

THE ELM LEAF NEWSLETTER

The Parish Church
of St. Peter

December 2007

Advent is a season of journeying as we make our way towards the celebration of

the birth of Jesus. During this season we will be hearing the familiar stories from the bible which remind us that our journey into the future is rooted in the stories of the past. In the Festival of Lessons and Carols we are taken through the story right from the beginning when God created humankind. The final lesson is from John's Gospel – the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us. This is not the end of the story, but rather the beginning of a new chapter – a chapter of amazing potential.

Our own spiritual journey is rooted in the stories of the past. We have many life experiences to draw on which have formed who we are today. Our relationship with God is, to a large extent, dependent on these formative experiences. But God is not limited by past events in the same way that we might be. God can always do new things in our lives and provide us with opportunities to walk along a new path which can lead us into a deeper relationship with God. In the same way that God brought new possibilities into the world in the birth of Jesus, God opens the door for new possibilities for us in our own lives.

The journey of St Peter's as a parish is rooted in the stories of the past. In its 52 years of ministry there is a wealth of experience. Many gifted people have given their time and energy to the life of this community of faith. Each succeeding generation benefits from and builds on the foundation that has been laid by those who have gone before. The journey of the parish has been guided by God, who has provided opportunities for ministry and growth and change. The parish is about to enter another stage of the journey when I retire in February. There will be a time of adjustment and letting go, which will be different for each person. It will also be a time of opportunity as leadership and gifts of ministry continue to develop. God is always doing new things and the community of St. Peter's will continue to seek the guidance of the Spirit and take further steps on the journey.

The Parish is a very healthy community at present, in many ways. There is a firm foundation from which to move into the future. I have been privileged to have been a part of this community for the past 17



years and to have been a participant in laying some of the foundation stones. The stories of our shared journey in the recent past will shape our lives in the future. As we prepare to go our separate ways I will be forever grateful for the experiences that I have had in this wonderful community of faith where I have been shaped and nurtured and grown. I know that God will continue to bless each one of us as we begin a new chapter of the journey – a chapter of amazing potential!

Yours, in the ministry we have shared,

*** **Phil Barnett** ***

Truly, it is in the darkness that one finds the light, so when we are in sorrow, then this light is nearest to us.
 - Meister Echart (Theologian) -

COME AND WORSHIP

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Sunday, December 16 | 10:30 a.m. | Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
<i>(Please bring some of your Christmas baking to share during coffee time)</i> |
| Monday, December 24 | 7:00 p.m.
10:00 p.m. | Sunday School Pageant and Holy Eucharist
Holy Eucharist for Christmas <i>(candlelight)</i>
<i>(Note the time)</i> |
| Tuesday, December 25 | No Services | |
| Sunday, December 30 | 8:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. | Holy Eucharist (said)
Holy Eucharist |
| Sunday, January 6 | 8:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. | Holy Eucharist (said)
Holy Eucharist (Family service) |



DATES TO NOTE FOR 2008

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|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Friday, January 18 | Phil's Retirement Dinner |
| Sunday, January 20 | 52 nd Anniversary Services |
| Sunday, February 10 | Annual Meeting |

CONSECRATION SUNDAY REPORT

Another very successful Consecration Sunday was held on November 25th. The estimate of givings for 2008 is 25% higher than that of 2007. This shows an amazing 47% increase since 2004. Thanks to all the parishioners who contributed to this success. It allows the Parish to have options such as increasing outreach, paying down the debt faster and having a reserve fund for unexpected expenses. Any members who have suggestions for other uses are asked to forward them to myself or any of the wardens.

*** **Mary Chalmers - Consecration Sunday Chairperson** ***

Just to be is a blessing, just to live is holy.

- Abraham Joshua Heschel (Philosopher and theologian)

PASSING THE LISTS!

I am very pleased to announce that Lynda & Jim Daun have taken over the ministry of scheduling officiants, intercessors, prayer team, communion administrators and lesson readers. I have been doing all, except the prayer team, for more years than I can count and am most grateful to them. I am also most grateful to everyone involved in these ministries for their care and devotion to them. Thank you all.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for Lynda & Jim, they can be reached at 489-5519 or jdaun@mts.net.

*** **Betty Currie** ***

I learned ... that one can never go back, that one should not ever try to go back – that the essence of life is going forward. Life is really a One Way Street.



- Agatha Christie (At Bertam's Hotel)

St. Peter's Church Presents

Sherry, Shortbread and Song:

An Old Fashioned Christmas Concert



Featuring

- ❄️ **Vocal Group "Harlequin"**
- ❄️ **You – Singing Along and Participating**
- ❄️ **Surprise Soloists and Groups**
- ❄️ **Sherry (or coffee or juice) and Christmas Dainties.**



Date: Wednesday December 12 at 7:00 PM

Where: ST. Peters Church – Grant Avenue and Elm St.

Admission: A Cash contribution towards the Christmas Hamper and LITE.



Christmas Song for 2007

Sometimes turning a song on its head seems to work. I have always loved this classic Western song (probably because I grew up hearing it). I wondered if the words could be changed to see what might have happened if the angels had come to a different type of shepherd at a different time.

Angels were in the sky

Words by J. Daun

Music, "(Ghost) Riders in the Sky" by Stan Jones

Herding cattle in the hills one dark and windy night
Cowpokes keeping watch above with Bethlehem in sight
When all at once the sky was bright and light was all around
Angels stood there in the sky and they made not a sound
Yippie yi Yay, Yippie yi Yo
Angels were in the sky

And then a voice spoke out these words to their frightened ears
Fear not, behold, I bring to you good tidings of great cheer,
For unto you is born this day a Saviour, with a crown
You'll find him in a manger near the edge of town
Yippie yi Yay, Yippie yi Yo
Angels were in the sky

They rounded up the dogies and rode off through the night
To see this king the angel had promised to their sight
A bright star lit their way to town; the angels added sound
But they rode on in silence to see what might be found
Yippie yi Yay, Yippie yi Yo
Angels sang in the sky

When they got to the stable, it was an awesome sight
To see that child a-lying there in strange and wondrous light
His ma and pa a sitting by; amazed they were to see
Seven grizzled cowpokes a-falling on their knees
Yippie yi Yay, Yippie yi Yo
Kneeling to their King

What kind of King was lying there, that those cowpokes did find
Would he heal the wounded and bring sight to the blind
And teach us all to love mankind against an earthly rule
And go up to Jerusalem to suffer death so cruel
Yippie yi Yay, Yippie yi Yo
Three crosses in the sky
(repeat)



THE PRAYER LIST THOSE WHO NEED OUR INTERCESSIONS

A number of people have expressed concerns about the length of the weekly intercessions so we are offering these thoughts about the ministry of intercessory prayer:

Intercessory prayer has always been a part of the church from the earliest days. We read in the letter of James (James 5:14): "Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them." The tradition developed in the Anglican Church, and continues in our worship today, that we pray for the sick by name. At the moment it takes about a minute to read these. It may seem long but it means so much to those who are on the list and to those who have put them on the list.

All those on the St. Peter's Prayer List have been placed there at their request or through the sponsorship of others simply by talking with Phil or by phoning the church and asking to be put on the list. All on the list are associated in some way with St. Peter's, even if it is only that their sponsor is a member of St. Peter's. Some people have long term prayer needs, possibly from a chronic illness or an emotional problem. Others have more temporary needs of our intercessions. When a resolution is achieved, we will give prayers of thanks and that name will no longer be on the list. People who are on the prayer list are prayed for on Sundays and Wednesdays at the mid week Eucharist. We have begun a process where the sponsors of people on the prayer list are being contacted regularly to see if our prayers are still needed.

We have another prayer ministry at St Peter's called The Prayer Chain which is carried out by several members of our parish. Often we have worries or concerns about ourselves or friends – an upcoming exam, a doctor's appointment, an interview, an operation, a difficult decision regarding a relationship, our career, or a disagreement with a friend. The prayer chain is a quiet way of offering our cares and worries to God by asking others to pray for us. Anyone wishing prayer for themselves or for another simply contacts either Dorothy Heaton: 488-0521 or Angie Ashton: 487-0263, coordinators of this ministry, giving them a first name only and indicating the length of the request (usually a short time of a few days or 1 or 2 weeks). There is no need to say why you are asking for prayer – God knows. The coordinators then start the chain response by contacting the people involved in that ministry asking them to include that person in their daily prayers for the requested time.

Intercessory prayer isn't just a ministry for Sundays or for a few people. We encourage all members of the parish to take their bulletins home and to remember those in our community asking for prayer in their regular prayer times during the week.

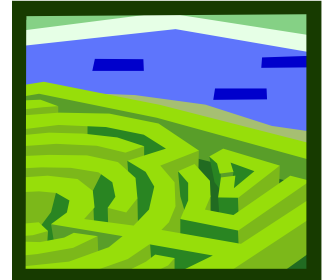
Prayer for the Sick

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight,
And give your angels charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.
Rest your weary ones. Bless your dying ones.
Soothe your suffering ones. Pity your afflicted ones.
Shield your joyous ones. And all for your love's sake. Amen
- St Augustine

*** *Jim Daun & Betty Currie* ***

ADVENT LABYRINTH WALK

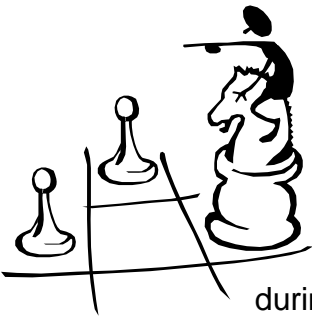
Sunday, December 16th, 2:00 p.m.



The light of the Advent season shines into the darkest time of the year. Like Mary and Joseph we are called to begin a new journey in the darkness – a journey that involves saying goodbye to life as we’ve known it and opening ourselves to a new future that is yet unknown.

The Advent Labyrinth Walk on Sunday, December 16 will provide an opportunity to enter this journey in a gently, yet intentional way. The walk will invite you to reflect on how the changes that are occurring in the life of the parish in the coming months are affecting you. If the ending of Phil’s ministry at St. Peter’s or the festivities of the Advent and Christmas season are awakening memories of other endings and losses for you, the walk will support you in your journey. Whatever changes you are experiencing in your life, this walk will help you move toward the light, wonder, and mystery of this season. All are welcome!

WHOA!



Teenaged Alex was passionate about chess and determined to teach his five-year-old brother Nick how to play the game. On Saturdays, the boys ventured to the park where Alex would match wits with older chess players.

Most of the time, Nick just leaned against his brother and dozed off. But during one match, Alex was about to move his knight when Nick hollered, “No, not the *horse!*”

Alex thought through his options again and played another piece instead. This new move helped him win the game.

Alex was beside himself with joy – not because he won, but because Nick understood chess! Curious about his little brother’s strategy, Alex asked, “Why didn’t you want me to move the ‘horse’?”



Nick rubbed his eyes and said, “Because he looked sleepy.”

- Adapted from the Random House Book of Jokes and Anecdotes
Joe Claro – editor
Random House -



GIFTS THAT GIVE

As we celebrate Christmas with visits and presents, we have a wonderful opportunity to witness to our mission for peace, justice and good stewardship of the earth. When you take a hostess gift, buy stocking stuffers or even when purchasing "big gifts" please consider "Fair Trade" items.

What is Fair Trade?

"Fair Trade Manitoba defines Fair Trade as an alternative approach to trading that:

- Promotes global economic justice, dignity and environmental sustainability through equitable trading relationships between northern importers and southern producers.
- Is based on fair trade principles as adopted by the Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International (FLO international) and adapted by FTM. These include: Direct trade, Fair price, Long term commitment, Access to credit, Democratic management, Public information, Environmental sustainability and Community development
- Recognizes that adherence to the principles of fair trade can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable system of production and trade that benefits people and communities."

A variety of Fair Trade teas, and coffees are easily and locally available at Robins, Starbucks, Safeway, Cornelia Bean, and Fort Whyte Alive. Other stores, like Organza Market, carry a wider array of fair trade food products including chocolate. You can get all this and even more at Ten Thousand Villages, Humboldt's Legacy, Caulfield's Organic Market and Canadian Lutheran World Relief/Four Corners. Additionally, they carry a wide range of handicrafts, clothing, accessories and furniture. There are many delightful gifts at these stores which would be appropriate for anyone on your list and you would be able to tell them that your gift to them continues to give by being fairly traded.

Another way to give "double blessed" gifts is to donate to charity in the name of your loved one. Think of those who are at the age where they need to "de-clutter" and just don't need more "things" or the folks who are at a long distance, and postage and handling costs more than the gift you would send. How wonderful to make a donation in honour of these people. They will be delighted to know that they have been remembered and your warm thoughts of them bring joy to others as well.

Thank you for considering these ideas. If you would like more information on stores that sell Fair Trade Goods, please check the Outreach Bulletin Board for a complete list.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



Last year was Yvonne's and my first year working together as Sunday School Coordinators. Our primary focus last year was the Sunday School community.

This year we wanted the children to look outside themselves and the Sunday School. We want them to know that they can make a difference both at St. Peter's and in our community.



We have designated the third Sunday of each month as Outreach Sunday. With the help of our Sunday School Teachers, Heather and Laura Pelser, and with the generous assistance of Elizabeth Pait, we have gotten off to a good start in our Outreach. In our first Outreach Project, we delighted and surprised many people in the Church with brightly decorated cards that let them know someone was thinking about them. The colourful cards the kids left in the mailboxes were well received. We earned many smiles and chuckles that day. We participated in the Church Bazaar again this year. The children decorated cookies to sell at the Bazaar with the proceeds going towards the Church.



Lynda Daun approached the Sunday School about doing something for homeless people in need of warm socks for the cold winter months ahead. The kids kicked off our Stocking Campaign by decorating stocking ornaments and making Christmas Cards. They created many beautiful decorations. We were able to sell all of our stocking ornaments and raised \$119.55 for the purchase of warm socks for the homeless. Thank you to everyone for their generous donations!

We look forward to the New Year and our continuing Outreach. St. Peter's can look forward to a hotdog lunch hosted by the Sunday School sometime in the New Year.

*** ***Sherrie Moir and Yvonne Kyle - Sunday School Coordinators*** ***

Those who cannot feel the littleness of great things in themselves are apt to overlook the greatness of little things in others.

- Okakura Kakuzo (Scholar)



NOT WHAT THEY EXPECTED!



There was a knock at the door. Eric and Jane looked at each other and sighed. "Might as well get it over with," Eric said to his wife, who was 8 ½ months pregnant with their first child.

"Thought you might be able to use these," said their landlord, Mr. Walters, as he carried in a stack of boxes.

"Well, hey there, Jane! How are you feeling?"
"I'm hanging in there, Mr. Walters," Jane said.

"Well, I know that things are a little tight this Christmas, but keep your chin up. I'm sure everything will fall into place soon." As he placed the last box at her feet, Mr. Walters turned to Eric and said, "May I have a word with you in the hallway for a moment?"

Eric followed his landlord into the hallway, prepared to face the music. "I know we're a little behind on the rent, Mr. Walters, but I'll –"

"Yes, that's what I want to talk to you about," interrupted Mr. Walters. "You see, I know money has been scarce since the plant closed and –"
"I might have a line on a job over in –"



"Well, I was thinking that maybe you could work for me, help me take care of the building. We could work out something that would cover your rent and a few expenses."

"You're offering me a job?" Eric blinked, "I thought you were going to evict us."

"Oh, heavens no!" Mr. Walters laughed. "I like you kids and I know how tough it is when you're just starting out. Come and see me tomorrow morning and we'll work out all the details."

"You've got a deal," Eric said, shaking Mr. Walters' hand. "You won't be disappointed you did this!" And then Eric ran back into his apartment to share the good news with Jane. "Janie, you'll never believe this! Guess what?" He stopped short when he saw the tears streaming down Jane's face. "Honey, what's the matter?"



"Nothing, really," she sniffled. "But look at all of this." Eric had been so excited about his news that he hadn't noticed what Jane was doing. She'd opened all the cardboard boxes from Mr. Walters and arranged the contents on the living room floor: a bassinet with a teddy bear in it, some baby clothes and blankets, an antique wooden rocking horse, Christmas tree ornaments and lights, and a tin of cookies.

Jane wiped away her tears. "I don't think I've ever known such kindness. Could Mr. Walters be any nicer?"