



# Catch the Spirit News

Winter 2017

**Annual Deanery Bowling and Pizza Party!!  
Sunday Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> at 2pm: Rose Bowl on Dougall**

*Please RSVP to Jane by Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> so we can make up the teams! This is an all ages event but we ask that anyone under 6 yrs of age be accompanied by a parent.*

*There is no cost for this event but we ask you to please bring a donation of socks for the Windsor Youth Centre.*



*This is always a great event! Hope to see you there! Jane ( 519-818-5263)*





## RECTOR'S LETTER

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In my more curmudgeonly moments in the middle of November I look around at the Christmas lights that are already lit, I listen to Christmas music already playing in stores, I see community Christmas events already taking place and I grumble. I think about the missed opportunity to enjoy Advent as its own season and to prepare ourselves for Christ to come again before we celebrate his birth. I think about the hopelessness of keeping Christmas at Christmas and I despair at the ever expanding holiday season which doesn't just intrude on Advent, but intrudes even on the last weeks of the season after Pentecost starting November 12<sup>th</sup>. In my more curmudgeonly moments I grumble and growl and complain that it's too early.

I know there is a difference between the cultural version of Christmas and the Christian version of Christmas. The Christian version of Christmas is 12 days long. The Christian version of Christmas involves waiting, it involves longing, it involves big issues of human existence like sin and death, and it involves God coming to us to live with us and save us. The Christian version of Christmas involves light coming to the darkness, joy overcoming sorrow, and God coming to his people as an helpless babe in a manger. The Christian version of Christmas is a powerful and glorious celebration of God's goodness and love.

Broadly speaking that doesn't quite hit the stores and air waves and houses around us, but I think we can be a little less curmudgeonly and a little more cheerful and generous with the cultural expression of Christmas around us. I will not ever advocate for adopting the cultural version of Christmas in the church, but on a day to day basis I think we can use it as an opportunity to reflect and joyfully look forward to that time when Christ will come again. So instead of grumbling, perhaps the best thing to do is to look at the Christmas lights shining early in the season, on these dark nights, and reflect on Christ's light and how it shines in our lives and through our lives. Instead of despairing, perhaps the best thing to do is to listen to and sing the Christmas carols with the members of our community and then use them as a way of looking back to Christ's first coming in the manger in order to look forward to his second coming with God's kingdom. Instead of feeling hopeless perhaps the best thing to do is to look at these cultural realities and use them as opportunities to deepen our faith, to rejoice more fully in the goodness of God, to remind us of Christ and his place in our lives right now, and to hope for that time when he will come again so that we can dwell with him unto eternity. There are wonderful and glorious opportunities all around us to remember Christ, his incarnation, and his love, let us use them to grow in faith, to know the peace of God, to inspire our hope, and to be filled with joy.

Yours in Christ,

*Robert Lemon*†

The Rev'd Fr. Robert Lemon



## ***Advent Project for Sunday School***

*Each family has decorated a box and has been encouraged to complete an Act of Kindness daily, with examples listed below. Any donations collected will be donated to the various food banks and shelters that we support in our community. If you still need a box, let Jane know and I will make sure you are a part of this project. Please bring your box back by Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> if possible.*

### ***Acts of Kindness Advent Calendar***

Each day, during Advent, complete an ***act of kindness*** for you, your family or your community

Some examples may be:

- do something nice for someone
- collect items for our local food banks
- help out around your home
- take time to read a good book
- collect warm items for local shelters ( gloves, mittens, hats)
- collect toiletries for local shelters

Please bring your collected items back to the church by Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> to be distributed to those in need.



***Unto the least of these.....***

***"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat'. Matthew 25:35***

***Many thanks for helping to support the people in our community!***

## Thoughts from the Rector's Desk



Already in November I've begun hearing about the "War on Christmas". Just to be clear, there is no war on Christmas. No normal, ordinary, socially competent human being gets their knickers in a knot over someone saying, "Merry Christmas". There are some fringe elements out there who have an unreasonable stance on appropriate holiday greetings, but that doesn't constitute a war any more than mosquitos on a summer evening constitute a tactical air strike on a civilian target. Where we can see a real war in the world we live in, beyond the literal armed conflict taking place all over the globe, is in the area of human dignity.

There is a real war taking place in the realm of human dignity. Women are not treated with respect and dignity in too many places in our society. We have heard stories of the mistreatment of women too much this fall. Harvey Weinstein, Charlie Rose, Al Franken, Matt Lauer, and even Garrison Keiler have all been accused of some sort of inappropriate behaviour. The trouble is that Hollywood and show business are not the only places where this sort of thing occurs. Even the church is a place where this war is being fought. A touch that lingers too long or drifts to an inappropriate place on the body during the peace or at other times, an inappropriate comment about appearance or activity, are all ways that, even in the church, the war on human dignity is waged and oftentimes women are on the receiving end of this kind of behaviour. Another group that is treated with too little respect and dignity is those living in poverty. They are treated as less than human, they are patronised, they are demeaned in society. Even the church is a place where their dignity is eroded despite our concern for their health and well-being. Marginalisation, disregard for gifts of time and talent, and the belief that if people worked a little harder and did a little better they'd be able to pick themselves are all realities in the church just as much as they are realities in our society. The war on human dignity is being conducted with women, with the poor, and with all sorts of others in our society.

When Jesus was born in the manger in Bethlehem, he elevated the level of human dignity even further. In the beginning we were created in the image of God. When Jesus was born, God chose to take on a human life, to live as we live, to be one of us. That added a whole new dimension to our human dignity that we acknowledge in our baptismal covenant. There, we promise to seek and serve Christ in all people. We promise to recognise the fullness of God in every person. God is in every woman we meet, God is in every person that struggles on a daily basis to survive, God is in every human being including ourselves and because of that we are called to treat everyone with the utmost of respect, love, and dignity and to strive for justice and peace at every turn in life.

In Advent we are called to look forward to Christ coming again, to do that faithfully we need to look around us and see Christ now, in women, in those in poverty, in all human beings, including ourselves, and to treat every person as we would treat our Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God came into the world as one of us and elevated the level of human dignity. Let us recognise that, live according to that reality, celebrate the incarnation through that recognition and way of life, and look forward to Jesus coming again by consciously choosing to respect the dignity of every human being in Advent, during Christmas, and throughout our lives. The kingdom of God is a place of joy, hope, and peace, when we respect the dignity of every human being we extend the blessings of the kingdom to the world and we celebrate the reality of Christmas in our words and our deeds. Let's celebrate that way especially this year.

*Robert Lemon +*

The Rev'd Fr. Robert Lemon

# Some gift ideas during the Christmas season!



## Huron Church Camp

*A place where even the trees clap their hands...*

Huron Church

Camp is our Diocesan residential summer camp located in Bayfield, Ontario. HCC offers weekly camp sessions throughout the summer for those in Grades 1-8, as well as Leadership Training programs. My experience as a former camper and staff member highly influenced my faith journey! Summers at HCC were the best summers of my life! **Give the gift of camp to a child this season!**

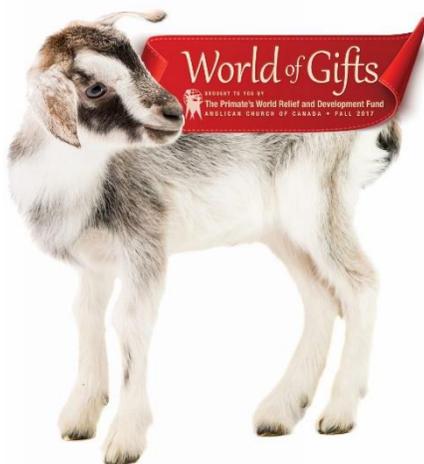


Thinking of sending your child/grandchild to camp this summer? Why not consider giving a gift certificate towards the cost! We will also be planning some fundraisers at church to assist children to attend camp this summer. For more information about HCC, go to their website: [www.huronchurchcamp.ca](http://www.huronchurchcamp.ca) or talk to Zach Shields or Jane Cornett



Campfire??? We LOVE campfire!!!!

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Donations during Coffee Hour throughout Advent will go towards buying items from the **World of Gifts catalogue, sponsored by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.**

PWRDF is the Canadian Anglican response for emergency relief, refugees, development and justice. PWRDF is making a difference in the world with your help! The catalogue has included gifts of small animals and gifts for education and health- in developing countries as well as in Canada. Each gift is matched 6X by Global Affairs Canada! Catalogue is posted on the Youth Board and was an insert in November's edition of the

Anglican Journal. Come enjoy a coffee and help us to help others this season! For more information, go to: [pwrdf.org/worldofgifts](http://pwrdf.org/worldofgifts)



## OUTREACH JUSTICE TEAM

The Outreach Justice Team are doing the Toy Drive for New Song Church again this year. If you wish to participate and help us give these children a good Christmas, please bring your gift **unwrapped** and deposit them in the boxes that are located in

the hall before December 15, 2017. It was suggested by New Song Church that the children ages 11 and 12 get gift cards for Tim Hortons, Burger King, McDonald.

If you get a gift card please give them to one of the members of the OJT.

A big thank you to everyone who participated in the Seniors Christmas. Alyce Sandie obtained 28 names from the nursing homes and all of the names have been taken. **MANY THANKS.**

Our team is presently working on doing three presentations in the New Year.

We shall advise you of the details in the very near future.

If anyone would like to join our team, please come to our meeting which is the second Monday of each month.

The Outreach for Justice Team would like to wish everyone a beautiful holiday season and a New Year of peace and happiness.



*Sincerely – Jeannine Renaud-St. Louis*



## **Warden's Letter**

As we prepare for the advent and Christmas season the wardens would like to thank the many members of the congregation who have helped out in making our summer and Fall such a success. Earlier we had two major events, the Turkey Dinner and Steak BBQ and auction. They both had large attendances and were much enjoyed by parishioners and visitors alike.

A lot of thanks have to be given to many volunteers for the hours of work that they do in preparation for these events. Special thanks go out to Angie Tuovinen who was the leading organizer of the many events and has now decided to step down from this position and pass the mantle onto others.

The other remaining event of the year is the Xmas Bazaar on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Many thanks to Brooke White for coordinating this event. We are sure that it will be a great success. Many parishioners do not realize how much time and effort goes into these events to make them successful.

We had an issue with our chimney which was struck by lightning. It partially collapsed. At the same time our boiler which was getting old had to be replaced. The funding for these two issues was covered by insurance. We thank Steve White and Mark Charlton for their diligence in getting the situation solved.

The sad news in November was that Margaret Dibbs passed away in Arizona. Margaret and Geoff have been a fixture at St Marks for many Summers. Margaret is the beloved mother of Amanda one of our wardens. There will be a remembrance service held at St Marks at a later date.

It only remains to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours in faith. The Wardens.



**John Anderson**  
Rector's Warden



**Amanda Dibbs**  
People's Warden



**Christian Paulton**  
Deputy Rector's Warden



**Carolyn Mastellotto**  
Deputy People's Warden



## Advent and Christmas Services

Lessons and Carols ✨ December 17<sup>th</sup> 7 pm

Christmas Eve Family Service ✨ December 24<sup>th</sup> 4 pm

Christmas Eve Solemn Eucharist ✨ December 24<sup>th</sup> 9 pm

Christmas Day ✨ December 25<sup>th</sup> 10:30 am

### **Stewardship**

We are thankful for the positive response to our fall Joyful Giving programme. Many thanks to all those who have pledged their time, talents, and financial resources to the ministry of the church. People have offered to take on new ministry work, people have pledged more financial resources, people have invested in the life of Christ at St. Mark's by the Lake. Because of the generosity of this congregation we expect to eliminate the deficit in our envelope givings for this year, we have ensured that our ministry activities have the human resources necessary to continue, and we are looking forward to a positive 2018. We have a very faithful congregation which is helping us continue to go from strength to strength and share the good news of God's love with the world. Thank you again for your generous and kind response to our stewardship programme.

## ***Upcoming Children and Youth Events***

***Sunday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm:*** Families are encouraged to gather in the hall before the Lessons and Carols service to enjoy a cup of cider or hot chocolate and some goodies! Activities and crafts will be available as well! Don't forget to wear your fav. Christmas hat or sweater!

*Hot chocolate, cider and goodies will also be available following the service (but it's a school night so we thought we would offer it beforehand as well!).*

*Come share some fellowship with your parish family!*



St. Mark's by-the-Lake  
150 St. Mark's Road  
St. Clair Beach ON N8N 2H4

«FirstName» «LastName»  
«StreetAddress» «StreetAddress2»  
«City», «Province»  
«PostalCode»