

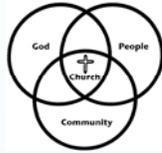


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LIFE AT ST. GEORGE'S

5350 Yonge Street, North York, (Willowdale), ON, M2N 5R5, 416.225.1922



“Our mission is to nurture our relationships with God in Christ, with one another, and with our community.”

FROM JOHN'S DESK

New Year, New Hope

Lots has happened around St. George's since the last edition of Life at St. George's.

Our Diocesan Bishop, Colin Johnson and our Area Bishop, Patrick Yu, spoke with us on December 15 about the way forward for us as a parish. They emphasized that St. George's is a strategic parish in the eyes of the Diocese but that Diocesan Council has some concerns about our redevelopment project as it is currently formulated and want us especially to work on growing the average Sunday attendance, which has fallen in the past 3 years. They have promised to support us as we endeavour to do this and it is our hope that our project will be approved some time in 2009. The Bishops said they see no reason to "tweak" the building, so our present design will likely be what finally gets built. But we have a considerable amount of work to do together to learn how to grow the parish and to take steps to make that happen. One step we are taking in that regard is the Natural Church Development program, which you can read about else-

where in the newsletter.

As you can also see elsewhere, the Bishop has appointed the Rev'd Steve Shaw as Honorary Assistant priest, commencing February 1. I have had one very pleasant and productive meeting with Steve and I look forward to his contribution to St. George's. He has lots of experience in helping churches grow and in building projects so we will no doubt benefit from that experience in the months and years ahead. He will take his place alongside Sr. Constance Joanna in preaching and presiding regularly, as well as participating in pastoral care as needed and in meetings about parish growth and redevelopment. I know that you will welcome him in the usual St. George's way.

About 25 people attended our music workshop on January 17, facilitated by Paul MacLean. We had a fun morning and the information gathered at the workshop will help the parish leadership formulate a job description for our new Music Director as well as chart the future of music in the parish.

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FROM JOHN'S DESK (CONT)

The three hallmarks of our music program as identified by those at the workshop were: participation by all, vibrancy and energy in the music, a wide variety of musical styles. We will keep all these things in mind during our search. By the time you read this I hope we will have posted the job and begun interviews. I give my personal thanks to Michael Leach and Graham Jackson who have filled in since Rod McAvoy left in November.

Many times in the past few months, many of you have ap-

proached me to ask "are you all right?". It is no secret that I have found the delays in our redevelopment project have taken their toll on me. After discussion with our Wardens, Bishop Yu and my doctor, I have decided that I need some time away from the situation for the sake of my health. I have found this difficult to admit, but I just haven't been myself for some time now and find I need a rest. I will therefore be going on Short Term Disability leave for the months of March and April. The Rev'd Steve Shaw will be responsible for pastoral ministry in my absence. My last Sunday

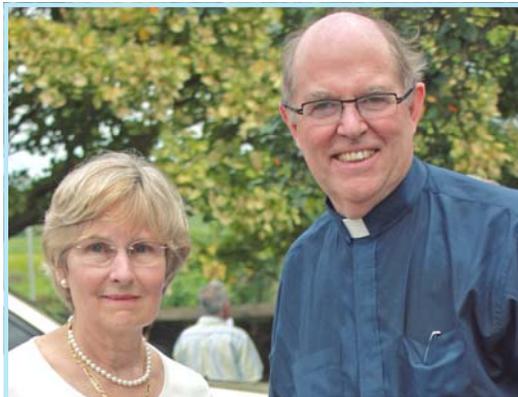
before going on leave will be February 22nd and I expect to return to St. George's on May 1. I have planned a short holiday somewhere warm, an 8-day retreat in Ignatian spirituality that I have wanted to do for a long time, and perhaps spend a few days visiting my daughter in Vancouver. I can't begin to tell you how much I value your support and friendship through all of this, and I hope my time away will be restorative for me. Please keep me in your prayers, as you will be in mine.

John+

THE REV. STEVE SHAW

The Rev Steve Shaw celebrated his 30th. year of ordination in 2008, but for most of his ministry he has served the church in an honorary capacity while following his professional career in the business world as a civil engineer and urban planner.

Steve is a New Zealander and his wife Chris is from Barbados. They have studied and worked in England where they met, in New Zealand where Steve did his theological studies and was ordained, and they have been in Canada since 1980.



Steve has worked in the Planning Department of the City of Toronto, and in the Economic Development Division of the former Metro Toronto. For the last 14 years he has worked with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, and retired in Jan 2009. He was Vice President, Marketing and Business Development, and before this position was Vice President of Corporate Affairs.

Steve comes to St Georges from a 2 year term as an Honorary Assistant at St Matthews Church, Riverdale

where he had joined the Rev Ajit John in a unique effort to "reboot" a church which was on the verge of closing. Previous churches where they have ministered include Little Trinity Toronto, Christchurch Brampton, St Georges Lowville and St. Pauls Bloor St.

Steve and his wife Chris celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in 2008. They have 4 children

- James married to Mariel; they live in Mexico City,
- Richard married to Gill; they have 2 children Emma and Isla and live in Toronto,
- Anne Marie married to Rob; they have 2 children, Lauren and Gavin and live in Calgary.
- David who lives in Toronto.



BUILDING MATTERS

The start of 2009 has already been a busy one here at St. George's, with several things happening. The year is only a month old and already we are seeing the effects of the extreme cold and snow which Toronto has been subjected to again this year. Due to a recent boiler problem, we had some frozen pipes and toilets off of John Thompson Hall, which resulted in the men's Property Room being soaked by the sprinklers. This caused the fire department to respond twice, as alarms were set off during the incident. We also have a large ice and snow problem on the roof. I am sure that you have all seen the large icicles hanging from our roof and flowing down the building around the pipes. While they may be pretty to look at, they are a sign that there is a problem with drainage. This has caused some flooding to occur in Claude Secret Hall, as water began to flow down the inside of the windows.

Both of these incidents have been dealt with, by trained professionals, and hopefully this will be the end of the 'surprises'. It is particularly difficult since, as you know, the area of the building housing

Claude Secret Hall was supposed to be demolished last November. It is increasingly obvious how much we need to replace our aging building. The end of January 2009 also means that we say goodbye to our long time caretaker, Fikru Adaye. Fikru has been working here at St. George's five nights a week, keeping our spaces clean, along with acting as 'lock-up' person. For those of you who may not have had the opportunity to meet Fikru, he has always been willing to do whatever we asked for, whatever that extra 'favor' might be, both cheerfully and enthusiastically. As Kathy has always said, he would be sure to get done whatever she needed him to do. All she had to do was ask. It was only after long deliberations, and examination of our financial position last year that we came to the realization that, due to the large drop in revenue from usage of the building, and the effects of the planned demolition, we would no longer be able to pay the salary needed to maintain his position.

The leadership team has, on behalf of all of us, made sure to thank Fikru for his dedicated work here over the last 12 years. We all know that it is extremely difficult to maintain a

full time job at the hospital, and also manage to come in here on a nightly basis, for such a long period of time. Fikru has often said that he has felt truly blessed to have been able to offer service here at St. George's, and we know that we will miss him.

The leadership team has engaged the services of a professional cleaning company, Advanced Cleaning Services, to maintain our premises here on a bi-weekly basis as of February 1, 2009. This move both allows us to ensure that the building is properly maintained to a high standard, as well as reducing our costs substantially on a monthly basis. With Fikru leaving, we are looking for a few people to assist in nightly 'lock-up' duties, to ensure that our building is safe and secure. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those that have come forward to offer assistance so far. If you can help out, please let one of the wardens know.

Doug Heyes
People's Warden



REDEVELOPMENT

In the last 8 months, your Redevelopment Committee has worked very hard to try and secure Diocesan approval of the final redevelopment budget and daycare plans, as approved unanimously by Vestry on April 6, 2008.

In June 2008, the Churchwardens and architect made a presentation to Diocesan Executive Board, to request Diocesan approval. Executive Board expressed concern about the extent of cost increases since 2005, and asked St. George's to develop three design and budget scenarios. This was done out in the summer of 2008, working with two Diocesan representatives, and was presented to Executive Board in September 2008. The Board made no decision, and asked the Chief Administrative Officer of the Diocese to work with St. George's to further the process.

Throughout the autumn of 2008 we continued to develop

scenarios, re-draw floorplans, work with lenders to secure mortgage proposals, and respond diligently to Diocesan information requirements.

In November, the Rector, Churchwardens and 2 additional parishioners met with Diocesan Bishop Colin Johnson to express parish concerns and frustration at delays in the Diocesan approval process. Bishop Johnson assured attendees that St. George's is considered a strategic parish, that he wants to see the redevelopment project succeed, and that the building design will not be tweaked any further.

On December 15, Diocesan Bishop Johnson and Area Bishop Patrick Yu attended a congregational meeting, to hear from the congregation. Bishop Johnson repeated the assurances given to parish representatives in November. However, the Bishops expressed concern about the decline in St. George's attendance, and whether the parish has the ca-

capacity to handle the redevelopment project, given our current size. The Bishops asked St. George's to develop a strategy for congregational growth before Diocesan authorities again consider project approval.

St. George's is now working to develop a strategy for congregational growth. A key component of that strategy will be our work on Natural Church Development, described elsewhere in this newsletter. We will also be working with Rev'd Steve Shaw, our new Honorary Assistant, on moving the redevelopment project forward.

Please continue to pray for the success of our redevelopment project.

Geraldine Sperling,
Redevelopment Coordinator
Redevelopment Design Committee: Murray Browning, Angela Goodwill, John Hunter, Janet Kirk, Kathy Lindsey, Geraldine Sperling, Rev'd Canon John Wilton, Elizabeth Davidson (Advisor)

LIBRARY CART NEWS

On Monday, February 2nd, 2009, Sister Constance SSJD celebrated her 105th Birthday! HAPPY 105th BIRTHDAY Sister. Many thoughts, prayers and best wishes are with you on your very special day and year ahead from your friends

at St. George's.

In 1997, Sister Constance wrote and published her memoirs titled "Other Little Ships". Looking back at her life in her memoirs Sister Constance noted "I was then, and still am, I

think not just a doer, but a doer about something." This book is available for loan from the Library cart. What an amazing Centenarian we have in our midst.

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CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

As we look ahead to our winter term and the coming season of Lent, we take a moment to look back and say thank you to Kathy and Anne Baillie for the beautiful Birthday cake to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. We also thank Stella Clennett for the lovely Christmas gifts she created for all the children of the church school.

Upcoming Important Dates:

February 15th

Fr. John will visit the church school and Youth for a special celebration of the Eucharist. To prepare for this visit the Youth will plan to act out the Gospel of the day and prepare the Prayers of the People. We will be introduced to new music and prepare the bread for the service ahead of time. We look forward to this morning.

Bowling Party

Saturday, February 28th, @ 1:00 p. m.
Cost: \$9:00 per person plus \$1.50 for shoes 12 and under., \$3.00 for over 12yrs.

**MEET US AT THE
BOWLING ALLEY AND
JOIN THE FUN.**

The entire church school and Youth are Invited to NEWTON-BROOK BOWL at Yonge and CUMMER for our annual bowling party. 3:00 p. m. A sign up sheet will be on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex so we can reserve the number of lanes we need.

Lenten Event

Sunday, March 1st

Please note the church school

program will begin at 10:00 a. m. on this day. Our theme this year is "Will You Come and Follow Me?" Details of our program will be found on a flyer to be sent home with each child and youth. Extra flyers will be on the bulletin board in the Narthex and the Claude Secrett Hall.

Good Friday Family Service

Friday, April 10th @ 9:30 a. m.

The children and youth participating should arrive by 9:00 a.m. The rehearsal will take place on Saturday, March 28th, 10:00 a. m. to 12: noon. A snack will be provided.

Palm Sunday, April 5th

Easter, April 12th.

Janet Kirk

MUSIC WORKSHOP

A big thank you to all who came out and participated in the music workshop. Despite the hall being colder than usual due to a reluctant boiler, there was lots of energy in the room! Paul McLean of the Potentials led us in various exercises and small group sessions to try and put a finger on the musical tastes of the parish. Not sur-

prisingly, we are a diverse bunch but not without some common ground.

In addition, we brainstormed the goals and visions for music and worship at St. George's. This is especially important as we begin the search for a new organist/ music leader for the parish.

A special thank you goes to Diane Wilton, Melanie Grauds and Allie Wiebe who helped out with the childcare, to Father John, Kathy Lindsey and Jennifer Schmidt for organizing the morning and to Paul McLean for facilitating the workshop.

Jennifer Schmidt



ST. GEORGE'S LIBRARY CART NEWS

We recently received some book donations for the Library.

"The Shack"

"Doin God's Work"

"Psalms For Praying"

"Seven Sacred Pauses"

Thank you Geraldine and Stephen for your generous donations of books.

Are you interested in attending some fun free events in our great city of Toronto?

The RCI (Royal Canadian Institute) offers Free Science Lectures Open to the Public, Sundays, 3:00 PM. University of Toronto, 1 King's College Circle, Toronto. On Sunday March 8, 2009, 2:30PM (Note Special Time) There will be a "Let's Talk Science" workshop for children ages

6-12. Free Admission. For further information you can click on to www.royalcanadianinstitute.org

Did you know that with a valid adult Toronto Public Library card you can borrow a (MAP) Sun Life Financial Museum Arts Pass to visit some of the best of Toronto's arts and cultural treasures for free. Quantities are limited and borrowing rules. There are seven organizations participating and offering admission to 14 different venues such as the AGO, or the ROM and Science Centre. There are 32 Library branches participating out of the 98 branches in the city. For further information you can click on to www.torontopubliclibrary.ca There are oodles of free lectures and seminars at many of the

branches .

Calling All People Interested in Knitting or Crocheting. Are you new, seasoned or wanting to learn how to knit or crochet? A knitting and crochet party and craft day is in the planning if there is enough interest. There would be an opportunity to explore the connection between Knitting , Spirituality and Creativity. Tea, Coffee and treats would be served. Please see Lori Grauds for more information.

Our Library Cart is broken and literally on its last legs. If any one wants to borrow or return books please speak to Lori Grauds or Lucy Browning after the 10:30 service upstairs in the Claude Secrett Hall.

Lori Grauds & Lucy Browning

POVERTY IN MOTION

At the request of the Social Justice and Advocacy Committee and Bishop Colin Johnson the Outreach Committee will be asking you to pass the following motion at this year's Vestry meeting:

The vestry of St. George's Anglican Church, Willowdale commends the Government of Ontario for its commitment to a poverty reduction plan for Ontario, and urges that the government's 2009 budget contain specific

anti-poverty measures so that substantial progress is made toward poverty reduction and in alleviating hardship among the poor during 2009.

This is a non-partisan effort. We want to commend the government for its strong commitment on poverty reduction, but also to make sure there are measures to help the poor in the 2009 budget, expected next March or April You might ask, "What good will it do for our parish to pass

this motion?" Well, although we all have a role to play in helping the poor, only governments can launch large-scale programs and policies essential for successful poverty reduction. It is important for the government to know that there is widespread public support for decisive action against poverty – especially in these difficult economic times. We encourage your support for this motion on February 22nd.

The Outreach Committee



PAR

St. George's parishioners have been hearing about PAR (pre-authorized remittance) for many years. We were one of the first parishes in the Diocese to adopt this form of offering. Today, parishioners have 3 choices for making their offerings:

- PAR
- Providing a series of post-dated cheques
- Offering envelopes

How does PAR work? If you have automatic debits going from your bank account to pay for insurance, cable TV, realty tax, mortgage, or newspaper subscriptions, then you are familiar with how PAR works. PAR subscribers' bank accounts are debited on or about the 20th of each month in the amount they select, and the funds are credited to St. George's bank account.

Why should you consider using PAR?

- Convenience – you never have worry about bringing your offering envelope or finding the exact amount of money to tuck in the envelope
- Faithfulness – you continue to support your home church even when you are away.

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PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer chain consists of six women and three men who have committed themselves to pray for the needs of others. The group meets once per month for evaluation and updates, to explore different ways to pray and to spend time in prayer. Recently the members used Prayer Beads as a way to enhance their personal prayer time. When they meet next they will talk about and practice Centering Prayer.

When a prayer request is made it passes to all nine (9) members who will pray as requested. Prayer continues until the person who made the request reports that their request can be taken from the list. All prayers requests are kept strictly confidential and never come up for discussion. Anyone can call any member

of the chain to make a request for whoever has a need.

Everyone at some time or the other, has painful experiences. Many times the pain is so deep, it is difficult to pray. The Prayer Chain members are ready to share your pain and be your intercessors. Many persons have already given their requests and the group is praying.

“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results”. James 5: 16b

The members are:
Father John Wilton
(Spiritual Leader)
416-498-7921

Lori Grauds
416-733-3374

Rosa Moreno
416-222-0219

Bob Jones
416-222-0278

Jan Buchan
416-221-8464

Stephen Powell
905-76e3-1578

Muriel Thomspson
416-221-0465

Janet Kirk
905-764-7818

Margie Lyttle
(Convener) 416-512-6265

Sister, brother let this group be your servant, in prayer.

Margie Lyttle



OUTREACH AS ST. GEORGE'S

Two people have joined our group- Madeleine Daley and Margie Lyttle. Welcome to both!! We have already appreciated your wisdom and insights.

The fall and Christmas season was very busy. There was great support from the Parish for **Flemingdon Park's** Christmas programs. A number of people served and supervised at their Christmas party, contributed to their Santa Store to provide holiday gifts for the kids and adults. And we raised almost \$300 to buy turkeys for hampers to be given to their volunteers. Thanks to Steven Powell for taking on the buying/driving in very bad weather!

Remember to bring your weekly contributions for the Flemingdon Park food bank – basket in the narthex.

Eva's Place – The response to Eva's emergency request for shoes and coats was out-

standing- we made a number of drop-offs of VERY FULL boxes. Remember to save coats and shoes for this fall- the kids will likely need them then as well.

The ESL program thrived during the fall – 6 teachers giving classes Tuesday and Thursday. Since Christmas the program has continued on Tuesdays only – 3 of the instructors got jobs!! in part because of the experience they got they got teaching at St. George – Thanks to them, and best wishes.

FaithWorks thank-you

A big thank-you to all those who contributed to the 2008 *FaithWorks* campaign and helped to raise a total of **\$8,645**. Remember that we retain 15% of this amount, or **\$1,296.75**, to support our local outreach projects.

Natural Church Development

– The Outreach group is working through what changes/additions we should make to our Outreach focus to support and contribute to the Parish's Natural Church Development initiative. In particular we see terrific opportunities for enhancing our connections with **Don Valley Refugee Resettlers (DVRR)** is planning a fundraiser - a gourmet sit-down dinner, entertainment, and silent auction on April 16. Tickets will cost \$100 per person, of which \$50 will be considered a charitable donation for tax purposes. It is hoped that 100 tickets will be sold. Olivia Chow will be the guest speaker. There will be more information in March and tickets will be available from the office or from Outreach members. [Jan Buchan, our DVRR representative, is away until March.]

The Outreach Committee

PAR (CONT)

- Flexibility – you can change your contribution at any time.

Why does the parish encourage parishioners to use PAR?

- Dependability – the Church leadership know the contributions they can count on, and they come in regularly (just as our bills do!!) rather than in peaks and valleys

- Less paperwork and book-keeping, which means more resources for ministry
- Less work for the counters

Please consider switching to PAR. The PAR brochures in the pews provide more information, as well as a sign-up form. You can also speak to

the Envelope Secretary or the Church Office. Remember – the amount you donate is up to you, and you can increase or decrease the amount, or withdraw from PAR altogether, on one month's notice.

Geraldine Sperling



CALENDAR

Worship

Sundays at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist with children's program at the 10:30 service

Ash Wednesday February 25

Holy Eucharist, Penitential Rite and Imposition of Ashes at 7 a.m., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Wednesday evenings in Lent:

Holy Eucharist at 7 p.m. followed by study group. (See elsewhere in the newsletter for details.)

Holy Week:

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday April 6, 7 and 8: 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Maundy Thursday

April 9: 7:30 p.m.

The Maundy Thursday Liturgy

Good Friday

April 10: 9:30 a.m. Children's Good Friday program

12 noon: Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday

Holy Saturday

8:30 p.m. The Great Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter

STUDY & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Monthly Bible Study

Thursdays March 5, April 2 and May 7, 7:30 p.m.

Prayer Chain meetings

2nd Saturday of every month at 10 a.m.

Lenten Study

Wednesday evenings in Lent after the 7 p.m. service

Parish Retreat at St. John's Convent

Friday March 13 and Saturday March 14:

PARISH EVENTS

Tuesday, February 24,

5:30 p.m. onwards: Pancake Supper

Saturday, February 28,

1 p.m. Church School Bowling outing

Sunday March 1:

Church School Lenten Event during regular church time

FAITHWORKS

A big thank you to all those who contributed to the 2008 *FaithWorks* campaign and helped to raise a total of **\$8,645**.

Remember that we retain 15% of this amount, or **\$1,296.75**, to support our local outreach projects

which includes assistance for Eva's Place, the Flemingdon Park Ministries, our own ESL classes and the Parents and Tots program.

The Outreach Committee



PARISH RETREAT

Once again this year there will be an opportunity for St. George's people to make a silent retreat during Lent. The retreat will be held again at St. John's Convent Guest House, 233 Cummer Ave. from 4 p.m. on Friday, March 13 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 14. This year, Sister Sue Elwyn, SSJD, one of the Sisters who lives and works there, will lead the retreat. This is what she has to say about the content:

We are the Living Stones: An Old Perspective on Change and Suffering

Rocks are born, as we are; they live and die, rise and fall, grow, change, suffer, and in the end they find new birth, as we do. Using poetry and Scripture, we will explore suffering, change and God's Love for us all, from a geologic perspective.

I use poetry which I have written myself, and a number of scripture passages, plus meditation on actual rocks.

This sounds like an interesting retreat and everyone is urged to consider taking part. There is much silence (including mealtimes) and lots of opportunity to rest, refresh and pray in a beautiful and peaceful setting.

The cost is \$90 per person, with a maximum of 8 participants. Please sign up with the Church Office as soon as possible.

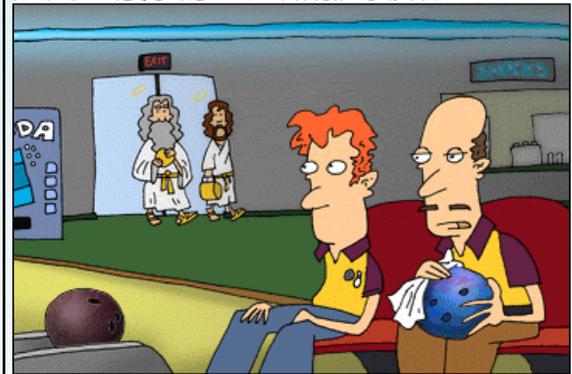
DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Deadline to submit articles for the Summer issue of the Life at St. George's newsletter is April 19th, 2009.

Please submit all articles to spencer_ferdinands@yahoo.ca by the 19th of April.

Thank you.

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Thanks to Jason Baker

01-26-2009

GREAT, THERE WENT OUR CHANCES FOR WINNING THE FATHER & SON BOWL-OFF



REMEMBER, EVERYONE IS WELCOME

AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

SUNDAY SERVICES AT: 8:00am & 10:30am

**"To nurture our relationships with God in Christ,
with one another, and with our community."**

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