
THE COURIER

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THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, NORWAY

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RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

It hardly seems possible that nine years have passed since we observed the beginning of a new millennium. Remember those Y2K warnings that there would be a global computer melt-down because computers hadn't been programmed for years that began with a "20?" Did you fill a bathtub with water – just in case – before you headed out for New Year's festivities? And what festivities they were! We at St. John's marked the occasion with a party, a service, and bell-ringing at midnight.

Our lives are so governed by the calendar that such landmark years make us want to do something significant. But there are others who remind us that dates on a calendar are arbitrary. The church calendar begins on the first Sunday of Advent as we begin another year of remembering and reflecting on Jesus' birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension. The secular calendar didn't always begin on January 1st either. In Britain and her colonies it was not until 1752 that Parliament decreed that the year would begin on that date rather than March 25th which had been New Year's Day for several centuries. That helps clear up something that had long puzzled me: why is the last month of the year called December (which means ten) when it is obviously the twelfth month?

January is an appropriate month to begin a new year. It is named after the Roman god Janus who was the original "two-faced" guy, looking both backwards toward the past and ahead to the future. That's what many of us do at this time of year. We look back at the past year with its successes and failures, triumphs and tragedies. We also look to the future with anticipation and hope. Many of us make resolutions to make meaningful changes in our lives and some of us even keep them.

Lorna and I join in giving thanks for God's blessing in the past year and wishing you all the best in the year ahead.

Yours in Christ,

Brian

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WARDENS' REPORT

Christmas is always a special festival in the Church year and much work went into making the events leading to Christmas a special time at St. John's. Many thanks to everyone who contributed funds for our Christmas flowers and to our Chancel Group and young people who helped decorate the Church at our first-ever Hanging of the Greens. A special thank you goes to Kathryn Kern and the Church School for a wonderful Christmas Pageant and to Ted Reid and our Senior and Junior Choirs whose work for the Carol Service and Christmas season was truly exceptional.

Over the Christmas season, some parishioners may have noticed a slight chill in the air. One of the two alternating current motors that power our boiler broke down over Christmas and a new one had to be ordered. We were fortunate to find a heating supplier who made a special effort to track down a new motor for us and came to install it on December 31. The good news is that our boiler is in good shape and hopefully will continue to give us good service for some years to come.

Our financial figures for 2008 show that this year we have been successful in reducing our deficit from the same time last year. Thanks to our Stewardship Campaign and the fundraising efforts undertaken by several of our Church Groups, our deficit at the end of this year will be approximately \$12,000. As we have a surplus in the Cemetery budget for this year, partially because we have not been paying a Cemetery Manager, we will be able to transfer this amount from the Cemetery. It is great to see our fundraising efforts pay off; we will have to continue the good work in the coming year to reduce further our deficit.

Parishioners are reminded of our upcoming Vestry Meeting on February 15. It will take place after a shortened regular service at 10:30 a.m. It is important that as many people as possible attend, as this is our major business meeting for the year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzanne Coxon & Bob Cameron

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Monthly Chuckle

A large continuing education seminar was held for clergy. One of the leaders was a well-known motivational speaker. He boldly approached the pulpit and announced dramatically, "The best years of my life were spent in the arms of a woman who wasn't my wife!" That got the crowd's attention! They sat in shocked silence until he followed up by saying, "That woman was my mother!" Everyone burst into laughter and he continued with his speech, which went over very well.

The following Sunday one of the clergy who had attended the seminar decided to use the joke in his sermon. As he shyly approached the pulpit, he tried to rehearse the joke in his head. It seemed a bit foggy to him this morning. Standing at the microphone he announced loudly, "The greatest years of my life were spent in the arms of a woman who was not my wife!" The congregation sat shocked. After standing there for almost ten seconds trying to recall the second half of the joke, the preacher finally blurted out "and I can't remember who she was!"

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Common Refugee Myths and Facts in Canada

The East End Refugee Committee, to which St. John's belongs, recently welcomed a refugee family from Afghanistan. They are a mom and dad with two small boys. The mother has a medical condition, which we hope can be treated in Canada. This seemed like a good time to run this article, which appeared some time ago.

Myth: Real refugees are those who wait in refugee camps overseas. Those who make a claim in Canada jump the line and are not as deserving.

Fact: Refugees are people who have been forced from their homes by human rights abuses. All refugees have a right to protection, wherever they are. Saying that some refugees are more deserving than others is the same as saying that some human beings are of less value than others.

Myth: Real refugees don't travel on false documents.

Fact: On the contrary, international law recognizes that refugees often have no choice but to enter a country of asylum illegally. The United Nations Refugee Convention therefore prohibits governments from penalizing refugees who enter or remain illegally in their territory.

Myth: Canada does more than its share to assist refugees and asylum seekers when compared to other countries.

Fact: Only a small minority of refugees and asylum seekers make claims in the world's richest countries, including Canada, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Japan combined. While Chad, Kenya, Thailand, China, Iran, and Jordan each hosted more than 250,000 refugees in 2005, Canada hosted only 39,500.

A refugee is a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country ... " – The United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)

To learn more about Refugee Myths and Facts in Canada, visit the Canadian Council for Refugees website: www.ccrweb.ca

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IN MEMORIAM

November 17	Thomas Hannigan
November 28	Teruo "Ted" Nagai
November 30	Mary Spooner

2009 Offering Envelopes are available for pickup in the north aisle. Please do not use last year's envelopes in 2009 as some of the envelope numbers have changed. **If you would like envelopes or would like information about our direct deposit programme, contact Bridget North or the office.**

Please find enclosed your contribution statement for 2008. Please check it carefully for any errors or emissions, and inform the office. Official Tax Receipts will be mailed in February.

A Sincere Thank You to all who helped enrich and deepen our worship this Christmas. A particular word of appreciation to all who contributed food, gifts, and money to help make Christmas brighter for people living in our community.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

St. James Cathedral will be the site of the Service on Sunday, January 18 at 4:30 p.m. Bishop Johnson and Roman Catholic Archbishop Thomas Collins will be in attendance. Dr. Brian Stiller, President of Tyndale College, will be the preacher.

A good example has twice the value of good advice.

Christians are the light of the world,
but the light must be turned on.

Combine common sense with the Golden Rule
and you will have very little bad luck.

Christianity 101

Wednesdays until February 11

7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

A basic explanation of the Christian faith

Call Kevin Love at (416) 917-1527 for more information

Annual Vestry Meeting

All written and financial reports **are now due in the office**. Financial statements must be reviewed. Speak to the wardens for more information.

Please send reports to admin@stjohnsnorway.org

Reports will be available **Sunday, February 1**.

The Vestry meeting will be **Sunday, February 15** following the 10:30 a.m. service. Lunch and childcare will be provided. Please plan to attend this important meeting in our congregational life.

Ash Wednesday February 25, 2008

9:00 a.m. – Children's Programme

The Education Act allows Anglican students to take time off from school on Ash Wednesday to attend religious services. A note from the church will be provided to all participants.

7:00 p.m. – Choral Eucharist with the imposition of ashes



Join the Fun!!

St. John's 4th Annual Used Book, Music, & Movie Sale

Saturday March 21, 2009 (9 am to 2 pm)

To volunteer or make donations*, please call
Gordon Stock at (416) 686-3249.

**Please, no textbook or magazine donations*

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Join us on Saturday, March 28
at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Norway

**when the Rt. Rev. Patrick Yu
(Bishop of York-Scarborough)
visits the Deanery to**

Discuss Prayer

More information will be available in February

Sunday Flowers

If you would like flowers placed in the Sanctuary, please forward request and payment (suggested donation of \$50) to the office one week in advance.

Deadline for the Next Courier is Sunday, February 8.

**Please send submissions to
admin@stjohnsnorway.org or place them
in the mail rack outside the office.**

St. Monica's Place

has a Food Bank. They always accept donations, including ready-to-serve food and cooking ingredients, cereals, canned milk, and condiments.

Donations can be left in baskets in the north aisle clearly labelled "St. Monica." We will ensure the food is delivered.

Faith is the hinge that holds the believer
to a personal relationship with God

God does not call us to be successful.
God calls us to be faithful.

The Prayer Nook

The World Day of Prayer

In Christ, there are many members yet one body
Written by the women of Papua New Guinea

Pray for the People of Papua New Guinea

The women of Papua New Guinea (PNG) invite us to come with them to the "land of the unexpected," to join with them in the World Day of Prayer with the confidence that *In Christ, There Are Many Members Yet One Body*.

The independent state of Papua New Guinea consists of more than 600 islands. The second largest country in the South Pacific, one of PNG's most spectacular features is its variety of peoples and landscape. Papua New Guinea has one of the most diverse indigenous populations in the world, with more than 800 languages spoken among several thousand separate communities. From rugged mountains to sandy shorelines, coral reefs to active volcanoes, Papua New Guinea is the land of the unexpected, a land of astonishing natural diversity.

As we pray with the women of PNG, we will learn about the country's intricate cultures and social challenges including concerns about growing domestic violence, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and difficult land and resource issues. On the World Day of Prayer, all people of faith are welcome to worship together, to join the women of Papua New Guinea in Christ's unity.

Please join us, and invite your friends and family to attend the World Day of Prayer service and learn more about Papua New Guinea and its unique culture and heritage. Join Christians in more than 170 countries around the world and 2,000 communities across Canada who will gather on the World Day of Prayer to pray and act in solidarity with the people of Papua New Guinea.

This year, St. John's, Norway is hosting the World Day of Prayer. Look for more information in February. If you are interested in helping to plan the event or would like to be involved in the service, contact Craig Gustafson in the church office.

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In Canada, the World Day of Prayer is coordinated by the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. To learn more about WICC, please visit the website: www.wicc.org

The World Day of Prayer has its roots in an ecumenical day of prayer organised by women in Canada and the United States in 1920. This event became the international World Day of Prayer in 1922, and Christians around the world began celebrating this event on the first Friday of March.

Bible Lore

Let's test your Bible knowledge. For the next few months I will post ten questions based on the Bible. Answers to this month's questions will be given next month – along with more questions!

The Pentateuch (Genesis - Deuteronomy)

1. Name the books where the Ten Commandments are found.
2. What are the signs of the covenants with Noah and Abraham?
3. What historical event is commemorated by the Passover?
4. Identify the Old Testament tribe from which priests were chosen.

Historical Books (Joshua - 2 Kings)

1. The Temple was first built in the reign of this king.
2. Name the woman who figured prominently in the ancestry of David.
3. What happened to the kingdom after Solomon's death?
4. Who was the Israelite king who strongly opposed Elijah?
5. Identify the capital city of the southern kingdom.
6. What foreign power took Israel captive in 722?

FROM THE CHURCH CALENDAR

January 22
VINCENT OF SARAGOSSA
Martyr in Spain

Vincent was only a boy when he was ordained a deacon by Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa, who had brought him up. Because the elderly bishop stammered, young Vincent used to preach for him. In the year 304 Vincent and Valerius were arrested by Dacian, the Roman governor of Spain. Valerius was released and sent into exile but Vincent was considered a prize catch because of his reputation. If he could be persuaded to defect others might follow his example. The young deacon was offered his freedom if he gave up the sacred books to be burned. When Vincent declared his readiness to suffer for the faith Dacian ordered him tortured. He was stretched on the rack and torn with hooks, then he was forced upon a bed of iron spikes over a fire and salt was rubbed into his wounds. Finally, he was rolled in broken pottery, and locked up to die of starvation. When his body was laid out to be eaten by wild beasts, a raven protected it. It was then thrown into the sea in a sack, but was later buried by a woman who found it lying on the shore. Eventually, when the persecutions were ended, a church was built and Vincent's bones were buried at the foot of the altar. The fame of his steadfastness spread throughout Europe and he was adopted as the patron saint of winemakers, bricklayers, sailors, and – of course – deacons.

CALENDAR *Weekly

JANUARY

Monday 12

VESTRY REPORTS DEADLINE

9:00 a.m. – Little Voices Dancing Feet*
5:00 p.m. – Kuma Marital Arts*
7:00 p.m. – Guides*
7:30 p.m. – Scout Group
8:00 p.m. – Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book Discussion Group *

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Tuesday 13	4:00 p.m. – Little Voices Dancing Feet* 5:00 p.m. – Boy Choristers* 6:30 p.m. – Creative YouTheatre* 6:30 p.m. – Brownies*
Wednesday 14	6:30 p.m. – Beavers* 7:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist* 7:00 p.m. – Christianity 101*
Thursday 15	9:00 a.m. – MumNet* 4:00 p.m. – Little Voices Dancing Feet* 7:30 p.m. – Adult Choristers*
Friday 16	9:00 a.m. – MumNet* 8:00 p.m. – Silver Birch Alcoholics Anonymous*
Saturday 17	11:00 a.m. – Memorial Service 1:00 p.m. – World Day of Prayer Planning Meeting
Sunday 18	8:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist* 9:00 a.m. – Girl Choristers* 10:30 a.m. – Choral Eucharist* 12:00 noon – Confirmation Class 7:30 p.m. – Venturers*
Tuesday 20	7:30 p.m. – Wardens' Meeting
Thursday 22	1:00 p.m. – St. Anne's Group 7:30 p.m. – Norway Group
Saturday 24	9:00 a.m. – Deanery Prayer Meeting
Sunday 25	12:00 noon – Confirmation Class
Tuesday 27	7:30 p.m. – Amnesty International
Wednesday 28	7:30 p.m. – MumNet Leaders' Workshop

FEBRUARY

Sunday 1	VESTRY REPORTS AVAILABLE 12:00 noon – Confirmation Class
Monday 2	7:30 p.m. – East End Refugee Committee
Tuesday 3	7:30 p.m. – Advisory Board
Wednesday 4	7:30 p.m. – Seton Area Forum
Sunday 8	COURIER DEADLINE 12:00 noon – Confirmation Class
Monday 9	7:30 p.m. – Scout Group
Thursday 12	1:00 p.m. – St. Anne's Group 7:30 p.m. – Norway Group
Sunday 15	VESTRY MEETING

Please inform the office of any errors or omissions.