith for a bright candle holder,
Take Hope for an unfailing match,
Take Truth for a wick, never thirsting,
Take Love a miraculous wax.
Take Joy for the flame, take its fire!
Take Peace for the glow, spreading far,
Take Grace, let its glorious meaning
Light Christmas wherever you are!



Submitted by Valda Kitching

Wake Up and Pay Attention

“If you want to be somebody, if you want to go somewhere, you better wake up and pay attention”.

These words are spoken by Whoopi Goldberg in the movie “Sister Act” as she challenges a class of bored high-school students to become engaged with life, to become “woke” to use a current saying. Likewise, the season of Advent calls us to wake up and pay attention, to notice what God is doing in the world and to become involved with it.

It is no coincidence that the church year begins on the first Sunday of Advent. These four weeks give us time to prepare for the great feast of the incarnation: Christmas, the feast when we celebrate the amazing truth that God, the Creator of the universe, became human, became a “God with skin”, who lived a human life that even 2000 years later, we can identify with.

My son’s high school had a practice around this time that they called “turnaround week”. This week included fun activities, dress up days, and prayer. The purpose of it was to refocus, and be ready to continue the year with fresh energy and commitment. Advent is our turnaround season: our time to refocus, to regain our energy, and above all, to come home to our true selves as beloved children of God.

It can be challenging to do this when the secular “Christmas” is already surrounding us. Halloween was barely over before the stores were full of Christmas merchandise, Christmas songs started playing, and advertising began to deluge us. It is necessary, though, to take time for what is most important, and we can begin by taking time to wonder, to be still, to pray. Even though it can be difficult to find time to slow down, it is the best preparation we can make to truly embrace the gift of the God who became human at Christmas. Choosing to sit in quietness, to do some reflective reading, to pray, helps us to cultivate a grateful heart, a heart that is ready to welcome Jesus in the great feast of Christmas.



This morning I spent half an hour with a cup of coffee sitting outside wrapped in a blanket, watching the soft rain. It was a time of prayer and reflection, enjoying nature and appreciating my coffee. It was the best thing I did all day. It was an intentional act of Advent!

Submitted by Colleen Lissamer

Thank you for the Veggies

A really big “Thank You” to Ellen and Peter for their generosity in sharing with us so much of their wonderful fruits and vegetables and their thoughtfulness in providing us with bags to take home their kind gifts. It was always interesting to see what they had set out on the seat in the parking lot on Sunday mornings.

Happy Gardening Ellen and Peter

Submitted by Phillis Huggill



Did you know that? Christmas Trivia

- * Pope Julius I declared December 25th as the official Christmas in the fourth century!
- * A Christmas wreath hanging on your front door symbolizes a sign of welcome and long life for all who enter.
- * Kissing under the mistletoe, dates back to the 17th century English custom. A berry was removed every time a kiss was made—there were no kisses when there were no berries left.
- * Christmas pudding should be stirred from east to west in honour of the Three Wise Men.
- * In Britain, the “Holy Days and Fasting Days Act of 1551”, which has not yet been repealed, states that every citizen must attend a Christian church service on Christmas Day, and must not use any kind of vehicle to get to the service. However, in 1647, the English parliament passed a law that made Christmas illegal.
- * Christmas trees became popular in the UK from 1841 when Prince Albert decorated a tree in Windsor Castle following a German tradition.
- * The first Christmas card was created in England on December 9, 1842.
- * There are two Christmas Islands. The Christmas Island in the Pacific Ocean was formerly called Kiritimati. The Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean is 52 square miles.



Why are Dasher and Dancer always taking coffee breaks? Because they are Santa's Star Bucks.

Hugging is healthy.

Christmas Hugs!



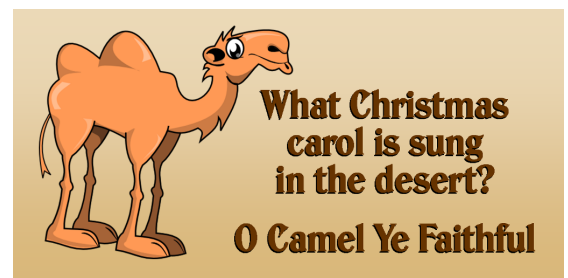
It helps the body's immune system
 It cures depression.
 It reduces stress.
 It's rejuvenating.
 It has no unpleasant side effects.
 It is God's miracle drug! It is all natural, it contains no chemicals, artificial ingredients, no pesticides, and no preservatives!

Hugging is practically perfect.
 There are no parts to break down, no monthly payments, non-taxable, non-polluting, and of course... It's fully returnable!
 Here are your hugs for the day!

Submitted by Margaret Eagle



Art by Valda Kitching



Creation Matters Here ... a practical guide



CREATION MATTERS

Creation has always mattered, to everyone, in all places. From the dawn of Earthly time, humans as thinking, self-providing beings, have – out of pure necessity – turned to Mother Earth for food, water, fuel and shelter. Even many millennia later on, those basic needs have not changed, and will not change. Though now more refined in their methods, more canny in technology and deeper in understanding, humans are as dependent as before on Mother Earth, and for the same basic needs.

Those who monitor the signs and the situations can see with a clarity of daylight that the human species has taken too freely the ability of Mother Earth to provide unceasingly. If we have really gone too far, what is the solution?

We hear the warnings, but do we heed them? We read the prognostications, but do we then try to forget them and carry on as if danger alerts were not important? Or does the enormity of the matter freeze action, and cause us to despair – “What can I possibly do? Any contribution that I could make towards saving the environment is only a drop in the ocean”. True, but enough drops make an ocean. It just requires enough people all working together to make that difference. Is that not, in fact, a simple requirement?

Here’s how to start:

Take a moment to look round at the things we deem essential. The grocery needs to provide me with a bag for my purchases, I need vegetables to be washed and wrapped, and I want bottled water that is labelled ‘pure’ (whether true or not). I want the CRD to take away all the bottles, cans and similar that I empty. I want electric lights to cheer the home and to act as a deterrent to intruders, and I want the neighbourhood and the City to be filled with light to represent energy and life. All in my household need a car to get them wherever they need to go, and whenever. I want the home to be as warm as summer, year-round. I want . . . I want . . .

Then select one or more items from such a list, and analyse the difference between your actual “need” and what in fact you only “want”. Do you need this or that, or merely want it? If using a bus, or walking, is a real option, do so twice per week, and persuade others to join you. Take your own bag for shopping. Try drinking plain tap-water. Save once-used water in summer for watering plants. Dry laundry out of doors if possible, rather than in a fuel-expensive drier. And turn out unwanted lights behind you.

Keep a record of the little changes that you have introduced. They will seem little at first, but when they have become new habits, try broadening the range, and – above all – tell others what you are doing and why. That is how the tiny drops that individuals contribute will become the great ocean of change that we desperately need.

Submitted by Elizabeth Griffin

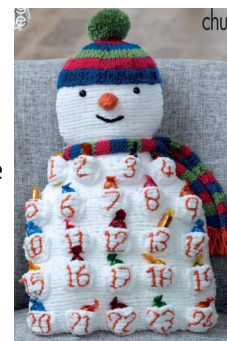
Craft Club

Crafts are not only a personally rewarding activity, they can be an environmentally friendly way to make gifts and a fun social activity.



There has been an interest shown in starting a parish craft club. Crafts could include knitting, embroidery, jewelry making or any other craft of choice. If you are interested in this club and need more information please contact **Wendy London** at (250) 727-3353 or email wendylondon@telus.net.

The plan is to meet twice a month, once on Sunday afternoon and once on Tuesday afternoon (2:00 to 4:00 pm) so we can accommodate as many people’s schedules as possible. The first meeting is on Sunday January 12th at Helen Love’s home; the second is on Tuesday January 29th at Diana Caleb’s home.



Mary Berry's Christmas Pavlova

Ingredients:

- * 6 large egg whites
- * 350g/12oz caster sugar
- * 1 tsp white wine vinegar
- * 1 tsp corn-flour

- * 600ml double cream
- * 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- * 50g icing sugar, sifted
- * 200g strawberries quartered
- * 300g raspberries
- * 200g blueberries
- * 50g pomegranate seeds
- * mint leaves to decorate
- * icing sugar, for dusting



1. Preheat the oven to 160C. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment and draw a 30cm/12in circle in the middle of the paper. Draw a 15cm/6in circle in the centre of the larger circle to make a ring.
2. Put the egg whites in a clean mixing bowl and whisk with an electric whisk until soft peaks form when the whisk is removed. Gradually add the sugar a little at a time, whisking on maximum speed until they are stiff and glossy. Mix the vinegar and cornflour in a cup until smooth, then stir into the egg whites.
3. Spoon the meringue onto the ring drawn on the baking parchment. Using a large spoon make a shallow trench in the meringue for the cream and fruit to sit in.
4. Transfer to the oven and immediately reduce the temperature to 140C. Bake for about 1 hour until the outside is hard but still white. Turn the oven off and leave the pavlova inside for an hour or overnight to cool and dry.
5. To assemble, whip the cream, vanilla paste and icing sugar until stiff peaks form when the whisk is removed. Spoon the cream into the trench in the meringue. Arrange the strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and pomegranate on top and decorate with a few mint leaves, if using. To serve, dust with icing sugar and cut into wedges.

Editor: Helen Love

The Messenger is the newsletter of St. Michael and All Angels' Anglican Church. The Messenger is a communication means for members of the parish. It does not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the editor, or the church. While the newsletter exists for parishioners to contribute their news, opinions and views, the editor may edit articles in order to facilitate understanding and fit space.

Contributions should report on parish activities, advertise upcoming events or be original literary articles, which are church related, maximum 500 words.

Please send submissions to the church office, preferably by e-mail to smaaac@telus.net.

St. Michael and All Angels' Anglican Church

4733 West Saanich Road,
Victoria, BC, V8Z 3G9
Phone: 250-479-0540
Email: smaaac@telus.net
www.stmikevictoria.ca

