

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

The St James Epistle

December 2011

"To be a loving, Christ-Centred Community Serving God by Serving Others"

Letter from Pauline

Saviour, be born in each of us who raises his face to thy face, not knowing fully who he is or who thou art, knowing only that thy love is beyond his knowing and that no other has the power to make him whole.

Come, Lord Jesus, to each who longs for thee even though he has forgotten thy name. Come quickly. Amen.

Dear Friends,

We can feel the magic in the air at this time of year as we approach Christmas. Soon we will celebrate that most wonderful event, the beginning of our story as Christians: God was born to us in a stable. But Christmas is not just the memory of a distant event that happened once, two thousand years ago. It would not be so resonant in our hearts if that were all the season was about. Jesus *is* born among us at Christmas. Jesus is still, always, being born among us and within us. Somehow we sense the enormity of this event as we await its coming during the weeks of Advent.

Margaret Silf, in *Roots and Wings*, explores the meaning of Christ's birth. In this book that describes the ongoing spiritual evolution of the human race, the birth of Jesus is the hinge point. Through him, God was born into the "mess and muddle" of our world as a "tiny seed of possibility." Human beings are, each of us is, becoming more and more fully human. Embodying the divine, Jesus "gives us a glimpse of everything that we ourselves might become."

I think this is why Christmas is so exciting. It's full of a hope that we can hardly describe. "Jesus invites us, again and again, to look at how things *are* around us, and then to imagine how things *could be*." Within that humble stable, God takes on our humanity, giving us the possibility of becoming all God dreamed we could be – of becoming more than we could ever imagine.

If Christ is born into our souls at Christmas – since this *is* the source of Christmas's mystery – each of us can be affected personally. I opened this letter with a pray written by Frederick Buechner. He entreats, "Saviour, be born in each of us No other has the power to make us whole." If we let Christ be born in us this Christmas, our relationship with God can deepen. We can become more fully human. The deep peace and joy of the stable in Bethlehem can be born into each of our hearts.

We can also think about how this birth of Christ among us affects us as a community. It gives us the invitation to imagine our future, to dream about how things could be. Christ's life brought to everyone he encountered healing and wisdom, forgiveness and encouragement. Let us pray that when Christ is born among us this Christmas we may grow in those qualities that we already nurture, becoming more and more compassionate, filled with brightness and hope.

Your sister in Christ,

Pauline

In This Issue.....

Letter from Pauline	1
Ministries & Stewardship	2
ACW Bazaar	3
Outreach & PWRDF	4
Five New Members	4
Parents	5
Christmas	5
Amy's Book Corner	5
Social Justice	6
Disabilities Act	6
Food Bank Message	6
VBS Thank You Letter	7
Carole's Order of Niagara	7
Calendar of Events	8



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our group has met on Thursday mornings once a month since September. Discussions concerning the organization and direction of our ministry have been the focus of the first four meetings. Topics discussed include: who will be the recipients of our prayer shawls, how will we package and deliver the shawls, where will completed shawls be stored, who will deliver them, what prayer(s) will be included with each shawl and how to record who receives prayer shawls. The idea of making 'pocket prayer shawls' – to be carried in pockets or used in situations in which a large shawl is not appropriate or allowed was also discussed.

Because this is a prayerful process, each gathering begins with prayer and ends with all present placing a hand on all finished or unfinished shawls followed by prayer. Patterns for knitted and crocheted shawls have been shared along with tips and suggestions for different shawls. Donations of worsted weight wool (#4) are needed for our members to continue creating more prayer shawls. We plan in the New Year to have Pauline bless all completed shawls before they are packaged and delivered to their recipients. If you are interested in this Outreach Ministry, please contact Anne Warner.

Our Prayer Chain

You remember the wonderful report given in Luke about the paraplegic on the stretcher who was carried to the place where Jesus was healing people of a great variety of problems. When his friends couldn't find a way through the crowd they went up on the roof, removed some tiles and let him down in the middle of everyone, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus told him to get up and go home, without a moment's hesitation he did it, praising God all the way. The people rubbed their eyes, incredulous ... and then they also praised God.

I always know when people are praying for me. I feel like I am being lifted up, through my roof, or whatever it is that is keeping me from the assurance that God will help me.

If you need to be lifted up or want help in lifting up the needs of someone you care for, you need only contact Pauline, the church office or Carole Darrah, for our confidential prayer support. Please let us know when your prayers are answered so we can praise God with you.

Carole Darrah

Medi-Rides

In the New Year, we would like to start a program to provide rides for our Parishioners who no longer drive.

Medi-Ride would offer rides to take them to Medical Appointments in the Guelph, K-W, and Cambridge area.

This will require a pool of approximately 5-6 Volunteers who would be willing to drive to and from the appointments at their own expense. It would also require a Police reference check at no expense because it is a voluntary position.

The Parishioner requiring the ride would notify the Coordinator (Caroline Macdonald) at the time their appointment is made so there is sufficient time to arrange for their ride.

This program can only proceed if we have enough interest and volunteers. Should it be successful, we will provide the details and start date. If this ministry is something that would interest you, please contact Linda Austin (519) 843-4171, Cathy Sweeney (519) 787-1312 or Caroline Macdonald (519) 843-4090.

Stewardship Committee

The members of the Stewardship Committee are: Laura McCartney, Ruth Sproul, Barbara Clunes, Linda Austin and Rev Dr Pauline Head.

During the past few months, we have been working to create a Narrative Budget which will accompany the regular budget that the parishioners receive at Vestry in February. The purpose of the Narrative Budget is to tell how St James invests resources of time, talent and treasures in the ministry of the church.

Each year, we ask parishioners to support the ministry and programming of our church. The Narrative Budget will explain how much and how we spend in each of the following areas: Outreach, Worship and Music, Christian Development and Pastoral Care. Your givings make it possible to offer faithful ministry. Look forward to reading this story in the New Year.

ACW World of Dolls Christmas Lunch & Bazaar on Saturday, November 26th raises \$2,350!



St James Outreach and Primates World Relief Development Fund

St James has generously supported the Primates World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) financially, through monthly giving in the “PWRDF” envelopes over many years. In addition a parish representative provided regular information on its work in the Sunday bulletins, and newsletters. When our representative stepped down, the Outreach Committee undertook the support of PWRDF as one focus of its ministry, in so-doing the committee has increased its awareness of the extensive and complex work, of PWRDF and its Christian inspired vision.

The mission statement begins, “PWRDF is a response by Canadian Anglicans to the gospel call to bear witness to God’s healing love in a broken world.”

The basic components of the PWRDF programme. Funding of programmes for emergency relief, community development, peace building, refugees, public engagement, and global justice. The “**Justfood**” initiative was recently launched as a programme directed at reducing and ending hunger in collaboration with other programmes for food security.

PWRDF supports projects worldwide, particularly in developing countries. The Indigenous Development Programme provides support in Canada.

Partnering with St John’s Elora. In order to increase St James’ support for the work of PWRDF, our Outreach Committee partnered with the PWRDF committee of St John’s, Elora in Aug. 2010 for the purpose of joint fund raising.

The Harvest Tea held in September 2011 was the first very enjoyable event, as well as a successful and rewarding partnership.

The next ambitious event will require tremendous support in 2012 from all who can at St James. On April 27, 2012 a concert sponsored by the PWRDF committees of St James’, St John’s Elora, and St George’s Guelph will be held in St George’s Church, Guelph. The performers will be “The Three Cantors” who are three Anglican priests who perform primarily for fundraising for the PWRDF. Pre-Christmas sales of tickets as a Christmas gift are available.

PWRDF

Not about money - about people.

Not about handouts - about partnership.

Not about charity - about dignity.

Not about them - about us and our sacred calling “Just as you did it to one of the least of my brothers and sisters you did it to me.” *Matthew 25:40.*

Barbara Clunes (for Outreach Committee)

We have a wealth of interesting resource information from PWRDF. If you would like to borrow it, please phone Joan Cochrane (519) 787-1905.

St James Welcomes Five New Members to the Family of God

Sunday October 30 was a busy day at St James! There was a buzz in the air and lots of activity in the Narthex as families arrived with their children. The church was full and there were about a dozen kids in attendance, in addition to the five new members of our community.

On that day Rev Amy Cousineau baptized five children, ranging in age from a few months to 2½ years, including one set of twins: **Sam and Charlie Nevitt, Axana Dube, Cooper Cox, and Jackson Gear.** (Amy was blessed to be the priest in attendance that day because Pauline was still in Spain, walking the Camino).

The older children were fully involved in the service—instead of a sermon Amy did a children’s talk about God’s love, the children helped Amy to pour the water into the font, and they gathered around the altar during the consecration of the bread and wine.

All the children who were baptized were blessedly peaceful!

To add to the specialness of the day we sang Happy Birthday to Liya Nevitt, big sister of Sam and Charlie!!



Parents

Yes, we all have them as we enter onto this planet earth. So what exactly is a parent? They are usually described as providers, caretakers, guardians, elders and more important persons who genuinely have our best interest in mind at all times through the good and bad years.

The fourth commandment states "Honour your father and your mother." So what does that mean? Honour is described as having esteem, homage, respect, glory, reverence, dignity and LOVE. Do we treat our parents this way more or less? They say that we never really appreciate our parents until we become parents and know all they have done for us.

Maybe you were an orphan and were adopted. Well I'm sure there were grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other relatives or strangers who wanted to adopt you and took over. Lucky you! Your own parents may still be alive or they may have passed on. If they are no longer with you, you still have many memories and without a doubt wish you could have said or done much more. However, if they are still living, you can still take the golden opportunity now to show them your deep affection and love for them. It's never too late. Honour and love your parents, or even parents-in-law, now while there is still time.

Don't miss the opportunity to honour and obey the parents God has given you, for they'll be gone someday. - Sper

Something to think about Ephesians 6:2

Patricia Kingdon



Christmas

by Sharon Lathrop

What does Christmas bring to you?
Does it bring you joy the peace that's true?
Do you have any hope or love to share?
Does the birth of Christ lead you to care?
Be filled with wonder at this child's birth
For God has sent His Son to earth
He came for a purpose and with a plan
To restore us to God the salvation of man
He has come be glad and rejoice
For He's God's Son and speaks with His voice
He has come be filled with hope and joy
Celebrate with all the birth of God's boy

Amy's Book Corner

Praying Our Goodbyes: A Spiritual Companion Through Life's Losses and Sorrows by Joyce Rupp, originally published in 1988, revised in 2009; Ave Maria Press, 170 pp. (available in the St. James library)

Joyce Rupp is one of my favourite authors on spiritual topics. She has a down to earth approach and her writing is easy to read. She tells personal stories to help us understand what she is writing about. And she offers prayers, meditations and poems grounded in her personal experience and deep spirituality.

Praying Our Goodbyes is a book that can help with all the various kinds of losses we experience in our lives—the end of a job, a child moving away from home, illness, and the death of loved ones. It is based on Rupp's belief that "loss and death are not the end of the story;" that our wounded selves can be healed and we will find the strength to live through our losses. [She begins the book by writing, "Goodbyes are as much a part of life as the seasons of the year. The story of gain and loss, of joy and sorrow, of life and death, of union and separation, is inside each one of us. ... My approach means a move from saying a goodbye to praying a goodbye. ... Leave takings are a part of everyone's life and the human spirit is wonderfully resilient in recovering from them."]

Each of the book's chapters speaks about a phase in the process of letting go. Rupp writes about these phases in prose and poetry. At the end of each chapter are questions for reflection, integration and discussion. The last half of the book is a collection of prayers for those experiencing goodbyes and includes prayers for "one who feels broken apart," "one who is leaving," and "one who is lonely" as well as 23 other kinds of transitions.

contributed by Amy Cousineau

Social Justice Making in our Parish and our Diocese

I was very inspired by the report from our elected delegates to the recent Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, Helen Henderson and Paul Holyoke. They shared good news about our Church's progress in many areas, but what I found most striking was the explicit commitment to prophetic social justice making enshrined in Bishop Michael's vision and the work being done across the Diocese to fulfill that commitment.

The knowledge that other parishes are also dedicating their precious time, talent and treasures to address the needs in their communities through their support for food banks, community dinners and other outreach activities taught me that we here at St James are a part of a broad and important stewardship effort.

And the recognition that these programs are just the beginning, not the end, that each opens up an opportunity for all of us to talk and learn about the other needs of our communities strongly validated my belief in the work of our St. James Social Justice Committee.

A new committee struck after our last vestry, the Committee has been working to begin to understand the systemic barriers that lead our friends and neighbours in Fergus to need our help to feed themselves and their families, barriers which include illiteracy, unemployment and under-employment, homelessness and physical and mental health challenges.

The Committee's sponsorship of the All Candidates' Debate during the recent provincial election, in partnership with other local faith communities, mirrors the Bishop Michael's work with the ISARC interfaith coalition's "Faith to End Poverty" campaign. Both groups seek to keep "poverty-related issues such as food security, housing, [and] employment" in the Bishop's words, on the public agenda and to work toward their eradication.

We will be hearing more about the work of the Social Justice Committee in the weeks and months to come. I know that they are formulating exciting plans to share information and ideas about the issues facing our local community and new ways that we can work together with those in other faith communities and beyond to address them. I know that everyone's ideas and enthusiasm are welcomed by the Committee.

And I have faith that St James' ongoing support for outreach and social justice issues will continue to make a critical difference in Fergus and in our Diocese.

Rick Petersen

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act from Linda Austin

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act comes into effect on January 1, 2012. A document called Customer Care Standards and Policies must be available on request to parishioners and non-parishioners for all parishes that have at least one employee.

Many of the necessary provisions are in place at St James; however, the information needs to be written down in the form of a policy. The Diocese has provided a template for our use and Linda Austin has been working on the policy to make it specific for our church. The Act includes all disabilities not just barrier-free access.

Examples of areas to include are having large print copies of the services and hymns available and providing designated spaces for wheelchairs and walkers. The Act also includes the need for provisions for training of those who interact with the public, responding to feedback about how services are provided and making this information available to the public.

In the New Year, we will highlight areas of our policy in the newsletter so that parishioners are aware of its contents. As always, we are open to any suggestions that would make worship at St James easier for you. Suggestions can be written on our feedback forms, sent by email to linda-austin@live.com or by calling Linda at (519) 843-4171.



Centre Wellington Food Bank

The Centre Wellington Food Bank would like to take this opportunity on behalf of its staff and clients to thank the congregation of St James for its support of The Food Bank in these troublesome times.

To give you an idea of numbers, at least 1 in 10 residents of Centre Wellington accessed the Food Bank once in the last year; due to layoffs, delay in unemployment payments etc. Each month the Food Bank distributes the retail equivalent of over \$26,000 of food.

Once more, thanks for your support.

Brian Dowling

Least Coin Service

For the second year in a row, the World Day of Prayer Service of the Least Coin was held at St James on Friday, November 4th.

Approximately 30 people attended and \$197.38 was collected. Many thanks to all who participated.

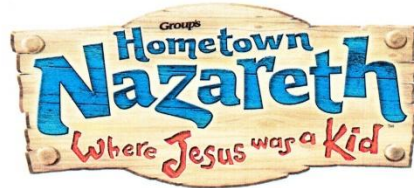
In 2012, the Least Coin Service will be held at St Mary's RC Church in Elora.

We Need Your Help!

Please help our new caretaker, George Bailey keep the hall floor looking good.

Remember to remove your wet boots and shoes before you go downstairs to the hall.

*Thank you
Linda and Cathy*



Oct. 1, 2011

Dear Friends,

Just a note to thank you for making HOMETOWN Nazareth such a success. Beginning the week with Marty Papernick telling the children bible stories thru magic tricks, Rob Hamilton doing carpentry and having the children make a bird. Then we had Alice and Bruce Bartlemen. Alice keeping our books straight and Bruce being our tax collector and making our fence for the animals to be corralled in which Eric Henderson taught how to care for the animals. Along came Allan Goldenberg to teach Hebrew language which Jesus would have spoken.

What can we say about Mary who was played by Anita Kitkowsk. What a fantastic job you and your noisy neighbor did played by Helen Henderson.

Along came Priscilla McGuire to teach rock quarry. Leah McLean taught how soap was made from olive oil, sea salt and spice, Lincoln Henderson gave us the wool and Jill McKee and Kim McGuire informed us on what the wool was used for and how to make a craft with it.

Some of our props were supplied by Barb Ferries and the Kortwright.

We must thank the ladies of ACW for supplying the snacks each day for the children.

A special thanks to Faith Evangelical Lutheran and St. James council for giving us encouragement to go ahead.

Again a big thank you and we applaud you for all your help making this such a success.

Yours Truly,

Ingrid Hebbel-Beer, Heidi May, Kim McGuire,
Helen Henderson and Rosalie Voyce



Congratulations Carole!

On Sunday, November 5th 2011, Carole Darrah received the Order of Niagara from Bishop Michael Bird.





Calendar of Events

Some Upcoming Events

*(Events will be added and details filled in.
Please check your weekly bulletins.)*

Thursday, December 1st	10:00am	Prayer Shawl Meeting
Friday, December 2nd	6:00pm	Food Bank Appreciation Dinner
Wednesday, December 7th	11:00am	ACW Meeting & Christmas Pot Luck Lunch
Friday, December 9th	12:00pm	Merry Widows Christmas Lunch at Highland Manor
Friday, December 9th	7:00pm	Pauline & Rick's Pilgrimage Presentation
Sunday, December 11th	7:30pm	The Way @ The Gorge Cinema
Thursday, December 15th	7:30pm	Taizé Service
Friday, December 16th	6:00pm	Community Dinner
Sunday, December 18th	10:30am	Lessons & Carols Service
	7:30pm	Christmas Bell Concert
Saturday, December 24th - Christmas Eve		
	7:00pm	Family Service
	10:30pm	Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 25th	9:30pm	Christmas Day
Sunday, January 8th	8:30/10:30am	Celebration of Epiphany
Tuesday, January 10th	7:30pm	Parish Council Meeting
Thursday, January 19th	7:30pm	Taizé Service
Friday, January 20th	6:00pm	Community Dinner
Friday, January 27th	7:00pm	Movie Night
Sunday, January 29th		Vestry Reports Due
Sunday, February 5th	8:30/10:30am	Celebration of Candlemas
Thursday, February 16th	7:30pm	Taizé Service
Sunday, February 19th		Vestry Books Available
Friday, February 24th	7:00pm	Movie Night
Sunday, February 26th	9:30am	Combined service followed by lunch and Annual Vestry

St James Anglican Church

171 Queen Street East, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7
(519) 843-2141

Minister	Reverend Pauline Head	(519) 824-1781
	E-Mail: pauline-head@sympatico.ca	
Honorary Assistant	Reverend Amy Cousineau	(519) 855-9489
	E-Mail: revamyc@gmail.com	
People's Warden	Cathy Sweeney	(519) 787-1312
Rector's Warden	Linda Austin	(519) 843-4171
	E-Mail: st.jameschurch@wightman.ca	
	Website: www.stjamesfergus.com	

Thank You & Congratulations!

Ron and Dorothy Dennis have been caring for St James as caretakers for 17 years.

Help us say thank you to them for their hard work and dedication. We also want to wish them congratulations on their retirement.

Join Ron and Dorothy on December 11th after the 10:30 service for cake and ice cream and conversation.

Christmas Bell Concert

with The Rainbow Ringers
from Niagara Falls

Sunday, December 18th

7:30-9:00pm

at St James Church



Free-will offering

The Three Cantors Concert

Friday, April 27th 2012

St George's Anglican Church
Guelph

A benefit concert hosted by St James' Fergus, St John's Elora and St George's Guelph supporting the PWRDF. Advanced ticket sales throughout December only: \$20 Adults, \$10 Students and Children. Contact Joan Cochrane (519) 787-1905 or Jane Douglas (519) 787-1724.

2012 Canadian Church Calendars are available from the church office priced \$6.00 each.

Brother Laser Printer

Free of Charge to collector

Contact Helen Henderson

(519) 843-2844