

*St. George's Anglican Church 416 225-1922;
5350 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario*

From Steve's Desk

Christmas is usually a special time for a church, but for our St George family this December is very special indeed. This will be our first Christmas in our new church, and more "firsts" lie ahead of us. Now that the work that has been required for our building project is behind us, we can look ahead with anticipation to being a part of the Christian life expressed in this pace, through our worship of a great and loving God through our fellowship and activities and through the delight of welcoming others.

So, in this newsletter, we have photos of our opening event, our Advent event and also the events that we look forward to in the next 2 months. Let me highlight some.

There will be significant and special services. On January 15th we will be welcoming new members into the family of God with our first service of baptism. Then on January 29th we will celebrate the ordination to the priesthood of our curate Rev. Pam Prideaux.

We will be offering opportunities to learn and grow as Christians with an Alpha program which begins Wednesday January 25th at 6:30pm. This will run for 10 weeks. We also plan to have another evening group for us to share and deepen our faith.

Music is always an important feature of Christian life. We have a Christian rock concert / service planned for Sunday 22nd in the evening, then an exciting "East meets West" concert on February 5th at 7:30 pm.

On February 19. we will recognise Black History month with a celebratory service in conjunction with Lansing United Church.

Then of course we will be enjoying once again our pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday February 21. The business of the parish will be facilitated with our annual vestry, meeting after the morning service on Feb 26.

And the routines for Christian discipleship will be nourished through our weekly involvement in worship or church school, the fellowship of our regular weekday groups and our commitment to helping others through our outreach activities.

We are all very grateful for the work and dedication of many that have brought us into this new phase of our church life. But above all we offer thanks and praise to our Lord for His provision and His guidance.

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him 'Emmanuel' – which means God with us." Matthew 1:23

May this incredible message of "God with us" speak to you in again, to strengthen your faith, for this day and for this time in your life.

May the Lord bring His peace and His joy into your hearts and your family this Christmastide.

In Christ's service
Rev. Steve Shaw

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Bishop Yu

At the Ribbon Cutting Event on December 3rd we opened the doors of our new church to the neighborhood and community.

In his remarks Bishop Yu addressed both the community and the congregation of St. George. He pointed out that - "A door marks ownership. What lies outside the door belongs to the city. What lies within belongs to the church. But, "he said, "a door also acts as a bridge – of welcome and hospitality on the part of the hosts inside, and of curiosity and neighborliness of those outside."

Speaking first to the community he expressed the welcome of the church. "You are welcome and you are invited", he said. "Programs will be run for the wellbeing of the community, including concerts, daycare, and many more. For those curious to explore the Anglican way, worship as well."

To the people of St. George, a challenge – "The building is completed, now your mission begins in earnest. The Christmas message is so relevant, '*and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*'. This is a wonderful tent to display God's grace and truth. It is you, the church, that can make these stones live. Always remember who you are and whose you are."

"The door is a bridge. It takes effort to keep them up, but it is worth it. Keep maintaining the bridge between the church and the community, between St. George and this neighborhood."

Finally, he reminded us of another example of a working bridge, the co-operation between this Church on Yonge and the Church beyond, and within the Diocese of Toronto.

Wardens' Update

More Than We Could Have Hoped For

The successes of our events and activities this past month have been truly incredible. All of the planning and hard work of our parishioners in preparing for each activity and event has allowed St. George on Yonge to return to our Yonge St. location with a major impact on our surrounding community.

It had been said to us during the re-development project process that the impact of building a new church would leave our parishioners exhausted and worn out. So tired and worn out from the long process that they would not be able to do any of those things that we have been discussing all throughout the project. Obviously they did not know what St. George's parishioners are made of. We are well aware of how tired and worn out that this extended process has left everyone, but it is amazing to see the renewed energy and enthusiasm, so obviously apparent throughout the entire congregation every time that a new person walks through our doors.

The ribbon cutting/open house held on the 3rd was a huge success. This of course was due to the planning and hard work of so many of you. We welcomed several hundred people into our new building that afternoon, and it was great to see how welcoming and organized that everyone was. While we had the

pleasure of seeing so many of our old friends and staff from over the years, there were also many new people from the community who wandered in to take a look around. The impact of this event as well as the informative and noticeable sign out front has been evident each service as we see many new faces appearing each time. We are confident that once they get a chance to become comfortable with the new surroundings and our services here that the friendly and helpful manner of our people will encourage a number of these people to continue joining us each week.

The Christmas season is almost upon us, and after a successful Advent event and carol sing followed by our service of Lessons and Carols, all of which were equally well attended and enjoyed, we look forward to our Service of Dedication, where Bishop Yu will return again to bless the new building and it's worship areas with all the refinished and new furnishings. These new worship spaces and the effect that they have on people was never more apparent than watching the Korean congregation, as they returned to begin their worship services again here at St. George. They were literally everywhere, looking in awe and excitement, much as a small child does approaching the tree on Christmas morning.

Plans are well underway for our first Christmas here in the new building, with members of the Link service joining with the children at the 7:00 p.m. service for the first time. Hopefully these new additions will add to the enjoyment and success of future services as well, as we continue to work out the logistics with staff of the services, worship layout and sound (yes we will have that incredible new system under control once we figure out how to work it), further enhancing the worship experience of all who attend.

We continue to prepare for the full operation of daily usage in our building, as we are pleased to announce the addition of Ryan Erwin as our full time custodian. This position will be essential to us all, as we offer the use of the building to a variety of users each day/evening and the day care starts to begin its operations in the near future. While Ryan will look after set-ups of needed spaces during the week, as well as maintaining order, security and cleanliness of the building and its users we are still actively seeking a part time post to cover the week-end hours of operation. Ryan has been worshipping with us each week for some time now with his wife and little boy. If you have not had time to introduce yourselves yet, please say hello to them when you get a chance.

While groups are gearing up for presentation of an improve play after Christmas based on 'It's a Wonderful Life' as well as a series of exciting concerts in the new year, it is clear that our building will continue to be busy and offer a fantastic way to welcome people from the community around us in to meet us and perhaps choose to join us.

It is also the time of year when we, as wardens, start to look ahead to the coming year. The process of putting together the budget for next year has begun, and the Nominating Committee will soon be contacting people regarding their interest in serving St. George's on the Parish Council.

We all look forward to a bright and successful future, with our members hard at work, hard at worship, and hard at play.

Doug Heyes, Egan Done

Notes from the Church School



Since the last parish newsletter the church school has been settling into our permanent space in this wonderful new church building. We unwrapped our cocoons and took our newly created beautiful butterflies into church for our first service in the main sanctuary. We have tested out our voices in the chapel learning a few of the special features the chapel provides as we close our church school time in that wonderful setting. We are almost totally unpacked. Our new furnishings have arrived and are being put to good use and all this is happening in the wonderful season of Advent. Two years ago all this was our - hope now our reality. Now we are able to get busy and continue to welcome new faces, learn and grow together through worship, music, lessons, activities and fun times together.

The church school hosted the first "Parish Advent Event" in our new church Parish Hall this past Saturday night. Thank you to everyone who attended and special thanks to the church school staff that worked so hard to prepare for this delightful evening. We also thank Egan Done who snapped lots of great pictures that are part of the memories we will share in this new building. We also thank Egan for coming to our rescue when we don't quite understand the technology of our new space.

The children and Youth are now preparing for our Nativity Christmas Service and Eucharist to be held Christmas Eve at 7:00 p. m. We ask those participating to please arrive by 6:15 p. m. on the second floor Parish Hall level to costume and prepare for the service. All children are invited to costume and take part.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2012

For the Youth: More opportunities to participate in our Contemporary Worship Service on the third Sunday each month beginning Sunday January 15th.

Planning Social Events & other activities for their 2012 Winter/Spring season: Sunday, January 8th following the 10:30 a. m. service in the Youth area of the parish hall.

Guest Leader: The Youth will welcome Aili Bloomquist as their leader for the month of January. Stephen Powell returns to the group in February.

Children: Classes begin on Sunday, January 8th. NOTE: Nursery/Toddler area will be open for Parents to use Christmas Eve., Christmas Day and New Years Day.

Bowling Party: The Bowling Party date will be set in January. Please watch for special notice about the date and time in the January 8th bulletin.

ADVANCE NOTICE: The Youth and Church School will begin preparations for our Lenten Journey this year with a special program on February 26th, the first Sunday of Lent. Please note this is also the date of our annual Vestry Meeting. Watch your bulletin or elsewhere in the newsletter for notice of that meeting.

The church school and Youth will welcome a special guest in February. Details to come.

Janet

SPECIAL NOTE: As we begin our first few months in our new sanctuary we will be bringing contemporary elements of the LINK SERVICE into the 10:30 services on the third Sunday of the month. This will begin with the baptism service on Sunday, January 15th.

The season of Advent is rich with meaning, traditions, and of course, festivities. This year at St. George on Yonge, there have already been many festive events. Some were annual events, such as the Advent Event, Carol Singing, and the Service of Lessons and Carols. Some were special events to celebrate our return to the corner of Yonge and Churchill, such as our Ribbon Cutting ceremony and Open House. And perhaps we have started to establish a new tradition with our Saturday morning drop-in open house, where we served hot apple cider and cookies to a number of people who were out and about in the neighbourhood on Saturday, Dec. 10. At each of these events, and at our Sunday morning services, we have been meeting our neighbours' and welcoming them to St. George on Yonge. Some of those "visitors" have decided they would like to make this their church home, and we are thrilled to welcome them into our community, and to get to know them. Overwhelmingly, what I have heard from these visitors and guests has been that they have watched our church being built and have been anticipating the opportunity to "come and see" what happens in this place.

It is fitting that there should be a sense of anticipation at this time in our church's life, and that we should be making our presence felt again in this neighbourhood during the Advent season. For anticipation and presence is what this season is all about. In Advent, we anticipate (again) the coming into the world of the long awaited Messiah, and feel afresh each year the unexpectedness of a God who came and dwelt among his people. He shared in our lives, our struggles and hopes. That is also our call, to be in the world and to build relationships with those around us, to share in their lives. Our Outreach team has been busy this Advent with a number of initiatives intended to do just that, providing gifts and food for the young people served by Eva's Satellite, and caring for new immigrants to Canada by raising money for the Don Valley Refugee Resettlers through the sale of the Amaryllis bulbs.

As we look ahead to the New Year, we intend to reach out to the neighbourhood in a number of ways. We have already started advertising the Alpha Course, which begins on January 25 and runs through to April 4. Alpha provides an opportunity for people to engage with the big questions in life, to discuss the possible answers to the question of what life is all about. Planning for the course is well underway, and registration for the course has already begun, with several people having signed up to attend. Each evening will begin with a shared meal, before the video based talk and the discussion time. We hope many of you will join us!

Submitted by Rev. Pam Prideaux

Annual Vestry Meeting

Our Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 26 following the 10:30 a.m. service.

To ensure that the report package is circulated in advance of the meeting, please send reports to the office **as soon as possible**. Reports must be in **by Sunday February 5, but please send sooner if possible** so that preparation on the package can begin before February 5. Please send reports to **office@stgeorgestoronto.ca** or drop off at the office. Thank you.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – December 3rd, 2011



All the preparation for a great event



The crowd gathering



Dignitaries



Let the Ceremony Begin



Rev. Steve Shaw welcoming everyone



Church Wardens Egan Done & Doug Heyes



Geraldine Sperling



Counsellor John Filion



Bishop Patrick Yu



Archbishop Johnson



The ribbon – going,.....going.....



Cut

And the Church is officially Open



Heading inside for refreshments



The Sanctuary



Looking around at the open house



Refreshments



Heritage Room – Window from old Chapel



Part of 1922 corner stone



Some of Bill Cawthorn's works



Rangers/Pathfinders helped



Meeting up with old friends



Some of the youth

The Legend of the Candy Cane

"A humble candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a candy that would be a special gift for the Kind of Kings, so he made the Christmas Candy Cane.

He incorporated several symbols for the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ.

He began with a stick of pure white hard candy: white to symbolize the Virgin Birth and sinless nature of Christ, hard because the church is built on solid rock, and firmness, for God's promises are a firm foundation.

He formed it into the shape of the letter-J to represent the precious name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. It could also represent the staff of the Good Shepherd with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep have gone astray.

Then he added three small red stripes to represent the scourging Jesus suffered on His way to the cross.

One large red stripe would remind those with eyes to see and ears to hear of the promise of eternal life.

It would be a gift of love that would tell

His story - the greatest story ever told." (Anonymous.)

ADVENT QUOTES:

"It is good to be children sometimes and never better than a Christmas when its mighty founder was a child himself."

(Charles Dickens)

"A prison cell in which one waits, hopes ... and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside is not a bad picture of Advent". (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1943)

Some Tidbits & Sites to See:

According to projected figures the total world population as of 12/12 /11 is estimated to reach 6.98 billion. The current population of Toronto is 2.48 million.

The current population of the GTA is 5.5 million. We are growing in numbers and in so many wonderful ways.

There are some amazing websites to see & surf at your leisure.

www.hubblesite.org

www.googleearth.com

www.earthcam.com

Happy Travels.

The new library is not set up with books as of yet. Please be patient & stay tuned for any further updates.

Submitted by Lori Grauds



Calendar of Events

It's a Wonderful Improved Life

Christmas Family Laughter comes to St. George's Wednesday, December 28, 7:00 p.m.

For one night only the Bad Dog Theatre will be performing an evening of improvised Christmas Comedy, based on the story, It's a Wonderful Life.

Tickets are \$10 for Children/Students/Seniors \$12 for Adults at the door or order from the website

www.baddogtheatre.com or call (416) 491-3315.

Get Advance Tickets from Chris Hayward for \$10 after services.

Come celebrate a new use for our new space. If you know some places or people who might enjoy this performance, please contact Chris to hand out more pamphlets. Half of proceeds go to the Church.

Holy Baptism & Eucharist with Combined Link Service

Sunday, January 15, 10:30 a.m.

Christian Rock Concert with Mike Jansen

Sunday, January 22, 6:30 p.m.

Freewill offering or bring a canned good for the food bank.

Alpha Course

Wednesdays, January 25 to March 28, 6:30 p.m.

Ordination to the Priesthood of the Rev. Pam Prideaux, Assistant Curate

Sunday, January 29, 4:00 p.m.

Guest Preacher: The Rev. Canon John Wilton

Sunday, February 5, 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. services

Come out and see an old friend of our parish!

East Meets West Concert

Sunday, February 5, 7:30 p.m.

Black History Month Celebratory Service

in association with Lansing United Church Sunday, February 19, 10:30 a.m.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 21, 6:30 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 24

12:15 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes

Looking Ahead

(look for more information soon)

Trinity Unplugged

March during a Sunday Service at 10:30 a.m.

Doors Open Toronto

Saturday, May 26 & Sunday, May 27

Marion Singers Concert

Saturday, June 2, 7:30 p.m.

The Church Office will be Closed Saturday, December 24 to Sunday, January 1 inclusive. In an emergency, please call the church and, when prompted, dial "1" to be forwarded to the emergency church cellular phone. The phone is carried by members of the pastoral staff on a rotational basis. You can reach this phone any time – day or night! You can also leave a message on any of the staff's voicemail, and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Weekday Services will be Cancelled from December 27-30 inclusive.

Services

Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist (BCP)
	10:30 a.m.	Choral Eucharist (BAS)
Tuesday to Friday	8:30 a.m.	Morning Prayer (BAS)
Wednesday	12:15 p.m.	Holy Eucharist (BAS)



Pictures of Advent Event



Lovely Pot Luck Supper



Janet Kirk explaining the activities



Getting messy making the Nativity Scene



Making the figures for the Nativity Scene



Making cards for the homebound



Advent Service in the Chapel

The next edition of the newsletter will be coming out on Sunday, February 19, 2012

Deadline is Thursday, February 9, 2012

Email articles to the editor: Kathy Baillie at family.baillie@sympatico.ca



We're on the Web! See us at:
www.StGeorgesToronto.ca

REMEMBER, EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

Sunday Services at: 8:00 am & 10:30 am
"To nurture our relationships with God in Christ,
with one another, and with our community."

5350 Yonge Street, North York