

The Anglican Church of St. Mary & St. Martha

Issue #2 Celebrating Our Community

Advent 2016

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A Message from Canon Beth +

Sunday, November 27th marks the beginning of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas and the beginning of a new Church year. I love the season of Advent for its counter-cultural themes and the sheer beauty of the music and other parts of the liturgy. It is a season that holds in tension the past, the present and the future. It holds together longing and hope, judgment and mercy, darkness and light; sin and redemption.

Our Advent worship services will deepen the tension between what God created the world to be, what it now is, and the future God has prepared. Indeed, it's the season when we say afresh, "Christ has died. Christ is risen. *Christ will come again.*"

In many ways the Christian life is the practice of living in what God has done in the past and is doing right now even as we anticipate the future God has prepared. Advent offers us an opportunity to reflect on what that looks like here at St. Mary and St. Martha. You see glimpses of that very thing in this newsletter, God's people bringing faith to life in daily living.

Over the past few weeks we have been celebrating our first anniversary together and I know you will enjoy the photos in this edition. I have realized in new ways that **bringing faith to life** is at the core of what we value and celebrate – and it is shown in so many ways. Joyful worship, small group conversations about Scripture and our faith, sharing hospitality, working together to care for our premises, supporting one another in good times and in times of sorrow, and coming alongside our neighbours in meaningful ways.

Again and again I see us striving to live ever more fully in what God has done and what God is doing now in our midst even as His future unfolds, one person at a time. We are Advent people and so in the coming weeks we will prepare to welcome the birth of Christ Jesus not just as something that happened in a distant place and time, but in our lives again and again. Mark your calendar so that you won't miss any of it as we journey together toward Christmas and beyond.

I hope you will let me know if you or a loved one is unable to get to church and I will be delighted to visit and to share Holy Communion.

Yours faithfully,

Beth+

The Rev'd Canon Beth Benson
Priest in Charge
bethbenson55@gmail.com

The Rev'd Jonathan Turtle
Assistant Curate
frjonathanturtle@gmail.com

MEETING FOR WORSHIP AT 11 49 WESTON ROAD

Making Preparation

After nine years of marriage I've (finally!) begun to pick up on some of Christina's "tells". For example, I know whenever we're going to be having family or friends over for a visit even if Christina hadn't previously told me (which, of course, never happens). It goes like this: I arrive home to a house that is absolutely spotless and a fridge that is full. Of course, in the chaos of day-to-day living our house is almost never spotless (nor should it be!) and we all too often get to the end of the day and wonder, as I'm sure you do on occasion, "What are we going to have for dinner?" So when I walk in the door and everything is in its place I can safely assume that Christina's sister is going to be staying with us for the weekend or some other such arrangement.

You see, when we are expecting someone to come for a visit—someone we love perhaps or someone rather important—we tend to busy ourselves preparing for their arrival. And so we ought!

As a season in the Church Year Advent functions rather like this. It is, as you know, a time of anticipation and hope, of active and diligent waiting and preparation for Emmanuel, God-with-us. As such, Advent is something of a microcosm of the whole Christian life, isn't it? For where else do we live out our faith but in what the Scriptures call these "last days," the time between Christ's ascension and his promised return? Advent isn't only about God's coming to us in the infant Jesus but is equally about Jesus' triumphant return as cosmic ruler-over-all.

The Christian life then is about living in light of this reality. As we prepare our homes for the arrival of a beloved friend or family member so Advent reminds

us that being a Christian is about preparing ourselves for the coming of Jesus Christ in glory. And what a day that will be!

I have been so pleased with the ways in which we as a parish have committed ourselves to "making preparation." Right now a handful of our youth are in the midst of a (let me tell you, rigorous!) Confirmation program so that they can step into and own their faith as adults. Our growing and developing Church Kids and their faithful team of teachers are also "making preparation"—Sunday school isn't just free babysitting, you know! Our children, your children, are being taught the faith in ways that engage them on their own level. Parents and family members, I pray that this supplements your own efforts to raise your children in the faith at home. Moreover, any time there

is a baptism and we walk with families and godparents in the weeks leading up to the sacrament, every first Tuesday of the month when we gather for worship at Weston Terrace, every time we visit a sick or shut-in friend, we are "making preparation."

You'll find a note in this newsletter about our Sunday morning Advent Study. It's another opportunity to intentionally "make preparation" during this season when we have a heightened sense and anticipation of Christ's coming. Friends, let us together in this season and always continue to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus!

Jonathan+

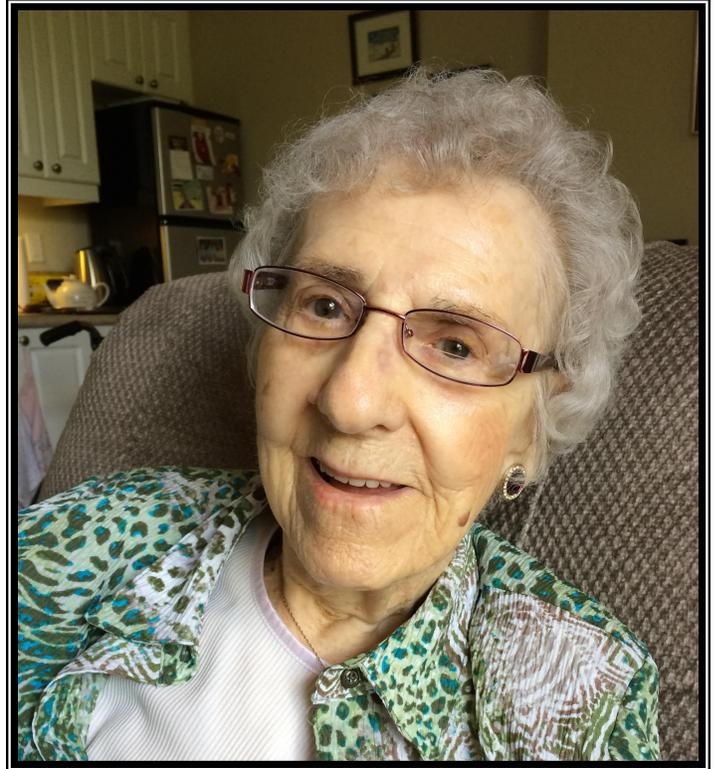


Irene Strand

On October 18th, the Church of St Mary and St Martha lost one of its staunchest supporters: Rene Strand. Rene (pronounced Reen) was baptised, confirmed and married at the Church of the Good Shepherd as was her husband, Bob. Her two eldest sons were also baptised here, but her youngest son was baptised at St. David's, which Rene referred to as "her beloved church".

Anyone who met Rene realized she was not one for sitting on the sidelines but wanted to be involved in whatever was going on and wherever she could be of service. She was an active member of St. David's since before the present church was built in 1953 and played an important part in its construction and growth. Most of the St. Davidians now attending SMSM were welcomed into our church family by Rene.

Once her boys were all in school, she took on the position of Church Secretary, a job she truly loved and held for many years. During this time Rene used her



remarkable talent with the written word and published a monthly newsletter with information about upcoming events and services as well as the occasional joke or poem and news about parishioners celebrating special times in their lives. Remember, this was long before computers and e-mail or even electric typewriters!

For many years she resisted requests to teach Sunday School, but when she gave in she found it was something else she really enjoyed. From there she went on to lead Youth Groups and work with Confirmation classes. She served as Warden and a member of countless Advisory Boards and attended Bible Studies for many years.

Rene worked hard as a member of St. David's Married Couple's Club (which later became the St. David's Club) from the time it was formed in 1952. She wrote scripts for skits and plays and we all marvelled at her ability to create rhyme after rhyme, year after year and to perform as well. On Saturday mornings, she would go to every garage sale she and her friend Muriel could find, looking for gently used dolls which she would clean up, and in her spare time, knit new outfits so they could be sold at our annual bazaars. She worked on too many rummage sales, bazaars, teas and luncheons to count. In recent years, she created so many knitted hat and mitt sets for W.A.E.S. she earned the nickname "Rene, Rene the Knitting Machine".

Poor health prevented Rene from joining us at SMSM. She passed away on October 18th and a service to celebrate her life was held on November 12th.

We pray that nothing good in Rene's life will be lost, but will be of benefit to all of us; that all that was important to her will be respected and that everything in which she was great, will continue to mean much to us now that she is gone.

'People, look east. The time is near. Of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table. People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.'

Written by Eleanor Farjeon, this hymn, and many others that we'll sing during the season of Advent, is a hymn of preparation. It is a time to take stock of our spiritual selves and how we can best prepare to provide a welcoming place for the coming of our Lord. It's a bit like preparing your home for a very special guest that is coming – you want to clear out the clutter and make sure that everything is just right!

As the choir prepares to begin a new year, we will clean out the clutter in our binders to make space for new songs and anthems in preparation for the Christ child. Advent is a great season to join us – you would be warmly welcomed to practice with us Thursday evening at 7pm and/or Sunday right after coffee hour.

We look eastward to see the sun rise – the beginning of a new day and things to come. The star of Bethlehem rose in the east guiding the wise men to where Jesus was born. It is always to the east that God's promise of never leaving or forsaking us is demonstrated with the rising of the sun each and every morning. *People look east, the time is near. O Come, let us adore Him!*

Denise Jackson
Director of Music

Advent Study Hour

Among other things, Advent is a time of anticipation and hope, of active and diligent waiting and preparation for Emmanuel, God with us. But just who is this God that comes to us in the flesh of the infant Jesus? From the earliest days Christians have had a particular way of speaking about God. Traditionally this has taken the form of the Creeds that Christians confess. For example, The Nicene Creed that is a part of our worship each Sunday and The Apostles' Creed which we recall at every baptism. You might think of these Creeds as providing the "grammar" for our God-talk, if you will. You are invited to join us at 9 am on the four Sundays of Advent (November 27-December 18) as we explore together The Apostles' Creed and its importance and significance for our life of faith. So come prepared to learn and to grow!

Advent Men's Breakfast – 9 am

Men of St Mary and St Martha's, block out the morning of Saturday, December 10th for our first ever men's breakfast! Men and boys of all ages are invited to attend and to bring along a friend or two. The morning will consist of good food and coffee, great fellowship, and more. If you are willing to help prepare food please speak with Fr Jonathan.

ADVENT

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FELLOWSHIP

Wow! What a Celebration!

On October 30th, the Church of St Mary and St Martha celebrated its first anniversary. Over 160 people came out to rejoice in our first year together. Bishop Peter Fenty was with us to preside and preach. There was also the baptism of Azron Sheldon Ashton and the confirmation of Barbara Robinson. A wonderful lunch continued the festivities.

Our first anniversary celebrations wrapped up with a festive luncheon on November 20th commemorating 50 years of independence for our Bajan sisters and brothers...and what a feast! Flying fish, cou cou, mauby, coconut bread and much more...thanks to Cynthia Rouse and her amazing team!



Bishop Peter Fenty with Azron Sheldon Ashton, above, and Barbara Robinson, right

Testimony

I am feeling the joy of being confirmed.

In 2014, I got ill and I was so scared especially because I couldn't even work. During this time, I started to feel the love of my family and friends. Everyone prayed for me and I began to pray stronger than ever. I started feeling better and stronger. I thank God for the prayers that made me stronger. This experience was my opportunity to start serving God more deeply in spirit and truth.

The amalgamation is a positive change. The combining of four churches to one brings more power in worship. Canon Rev. Beth Benson is the true essence of goodness in God's work. She taught me to strengthen my faith and believe more in God the Father Almighty. I am very grateful for her confidence in me. She is an inspiration and fragrance of communion.

Barbara Robinson





Thank you!

Thanks to all who donated so generously to the special Thanksgiving Food Drive. There was a lot of food and all the types of things that the food bank is looking for. The donations were delivered to the WAES (Weston Area Emergency Services) and the Woolner Rd. Food Bank. Half went to each location. Both were very appreciative of the donations.

Community Supper

Things continue to go well at the Community Supper. About 50 people on average are fed a healthy nutritious meal each Thursday. The new volunteers from St. Mary and Martha are into full swing now and their team is doing a marvelous job and much appreciated.

This Outreach program is wonderful example of what can be done when we work together not only as the community of St. Mary and St Martha but with the wider Christian community in our neighbourhood. The program is operated with two teams from St Mary and St. Martha and two teams from St John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Weston and the community supper is held at Weston Presbyterian Church. How's that for working together! A real ecumenical effort!

The Annual Com Sup Christmas Dinner will be served on Thursday Dec. 15 at 5 pm. It will be a full turkey dinner with all the trimmings! We're going to provide small gifts to those that attend and Weston Presbyterian Church is also putting together some goodie bags for the group and again we're coordinating our efforts! We're already getting enquiries about this and people are once again looking forward to the celebration. We usually serve 90 – 100 people.

If you'd like to help on the 15th, just let Shirley Radley or Don McCamus know or if you'd just like to join the Christmas Dinner, that would be great too!

Advent Food Drive

We are going to have a special 'food drive' in support of the two food banks within our neighbourhood that St. Mary and St. Martha supports – Syme Woolner Neighbourhood Food Bank and the Weston Area Emergency Services (WAES) Food Bank. Both are busy places that distribute large volumes of food to those in need. Christmas and Advent are a special time to share with those less fortunate.

We're going to have a special type of food to focus on each Sunday in Advent:

First Sunday in Advent – November 27 - **Canned Food**– tuna, salmon, fruit, vegetables, soup, beans, chickpeas, etc.

Second Sunday in Advent – December 4 – **Christmas Treats** – candy, chocolate, cookies, cake, etc. (Some of these may be used for the Christmas Hamper program at WAES.)

Third Sunday in Advent – December 11 – **Pasta** – spaghetti, macaroni, fettuccini, Kraft Dinner, pasta sauces, canned pasta, etc.

Fourth Sunday in Advent – December 18 – **Boxed Items and Baby Items** – cereal, crackers, baby food, baby formula, etc..

The food received each Sunday will be divided between the two food banks.

The Thanksgiving Food Drive was a great success with very generous donations. The Food Banks are very grateful for your support and will be appreciative of any donations that you are able to make. They put our donations to good use!

Welcoming Alexandra Pohlod

I am honoured to be serving as student intern at St. Mary and St. Martha this academic year. My parish before coming here was Church of the Redeemer at Bloor St. and Avenue Rd., where I served in the Chancel Guild and on the Advisory Board, led various educational programs including a Greek bible study, and frequently bothered the clergy with theological questions.



At present, I am working on finding answers to all of these questions at Wycliffe College, where I am now close to halfway through a Master's of Divinity in the Pioneer Track. During my time at St. Mary and St. Martha, I hope to continue teaching, to develop my leadership and pastoral abilities, and to participate in the worship life of your community in a number of different roles. I am thankful for all of the support I have received so far, and I look forward to journeying with you through Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter!



2016 Community Walk Report

Our second annual Community walk was held on October 1, 2016; Our 1, 2 and 5K routes walked the boundaries of the new parish. We set a modest goal of \$1,000 and to-date we raised \$975 with a few more donations to come. A big thank you to everyone who supported this event especially Canon Beth, Shirley Radley, Dianne Izzard, Barbara Franklin, Joyce McKenzie, Deborah Scantlebury, Audrey Riley, Celeste Roberts, Theresa Nash, Dorothy Thompson, Sophie Joaquin and our two new walkers Marie Geeves and Evangelina Gaffoor, a friend of the parish.



The always popular silent auction

The Bazaar

The Bazaar was a tremendous success making \$2811.35 - \$800 above last year! A big thanks to all who made this event so much fun and wonderful. Many hands make light work. One of our side events was a tour of our Church, hosted by Carol and Audrey. There were about 20 people who had the chance to see precious chasubles, a chalice, a ciborium.



Kitchen Elves!



Craft Club Invites you!

If you like to knit, crochet and make beaded crafts and wool toys and decorations we have something special for you!

The Craft Club meets every Thursday in the Committee Room, 10:30am-1:30pm. In addition to the wonderful array of crafts available for sale at our Christmas Bazaar, warm shawls, comfort dolls and woolen vests keep sick children warm.

You can knit at home and bring your items in as well – what a great way to contribute to our growing outreach ministry! Mittens, hats and pneumonia vests are especially needed now.

Speak with Doreen Smith or Dorothy Smythe for more information.



the loonie project

1. *How did you spend your loonie?* I purchased a box of salt to give to the food bank.
2. *How did it open your eyes to the needs of others?* I looked in the grocery store for something to buy for the food bank for a loonie and found that other than a can of tuna, there was very little. This made me aware of how difficult it must be to get tasty, wholesome food on a very limited budget. I thought of salt which enhances flavour making foods like rice or pasta a little more appealing. It is also an effective cleaning agent and can be used medicinally as a gargle or soak – so a variety of uses addressing a number of needs. As little goes a long way, it gives value over a long period of time.
3. *How were you encountered by God as you entered into that need.* By His giving me an increased awareness of the needs and plight of others and also of the need for outreach in our community – a reminder that we are His hands and feet here on earth and that we are called to look after our neighbours. As we do, we can be assured that even the smallest effort/contribution can make a difference.

Dianne Izzard



**We will
remember them**

November 13, 2016



You Were Asking...

...About the Sign of the Cross (SotC). What is it and why do Christians do it? The SotC generally takes three forms all of which you will notice during the liturgy. The first and most common is the gesture with which the priest begins the mass. Raising their right hand they touch their forehead, breast, left shoulder, and right shoulder. This occurs not only at the beginning of the mass but also at the name of the Trinity or anytime the presence of Christ is invoked. For example, in the words of absolution ("Almighty God have mercy upon you...") or the Benedictus ("Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord...").

The second form is when the priest blesses a person or an object. This SotC is larger and the priest will make it with arm outstretched. For example during the blessing at the end of the mass ("...and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit..."). The third form is when the deacon makes a small SotC on the gospel book and then on his/her forehead, lips, and

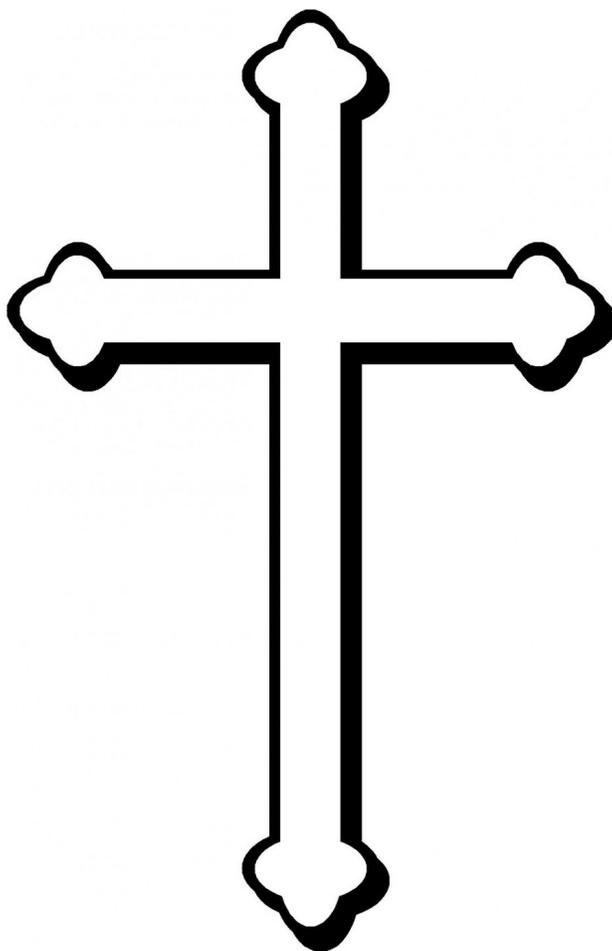
So, that's what the sign of the cross is, but why do we do this at all? Allow me to suggest three reasons: First, the Christian religion involves our whole of our tradition for a rather long central truth that Christians

The Christian religion isn't something that our recently. To "believe" isn't just with this or that statement but whole life. Moreover, the reminds us that our bodies involves our whole bodies: we we shake hands, we kiss (the eat, we drink, we smell of the cross.

Making the sign of the cross is a least the second century when small cross on their foreheads also, "in all our coming in and shoes, at the bath, at the table, down, in sitting down, whatever (Tertullian).

Finally, this practice calls to mind a central truth of the Christian religion: that we are Christ's and that our lives are marked by his cross. You'll recall that after baptism the priest will anoint the new Christian with holy oil, making a small cross on their forehead saying, "I sign you with the cross, and mark you as Christ's own for ever."

To conclude, whether you practice this yourself, have seen others do so, or are simply curious about the sign of the cross, these are some reasons why Christians from the earliest times have employed this practice.



cross is, but why do we do this at reasons: First, the Christian body; second, it has been a part time; and, third, it invokes a believe.

merely a cognitive exercise. This confirmands have been learning about using our minds to agree is about trusting God with our Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ matter. Worship, therefore, stand, we sit, we kneel, we bow, altar, the gospel book etc), we (incense!), and we make the sign

practice that goes back to at early Christians would make a and not only during prayer but going out, in putting of our in lighting our candles, in lying employment occupieth us,"

Thanks for asking!

Jonathan+



Celebrate the Season!

The New Anglican Church of
St Mary and St Martha
1149 Weston Road, Toronto. M6N 3S3
416 249 4681
www.stmaryandstmartha.org

Sundays in December @ 10.30 am
Experience the evocative music and message
of Advent during the 4 weeks before
Christmas

December 22 at 7 pm – Carols With Friends
Sing the songs of Christmas with your
neighbours and stay for hot cider.

Christmas Eve – December 24
4.30 pm – Family Service
7 pm – Holy Communion
10 pm – Candlelight Holy Communion

Christmas Day – December 25
10.30 am

New Year's Day – January 1
10.30 am – Holy Communion

Epiphany – January 8
10.30 am – Holy Communion

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1149 Weston Road (at Eglinton)

416 766 1887

Parish Office: 8 Blackstone St

416 249 4681 (afternoons)



Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

Carols with Friends

What a great combination: Christmas Carols, friends and hot apple cider!

Circle Thursday December 22 and invite someone special to come along with you to St Mary and St Martha's first annual

Carols with Friends.

We will get started at 7pm and conclude with refreshments at 8pm.

Show off your beautiful church all decked out for Christmas.

Joy to the World, indeed!



November 27 **First Sunday of Advent**

December 4 **Second Sunday of Advent**

December 10 **Men's Breakfast**

December 11 **Third Sunday of Advent**

December 15 **Board of Management Mtg**

December 18 **Fourth Sunday of Advent
Advent Lessons and Carols**

December 22 **Carols with Friends at 7 pm**

Christmas Eve

4.30 pm – Family Service

7 pm – Holy Communion

10 pm – Holy Communion

Christmas Day

10.30 am – Holy Communion

January 1

10.30 am – Holy Communion

Help Us Out

Your chance to see the Newsletter in colour! Simply send an email to the office at office@stmaryandstmartha.org and you will be placed on the electronic distribution list.