



the Church
of St Peter and
St Simon-the-Apostle

JUBILATE!

Wardens' Update

The wardens update us on the various committees that continue to keep our church running, what is on the horizon in 2021, and the future of the St. Simon's Shelter. Pg 3

From the Organ Bench

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Incumbent: [Geoffrey Sangwine](#)
Honorary Assistant: [Jennifer Matthews](#)
Assistant Curate: [Michael Perry](#)
Rector's Warden: [Ted Robinson](#)
People's Warden: [Vanessa Scott](#)
Treasurer: [Johan Van't Hof](#)
Musical Director: [Robin Davis](#)
Jubilate! Editor: [Peggy Needham](#)
Jubilate! Production: [Michael Perry](#)



Inset, the Nativity with Mary-the-Virgin and Joseph, by Yvonne Williams (1976). Installed in memory of Ethel Sinclair Finlayson. Found in the Memorial Chapel of SPSS.

From the Rector

Fr Geoffrey Sangwine

I have always loved Christmas. When I was a little boy it was impossible to sleep on Christmas Eve in anticipation of Santa's visit, that I might just get a glimpse of him or hear him. Of course sleep always won, yet my waking moment was filled with the excited anticipation of seeing proof that my gifts had been accepted by the special visitor – the crumbs from the cookies left out, an empty glass of milk and teeth marks in the carrots left for the reindeer.



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The Anglican Church of Canada

From the Organ Bench

Robin Davis

"When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade."

This fall has been a time of many trials but also of many triumphs. Between September 9 and November 12 with in-person attendance permitted at Sunday morning services, a group of choir members gathered on Thursday evenings to rehearse and record hymns and service music to enrich each of our Sunday services. We recorded in the nave of the church, wearing masks and spacing ourselves four meters apart (well in compliance with the Diocesan and government protocols at the time). For singers, working in these circumstances was very challenging, both for hearing the other singers and also for breathing. Despite these challenges, these weekly gatherings became an important source of spiritual nourishment and fulfilment. It made absolutely clear the passion and commitment we have to each other and to supporting the musical life of our parish and of its importance in our worship. I am very grateful to Fr. Geoff and the wardens for supporting our efforts during this time. Unfortunately, with the rising COVID numbers and the newly imposed diocesan restrictions on gatherings in person outside of worship services. (Continued page 19)

As I got older and learned that Christmas was about far more than a visit from the man at the North Pole, the magic did not go away; it changed, but it did not go away, in fact learning about the real meaning of Christmas, and being able to sing about that meaning, gave it much more meaning than ever before. One treasured memory for me is the Toronto Star Carol Service at St. Paul's Bloor Street. The Cathedral Choir joined with the St. Simon's Choir, the St. Paul's Choir and the Staff Band of the Salvation Army. It was always a Saturday in Mid-December and it was magic. For two services St. Paul's was filled with people who sang their hearts out and supported the Star Santa Claus Fund for needy children.

I could go on and on about Christmases past as I am sure can you, but what comes to me especially this year is this: with all our traditions – tree-trimming, carols, lights, gifts and feasts – we can easily forget that Jesus was born into a broken and hard world. The birth in time of the timeless Son of God means that God Himself entered our broken human condition. Not all aspects of the Christmas story are pretty! It is understandable that we focus on the wonder element of the celebration – the angels, a star, and animals in stable, precious gifts from the east given by exotic visitors dressed in colourful brocade. But do we pay attention to the other parts, the fact that Gabriel's message to Mary was life-changing and potentially life-ending? Joseph could have sent her away or done even worse. Do we pay attention that they were



Inset Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary by Yvonne Williams (1976). Installed in memory of the Honourable William Finlayson. Found in the SPSS Memorial Chapel.

summoned because of a tax, and there was no room for them? Or that they had to flee at some point to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod? Do we make note of the words of St. John who says “He came to his own and his own received him not.”? Jesus was rejected by many, yet God did not give up on his plan of salvation. When everything else is gone, when the tree is down, the gifts put away and the wise men returned to their home, we are still left with the most precious and beautiful gift the world has ever known: Immanuel -- God with us.

Christmas this year is certainly going to be very different. With more intense distancing restrictions in place once again, our time of preparation and celebration may in fact be a bit

less hectic. In our homes, things will certainly be quieter - the same will be the case at Church. As well as our pre-recorded Carol Service on December 20th, and the live-stream service on Christmas Eve at 9 pm with Bishop Kevin Robertson present, we have scheduled a series of intimate in-person services for Christmas Eve and through the Christmas season. The intention is to enable the faithful to come into the Church safely for a time of prayer and to receive Holy Communion. At each Service there can be a

maximum of ten people present including the priest. All taking part must of course wear masks and observe social distancing.

Friends, we are not “losing” Christmas. Yes, it will be different, but we have a unique opportunity to discover again, or perhaps for the first time, a deep joy and hope in the celebration of our Saviour’s birth and his meaning in the world. He is Immanuel – God with us. At this time, He is very near and it is my prayer for us all that this Christmas will be a chance to draw closer to Him. “The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth” John 1.14.

Best wishes for a blessed Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Geoffrey+

Wardens’ report

Looking ahead to the celebrations of Christmas, everything will be different this year, as we all know. We were blessed to be able to meet in person for several weeks this fall, from mid-September to the end of November. And special thanks to Fr. Geoff and Fr. Michael, who are planning a series of in-person services at Christmas, so that all who want to celebrate the Eucharist may be able to do so in a safe, secure manner.

The Wardens team has been meeting (virtually) each week to monitor activities at the church, including worship services. We will continue to do so as long as there is a need to do so.

There are new teams who are playing important roles in the life of our Parish. They include the tech team, who are making it possible for us to participate in live virtual services and stay connected as a community. (Continued page 5)



Annunciation of the Shepherds by Yvonne Williams (1976). Installed in memory of Ethel Sinclair Finlayson. Found in the Memorial Chapel. Stained glass photos: Fr Michael



Eloise Margaret Oakley, the great granddaughter of Margie Huycke, the daughter of Katie and Jason Oakley, was baptized on Saturday, November 21, 2020.



These wonderful pictures, submitted by Katie, show baby Eloise and her parents, Katie and Jason. They also show Father Geoff holding Eloise and Eloise's godmother, Emma Beqaj.

Such a happy moment in a dark time!

The Health & Safety working group, formed several months ago, has been important in guiding us through protocols for all church activities.

We are deeply grateful for the important work that Rosemary continues to do in the office, keeping us on track with her administrative expertise and commitment. We could not have survived without her!

You may have noticed that there have been significant improvements to the physical appearance of the church - notably the floors in the Parish Hall and back and front of the Nave, and most recently in the chancel. Now that the plastic sheeting has come down, we are able to see the restored beauty of this work. Thanks to all who have made this happen. And a special acknowledgement of the donor who made a bequest that has allowed for this to be completed.

As we look ahead to 2021, we are facing significant challenges, which at the same time provide us with new opportunities. One fact is that the Shelter will not be able to continue in our building beyond this winter, due to the restrictions that Covid 19 has placed on all shelters in the city. That has led us to engage a real estate agent to help us find a new long-term tenant. This process is well underway. We will keep the Parish informed as plans unfold.

This fall we have said farewell to the Ryerson group, who have led the day care program in the church basement for about 10 years. Because of the constraints of Covid, they have had to move to the Ryerson campus. Although it is sad to see them leave, this will allow us to explore new possibilities for ministry, once the effects of the pandemic begin to recede.

There is also a need to plan for upkeep of our buildings. The most obvious issue is the roof, which needs to be replaced after over 30 years. Work needs to be done on the masonry as well. We are forming a plan to do this work over several

years. Stay tuned for more details to come in the New Year.

Through the stresses of the past several months, the Parish has been blessed with the spiritual leadership of Fr. Geoff, ably assisted by Fr. Michael. Thank you for tending the flock, good shepherds!

May you all be blessed with joy as we celebrate the Incarnation.

Ted, Vanessa, Laurie and Stephanie

Wardens Team SPSS

Altar Guild Retirees

Larry Krotz

The silver chalices and brass candlesticks on the altar don't polish themselves. Nor do the linens iron and fold themselves. Every Thursday or Friday a team of parishioners arrive at our church to take on the task of caring for the 'vessels, vestments, and linens' that are the props for the Sunday Eucharist and worship service. This is a group of twelve currently under the leadership of Marie Samuels, of whom four, Marion McPherson, Marjorie Phillip, Joyce Brighty and Heather Ballon, after many years of service, are retiring.

All churches need a version of this though the term "Altar Guild" seems to be unique to Anglicanism. The national Altar Guild Association describes them as "the liturgical partner of the Priest." Their ministry "a gift of time and talent to serve God in His house." In our church they work closely with Fen Nanton and the Servers performing, as Father Geoffrey points out, "the crucial behind the scenes role of making our church ready for worship."

Between them, Joyce, Marion, Heather and Marjorie combine at least 150 years of service. Marjorie claims that she has been doing it “all my life”. Before St. Peter and St. Simon she looked after the altar and flowers at St. Peter’s for seventeen years.

And before that, in a church in Indiana in the U.S., and before that in Jamaica where as a child she helped her mother, the rector’s wife, with such tasks.

Heather Ballon joined the guild at SPSS when she and her husband returned to Toronto after having lived in Montreal, Vancouver and Winnipeg. It was in her blood, her mother (Mrs. McPherson) had performed the duty for decades famous, recalls Heather, “for worrying about wear and tear on an oriental rug that used to be placed in front of the altar and getting down on her hands and knees to apply water colours to cover its worn spots.”

Top Left: Marjorie Phillip, Top Right: Marion McPherson
Bottom Left, Heather Ballon, Bottom Right: Joyce Brighty (left) with Margie Huycke, whose great-granddaughter was baptized in November, see photos on page 4.

Photos Submitted by Mary Anderson & Fr. Geoff

Joyce Brighty took over from Betty Scott in 1990 so has served for thirty years. Joyce claims responsibility for moving the guild’s duties from Saturday to Friday after, early in her tenure, realizing that Saturday conflicted with her golf game.



For Marion McPherson, the altar guild provided a way into this church sixty years ago, after marriage to David. She found a ladies club known as the Tuesday Afternoon Group hard to crack because “they still viewed me as United Church.” But she was embraced by the altar guild, “a nice, nice group to work with so long as you’re happy polishing brass.”

Adds Father Geoff, “They look after the objects that are necessary for a proper Eucharist and make the environment pleasant, attractive and holy for all of us. The altar guild provides an invaluable extension of my ministry. During Covid, when they weren’t able to come as much, I missed them and felt the draft.”

Announcing SPSS's New Garden Guild

Nancy Nourse

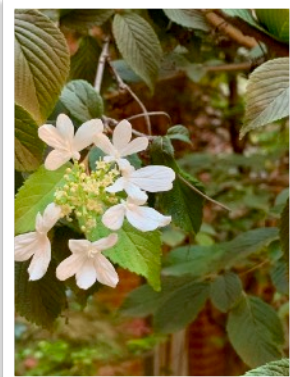


Advent--the beginning of the church's calendar year, and the shortened days and long, dark nights of waiting for Christmas--might seem a most unusual time to turn our thoughts toward the care and nurturing of the church's gardens. Yet that is exactly what occurred as a small group of forward-looking parishioners gathered together (via Zoom) to discuss the formation of a new parish Garden Guild.

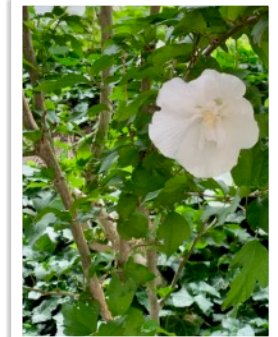
It was evident that this was a gathering of a widely experienced group of individuals. The members presented their concerns and aspirations;

discussions of overarching goals, design and documentation of what existing plants have thrived, soil analysis and composting, drainage, hours of direct sunlight, demonstrated a treasury of expertise and perspective from which we can draw.

In the midst of these new beginnings, the group quickly recognized how caringly Jerod Bertram had been tending SPSS's flora during the various stages of pandemic restrictions. Of course



from our service broadcasts we became aware of his stepping in to grace our altar with blooms and greenery, not only from our own grounds, but also flowers from St. Peter's almost forgotten garden. His tireless nurturing of our plants this past year--the watering, the weeding, the dead-heading--and his intimate knowledge of what plants are flourishing in our gardens is greatly appreciated. Thank you Jerod!



With the new Garden Guild, there will now be a tangible, centralized core of responsibility that will ultimately unify direction for all garden-related maintenance and decision-making. For the short term, because of the massive construction site affecting Howard Street's appearance, it was decided to concentrate upon the garden spaces on the Bloor Street side and the interior, protected courtyard. Meanwhile, as our plans solidify, be prepared for our seeking your help as we approach a new growing season. We could ask you if you might have any surplus garden tools. Would you be able to donate a small amount of time each week to tending a bed?

Depending upon the upcoming soil analysis, we might even ask for you to save up some coffee grounds or ashes from the fireplace. Do let us know if you wish to join in or contribute in any way.



Photos:
Nancy Nourse

Outdoor Christmas Craft

Sileen Philips

On Saturday and Sunday, December 5th and 6th, the parish's Child Youth Ministry held its first outdoor Christmas craft workshop. Held on the lawn of the church's south entrance on Howard Street, the event was geared toward families with children. Present were children from our Sunday School but it also served as an outreach effort to the immediate community. In this time of uncertainty and abnormalities, restrictions and anxiety coupled with fear, I felt compelled to do something to let families and children know that we are still very much present and willing to provide any support in any way we can. In doing so, I felt it contributed to maintaining visibility in the immediate community.

The main activity was wreath making. Families were invited to use the materials provided to make Christmas wreaths. The result was a lot of creativity. Parents greeted each other and chatted, and COVID protocols were maintained.

We set out to foster a sense of togetherness during a time of isolation and distance. Did we achieve this? Seeing the smiles on the children's faces and remarks from the parents provided a resounding "Yes!!!" one parent remarked, "Thank you for this. If no one else came out, it would not have been for nothing because my child is overjoyed. Thank you for making our day".

On Sunday, we were joined by Claire Lattimer, the youth director from St. James Cathedral. There was music, laughter and cheer amid the imposed restrictions on another crisp winter day.

A big thank you to Maggie Sanderson and Carol Peck for helping with the event.

The children's work is showcased on the following page of the newsletter or you can visit the Kids & Youth page on our website www.stpeterstsimon.ca.

Kid's Corner: Ethan

Why I like Sunday school and what I learned at Sunday school

I like Sunday school because it allows me to study and learn the word of God. I get to study the bible with other friends I get to meet because of Sunday school. In Sunday school, we get to ask questions and tell how we feel about God and his word. I love that we play games and watch videos that teach us in a very fun way about God. It helps us to learn quickly and I learn a lot! I have learned how to obey the word of God and that the bible is not fiction. (I am learning about fiction and non fiction in school). I have learned the fruits of the spirit, how to treat others with respect , kindness and to love each other. In closing , I love Sunday school because it teaches me how to be a child of God.



Sunday School member
Ethan.

Photo: Sileen.



Above, left to right: Ethan, Siyani, Kidus, Bram, Old, Noah



Left, Philip

Bottom right:
Members of our parish
team of volunteers,
children, and
neighbourhood
connections
participate in our
Outdoor Christmas
Craft event on a chilly
December weekend.

All Photos: Sileen.



Bottom left: Mokshita, Latish

Birthday Cards

Marjorie Phillip

If you would welcome a card on your special day and are not currently on our list, please contact Marjorie Phillip at marjoriephillip48@gmail.com or call 416-421-4942. All she needs in the month and day of your birth. Marjorie looks forward to hearing from you!

Stitches in Pandemic Times: A Prayer Shawl Ministry for SPSS?

Nancy Nourse

Knit three, purl three... and so it goes. After finding some yarn and a pair of 8 mm needles, an opening prayer and the casting on of 57 stitches, the repeated pattern of those two basic stitches is the only further instruction. Knitting may not have been central to my usual activities—the orchestra rehearsal, the Flute Street performance, teaching students, or an in-person Sunday service at SPSS—but the ever-growing product on my needles is becoming a new, engaging occupation. I am now crafting my first prayer shawl.

What is a prayer shawl? It is a knitted, crocheted, woven, or quilted wrap, fashioned prayerfully, blessed, and then bestowed upon someone ill, shut-in, grieving, or in other need. It is an item that cannot be purchased but operates only in the currency of human compassion. In the words of Janet Bristow, co-founder in 1998 of The Prayer Shawl Ministry, these wraps “enfold, comfort, cover, give solace, mother, hug, shelter and beautify.. [and] those who have received these shawls have been uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to fly above their troubles....[These shawls

have been] made for centuries universal and embracing, symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God.”

My introduction to the Prayer Shawl Ministry came from an informative little pamphlet I found several years ago at the back of The Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto. At the time, I was intrigued, yet far too caught up in my daily whirlwind to consider participating in what appeared to be a definitely worthwhile endeavour. However, recently Fr. Geoffrey related to me his heart-felt gratitude for the prayer shawl that had been bestowed upon his father and which gave him such comfort in his last days. It was this conversation that was the catalyst that prompted me to reinvestigate.



Upon googling “Prayer Shawl Ministry“ I found the online resources to be abundant; not only is there the history of its founding, a collection of specific prayers, and many knitting and crocheting instructions, but also a worldwide

network of prayer shawl communities that has emerged with inspiring stories of givers and recipients. At the same time there is certainly no lack of video instruction for anyone wishing to learn how to crochet or knit, or to interpret the stitching abbreviations for some of the more advanced patterns. This appeared to me to be an ideal time to join in.

Outreach and Advocacy Conference provides inspiration and opportunity

Brooke Sales-Lee

Each year the Social Justice and Advocacy team at the Diocese of Toronto holds an Outreach and Advocacy conference that gathers Anglicans and our ecumenical partners working to do good in the GTA. In light of the pandemic, this year the theme of the conference was *"No One is Disposable,"* and for the first time ever the conference was completely online.

Speaking personally, I have attended faithfully for several years now, often carpooling with church friends from SPSS or elsewhere, and eagerly greeting friends from volunteering or taking classes around the city. It is like a mini reunion each year as people who have moved on from one ministry to another see their old friends and make new ones over cups of coffee and notes on their last conference session. While we missed this fellowship in many ways this year, the timely discussions still brought energy and spirit.

The morning sessions included a talk on disability and how the Church might make people with disability and illness welcome or unwelcome in a time of pandemic and one on housing for people recently released from prison. I attended the session on housing which was led by the founders of a Christian group that interviews suitable candidates and sets them up with housing and a network of volunteers much like refugee settlement groups do, but the person being supported is someone newly released from prison. This helps reduce the rate of recidivism and gets people on their feet, working and integrating with their community.

The afternoon sessions included talks on basic income, anti-racism, ministry with indigenous peoples, and supporting people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic.



But looking beyond myself, I am appealing to any SPSS parishioners, who are already stitchers or those might like to just try it out, in asking if we can initiate this most meaningful ministry here? If we had a few

shawls to offer our most infirm, it would be the tangible embodiment of our prayers we offer every Sunday, and the constant, soft, and warm companion reminding them of God's love. And while these shawls are recognized as meaningful presents to the recipients, they are at the same time gifts to their crafters, for it is a true gift to be able to give to another of one's self.

Thoughts, advice, support, interest, comments, questions? Please contact Brook Sales-Lee (especially about crocheting) or myself.

Nancy Nourse noursewind@sympatico.ca

416-485-8262

Prayer Shawl Photos: Nancy Nourse



Brad Smith's workshop is still on the Diocesan YouTube Channel for viewing. Screen Grab: Fr. Michael

I attended the last, a talk given by Rev. Canon Brad Smith of St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough, who made headlines when he invited those who moved each summer from the seasonal shelter of the church into tents hidden out of sight of middle class Peterborough residents to set up their tents on the church's property. With the tents so visible in the downtown, the city could no longer maintain that people who lived in a shelter all winter found housing for the summer, and city staff made resources available to provide better year-round support. During the pandemic, St. John's outreach ministry shifted gears to continue to feed people who used the church's drop in, and Rev. Canon Smith gave tips on how to better be neighbours to those experiencing homelessness and hunger during these unusual and difficult times.

One of the small blessings of this shift to a digital conference is that you, too, can watch the sessions. Thanks to the wonder of Zoom recordings, all the sessions are available through the Diocesan YouTube channel. The playlist of all the conference sessions, including an inspiring opening keynote by Bishop Peter Fenty, can be found by going to the web address bit.ly/36TCgXS. I highly recommend taking some time to watch the recorded sessions, and let yourself be inspired but what the dedicated work of Anglicans like us can do to bring our churches and our cities more in line with God's Kingdom.

And if you would like to get involved in helping those at risk of homelessness during the pandemic, please be sure to visit stpeterstsimon.ca/howweserve/the-opportunities-committee/ to find template letters to send to government officials asking for more housing options for people in shelters and a moratorium on evictions this winter.

Peggy Needham

I have gone to Social Justice and Advocacy Conferences for so many years I don't remember how many I've gone to! I go to learn about what issues Christians should be concerned about and doing something about. People from our diocese and sometimes other dioceses tell us what they are doing and what we can join them to do.

One of the most dramatic presentations was made a decade ago by two Anglican hunters who were in a small northern Indigenous community called Pikangikum. Some teenagers threw rocks at the windows of their motel. The hunters decided to find out what was going on. There was no clean drinking water for the town's residents, in fact, the homes had no running water. And the community, they discovered, had the highest teen suicide rate in the world. These two gentlemen along with Rev. Martha Tatarnic started the Advent Conspiracy to which many of us contribute at this time of year. Now each year more homes have running water, young people who were apprentices gained accreditation as plumbers, the schools have improved and so has the mental health of the young people. I am happy that the Primate's Fund supports the Advent Conspiracy.

Like Brooke, what I missed the most this year was seeing friends from other churches, sitting next to them in workshops and having lunch and sing hymns in the closing service. What I will remember most from this online conference were some of the remarks made by Bishop Fenty at the opening of the conference. He spoke eloquently about Social Justice and Advocacy in our diocese, but perhaps because he would be retiring the next

week, he added some personal comments I will never forget. He said that Black Lives Matter was a divine imperative. He said that there are many black Anglicans in urban churches, but General Synod does not have enough black representation. He told about being in a supermarket in a white neighbourhood. Over the loud speaker, there was an announcement: Security to Aisle Six. He was the only person in Aisle Six. Bishop Fenty is a very distinguished looking gentleman. To be suspected of possible crime because of the colour of his skin is so unjust!

I have hope that 2021 will see Toronto Diocese Anglicans together again at the Social Justice and Advocacy Conference. And I hope more people from SPSS will attend.

“I Long to See”

Alison Jane

During the last few months, I have been reading many of Christina Rossetti's secular and devotional poems. She was profoundly empowered by her Anglican faith, and a key Victorian writer who examined the ambiguities of faith in a time of turmoil and major change. Her writing was influenced by the aesthetics of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the Tractarian Movement, and her interest in transformative possibilities for women. The simple language of her poetry belies her ability to offer these transformative possibilities, yet an agonizing sense of doubt and alienation often swept over her and a disappearing God brought an instability to her faith.

It is difficult at times to find hope or even a sense of identity amid lockdowns, rising Covid-19 case numbers, political unrest, and injustices. Rossetti's poem, “A Better Resurrection” resonates in this current time of fear, isolation, and questioning. The speaker feels alienated

from the “everlasting hills” of God's blessing and depicts her life as a “broken bowl” which is unable to hold “one drop of water” for her soul. Despite the questioning, her language suggests that there can be a richness found in desire. The final lines of the Resurrection poem bring hope of renewal and transformation as the speaker turns to Christ to form the broken bowl into something new:

*Cast in the fire the perished thing,
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him my King:
O Jesus, drink of me. (ll. 21-24)*

The season of Advent is characteristically marked by longing and hope, waiting and seeing. Rossetti is particularly skillful at exploring these in-between spaces of the speaker's existence and thought, as seen in “A Hope Carol”:

A night was near, a day was near;
Between a day and night
I heard sweet voices calling clear,
Calling me:
I heard a whirr of wing on wing,
But could not see the sight;
I long to see my birds that sing,--
I long to see.

Below the stars, beyond the moon,
Between the night and day,
I heard a rising falling tune
Calling me:
I long to see the pipes and strings
Whereon such minstrels play;
I long to see each face that sings,--
I long to see.

To-day or may be not to-day,
To-night or not to-night;
All voices that command or pray,
Calling me,
Shall kindle in my soul such fire,
And in my eyes such light,
That I shall see that heart's desire
I long to see.

In each section, the speaker is confronted by a sound which reminds her of something for which she longs. There are moments of both wistful happiness and never-ending longing, and she feels she doesn't exist in one place or another. I am reminded of the somewhat 'disembodied' voices of our church choir. Through the marvels of technology I can still hear the "sweet voices calling clear" but I long to see in a more intimate way "each face that sings." Rossetti's poetry depicts a beauty in an unknown future and her senses inspire her to hope by reminding her of the things she values in life. Despite a sadness that choir rehearsals have stopped, I have experienced new moments of joy during the time of lockdown such as hearing Robin playing the service music more often, or Fr. Geoff singing countertenor.

Rossetti's poem, "Up-hill," uses the familiar question and answer form of devotional writing, which also encourages the reader to contemplate a response to the question. Again, the austere, simple language masks the complexities of religious thought leading to religious understanding. If seen in a Christian context, a resting-place with God may be achieved, even after life's hardships:

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
 Yes, to the very end.
 Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
 From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
 A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?
 You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
 Those who have gone before.
 Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
 They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
 Of labour you shall find the sum.
 Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
 Yea, beds for all who come.



A water colour painting by Alison Jane

In John's Gospel, Jesus comforts his disciples with the promise that his Father's house has many rooms (John 14.2-3). The traveller in Rossetti's poem is drawn to the powerful light of the inn in the darkness, a light which cannot be overpowered. The acceptance of Jesus in the traveller's heart involves a journey requiring responsibility and perseverance: "Of labour you shall find the sum."

Christina Rossetti continues to be one of the "voices that command or pray, / Calling me." The "rising falling tune" of our time at once satisfies and disappoints. Rossetti understood the complexities of that in-between place where the possibilities of a satisfactory end may be deferred long into the future. I am reminded, through reading her poetry, that the physical journeys of those like Abraham, Moses, and Mary and Joseph involved difficult hardships but also had deep significance for their relationship with God. Before I finished the last draft of this article, I happened to listen to Fr. Geoff's sermon on December 6th. He referenced the "stern urgency" of Advent and making meaning out of wilderness. Like Rossetti, he suggested that we must "recognize and seek our desert places" in order to find meaning in God. He concluded his sermon by saying that "God's being and presence is in our midst and endures for ever and ever."

The Advent season is a time for preparation, discipline, and reflection. Rossetti's poetry gives me the sense that she wants to reclaim a sense of God's time. Our bleak mid-winter does involve a world in need, yet "*A stable-place sufficed / The Lord God Almighty / Jesus Christ*" and we are asked to give our hearts in response. This comforting time and space which God gifts to us is one of blessing, joy, and wonder.

Wishing each member of my SPSS church and choir family a blessed Advent and Christmas. I feel blessed to remember each face. -Alison Jane

Letter from the Sunshine Coast

Diane Marshall

Greetings to all my SPSS friends this first Sunday of Advent, where here on the Sunshine Coast our parish once again worshipped online at St. Hilda's, Sechelt.

As we celebrate the hope that Advent brings for followers of Jesus around the globe, there seems to be more darkness than light as we live through the strange year this has been for all of humankind, with the Corona Virus-19 seeming to determine our every move! We are under lockdown orders here on the Coast, with only essential (especially medical) access to the ferries to Vancouver.

As I continue my training in Restorative Justice, and in facilitating Peacemaking Circles, it has been a privilege to share together in a small group Circle format on Zoom (what would any of us do without Zoom during these days of isolation & "stay at home" orders!). The group I am part of consists of Indigenous, Métis, eastern European,

Feeling of dislike for a racial or ethnic group
+
Belief in this dislike
= PREJUDICE

Actions that harm those you have a prejudice
against
= DISCRIMINATION

Institutionalization of this discrimination, which
is perpetuated in society
(when discrimination becomes a part of how the
society does things)
= RACISM

and ordinary white people like me who are descendants of British immigrants who settled in this land we call Canada. I am attaching (an adapted) chart from the Allies Academy for your interest, which the anti-racism trainers have used in helping us to dialogue about the issues of racism that have come to the foreground for everyone this year through the media, and in our own midst in the communities in which we live.

It is not always easy to confront our own unconscious prejudices or to be faced with the heartbreaking stories of those in front of us in the Circle who suffered personally, as did their parents and grandparents before them, from the cruel afflictions imposed on them in the Residential School that once stood in the centre of their reserve here in Sechelt.

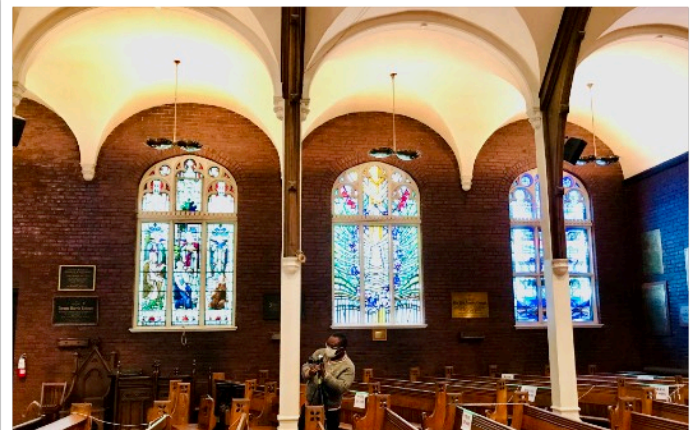
I know that several of you at SPSS suffered likewise from the ingrained racism displayed towards you when you arrived in Toronto. I am always mindful of the prophetic words of Martin Luther King when he spoke from the March.

May the love of Christ teach us all, across this nation, beginning with us, the church, what it truly means to repent of our inner fears and prejudices and to light a candle in the darkness as we learn to truly love our neighbour.

I send my warmest regards.
~Diane

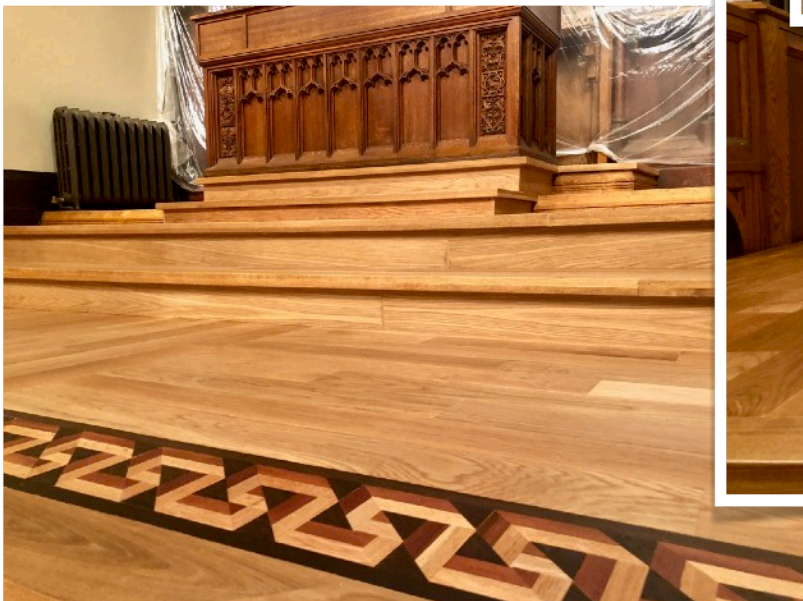
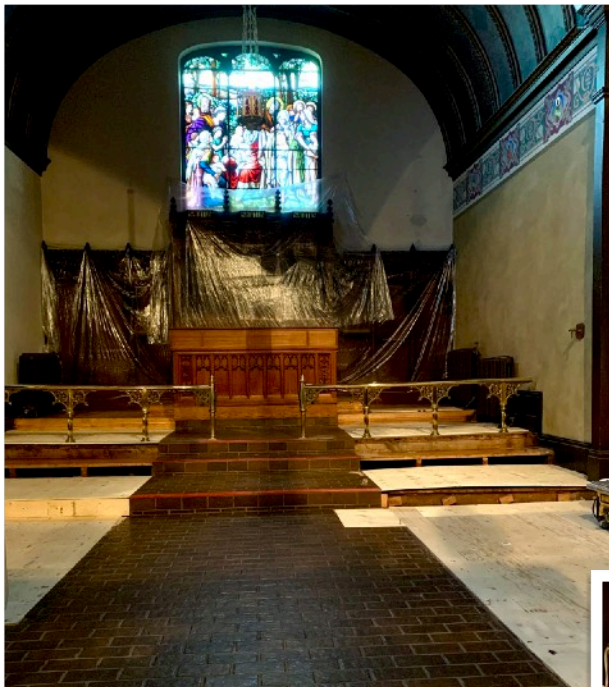
Live streaming at SPSS

My gratitude to the Live streaming team during these past few months for their hard work and dedication to learning and improving. Many thanks to Christopher Lambe who designed the streaming set up and remains our solver-in-chief, to David Carrington for his expertise with cameras, and to Alain Sauvion for production skills. Special congratulations to new members Laurie Sanderson and Jerod Bertram who joined the team. ~Fr. Michael





'So what's behind the plastic,' you ask. During the months of November and December there have been works ongoing in our chancel. The images below will show you how the new floor has been laid. The plastic comes down on Advent 4, just in time for Christmas. Photos: Vanessa Scott & Fr Michael





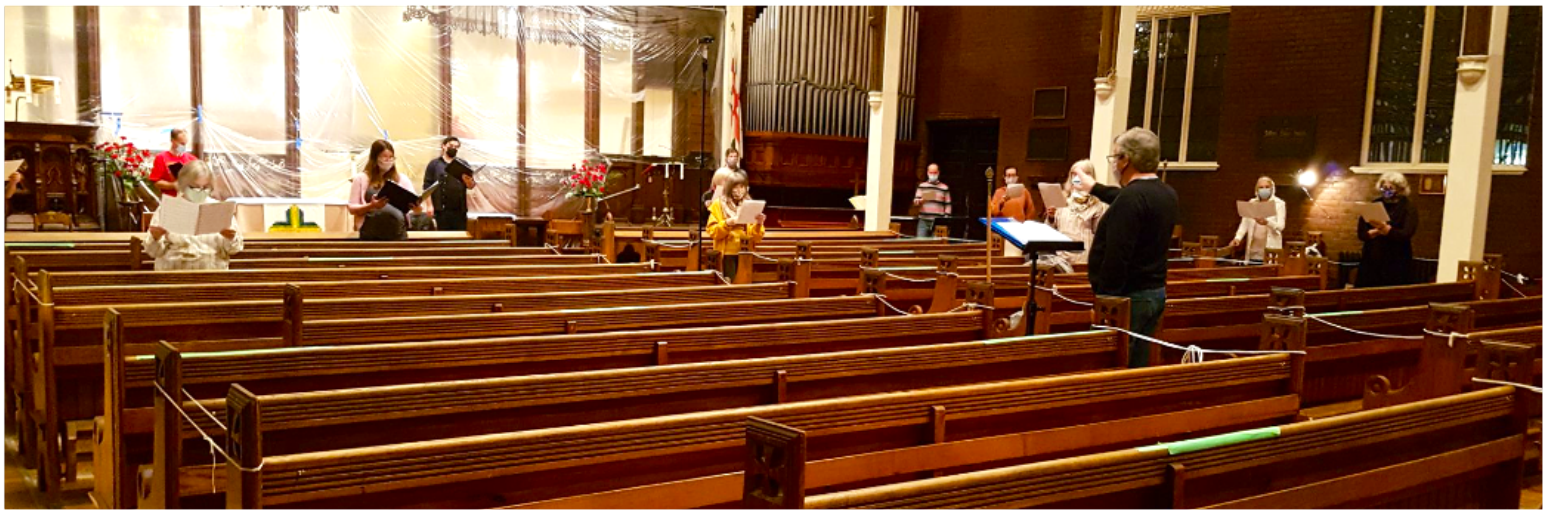
The first cold and snowy days of winter arrived just as Ena, Fen, and Joy decorated the Church with our Creche. Someone should tell the king, he is a little lost and coming from the west ... Photos: Fr. Michael

From the Organ Bench (Continued)

Hopefully with the new vaccine in the spring things will open up and we will be able to again safely gather to record music for services. I am more grateful than words here can express to our singers and rehearsal organist David Smith for their incredible support over the past few months. A huge thank you is owed also to Johan, Maurice and Alison for assisting on the organ bench for the live-streamed services.

home our well-loved carols, hymns and service music for our Advent and Christmas services. I am pleased that other churches will also have the opportunity to use our recordings in their services.

The Lessons and Carols service will be broadcast via YouTube on Sunday, December 20 at 4:00 p.m. In addition to three choir carols recorded on November 13 and two choir selections from earlier years, Sophie, Amos, and David will perform a piece for soprano, violin and organ as well as a newly composed arrangement of the hymn, Of the Father's Love Begotten for violin,



Recording music for our liturgies. Photo: Robin

When the word came on Thursday, November 12 that as of that Saturday, choir members as a group could no longer meet, we were well into rehearsing music for the Lessons and Carols Service. At our rehearsal that evening, it was agreed that we would come back again on the Friday evening and record as much music as we could for our Advent and Christmas services as well as the Lessons and Carols Service. In my 45 years as a church musician, I can't recall another rehearsal where we worked as hard or accomplished as much in 2 ½ hours. Thanks to the efforts and dedication of our incredible group, we will be able to hear our choir and sing along at

organ and two voices. I hope you are able to join us.

At this moment we don't know the exact format of the services come January, but whatever it is, we will continue to make the best darned lemonade we possibly can. At the forefront of our planning is the recognition that the great majority of our worshippers are participating on-line, and that doing what we can to enrich their experience and make the services engaging for everyone is of primary importance.

I do hope that each of you will have a blessed Christmas, and I look forward to the day when we can rejoice together in person. ~Robin



Next Jubilate: an Easter edition

- ❖ Tentative Submission deadline: Sunday, March 7th, 2021
- ❖ Tentative Publication: Friday, March 26th, 2021

May the raindrops fall lightly on your brow.

May the soft winds freshen your spirit.

May the sunshine brighten your heart.

May the burdens of the day rest lightly upon you.

And may God enfold you in the mantle of His Love.

~Old Celtic Blessing, submitted by Diane Marshall

Jubilate! is a newsletter for the parishioners and friends of
the Church of St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle

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