



JOY

the epistle

The Joy of Christmas

Submitted by Marissa Kubien

I know many people in this world love Christmas for one reason or another. Maybe it's because they receive presents, visit relatives, and sing Christmas carols or because they like decorating a Christmas tree.

Christmas is not just about Christmas trees and presents. The first part of Christmas is Christ, which is what Christmas is all about - Christ, the Son of God. Jesus' birth was and still is what Christmas is all about. Without the birth of Jesus there would be no Christmas and the 25th of December would just be another boring day of the year.

Even though over the years Christmas has kind of changed into a day to exchange gifts, the real meaning of Christmas is still there.

What is the real meaning of Christmas you ask? The real meaning of Christmas, the reason we celebrate, is the Joy that God has given us through his only son, born as a baby to Mary.



CHAT FROM THE CHAIR

Words, are of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind.– Rudyard Kipling

There are those of you who know the poet Rudyard Kipling and may disagree with some of his sentiments, but it is hard to argue with the fact that he was a master of the English language. I found this quote yesterday (November 23) and today I received a *National Geographic* magazine. In it, I was excited to see an article about the King James Bible. It is **four hundred years old** this year. Talk about the power of the English language!

A lot of us grew up in the church in which the KJV Bible was the one quoted in scripture. I remember as a child listening but never really understanding the true meaning of what was being said. However, when you take your time, read it, absorb it and relish its depth, it will provide a deep and emotional understanding of God's Word.

We say today "Information is power" and in the old Catholic church the Latin speaking priests were able to keep this information within the priesthood. One of the reasons for Protestantism was the translation of the Bible from Latin into the common languages. The mysteries of God were set before those who believed that God was a part of them; that as a person God was brought into their hearts. With translation to a language that everyone understood, the Power came to be within our souls. In the magazine article, the Rev. John Hall of Westminster Abbey stated, "The language is full of mystery and grace, but it is also a version of loving authority, and that is the great message of this book."

I have the Sheaves' family Bible that was published in 1901 and was given to my great-grandfather on his change of faith from Anglicanism to Methodism. One hundred and ten years old and it is still as vital and important as the day it and the King James Version were originally printed. I pray that this strikes you as it does me. The mass printed book had just started four hundred years ago. The Bible was one of the first such books and it continues in life today. This book, as our Faith, is the one constant that has lasted and endures.

God Bless,

Bill Sheaves

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2: verses 1—20, The King James Bible

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN (UCW)

THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Submitted by Jennifer Cree

I would like to thank everyone who donated, participated in or came out to enjoy the bazaar. So far we have made over \$ 5,000.00. I will give a final total within the next few weeks.

On behalf of the UCW, thank you again,
Jennifer Cree, Bazaar Convener

MUG ROUND UP

We are running a little low on our special coffee mugs in the downstairs kitchen. The mugs have a picture of St. Paul's on the side and were available for sale many years ago to church members. If you happen to have one and you wouldn't mind donating it to the church we would really appreciate your kindness.

Thank you.



And in our world of plenty
We can spread a smile of joy
Throw your arms around the world
At Christmastime.

- Bob Geldof and Midge Ure
Do They Know It's Christmas?

STEWARDSHIP

PROPERTY - FALL CLEAN UP

We're looking good. A huge thank you to the 18 people who came out on Saturday, November 19th. We cleaned windows, stairways, washrooms, the choir room and the kitchenette. Chipped paint was touched up and the furnace room tidied. Eaves were cleaned and more than 40 bags of leaves were raked. Your help was really appreciated.

WE REMEMBER

Submitted by Linda Westendorp

As the crowd gathered last Friday morning (November 11) at the Royal Canadian Legion, it was obvious that the rain that had been in the forecast was going to wait its turn. Cold breezes blew in from the north and people huddled in their winter coats as the time for the service drew closer.

Veterans and their families had gathered there to pay tribute to the many lives lost in the two world wars, and those lives lost since. Neighbours and friends, school groups and interested parties came together to share in this annual observance of remembrance. As our own retired minister, Rev. Bert Batstone, spoke of what we remember, each one of us was lost in our thoughts and memories of people and places.

Depending on our life experiences, this day means something different to each person gathered there. The guests who spoke eloquently of the sacrifices made by so many for our freedom, brought the importance of those contributions to mind. It was a privilege to be a part of this significant day in the lives of all Canadians. Lest we forget.

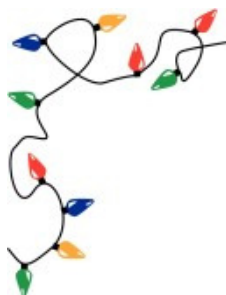
MUSIC

SENIOR CHOIR NEWS

Submitted by Lois Craig

The senior choir proudly presents Night of the Father's Love, by Pepper Choplin on Sunday, December 11, during the 10:30 service. On Sunday, December 18th, the choir will repeat the performance at 2:00 pm at St. Paul's. This provides an opportunity for those in the community who are unable to hear it during the morning service to hear this beautiful musical telling of the Christmas story. Invite your friends and relatives to join us for one (or both) of the concerts.

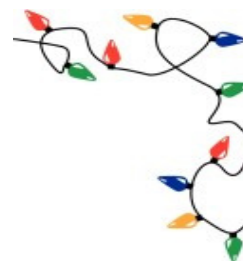
On Thursday, December 22, the senior choir invites any member of the congregation to join them in an hour of carol singing at Ballycliffe Nursing Home.



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Submitted by Michael Morrison

Imagine if a store Santa was left with the task of creating the Christmas windows for the store? (He would need the help of angels—young and old.)



This year's 7:00 pm Christmas Eve service will include a play written by Michael Morrison. Singers and actors are needed. There will be speaking parts! Come and join the fun of presenting the Christmas story in a unique and fun-filled way. If you would like to be involved with the play 'Christmas Store Window', please talk to Michael Morrison or contact him at mjmorrison151@gmail.com

OUTREACH

CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKETS

Submitted by Sharon Eagleson



St. Paul's is once again planning to supply food baskets to people in the community this year. The lists are on the table in the Narthex for you to sign up to help fill the baskets. Should you wish to make a financial contribution please use one of the envelopes in the pews and mark it Benevolent Fund Christmas Families. Any monies that are collected will be used to purchase gift cards to enable parents to put a gift under the tree for their children. If you are aware of anyone that would benefit from this, please contact Sharon. As always all names will be strictly confidential.

MITTEN/GLOVE/HAT TREE

Submitted by Sharon Eagleson

The Mitten Tree is now all lit up in the Narthex. Members of the congregation are invited to hang homemade or purchased mittens, gloves or hats on the tree. All are welcome. The mittens, gloves and hats will be distributed to organizations in the area so that children will have warm hands and heads this winter. The tree has clothes pegs so that we can decorate it. Many thanks in advance for your support.

LAY VISITORS TEAM

Submitted by Susan Reed

The lay visitors team makes regular visits to members of the congregation who are no longer able to participate in the active life of our church. Four times a year, the lay visitors serve communion. At Christmas we give a gift from the congregation. This year, 9 shut-ins were visited and given gifts. Since the group's inception, the team has been led by Louise Johnson. Through her dedication, faithfulness and encouragement, Christ's gift of love has been shared with others. The team thanks Louise for her leadership. We welcome Stuart McLean as the new coordinator. If you know any shut-in members of the congregation who would like to be visited, please contact Stuart McLean.

ST. PAUL'S PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Submitted by June Ruben

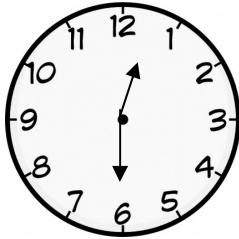
The St. Paul's Prayer Shawl group still meets at 10:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Fellowship Room. We always welcome new members and we invite anyone who is interested to come out and join us. Even if you do not knit or crochet but would like the fellowship and social aspect of the meeting, you are certainly welcome to attend.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Since the last report, we have presented several people with Prayer Shawls and for a variety of occasions. Some of these presentations were: to a high school graduate, two ladies who became licensed lay ministers, and for birthdays, encouragement, illness, surgery, grieving the loss of a loved one, etc. We have distributed approximately 30 shawls to date in 2011. We also made an afghan that was given to the UCW to be raffled at the Bazaar.

These Prayer Shawls are available to anyone who would like to present one to someone they think would benefit from knowing prayers have gone out for them. This is not limited to members of the congregation and can be for any occasion. Feel free to give a shawl to a relative, friend, neighbour, or even a complete stranger. It doesn't matter if they live in the area or far away. These shawls are a wonderful way to spread God's love. If you would like a shawl, contact Sharon at the church office or any member of the Prayer Shawl Group as follows: June Ruben, Susan Reed, Geraldine Clarkson, Madeline Oswald, Julia Godfrey, Sally Carter, Grace Sheaves or Jane Armstrong.



NEWS FROM JNAC

The Joint Needs Assessment Committee report was approved by the church council on November 6th, the congregation on November 13th and by Oshawa Presbytery on November 15th. A vacancy has been declared at St. Paul's United Church! If you would like a copy of the report, please contact Stuart McLean. The JNA Committee has been dissolved and a Search Committee selected. Technically, we are halfway there to finding our new minister.

The following members of the congregation were selected for the Search Committee:

Julia Godfrey	Julie Kubien	Kim Lawrance
Wendy Mason	Stuart McLean	Gord Ottaway
Bill Sheaves	Laura Springate	Dorothy Wilkins
Sarah Wood		

It is now up to this committee to get the news out about the vacancy, collect resumes, interview and visit applicants before finally recommending a minister for our church. The committee has already started to meet. We wish them Godspeed.



Good news from heaven the angels bring,
 Glad tidings to the earth they sing:
 To us this day a child is given,
 To crown us with the joy of heaven.

- **Martin Luther**

THE CHURCH OFFICE

EMAILS FROM THE OFFICE

Submitted by Sharon Eagleson

When you receive a bulk e-mail from the office please respond to the person I have sent the message for. I am receiving many messages and they should go to the person who has requested the e-mail be sent.

Thanking you in advance for your co-operation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Submitted by Sharon Eagleson

If you wish to make an announcement during announcement time, please contact the office by Thursday at 10:30 am so that our guest minister or speaker is aware in advance. We also ask that you kindly keep your announcements brief. Thank you.

ANNUAL REPORT ADVANCE NOTICE

Submitted by Susan Reed

The annual report deadline will be here before you know it. Take advantage of the lull before the whirlwind of Christmas events to get your report completed. The last date for submission of written reports will be Sunday, January 15 and January 22 for financial reports. Email reports to Susan Reed at svreed@bell.net in Word, WordPerfect or as an RTF file.

FOR KIDS ONLY

Unscramble these familiar Christmas story words.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. VISROUA _____ | 2. MALEC _____ |
| 3. SGANEL _____ | 4. DPREHSEH _____ |
| 5. YRAM _____ | 6. ODNEKY _____ |
| 7. IKNG _____ | 8. HEJOPS _____ |
| 9. NAECDL _____ | 10. BHTRI _____ |
| 11. AVENHE _____ | 12. SINAMEW _____ |
| 13. LHEHTEEMB _____ | 14. REMGNA _____ |
| 15. RAST _____ | |

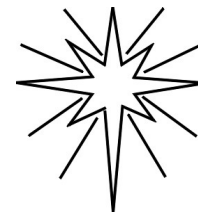
WHAT CHRISTMAS COLOUR ...

... represents God's eternal love (HINT: The Christmas tree and wreath are this colour)



... represents the blood shed by Jesus to save mankind (HINT: Holly berries are this colour)

... represents the light of God leading us through the darkness (HINT: the star is this colour)



... symbolizes the royalty of the 'Prince of Peace' (HINT: three Advent candles are this colour)

FELLOWSHIP

IN MEMORIAM



Tom Nelhams, loving husband of Judy, father of Tim, Cory and Justin, brother-in-law of Jennifer Cree (Richard) and uncle of Melissa, Sean and Joshua.



Mary Younie and family thank the St Paul's Church Family for their many acts of kindness due to the recent passing of Ken.

Cards, calls, visits and contributions were all very much appreciated.

One never needs to feel alone at the "Church with the Open Arms"!

God Bless you all!

FROM CATHY AND JEFF SHAW

Cathy and Jeff share this inspirational message with all of us to remind us of the strength of the human soul and that there is so much cancer can't take from us.

What Cancer Cannot Do

Cancer is so limited...

It cannot cripple love.
It cannot shatter hope.
It cannot corrode faith.

It cannot eat away peace.
It cannot destroy confidence.
It cannot kill friendship.

It cannot silence courage.
It cannot reduce eternal life.
It cannot quench the Spirit.

Author Unknown

GREETINGS FROM THE GOSLIN FAMILY

Submitted by Sharlene Bannan (nee Goslin)

My family — Robert John and Iva Mae Goslin and their three children, Sheila, Doug and Sharlene — were active members of St. Paul's. We lived on Burcher Road and moved to California in 1962. My father has passed away but my mother, Iva, is turning 91 on January 4, 2012. Mom lives in Tigard, Oregon, which is about 5 miles from Portland. She is living in a retirement home for active seniors. She had hip replacement in April and is doing great! I was thinking that if I can gather some well wishes, I could put them in an album for her. If you remember my mom and would like to forward her a birthday message please send it to me at sharbannan@yahoo.com or
Sharlene Bannan
4664 NW Driver Place
Portland OR 97224
USA



FEELING STRESSED?

Looking for a great family gift? Looking forward to the warmth of summer? Consider bidding on the talent auction Vacation Package. Imagine a one-week holiday for up to six people on Lake Seymour to be taken between June 1 and October 1, 2012.

Bids can be submitted via e-mail to Bruce Hopewell at wmbruce@sympatico.ca. Bidding closes on Monday, January 23rd, 2012 at 6pm. You don't want to miss this opportunity for a great family getaway.

For more information, call Robert Hunt at 416-458-5888.

WHAT'S ON!

Sunday,
December 4
10:30 am

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The lighting of the second Advent candle represents the peace that God has given through His son Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Peace was one of God's gifts to us. We are called to show God's love through our actions. On this Sunday we have the opportunity to give the gift of love through our **White Gift Service**. We welcome Martine and Briam Miller as leaders at this service. Members of the congregation are asked to bring a gift wrapped in white paper. Gifts are redistributed by our OSAC group to areas of need in the community.

Sunday,
December 4
7:00 pm

C.G.I.T. VESPER SERVICE

The celebration of our Christmas church season continues with the CGIT Vesper service at 7:00 pm. This year's message focuses on regifting. Refreshments, coffee and tea will be served downstairs following the service.

Sunday,
December 11
10:30 am

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The lighting of the only pink candle on the Advent wreath symbolizes the joy associated with the anticipation and excitement of the coming birth of Jesus. The angels brought good tidings of great joy to all people.

WHAT'S ON!**CHRISTMAS CONTATA**

Enjoy the sounds of Christmas as the Senior Choir performs Night of the Father's Love by Pepper Choplin. The augmented choir, conducted by Lois Craig, and singing to a full orchestral performance CD will take you on a musical journey through familiar scripture and reflections about the true meaning of Christmas, the gift of the Father's love.

**Sunday,
December 11
10:30 am**

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The lighting of the final Advent candle represents the love sent from God through His son, Jesus Christ. As we advance the figurines of the crèche into their places at the front of the church, the story of the birth of the Messiah is told. For God so loved the world that He gave us only begotten son.

**Sunday,
December 18
10:30 am**

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Join us at St. Paul's to celebrate the birth of Jesus. A family service at 7:00 pm will include familiar carols and scriptures and relate the story of Christmas through drama, humour and storytelling.

The 11:15 pm service will include the sharing of communion along with carols, scriptures and a Christmas message. The lighting of the candles throughout the sanctuary reminds us of the Christmas message that "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." As the congregation circles the sanctuary, passing the flame from candle to candle, we share in the birth of Jesus, the light of the world.

**Saturday
December 24
7:00 pm and
11:15 pm**

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

- December 4** **7:00 pm CGIT VESPER SERVICE**
- December 11** **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
- Senior Choir presents 'Night of the Father's Love'
- December 18** **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
- Kim Lawrance
- December 24** **7:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service**
11:15 pm Candlelight Communion Service
- Rev. Karen Smart
- December 25** **CHRISTMAS MORNING FAMILY SERVICE**
- Laura Springate
- January 1** **FAMILY SERVICE**

The next Epistle will be issued on January 8, 2012. DEADLINE for articles is December 28, 2011. Please send articles to Susan Reed at svreed@bell.net



St. Paul's United Church

"The Church with the Open Arms"
65 King's Cres., Ajax, ON L1S 2M5
905-683-4740
Office Administrator: Sharon Eagleson