



# Waves, Ripples & Hellos

St. Andrew's United Church

Christmas 2008

[newsletter@standrewsunitied.org](mailto:newsletter@standrewsunitied.org)

## Warning!

### The Advent Virus:

Be on the alert for symptoms of inner **Hope, Peace, Joy and Love**. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to this virus and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable condition of conflict in the world.

#### Some signs and symptoms of **The Advent Virus**:

- A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than on fears based on past experiences.
- An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- A loss of interest in judging other people.
- A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- A loss of interest in conflict.
- A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)
- Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.
- Frequent attacks of smiling.
- An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.

- An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Take care and spread the virus to as many people as you can.



### A Message from Andrea:

I've been thinking about the story of Mary, the mother of Jesus. I've been thinking about the beginning part of the story – the part where the angel comes to Mary and tells her she is going to have a baby. (Luke 1:26-38) Now, anyone who is old enough to have reached adolescence knows that news of being pregnant can come as good news, or it can be a bit troublesome.

Another mother in the Bible – Hannah – thought it was great news to be pregnant (1 Samuel 1:1-2:11). She had been to the temple praying fervently for a baby. Hannah was one of two wives to a priest named Eli. The other wife, Peninnah, had lots of children, and flaunted this over her until Hannah wept and stopped eating. For Hannah to be pregnant, and to give birth to a healthy boy was good news indeed. Hannah was so overjoyed, that, as the story tells us, she sang a song of joy.

*“My heart rejoices in the LORD; my strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in my victory.”*

[I'm wondering if this is how Leafs fans feel whenever the Leafs win a game over the Sens or the Habs. 😊]

The situation for Mary was a little different. It seems she wasn't planning children just yet. She was 'betrothed' to Joseph, and reports they had not yet had sexual relations. The angel seems to be fast-forwarding things a little bit. Mary was about to become a young mother in a poor family in an occupied territory, at a time when the risk of the death of mother and/or child in childbirth were much higher than what we experience. Not only that, but the child she would carry and then raise would be a very special child who, the angel said, was sent by God to change the world. All this was no small potatoes. And yet she, like her forebear, Hannah, Luke has her singing,

*“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.”*

It seems that when Hannah sang, her joy came from a situation that had turned out favourably for her. When Mary sang, it seems to me to be less about her life circumstances, which seem a little precarious, and more about her relationship with God.

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When we prepare for Christmas, we make plans that we hope will go well – travel plans, meals, presents, concerts, worship services – and the list goes on. Perhaps the joy of Christmas is not to be found so much in ‘things working out’ the way we had planned, but in our experiences of hope, peace, joy, and love, that happen in spite of the circumstances. Perhaps God’s promise is not about ‘things working out’, but about ‘God being with us’. That was one of the first things, after all that the angel said to Mary –

“Greetings favoured one! The Lord is with you.”

During this season of Advent, of anticipation, of Christmas, I pray that hope, peace, joy, and love will be present when your plans work out, and, perhaps more importantly, when they don’t. God’s presence in our lives is not dependent on any circumstances. God’s presence is within us. Christ is born in us today.



## Christmas Baskets

On Dec 13 we will be putting together the bags of goodies and a Christmas plant for our friends of St Andrew's who have difficulty getting out. If you know of someone who would benefit from a visit and some Christmas goodies

call Nancy at 613 347-3598. They will be available for pick up and delivery during refreshment time after the service on Dec 14. If you are able to help with the baking, fudge or candy making for 9 am Dec 13 please call Nancy at 613 347-3598. We also need assistance with delivery of the 18 (so far) "baskets"

## Outreach

Please bring non-perishable food items to **White Gift Sunday on December 14<sup>th</sup>**. Consider focusing on “the basics” such as soup, cereal, peanut butter, pasta, pasta sauce, tuna, Kraft Dinner, crackers, or canned veg & fruit. Also consider wandering down the baby aisle and picking up some baby cereal, baby food or formula. Cash donations are welcome as well.

**Jim & Joyce Lewis** will be helping **Edna McDougall** deliver our gifts of food to local charities.

## Pastoral Care Team

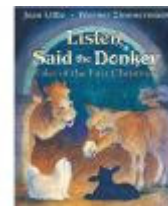
St. Andrews United Church, Williamstown is about to initiate its Pastoral Care Team in January 2009. After completing a Pastoral Care course, and several organizational meetings, we hope to be able to start visiting members of our congregation in their homes, and when hospital clearance is received, in hospitals as well. We are starting small, getting our feet wet slowly, and look forward to keeping everyone up to date as we progress. Keep us in your prayers!

from Karen Paavila

**Pastoral Care Team Coordinator**

## Christmas Book Review

### [Listen, Said the Donkey: Tales of the First Christmas](#)



Written by  
**Jean Little**  
Illustrated by  
**Werner  
Zimmermann**

Each animal in the Bethlehem stable tells how it came to be part of the Christmas story. The award-winning creators of Pippin the Christmas Pig cast a classic tale in a new and wondrous light.

Stéphane Jorisch, Montreal, *The Owl and the Pussycat*, text by Edward Lear (Kids Can Press) *Light, poetic, playful, imaginative, bizarre and ingenious illustrations match the text superbly. Stéphane Jorisch's art brings new colour and depth to this well-known poem. Sit down in an armchair with this book and let it transport you into its magical world.*

John Ibbitson, Washington (D.C.), formerly of Ottawa and Toronto, *The Landing* (Kids Can Press) *A superbly crafted story, The Landing takes us to the Ontario Muskoka region of the 1930s. As an interpretation of a place and time and a young man's coming-of-age, it never falters. It is a novel as timeless as the music and the adolescent imagination that lie at its centre.*

Christopher Paul Curtis took home two of four awards for his internationally acclaimed novel, *Elijah of Buxton*.. Readers are introduced to 11-year-old Elijah,

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the first African Canadian child to be born into freedom in Buxton, Ontario, a settlement for runaway slaves.

**Postcards from the Valley: Encounters with Fear, Faith, and God** is published by United Church Publishing House Toronto: The United Church of Canada's Moderator David Giuliano is entering what he describes as the "home stretch" of his three-year term of office. It has been a period that early on was marked by the unexpected challenge of facing a personal journey "through a valley of shadows carved out by cancer"

"I dreamed of leading our church for a time from a place of strength, wisdom, and creativity. Instead I have been offering my weakness to the church," says Giuliano. And although he admits this journey is not one that he would have chosen, "I cannot deny that it has been a gift to me and to others."

## Origins of Christmas Tree

(from History.com)

Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Just as people today decorate their homes during the festive season with pine, spruce, and fir trees, ancient peoples hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. In many countries it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits, and illness.

Germany is credited with starting the Christmas tree tradition as we now know it in the 16th century when devout Christians brought

decorated trees into their homes. Some built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was scarce. It is a widely held belief that **Martin Luther** first added lighted candles to a tree. Walking toward his home one winter evening, composing a sermon, he was awed by the brilliance of stars twinkling amidst evergreens. To recapture the scene for his family, he erected a tree in the main room and wired its branches with lighted candles.



Most 19th-century Americans found Christmas trees an oddity. The first record of one being on display was in the 1830s by the German settlers of Pennsylvania, although trees had been a tradition in many German homes much earlier. But, as late as the 1840s Christmas trees were seen as pagan symbols and not accepted by most Americans. **Oliver Cromwell** preached against "the heathen traditions" of Christmas carols, decorated trees, and any joyful expression that desecrated "that sacred event."

In 1846, **Queen Victoria** was sketched in the Illustrated London News standing with Prince Albert and their children around a Christmas tree. Unlike the previous royal family, Victoria was very popular with her subjects, and what was done at court immediately became fashionable—not only in Britain, but with

fashion-conscious East Coast American Society. The Christmas tree had arrived.

## News from Presbytery:

*(Taken from minutes of last meeting of Seaway Presbytery.)*

During worship, Rev. Bob Fillier used "digital medium" – projecting hymns, Biblical texts, responses and pictorial images onto a screen. Then following worship he spoke to Presbytery about using digital medium as a worship tool, outlining benefits, pitfalls, do's and don'ts. He started his workshop lecture with a quote from Rick Warren:

*The Message must not change but the method (to deliver the message the Message) must change with each new generation.*

By way of illustration, Rev. Bob Fillier reminded Presbyters that people in younger generations have no idea how to use a dial telephone but can text-message on cell phone; have no idea how to turn on a 1970's television or radio but can use remote controls and ipods. Perhaps, he suggested, Church leaders need to be reminded of this when planning and conducting worship – our traditional ways of worship (hymns, hymn books, spoken word) may no longer have relevance for people. Perhaps, he also suggested, it may be time to use digital medium as a worship tool.

To illustrate the impact that digital medium can have on worship, Bob showed two videos – one was for use as a call to worship in which a

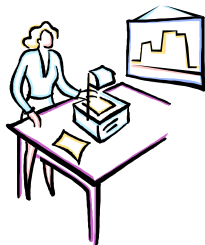
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modern-looking, young bald man is nodding / bobbing his head in a "calling", "come with me" fashion.

The other was a powerful, unforgettable video about stewardship and sharing our gifts – a man takes up the collection in church, then leaves the sanctuary with his collection plate, going to the Church school where a group of bored kids are just waiting to go home. The man tosses the contents of the collection plate into the midst of the kids and its contents become paper, pens, crayons, and the kids spring into life. The man then goes outside, sees a "street person" seated on the side-walk, leaning against a wall. The man tosses the contents of the collection plate at him. A blanket and a cup of coffee appear and are given to the man on the side-walk. (There were other stewardship situations in the video).

Rev. Fillier said that traditionally, Church leaders would speak about what was shown in the video. Digital medium lets us see, feel and partially experience. The latter method – seeing and experiencing – for a lot of people has longer "staying power"

Rev. Fillier concluded his presentation with a note of caution – don't just go out and buy the first cheapest projector and lap-top you see. Look very carefully at what your congregation-pastoral charge needs and will use. Then do your purchasing.



## Emerging Spirit Event

Andrea and I, along with Patti Carson from the Martintown congregation, attended an "Emerging Spirit" event at Parkdale United Church in Ottawa in mid-November. It was a Friday-evening-all-day-Saturday kind of event, with about fifty folks attending, the majority being laity.

"Emerging Spirit" is the United Church's revitalization project, you might say. It's an attempt, in a major way, to bring new life and new members to our denomination. A lot of research was done looking at trends, demographics, lifestyles, values, the reasons why people go to church or don't go to church, and what people are looking for in a church.

One of the results was a national campaign of creative, funky, at-times-controversial, posters and magazine advertisements promoting the United Church. The ads, along with a new web-site, [www.wondercafe.ca](http://www.wondercafe.ca), are intended to catch people's attention and get the message out that we United Church folks are alive and well and have something worthwhile to offer.

The event that we attended called "Living the Hope" was the second of a series of nationwide events. The first one was called "Living the Welcome". What struck me the most was how visual, upbeat, creative, dynamic, and engaging the presentations and presenters were. No moss or cobwebs here! With posters, music, lots of projected imagery and video presentations on the big screen,

this Emerging Spirit event was indicative of the direction the United Church hopes more of us will choose to follow.

from Lorna McKendry

## Turkey Supper A Success

The church supper was a great success again this year due to the hard work of many people. We served 512 people-. Takeout has become very popular. We had just enough turkey, there being scraps for the kitchen help. Thanks to Art Craig for having the foresight to insist we get one more turkey at the last minute. The bazaar table monies were also up this year thanks to the increased contributions of baking, jams, candy, etc. All in all the frown was gone from the treasurer's face and he was "smiling all the way to the bank."

## The Observer

The United Church Observer subscriptions will be due in the New Year but Eleanor would welcome your \$15 anytime now. There will be an envelope in with your 2009 envelopes or she will be happy to give you one. She can be reached at 613 347-2622. Just drop your envelope in the offering plate.

## Reminders:

The church books close on December 31 so please have all bills and contributions -for- receipt in before that date.

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Envelopes for 2009 will be given out in early December. If you do not have envelopes please speak to Treasurer Jim at 613 347-1116 or a Steward.

If you would like to place flowers in memory of a loved one, in the sanctuary for the Christmas season, please give the name and the contribution to the treasurer before December 14 to enable the flower purchasing and the bulletin printing.

## Cards for Anyone?

Maybe you could send a reminder to folks- if they know of someone who needs a card for any reason- illness, birth, marriage, death, special birthday, thinking of you - you can think of more, Linda McDonnell is waiting to be contacted at 613 347 2628 or [lmcdd8@hotmail.com](mailto:lmcdd8@hotmail.com).

This notice reminds me (Editor) of my recent chat with Barbara Stones. Barbara sounded great – she recognizes that ‘increased fatigue’, but she is pleased to be making amazing progress following surgery.

## McGregor Bequest

McGregor Bequest Request forms for Funding from the McGregor Investment are now available at the entrance to the Church. Completed forms must be handed in to either Jay Woollven 613-347-3598 or Bill MacNaughton 613-347-3618 by December 31, 2008 for them to be considered by the Trustees in January for funding in 2009.

If you would prefer a digital form in MSWord format please send your request to [jay@inncon.ca](mailto:jay@inncon.ca)

## More New Members

Chris Watt joined the church last Sunday- he was unable to be there in June. Edna McDougall is also an official member.

Apologies go out to those individuals were not included in the last newsletter. Congratulations to all. In 2008, the following people have become official members of St. Andrew’s.

- Alison Buchanan
- Tina Cairncross
- James Denis
- Joyce Lewis
- Jim Lewis
- Christine Matt
- Edna MacDougall
- Theresa MacDonald
- Lorna McKendry
- Alan Rose
- Jason Robinson
- Adele Bissonnette
- Kathi LeGault
- Chris Watt
- Trudy Zerán



## Important Dates:

### December 7: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Peace 9:30 am

Students from Char-Lan District High School will be talking about their experiences with Free the Children – particularly around a Free the Children conference they

attended this year.

### Celtic Advent Service, December 7: at 7 pm Martintown

Please join the Martintown congregation for the Celtic Advent Evening Service at St. Andrew’s United Church in Martintown.

.Soloists are Ian Hepburn, on harp, Luane Doyle, Andrée Hunter and Maryanne Kampouris. Guest reader is Keith Clingen. Refreshments will follow. All are welcome!

### December 14: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent - Love 9:30 am

Our Sunday school will be presenting their pageant “The First Christmas”. This is also our White Gift Sunday. People are asked to bring non-perishable items (staple foods, baby food) in white bags. Cash/cheque donations (in white envelopes) will also be forwarded to St. Vincent de Paul’s for the purchase of food. There will be a coffee hour following the worship service.

### December 21: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – Joy 9:30 am

### December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 8:00 pm

### December 28: Family Service Irvine Hall 9:30 am

**Note:** Some will recall that last year we made cookies and hot cider, and sang lots of Christmas carols. I wonder what Lorna has planned for us this year? Both congregations, young and old, are invited to gather at 9:30 am

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on Sunday, December 28th in Irvine Hall for our annual end-of-year family service.

## **Babes & Brides**

There have been a number weddings and baptisms since we last reported on such wonderful events.

On July 20, **Donato James Cella** son of Joy Dorothy Cella (nee Nichol) & Vincenzo Albert Cella was baptized.

**Carter Stuart Simpson**, son of Sarah Kinloch & Joseph Melbourne Simpson was baptized on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

On Aug 16, **Vera Cumming & Robin Hunter** were married at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in South Lancaster. Andrea conducted the ceremony as Rev. Ian MacMillan was on summer holiday at that time.

On Sept 13, **Tracy Chalette & Devin Gills** of Martintown were married at St. Andrew's United

Church, Williamstown, by Rev. Alice McAlpine, a United Church minister from Quebec. (Andrea was on vacation at that time.) Tracy's parents were married in our church, and Rev. Alice McAlpine was the minister who baptized Devin.

**Congratulations to all.**

**Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!**

## Christmas

I H N J S J S Z R H T B S T Q  
 I G T L O L T E E P U S U R F  
 R A L A E Y P M P E R D S E I  
 G E X G E E A U O S K R E E A  
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 M A A K Y D W L M J Y H V L C  
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 X F G Z H F I W M D E V J P O

ADVENT  
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 INNKEEPER  
 JOY  
 MAGI  
 NOEL  
 SHEPHERDS  
 STAR  
 WREATH

ANGELS  
 CAROLS  
 HEROD  
 JESUS  
 LIGHTS  
 MANGER  
 PEACE  
 SNOW  
 TREE

BELLS  
 CHOIRS  
 HOPE  
 JOSEPH  
 LOVE  
 MARY  
 PROMISE  
 STABLE  
 TURKEY