

2012 CHRISTMAS EDITION

FOCUS

ST. PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OTTAWA



Adoration of the Shepherds (1646)
by a pupil of Rembrandt

editor's

prologue

"Come & See... Go & Tell..."

The theme for the Christmas Focus is found in Luke's story of the birth of Christ. Shepherds were told by the angels that a Saviour was born in Bethlehem. Luke states that when the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen Him they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. Luke 2:15-17

The shepherds went to the manger to see for themselves. Then they spread the news to everyone they met. We too need to come and see what God has done and is doing through Jesus Christ even today. But along with the shepherds we also have a mandate to go to tell others.



As a church community we have many opportunities to learn to grow in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus Christ. We also have opportunities to spread the good news to others in our homes and community. We also need to "Come and See" and then "Go and Tell." —Ruth Whitehead

The front cover painting by a pupil of Rembrandt was long thought to have been painted by Rembrandt himself; only recently was it declared by the National Gallery in London, England, "not a Rembrandt after all"—it must be said, to the consternation of some art experts. Check out discussions online!

Regardless of artist, this canvas reveals the best that Rembrandt's students were ably taught. Amongst them were his fascination with and use of the play of light and shadow, as well as his pull to grasp more about the "Light of the World" and as well the world's darkness too. If a pupil did paint this masterpiece, he'd learned much more than technique from his Master. Words about Jesus from the book of John, Rembrandt's favourite book of the Bible, echo in memory as a Christian becomes part of this scene in the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, "in Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness."

The strongest light by far in the barn comes from the baby in His mother's arms. It strongly suffuses the faces of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds crowded around—perhaps even a wife of one of the them as she swoons at its effect. The nearest shepherd boy simply bows, the other reels as in shock at something beyond his everyday experience of

light, or perhaps Messiah recognition(?).

The lighted lantern in the hand of the standing shepherd only serves to make us realize further the difference between the two sources of light. In this glimpse of Jesus' birth, the twin halves of God's world, heaven and earth, seem to intersect and even touch.

Might Rembrandt have thought of the brilliant light from the baby as the *Shekinah* light or glory of God in the Jewish Tabernacle's or Temple's Holy of Holies when Yahweh had his earthly residence there? Who then was this baby born of Mary? John replies:

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we saw the glory, glory as of the only begotten son of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:4-5, 16)

As Rembrandt (and his pupil) 'saw' it, what a profound and unforgettable experience the shepherds had that night.

There is much to be seen and pondered in this painting once one gets beyond squinting into the shadow as if we were ourselves there. Slowly as our eyes adjust to the dimness we see more and more. Do a google search for commentary. Or, better yet just sit and think...

The painting is on view everyday in the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square. Room 23. Want to go?

Off the Collar

Memo from our minister

I'm going to share a story with you. It's an apocryphal tale (i.e. I made it up!), but gives us food for thought. Let's call it "The Sad Story of the Silly Shepherd." It has to do with that famous episode when the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds and the glory of the Lord shone around them.

After declaring the Good News, the angel said something that the shepherds naturally interpreted as an invitation, "This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." So the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened."

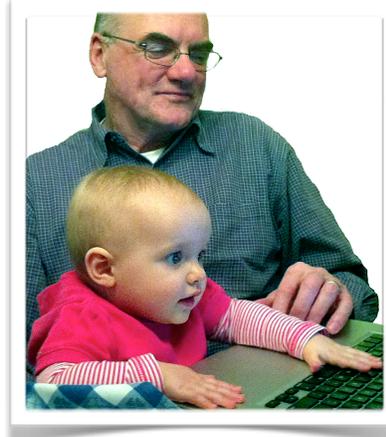
There was one shepherd, however, who didn't think that was such a good idea. He thought the angel's appearance was interesting and the "great company of the heavenly host" was even spectacular, but he felt there were more important matters to consider. "What about the sheep," he asked. "Who will look after them? What would happen to them while we're off gallivanting across the country?" And he reminded them, "This is our job! We can't just walk away and leave everything behind!"

"And besides," he told them, "Bethlehem is packed with people right now. How will we ever find one little baby lying in some obscure manger somewhere? And maybe this is all some kind of trick, a practical joke. You go if you like, but I'm staying right here. This is where I belong."

As we know, the shepherds who hurried off to Bethlehem "found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger." Then, "they returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been

told." And what was the first thing they said to the silly shepherd who stayed behind? "You should have come with us! You should have accepted the angel's invitation! You should have seen what we saw!"

What a scene that stable presented to them: it was simple, yet profound; humble, yet mystical; everyday, yet world changing! They saw two poor parents and their newborn infant "wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger," but that little child was none



other than "the Saviour... Christ the Lord." And that poor shepherd missed witnessing the very beginning of the most significant event the world has ever known: the incarnation of God, when "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us for awhile", and all because other things seemed so much more important at the time. What a silly shepherd!

Yes, I made up this story, but isn't it the story of so many Christmases past and present? The Christmas season comes round year after year, but most of the world is too busy, too preoccupied with other things to pay any attention to what the celebration is really all about. They have no idea that a special child was born into the world

to save us from our sins, bring God to us and us to God and give us life "in all its abundance." And the worst of it is they don't care. Other things are just too important to give Jesus the time.

We at St. Paul's have the opportunity to witness this Christmas miracle every year. We receive the invitation to worship Christ, the newborn King, participate in programs and attend special events, all designed to inspire us again to see the wonder and celebrate the grace the shepherds encountered that night. We hope you will "come and see" what God has for us at St. Paul's this Christmas season.

Our hope too is that you will "go and tell" friends and family about our celebration. Bring them to church where they will see and hear the singers, the musicians, the readers and the actors, and where they'll find a large congregation in the same state of awe as the shepherds who left their flocks to "see this thing that has happened," and hear the good news that "a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord!"

Let's all of us this Christmas season "come and see" and "go and tell!" And may God bless us all with the wonder of beholding once more the glory of Christmas.



These testimonies are an important reminder of why the volunteers and I serve in the youth ministry. As we approach Christmas and the celebration of the gift of our Saviour, I am reminded of the incredible gift that it is to share this love with the teens and volunteers at Epicentre. Please continue to pray for this St. Paul's Church ministry as we are constantly forging into uncharted waters but knowing what we do is not in vain. Thank you to the wonderful volunteers that make this ministry happen.

—Jeremy Sawé (Youth Pastor)

The youth ministry and my spiritual life go hand in hand. What I learn at **Epicentre** every week becomes something that I carry with me. It helps shape the way I pray and think about the the issues we discuss. I learn about God and what He does in other peoples' lives and this helps me when I think about my own life and what God might do. It also helps me to realize how important it is to be a part of the communion of saints. As a result I grow closer to God and build a stronger relationship with Him.



My name is Elisabeth Ginder and this is my youth ministry.

Epicentre is a really lovely and fantastic place to learn more about God and what He is doing in the lives of others. It is a really great encouragement to me and makes me excited to get to know Him better. The time that I've spent in the youth group has helped me grow in my relationship with God and given me a fantastic group of people that I can call my family because of what Jesus did for us.



My name is Alicia Hofland and this is my youth ministry.

Coming to **Epicentre** every week is always exciting: when I walk in, the people are friendly, welcoming and full of excitement, and at the end of the night, there's always something to think about when I go home.

Hearing the messages about the teachings of God has helped me to get to know who He is, how much He loves us and that He is always here for me. The lessons have also taught me to practice my faith outside of youth group and church.

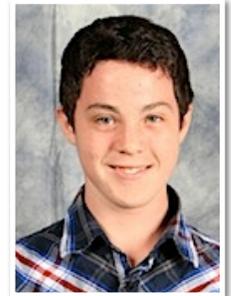
Throughout the years of being here, I've learned the importance of knowing God and building a good and stable relationship with Him, and how it all starts by having faith and trusting Him.

My name is Rebecca Asibey and this is my youth ministry.



Epicentre to me is the place to which I can come every Friday and learn something new. It also helps me make sure I am connecting with others in the right way and making them feel welcome. Epicenter keeps me on track with my walk with God.

My name is Cameron Galbraith and this is my youth ministry.



Christmas is a time for reflection and for many of us a time of real nostalgia. For example, do you remember ever being in a pageant at Christmas time? What part did you play? Maybe it was Mary or Joseph. Perhaps you played one of the shepherds or an angel. Or was it one of the wise men? Remember the costumes that were resurrected for you to wear? You put on the appropriate garb played your part, and then took it off, got dressed and went home. You went on with your life as if the pageant never happened. But all of the characters in the Christmas pageant were real people. They didn't take off their costume and go home. Those were the clothes they

wore as they went about their daily activities. They had established a regular pattern of life just as we have. They ate, slept, worked and socialized with friends. Their culture imposed its norms on their lifestyle and thinking

I wonder if we had not been able to take off that costume, I mean, if we had, in fact, been that person whose part we played in the pageant, how we would have responded to the situation.

Last year at the Seniors' Christmas programme we met the innkeeper and had an opportunity to dialogue with him. This year we met another familiar character and heard his point of view. It was a special day which included a lovely turkey dinner followed by a programme of special music, carol singing, and a message from Jack. Watch for news of monthly luncheons in the new year. Take time to sign up and join the group.



St. Paul's Seniors

FOOD FOR THOUGHT (and the stomach too!)

even as our culture has on ours. They felt joy and pain and had their ups and downs even as we do. They were ordinary, very ordinary, people chosen of God to fulfill His purposes.

The Nursery

“How great is God—beyond our understanding!” (Job 36:26a)

We see glimpses of the greatness of God, but we are so finite and He is so infinite that we see only the ‘tip of the iceberg.’ How then can we hope to help our littlest members of St. Paul’s see an infinite God? How can we help them to “come and see?”

Little by little and step by step we are building a foundation of understanding for little children. Will they catch it all? No. But they will catch some of it, and little by little they will begin to understand who God is and how great God is. Will they remember it all? No. But we will repeat over and over “hidden things, things from of old – what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done” (Psalm 78:2-4).

The sure foundation of our little ones is Jesus Christ. Everything else will crumble. Our nursery ministry is just the beginning of leading our children to Jesus. Much of the work is hidden, and the fruit of this ministry may take years to see. But God is faithful. Because once they “come and see,” they will “go and tell”.

The goal of our teaching ministry to little ones is to present great truths about God in very simple words, to show glimpses of who God is through the telling of key Scriptures, and to repeat these stories and basic truth statements over and over with the prayer “that the next generation... would put their trust in God” (Psalm 78:1-7).

May God be pleased with our efforts to raise up a generation who trusts in Jesus and go on to proclaim, “How great is God –beyond our understanding!”

Rachel Topps Colman & Victoria Miles



Some of the ideas above are from *A Sure Foundation, Children Desiring God* (2005).

A Small Group Experience!

Almost two years ago, I was approached to join the Thursday morning men's Bible study, an invitation I gladly accepted. Together, we've been examining Ephesians with the help of Eugene Peterson's book "Practice Resurrection." The discussions, led by Jack, are rich, thoughtful, and demonstrate each man's commitment to a common bond - our love for Christ and a pursuit of holiness.

It's an extraordinary, and often times overwhelming group of which to be a part. On many occasions I catch myself listening attentively like a young boy, to stories of past lives in medicine, politics and business. I truly appreciate the wisdom and insight each man contributes, and regularly find the conversations stimulating and challenging.

I have learned a great deal about the 'walk of faith' and seen it lived out in some difficult circumstances. Last year, we lost one of our members, Frank Jones, and watching how each

man dealt with his passing brought the reality of death and the reunion with Christ, into a clearer perspective. We also recently faced another difficult period when long time member, Robin Barr moved to Toronto to be closer to family. I know I speak for the group when I say we miss him, and the others that have played such an important role in the growth of each member and the group collectively.

The men in the group genuinely care for one another, especially having known each other for so many years, but even being both new and young, I have felt they care equally for me, and my family. The legacy of these men in my life is a heart's desire to serve and support others in the same way, and I am grateful for their leadership, commitment and passion for their faith.

– Stuart Miles

The New Kiosk

A new kiosk is now available in the Narthex by the Library. At the kiosk you can find out information about St. Paul's and events by accessing the St. Paul's website, you can also access the youth website Epicentre. You can download your iPod, iPhone or mp3 device by connecting it to the USB port on the back of the kiosk. The kiosk also allows you to create CDs of sermons and services.

1. To make a CD open iTunes and select the sermon you want.
2. Right click on the sermon and select Burn Playlist to CD
3. When the dialogue pops up insert a blank CD and click on BURN.
4. After about 3 to 4 minutes when the burn is finished eject the CD.

We plan to have someone available to help with this. Note that it takes a few minutes after the service to prepare and download the current sermon to the kiosk. If you have a computer at home we recommend downloading the sermon from the website and burning a CD at home.

We hope to use the kiosk in the future for signing up for events and other activities at St. Paul's. If you have any questions about the kiosk please feel free to contact me or someone on the A/V team. If you are interested in switching from using CDs to using an iPod shuffle or other mp3 device please let us know we can show you how to do this easily or access the sermons from the St. Paul's website.

Ed Smith
ed4smith@gmail.com
613-513-3841





From Our House to Yours

More than 90 women congregated in Campbell Hall on Saturday afternoon, November 24th for the Christmas event, "Merry Christmas from our House to Yours." Beautifully decorated Campbell Hall was a welcoming setting for St. Paul's women and their friends to focus on why Christmas is "the most wonderful time." Through word, fellowship, song and fun, we celebrated the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A special thanks to all those who made the afternoon possible—over 45 people contributed in various capacities, including set-up, baking, program, serving and organizing—under the leadership of Janice Hunt.

Praise God for this special time, and pray that He will use this in the lives of all—that we will continue to focus on the Lord during this Christmas season, and that newcomers who attended will be drawn to seek Him in their lives. —Jerry Campbell

Lesson in flower arranging



Mummers Entertain

Janice Hunt's Message

MY SENSES ARE TELLING ME IT'S CHRISTMAS

"It's the most wonderful time of the year!" We all know the song. It says things like "there is much mistletoe-ing and hearts will be glowing when loved ones are near." The romance of Christmas seems rather idiotic and yet we long for it. And what's wrong with that? In our imagination we can allow ourselves these snapshots of an ideal time. So Andy Williams continue to sing your song, "It's the most wonderful time of the year" and allow

us to reminisce or dream even for a moment.

However, we don't live in a world of dreams. So I ask how can Christmas be the most wonderful time of the year when I see the calendar flip from the month of November to December and I thought Halloween was just yesterday. There before my eyes I SEE an unrealized time line of commitments fast approaching. Or I SEE the colours of Christmas, red, green and gold, all meshed into one blinding blur. Or I SEE a bank statement already

overdrawn and panic grips my mind.

Why is it the most wonderful time of the year when I HEAR my children's voices telling me of ALL the items on their Santa Wish List? Or from my radio station I HEAR the constant countdown of the number of shopping days till Christmas. Or I HEAR my husband telling me, he offered our home for the staff Christmas party and it's this weekend!

Why is it the most wonderful time of the year when I TASTE all the food and drink samples at the local Christmas craft fairs, leaving that little black dress bulging at the seams?

Or why is it the most wonderful time of the year when I am TOUCHED by the sharp prickles on our fresh evergreen tree while trying to secure it into its stand?

Why is it the most wonderful time of the year when I SMELL the burning of cookies which were my contribution to our neighborhood cookie exchange? Or I turn up my nose at the odour coming from the many street people begging outside my neighborhood grocery store?

I need to "COME TO MY SENSES!" A reminder to put things in perspective.

This line is from one of my favourite Christmas TV specials when Charlie Brown asks "ISN'T THERE ANYONE WHO KNOWS WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT?"

The prophet Isaiah foretold this most wonderful night in verse two of chapter nine of his book. "The people who are living in darkness will SEE a great light."

Have you SEEN Jesus for yourself? The baby, the inquisitive teenager, the son of a carpenter, the fisher of men, the teacher, the healer, the friend, the betrayed, the crucified, the risen one, the coming king?

Luke says that, "After the Shepherds had SEEN him, they reported what the angel had said about the child. All who HEARD it were amazed at what the Shepherds had said to them." They had been waiting for years to HEAR that the Messiah, their deliverer, had finally come. No wonder they were amazed. Today what are we hearing? What fills our minds?

Do you find at Christmas the voices of the season clamour for headspace? It is almost impossible to escape the constant invasion of outside forces on our minds. And in the midst of our demanding and busy lives are you like me longing to HEAR the quiet, tender voice of Jesus saying "Come unto me all who are weary and I will give you rest"? Rest for our body, spirit, and mind.

O TASTE and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him. (Psalm 34:8) Together, today we

are tasting of the goodness of the Lord and it has nothing to do with counting calories. Again a verse from the Psalms. "How sweet are your words to my TASTE, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Here David is saying to savour the words of scripture.

When we savour our Christmas dinner, we start by eating with our eyes what has been so attractively displayed on our plate. Then we sample each delectable bite, noting the texture, blend of flavours and distinguishing how each portion complements the other, resulting in our enjoyment of the meal. We should approach God's word in the same manner, for our growth, enjoyment and our spiritual well being. TOUCH is the first language we learn. It is said to be the richest means of



Carol Singing

emotional expression throughout life. Did you know that a sympathetic touch from a doctor leaves people with the impression that the visit lasted twice as long? Mothers and science know that massaging a baby for fifteen minutes reduces baby's irritability, and improves baby's learning and development.

Modern science can only concur with the Biblical truth from Daniel's experience with a touch from God. Daniel 10:18 says, "Then the one that looked like a man TOUCHED me again and I felt my strength returning." Research has shown that a simple hug can lower blood pressure and reduce stress. It can bring comfort, calm and, for a brief moment, be a shield against the world.

Bell Canada knew the value of TOUCH and banked on it with the slogan "Reach out and touch somebody." And we did, all over the world. Of course we know Bell was referring to the sound of one's voice giving the feeling of being TOUCHED.

Then there is the sense of SMELL Paul writing to the Ephesians said: "Live a life filled with love following the example of Christ. He loved and offered himself as a sacrifice, for us, a pleasing aroma to God." This is our Christian mandate.

Can this heart adjustment now change my thoughts and actions about Christmas ?

I drive past Parliament Hill and smile as I SEE our nations capital alive with coloured lights announcing that we are celebrating Christmas.

I like to SEE so many families coming together and the happiness of these relationships. I like to SEE classic Christmas movies..

I like to HEAR the excitement in children's voices as they perform their rehearsed lines and songs at their school or Sunday school concerts. I like to HEAR the message and music of Handel's Messiah.

I like to TASTE fudge made from a family recipe passed down for generations.

I like the TOUCH of a handshake as we greet one another expressing fellowship. I like to TOUCH

beautifully wrapped gift boxes under my tree and wonder at their content.

I like to SMELL the aroma coming from my kitchen both savoury and sweet. I like to SMELL the scent of nature as it permeates my home with woodland freshness.

Yes a baby has made the difference! Christmas is indeed the most wonderful time of the year for God has become flesh and lives among us.

As Linus says, "THAT'S WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT, CHARLIE BROWN."

I pray our love for Jesus will be the reason we are celebrating this year.

May the blessings and joy He gives flow from our house to yours.

Adapted from Janice Hunt's presentation



The St. Paul's Missionary Family Worldwide



When you turn this page 90°, how many of these people can *you* name? Perhaps this page could be laid out in a noticeable spot at home as a reminder to pray for these members of our faith family.

ເຢືຍ ບັ້ວ ຍິວ-ເມື່ນ ຜົ້ວ ເຈື່ນ ພມວັງ ທິນ-ຊື່ງ ເຍືຍ ຫວ່າ
 ເຢຍ ບິວ ຍິວ-ມ່ຽນ ຕສິວ ຈິງຽນ ໝວັງ ທິນ-ຊື່ງ ເຍືຍ ຫວ່າ

Yie mbuo Yiu-Mienh zuov jienv muangx Tin-Hungh nyei waac
 Yia Bua yiub mienh zuaq Jyenq mwavj Tinb huvb Eei waag

For a translation of the words above, go to the very bottom of the page

**FROM HARDCOPY TO AN AUDIOBOOK –
 A BIBLE IS STILL A BIBLE!**

“The Mien Bibles are finally here!” was the excited greeting as boxes and boxes of the newly translated and printed books arrived in North Thailand March 2008. After waiting decades to have the Bible in their own heart language the Mien are thrilled. But, there is a problem! What about the tens of thousands who can’t read? Literacy programs haven’t yet reached Mien in more remote areas of China, Vietnam or Laos. Even in Thailand, the U.S., Canada and France many Mien are still unable to read in their own heart language. What can be done to help them? The obvious answer was to record the Bible so Mien could listen to it! But how were we to get recordings to the people? Praise the Lord for many committed groups who have the experience, ability and desire to help.

One such group is GALCOM International. “GAL” comes from the Hebrew word in Psalm 37:5 meaning “commitment” and the “COM” is the abbreviation of “communication,” and then “INTERNATIONAL” referring to their worldwide outreach. Based in Hamilton, Ontario, this group of committed individuals and volunteers has now sent over 900,000 solar powered fix-tuned radios into 126 countries world wide. Where radio transmitters are required they set them up. Not only are the newest little radios solar powered but they can transmit from local AM, FM or short wave Christian radio stations. They even have a microchip that can hold the entire Bible plus hundreds of hours of Bible teaching. Allan McGuirl, one of the founders of Galcom, was at St. Paul’s recently and shared some of the amazing things God is doing through these colourful little “missionaries” that can go where people often cannot go. In hard to reach mountainous areas these tough, durable fix-tuned radios are sometimes attached to tiny parachutes and dropped into the hands of the people. Where there is no Christian radio station, teams go in and set them up. What an incredible outreach ministry worldwide.

The Mien in both Richmond and Seattle, California, are currently recording the Old Testament while the New Testament is soon to be recorded in North Thailand. My part at the moment is to encourage those involved and to be a “proof-listener,” carefully listening to make certain that the

entire Mien Bible is clearly and accurately recorded. We are also looking forward to having each of these little solar powered radio/recorders fix-tuned to receive Mien Christian radio broadcasts, plus the unabridged audio Mien Bible, and hundreds of hours of Christian teaching. Pray also that God will do great things in the hearts and lives of the Mien everywhere, even many who have now emigrated to the United States and worldwide as they listen to His Word.

Ann Burgess**

*** Ann Burgess (currently living in Ottawa, an Elder and member of the Missions Committee at St. Paul’s) in 1964 set out at ‘20-something’ for Southeast Asia to be a missionary nurse under the auspices of OMF.*

After two years of Thai language study, she went to live with the Mien people, a unique tribal group with their own distinct language who live in a great geographical range across northern Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and southern China. It was in Thailand amongst them that she made her home for much of five decades, beloved by now by her Mien ‘family’ in their remote mountain villages, reached initially only by foot.

Her nursing skills were swiftly put to good use, often 24-hours a day, and her Bible teaching too. Her significant linguistic skills were soon put to good use translating the whole Bible into Mien. It took 27 years! During this time she trained a Mien woman (the wife of her Mien language consultant) to carry on many medical duties, releasing Ann for more translation; Ann was still called out on many an emergency. Ann has just finished gruelling hours of checking and correcting the “Mien Dictionary with Cultural Notes.” Another victory, it has just been published. Now as a Mien speaker she has been chosen by the Mien themselves to check the accuracy of their new audio Bible!



Muic & Meix



**SOLAR POWERED FIX-TUNED
 RADIOS**

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Plastic Milk Bags for Haiti

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me.'" (Matt: 25:40 NIV)

Before the arrival of television, people would gather together regularly to work on a shared project, whether it be for a new baby, family or to help people in crisis. Not only did this meet a practical need, but the simple act of coming together to work on a shared project strengthened social bonds and built community. Some of these groups became known as "quilting bees" or "barn-raisers," depending on the nature of the project, but they all fulfilled a Biblical mandate: to share our resources and care for one another.

As is evident in the various ministries at St. Paul's, people are not only the heart of an organization, they also provide heart to an organization. The Milk Mat Project began as a way to support disaster-relief efforts in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. Milk bags are transformed and made into mats suitable for sleeping. They are also used as surgical beds and protective wraps for medical supplies in hospitals. Milk mats provide warmth, cushioning and protection from diseases and are easily washed and



hung to dry. The plastic repels biting insects and poisonous spiders, making them ideal for the tropical climate. Approximately 300 milk bags are required to make a child's mat and nearly 600 for an adult-sized one. It sounds like a lot, but it's surprising how quickly they "stitch up."

In November 2011 an informal group began creating milk bag mats under the direction of our office administrator, Frances

"The plastic repels biting insects and poisonous spiders... ideal for the tropical climate."

Cartwright. Several mats were completed and sent to Haiti in June of 2012. This small group officially became the Mission Crafts group and welcomed eight additional people in October 2012 with an introductory workshop. A follow-up workshop was held in November, to teach a crochet-stitched border and provide ongoing support. Many enthusiastic people are

currently volunteering their time and efforts and making a difference for Haiti!



The process of learning to make a milk bag mat is easy. For those who prefer not to crochet, we

always need helpers to cut the outer-branded milk bags into strips. These strips are crocheted using a single-crochet stitch. The mats can be worked on at home which makes it an ideal project for individuals, couples and families. When the Mission Crafts group meets, people bring in their project to work on and they enjoy refreshments and fellowship together.

The Mission Crafts group extends its heartfelt thanks to those who have contributed generously to this cause by keeping the drop-off box in the narthex well-stocked with milk bags.

Additional workshops will be held in the New Year for current volunteers, as well as for anyone interested in learning how to make a mat. For more information, please contact Frances at the church office, 613-729-3384.

Mary Anne Marston



The Ottawa West End Community Chaplaincy (OWECC)



The Ottawa West End Community Chaplaincy (OWECC) provides a Christian community chaplaincy presence in four west-end neighbourhoods—Foster Farm, Morrison Gardens, Pinecrest Terrace, and Regina Towers. We serve these areas by providing a ‘ministry of presence,’ that accompanies people who live daily with the challenges of poverty, isolation, mental and physical health barriers,

*What is required but to do justice
And to love kindness,
And walk humbly with your God?
—Micah 6:8*

addictions and underemployment.

Support comes in a variety of forms, including activities, individual support, communal celebrations, and crisis management. OWECC also operates food banks in three of these neighbourhoods and a community clothes closet for all.

Naomi Kabugi, an ordained priest of the Anglican diocese of Ottawa, is our full-time chaplain. She and a team of

other volunteers work with groups and individuals and walk alongside them, offering a listening ear and pastoral care support. In the summer OWECC also offers a Cooperative Family Camp and Teens at Risk Canoe Camp. This is an opportunity for families and teens to experience a rare chance to get outside the city and enjoy nature, and reflect on spiritual matters and other life issues.

Christmas can be a particularly difficult time for people who live in poverty. All around us we hear of what we should buy for those we love, and these families will feel their need the most. During the Christmas season we have a ‘Blue Christmas’ service for those who have experienced loss in their lives or who feel sad during the Christmas season. We also hold a multi-faith service recognizing the effect of loss in our lives.

My own involvement with OWECC began by volunteering at Pinecrest Terrace Food Bank almost two years ago. My responsibilities there have grown, and I now help coordinate this food bank. One of the most memorable times for me happened this fall when a



young couple who are refugees from Russia arrived. They had been in Canada less than a month, and in a couple of days would be moving into an apartment in Bells Corners, and needed to be set up with some basics. They were so happy and excited, and we all shook hands and welcomed them to Canada, and then got a nice assortment of food together for them.

One of the most difficult, ongoing situations we deal with is a gentleman who is under-employed. He supports a wife who is not able to work because of a devastating car accident some years ago, and a young son. He has work for 20 hours a week on contract with the government, but that is not enough for him to live on and support his family. We pray and hope for him, that things will improve. In all these situations I seek to follow the Lord’s example of reaching out to the poor and needy, being his hands and feet to those I meet.

Linda Shugart

Resource Centre/Library

Please take the time to browse the Christmas theme window and shelf. Several items have been added this year to help you enhance your enjoyment of our celebration of the birth of Christ Jesus. The items chosen are done so to reflect the diversity of ages of our congregation, including the youngest.

—The Library Committee

Upcoming Events

CHRISTMAS EVE Monday, December 24

4:00 “An Upside Down Christmas”

7:00 Traditional Candlelight Service

NOTE: Single Worship Services:

Sunday, December 30 – 10:30

Sunday, January 6, 2013 – 10:30



Ghislaine's Notes

Hard to believe it is time to plan for Christmas! Have you started yet?

We will remember

Mack MacGregor's sister Jean Canham from Avonmore passed away suddenly Monday Nov. 12th. The funeral was on Nov. 16th. Our prayers are with the family.

Visiting St. Paul's

Jim Logan and Marion Rae, Richard Lessard from Toronto, Ben Stevenson, (at the 9 a.m. Bible Study he spoke about his stay in Gambia). The Bible Study was led by his uncle, Paul (McKechmie.

Seniors' Luncheons

Wednesday September 26th—good food, no special feature. It gave us the chance to get to know each other better. Wednesday October 24th the special feature was "Mostly Bows". We are blessed having them at least once a year. Three are members of our church: Arnold Macdonald, Allan Grunder and Arden Walther. About sixty attended.

Wednesday November 28 Evonne Isaak gave some helpful advice as she shared "How to prepare an Estate Binder."

Wednesday, December 12, the Seniors' Lunch was a delicious turkey dinner. This was followed by a special presentation in the sanctuary with a message by Jack Archibald and special music by guest organist, Mark Thallander, and several other musical guests.

Soupwich

On October 28th there was a good attendance after church to enjoy the four different kinds of soup served by the youth group. This was a special Focus on Missions event with a "Human Library" of missionaries with whom to talk, one or two to a table.

Take Note of these Birthdays

Joyce Kouwenberg – December 10th,
Vera Barnes – January 28th,
Beth Hurd – February 14th.

Baptisms

October 7th Markus Christian Hertwig, son of John and Sara, brother of Sophia and Elise. He was baptized by his grandfather, Rev. Henry Gunning, Pastor of Grace Reformed Church in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

October 14th Adler Kell Smith, son of Ryan and Melissa and little brother of Oren. There was a cake served in Campbell Hall after the 10:30 a.m. service.

Home for Christmas

Patricia Smith, Kristopher Houston, Andrew and David Hill, Dan Corrigan and Robin Shugart.

Galcom International

November 7th cookies, squares, coffee and tea were served. Allan McGuirl showed us five different solar powered radios (all materializing from pockets in his suit!). Over 900,000 of these tiny fixed-station radios are being used to share the whole Bible as well as hundreds of hours of gospel teaching around the world, most recently in Greenland, and soon in Haiti.

Remembrance Day

November 11th at the 9:00 a.m. service John Hertwig was interviewed by Phil Kim. He has been in the Armed Forces for 16 years and has served in Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Pal Night

November 15th was Pal Night at Pioneer Club and 25 children were present to meet their Prayer Pals. Every year I'm amazed the way Derek Jonker leads the children in singing. He is one of a kind and very dedicated.

Going to Urbana

Victoria Mabie, Patrick Smith, Janet Hurd, Nancy Boame, Amanda Watson, David Hill and Heather Shugart are going to the InterVarsity missionary conference held every three years. This year, the 23rd conference since 1946, is again held in St. Louis, Missouri from December 27 to 31. Pray for a safe trip for all.

"Merry Christmas from Our House to Your House"

With Terry Campbell as emcee it was a festive event for the women of St. Paul's and their visitors. Beautiful decorations changed the look of Campbell Hall. Instructions on how to arrange flowers were one special segment, wonderful treats, fun and laughter, especially with the three "Mummers." There was great carol singing as well. Victoria Mabie played her flute, Evelyn Pike played the piano and Carolyn Henderson sang. The afternoon concluded with Janice Hunt's thought-provoking message focusing on the use of our five senses at Christmas time.

Soupwich November 25

Lots of good fellowship and good food was had by all, served this time by the Ladies' Friday Night Small Group & friends. The soup was so good they ran out!

Congratulations to Ian Shugart

on receiving the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal presented to him at Government House on November 22!

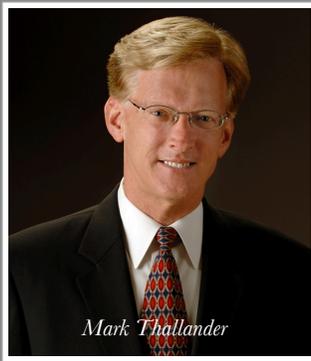
New Members

On December 2nd Joyce Hunt and Carole Rourke were received into our fellowship at St. Paul's. Let's pray for them and our whole church family that we will be blessed as we work together for God's glory.

God Willing I will be back next spring. Your friend, Ghislaine.

DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR? DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

by Mark Thallander



The season of Advent is filled with the sounds and sights of our Savior's long-expected arrival. The sounds—do you hear them? The sights—do you see them? Even the smells of the approaching celebration fill the halls of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church and your homes – from the kitchens to the Christmas trees! The sounds, sights and smells of the season. Are you

ready? Let every heart prepare Him room...and heaven and nature sing!

One of the exciting sounds I am looking forward to will be a piece arranged just for St. Paul's by Memphis, Tennessee composer Dennis Janzer. It is titled Exultations on "Regent Square" and is set for brass quintet, percussion and organ. The world premiere will be at the Christmas concert on Sunday, December 16, 2012.

It is based on one of my favorite Christmas hymns, "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" written by English poet James Montgomery. It was first printed almost 200 years ago in the *Sheffield Iris on Christmas Eve 1816*, though it only began to be sung in churches after its 1825 reprinting in the Montgomery collection *The Christian Psalmist* and in the Religious Tract Society's *The Christmas Box* or *New Year's Gift*.

Before 1928, the hymn was sung to a variety of tunes, including "Regent Square," "Lewes" by John Randall, and "Wildersmouth" or "Feniton Court" by Edward Hopkins. In Canada and the United States the hymn is today most commonly sung to the tune of "Regent Square" by Henry Smart. In the United Kingdom, however, the hymn came to be sung to the French carol tune "Iris" (*Les anges dans nos campagnes*), the tune used for "Angels We Have Heard on High" after this setting was published in the *Oxford Book of Carols*, except that the "Gloria in excelsis Deo" refrain is sung in place of Montgomery's original, "Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the new-born King" refrain.

Do you hear what the angels sang? Listen ...

*Angels, from the realms of glory
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
You who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.*

Do you see what the shepherds saw? Look ...

*Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant light:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King*

Do you see His natal star? Just imagine ...

*Sages, leave your contemplations
Brighter visions beam afar,
Seek the great Desire of nations,
You have seen His natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King*

Do you see the Savior? Do you bow before Him?

*Though an infant now we view Him,
He shall fill His Father's throne,
Gather all the nations to Him,
Every knee shall then bow down:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King*

Do the sounds and sights encourage you to worship?

*All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising,
To eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King*

It is interesting to note how often children's songs, Christmas carols, beloved hymns and Psalms include heaven and nature singing and praising God. Many times we sing about the God's creation in the galaxies ... from "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" to "Away in a Manger," from "I Sing the Mighty Power of God" to "How Great Thou Art."

The stars play a significant role in the Incarnation story... and can be a part of our lives, as well!

An encouraging text comes from Norman Macleod:

*Courage, loved one, do not stumble,
When your path is dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble:
"Trust in God and do the right."
God does rule and with His guiding
Comes great peace and inward might,
Stars are on your path abiding,
"Trust in God and do the right."*

In his "Hymn of Courage," John Ness Beck writes:

*And when age and sorrow have left their sad scars,
Let dignity fasten my gaze on the stars,
And when life is ended and my course is run,
I'll praise my Creator for victories won.*

Dr. Robert H. Schuller writes in his hymn, "People, People Everywhere":

*People, people will you dare,
Venture forth in noble prayer?
Claim your heritage divine,
Born to be a star to shine!*

Will you be the hands of Christ in *your* world today? What a privilege to be His messenger in Ottawa. Will you be Christ's ambassador? What will those around you hear? What will they see? O taste and see that the Lord is good! Will you be a star shining the light and love of Christ in your area of influence? Will you laugh and love and lift?

Let Philippians 2:15 be our goal for this season and throughout the New Year!

Shining like the stars for Jesus Christ as we hold out the word of life. –Philippians 2:1

DO NOT MISS...

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

Christmas Joy!



A Wonderful Evening of
Christmas Music
and Carol Singing

Sunday, December 16, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

Featuring:

- Clive Talbot St. Paul's Choir Director
- Patricia Talbot St. Paul's Pianist
- Mark Thallander Guest Organist
- Manotick Brass Ensemble with Percussion

Free admission
Non-perishable food donations appreciated for the Food Bank
Child care available
Parking behind the church Wheelchair accessible
Information: Church office 613-729-3384