



# The Open Door

Volume 37, Issue 13

December 2012

## Message from Fr. Murray

C.S. Lewis writes somewhere that Christmas is three quite distinct things:

- ✦ A commercial extravaganza
- ✦ A family gathering time
- ✦ A Christian Festival

Don't know about you, but I look back on a lot of Christmas Days with nostalgia. My sister Mary, my brother Ian, and I were allowed to wake up early and open our stockings, which were stuffed beyond overflowing with exciting do-dads. Then there was an exquisite form of torture in which my dad would go over and pick up my grand-parents, with us waiting all the while before we could open any other presents than the hors d'oeuvres in our stockings. Then my grand-parents, who were from Northern Ireland arrived, and we were forced to endure having to listen to the Queen, who "wished all the members of the Commonwealth a very merry and blessed Christmas." (I mention they were from N. Ireland only because the N. Irish are passionate in their loyalty to the Crown, way more so than most Brits). Only then were we allowed to get to the main business of the day – opening presents.

But even then, I knew it wasn't the main business of the day. It was about God's Son who had come down from Heaven, and who took the form of a Creature in Jesus of Nazareth. By early afternoon, I was beginning to get bored with the presents. God had a valuable lesson for me in that – material things always fail to satisfy for long. I don't think the family and commercial aspects did me irreparable spiritual harm. The family time always included having Mrs. Warren over, a friend of my grandmother's who always smelled funny and yet we had to give her a kiss coming and going. I respected my parents for including this lady around our festive board.



But I knew it was about Jesus, and for this I loved Christmas. Even the frivolity that went with it, I could love for his sake.

Hope you'll find time this Advent and Christmas to worship – a lot.

Blessings  
Fr. Murray.



## Christmas Services

**Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24**

**4:30 p.m.** Family Holy Communion with emphasis on children and families.

**9:45 p.m.** Singing of favorite carols, led by the choir, then...

**10:00 p.m.** Candle-light Holy Communion, late-night Mass of Christmas Eve

**Christmas Day  
Tuesday December 25**

**10:00 a.m.**

Holy Communion,  
Feast of the Nativity



## Greetings from your Wardens!

2012 will be remembered at CCSJ as the Year of Construction – and you all have shown great patience, adaptability and flexibility!

Just think –

- \* Of all of you who have continued to bring the hospitality of Coffee Hour under challenging situations in the rectory, competing for time and space with the Children's ministry program.
- \* Of all you Church School leaders who have carried everything you need to teach our children from room to room, building to building since June.
- \* Of all involved in the physical activity of setting up and putting away, carrying water from the rectory, enabling other people to use the common spaces.

\* Of the incredible flexibility that the food bank people have shown when faced with new weekly challenges - their ability to find things, to maintain their snack program with the kitchen in another building, to find new places to interview incoming families, and now to securely store toys for the Christmas 'toy mountain' for our client's children.

\* Of every one of you who has been faithful despite the struggle to find a washroom, use the elevator, hang up your coat, etc., etc.

We thank all the members of the building committee who have been so diligent to keep things moving and keep the building functioning despite numerous frustrations - Wendell, Gord, John and Gabriel.

Especially we thank our staff: Luisa and Muriel working out of the rectory basement; Murray and Bruce keeping fit running up and downstairs to their offices; and Mae and Lorne for the challenge of keeping the place as clean as possible during the building chaos.

CCSJ'ers, you are a great community of people - thank you for all your support and encouragement through these last few months!

*Have a Blessed Christmas!*

Peter Patterson  
And  
Sue Spiering



## Samuel Adam's Christmas Musings

When I joined the Anglican Church in 2009, as Christmas season rolled around, I naturally geared up for holiday cheer that is characteristic of this time of year (the most wonderful, as some have posited in song). A huge part of that is all the wonderful Christmas songs, many of which have their roots in the Anglican tradition. Well, you can imagine my disappointment and dismay whenever December rolled around and there was not a "What Child is This?" or "Joy to the World" to be found in the services at my church. I thought, "this is ridiculous! We should be singing Christmas songs right now! After all, this is *Christmas* season, isn't it?!"

And so was my introduction to the season of Advent. For us, Christians, in the Anglican tradition, Christmas season does not begin on Black Friday (the day after American Thanksgiving) or the 1st of December. It actually *begins* on December 25th. Now obviously that sounds crazy. Most of us would say that December 25th is when Christmas season *ends*, not when it begins. But actually Christmas Day is preceded by a season very distinct from (but also inextricably related to) it.

This is what we call Advent. It is the season of expectant waiting for the coming of the Messiah, both his first coming in the Incarnation and his second coming at the end of the Age. We have a tendency to conflate the two, Advent and Christmas, but I am convinced that in doing so, we miss out on a lot of the profundity of what Christmas is about, namely, the commemoration of God's taking on human flesh to dwell among us.

There is something powerful about sitting and waiting, purposefully *not* celebrating yet, but waiting in eager expectation for the coming of God's chosen one into our midst. There is something powerful about refraining from singing Christmas songs, and instead opting for "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" for a few weeks.

It is incredibly difficult to do, for sure (especially with everything going on around us), but there is great value in spending this month preceding the Feast of the Incarnation in a time of reflection, personal examination, and especially hopeful longing for the coming of Jesus. If nothing else, it may help to reorient our understanding of Christmas from that of simply the biggest commercial holiday of the year, to that of celebrating of God's taking on human flesh and dwelling among us for our salvation.

So, my encouragement to you: *don't* celebrate Christmas! ....at least not yet fully. Certainly, don't be a Scrooge, but let Advent have its proper time. It will make the singing of "Joy to the World" all that more meaningful on that glorious Christmas morning.

## Christmas Crèches

In the early 80's Peter and I went on a business trip to the Philippines. On a weekend excursion to the town of Baguio we bought a hand carved Christmas nativity set made out of their native wood. This nativity scene has been arranged on our coffee table every Christmas since then.

In the late 90's when Peter started travelling with World Vision we visited El Salvador. The local church we attended for the Sunday service had a craft shop that sold local crafts. That was the second time we purchased a nativity set, in fact we bought two brightly coloured sets, thinking that we would give them away as gifts. Our son Paul, at that time, convinced me to keep one for our family. Since then we have developed a family tradition of collecting crèches. We have two from Mexico, one a traditional clay set painted with white and gold, the other a tiny metal set that fits in a miniature tin box.

On a trip to Malawi, I convinced the World Vision driver to take a small detour to a pottery

factory. There I purchased my first African nativity set carved from ebony. Peter brought me another set back from Uganda and the Mercer's brought me a set from Kenya made of sisal and banana leaves.

My crèches range in size from tree ornaments made in Costa Rica and Bolivia and larger hand carved wooden pieces from Israel and Ecuador. I have a beautiful white marble nativity scene from Italy, a clay set from Sardinia, another clay set depicting a Hopi Indian pueblo instead of a stable and a heavy earthenware holy family from Egypt. The latest set is one of the most magnificent and it is from Korea. It has a uniquely Asian flavor. The wise men are in traditional Eastern garb, the stable includes, pigs, and chickens and along with a shepherd there is a peasant who works in a rice paddy field.

Each of these crèche scenes gives an added perspective to the story. Peter once spoke about his favourite, the

olive wood one from Israel. He particularly liked this one because Joseph has his arm around Mary and is supporting her. His reason for this choice – that Joseph often gets overlooked and in this carved piece his warmth, concern and compassion for Mary is depicted.

As you may have guessed by now, the entire house is decorated with these crèches from the dining room coffee table, to the mantel over the fireplace, the front hall table, the family room counter and even in the bathrooms. I think you can truly say that our home reflects the Christmas spirit.

by  
Barbara  
Patterson



## Kids Christmas Activity

### Counting up Christmas

There's the mother of Jesus  
( little finger)  
And Joseph stands so tall  
( ring finger)  
Now 2 shepherds from the field  
( next two fingers)  
Do we have them all?  
we're missing baby Jesus  
(thumb)  
Born on Christmas day  
Happy Birthday Jesus  
Hip, hip, hooray  
( clap /raise arms/high 5 )



### Wise Men

Three wise men travelled from afar  
( fingers walk)  
Following the Christmas star  
( twinkle movement)  
When it stopped ( clap) they  
jumped for joy  
And worshipped baby Jesus boy  
(rock baby)



# Spirit of Christmas

CCSJ would like to thank ALL who have donated to our **2012 CCSJ Food Pantry Toy Drive**. Once again we will be putting smiles on children's faces during this holiday season.

We are happy to share that, to date, the CCSJ Food Pantry has served a total of 2,981 families which equates to 7,344 adults and children—and the year is not done yet!!

On each day that we are open we are receiving an average of 8 new clients—this is not good news. That means there are more people in our community needing our help. But even with the increased numbers we are serving, we are blessed to have over 70 volunteers comprising non-client, client and students.

We thank you all for your continued help and support for this very important outreach commitment for Christ Church St. James.

*Loretta Carnahan*

Not only did we share the season of joy to our community but we went beyond Canada!

Thank you for the 70 boxes we collected for **Operation Christmas Child**, a project spearheaded by Samaritan's Purse.

Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes from Canada collected in 2012 will be distributed to the following countries\*: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Uruguay, Venezuela.

*Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled shoe boxes and the message of God's unconditional love.*

Special THANKS goes out to Muriel Yoshiki for converting her car into Santa's sleigh to transport the shoe boxes to Operation Christmas Child head quarters.



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!



## P o e m s o f t h e S e a s o n

### W I N T E R J E W E L S    T R U E C H R I S T I A N C H R I S T M A S

A million little diamonds  
Twinkled on the trees,  
And all the little maidens  
said:  
“A jewel, if you please!”



But while they held their hands out-  
stretched  
To catch the diamonds

A lit-  
gay,  
million  
tle sun-  
beams  
came



*By Joanna Fuchs*

Christmas isn't showy gifts, Or glittering decoration;  
It's honoring our Savior, Jesus Christ, In humble adoration.

It's serving those less fortunate, Meeting their needs before our own;  
It's making sure at Christmas time, That no one is alone.  
It's taking what we would have spent, On things that no one needs,  
And using it to help someone, With service and good deeds.

Our Savior showed us how to live, With charity, faith and  
service.

It makes the holidays a joy, More peaceful, and less nerv-  
ous.

So let's remember Christmas is About our Savior's birth;



### H O P E F O R U S A L L

A long time ago in Bethlehem, on a  
starry winters' night;  
The child Jesus Christ was born, our  
savior, king, and light,  
The hope- for us all!  
And in the sky the angels sang  
“Glory to God on high  
Peace; good will to all men.  
Peace; good will to all men”.

Poor shepherds left their flock alone,  
and to the stable came  
Seeking the child of the angels song,  
while glory shone around  
The hope- for us all!  
And in the sky the angels sang  
“Glory to God on high  
Peace; good will to all men.  
Peace; good will to all men”.

Behold the star that brightly shines  
guiding wise men thro' the night  
To the place where the king is born  
Messiah Jesus Christ!  
The hope- for us all!  
And in the sky the angels sang  
“Glory to God on high  
Peace; good will to all men  
Peace; good will to all men”.

The wise men placed their gifts before  
the child as he lay  
Gold, and myrrh, and frankincense as  
they knelt before their king,  
The hope- for us all!  
And in the sky the angels sang  
“Glory to God on high  
Peace; good will to all men  
Peace; good will to all men”.

Mary pondered all these things, and  
kept them in her heart  
She softly sang a lullaby; rocking our  
king to sleep  
The hope- for us all!  
In the sky the angels sang  
“Glory to God on high  
Peace; good will to all men  
Peace; good will to all men”.

*by Arthur B Clark*



### C A N Y O U H E A R H I M S I N G ?

He stands there knocking at your door  
Just like He's done before, Your door  
The doorway to your soul.

He's been there waiting for so long  
To share with you His song, His song  
The song He wrote for you  
- *Can you hear Him sing?*

He speaks so gently to your heart  
So gently to your heart, Don't part  
He'll never hurt or leave you.

He simply longs to be your Friend  
An outstretched hand to lend. O friend,  
Just open to receive  
- *Can you hear him sing?*

To heal hearts which are bruised in pain  
To still those searching for peace again  
To hungry souls, so desperately *stained*  
- *Can you hear Him sing?*

More than a memory of old  
Or stories to be told  
Behold, - the manger of your heart.  
He comes a temple there to build  
A temple there to fill  
Be filled, - The Lord Himself is here!  
*Can you hear Him sing?*

*by Bruce Smith*



## Sue Coatsworth's Famous Brownies



**It's Here!** After many requests, Sue Coatsworth has volunteered her "famous" recipe for brownies. Many satisfied samplers have raved about these brownies. It's surprisingly easy to make!

### Ingredients

1 cup butter (not margarine)  
 1 cup pure powdered cocoa (Fry's works best)  
 2 cups granulated sugar  
 4 eggs  
 1 cup all purpose flour  
 1/4 tsp salt (maybe even less if using salted butter)  
 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

### Method.

1. In a sauce pan, melt butter. Stir in cocoa, sugar & eggs.
2. Blend in flour and salt.
3. Add 1 cup chocolate chips (do not melt them) and stir. Save the other cup for the icing.
4. Spread this mixture evenly in a greased 9" by 13" metal pan. Don't try to use glass - they won't cook through evenly.
5. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 25-30 minutes.
6. Just before finishing baking, melt the other cup of chocolate chips with 2 tbsp of butter and spread over brownies fresh from the oven.
7. Let cool before cutting into squares for immediate serving or cover in plastic wrap and refrigerate. If refrigerating, let the pan come back to room temperature before cutting up.

## Walnut Cranberry Coffee Cake

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 40 min. + cooling / Yield: 12 Servings

### Ingredients

1 cup *butter, softened*  
 1 cup *sugar*  
 2 *eggs*  
 1 cup (8 ounces) *sour cream*  
 1 teaspoon *vanilla extract*

2 cups *all-purpose flour*  
 1-1/2 teaspoons *baking powder*  
 1/2 teaspoon *baking soda*  
 1/2 teaspoon *salt*

1 cup *chopped walnuts*  
 1/2 cup *whole-berry cranberry sauce*  
 1 teaspoon *grated orange peel*  
 1 teaspoon *ground cinnamon*  
 1 tablespoon *confectioners' sugar*

### Directions

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in sour cream and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Gradually add to the creamed mixture.

Pour half of the batter into a greased and floured 10-in. fluted tube pan. In a small bowl, combine the walnuts, cranberry sauce, orange peel and cinnamon; spoon over batter. Top with remaining batter. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean.

Cool for 15 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar. Yield: 12 servings.

Nutritional Facts 1 slice equals 408 calories, 25 g fat (12 g saturated fat), 88 mg cholesterol, 329 mg sodium, 40 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 7 g protein.

Originally published as Cranberry Coffee Cake in [Country Woman Christmas](#) Annual 2009, p29



## Holiday Traditions

Growing up in Romania with a grandmother who was religious had introduced me to a few traditions which I am not ready to let go of. As kids we had to fast at least 7 days prior to Christmas in order to instill discipline in us. During this time we would go to church almost daily to pray and ask for forgiveness of our sins. Grandma would tell us stories from the Bible daily before bed time. On Christmas Eve we would go caroling, something my children may never experience, praising Jesus, Mary and Joseph for bringing the Son of God into this world. When we would come back from caroling, we would see the Christmas tree in our living room. Sparkles of joy were in our eyes. My mom would say that Santa has brought the tree, which at the time represented wealth given to us by God. The decorations were not artificial globes but candies, chocolates and small toys that we would get to play with after. The candles were real, and lit to make everything look so much better. We would then get ready to sleep so that Santa can make his way with the remaining gifts. We were so excited wanting to stay up and stare at the tree but my mom would not have it, we had to go sleep so that Santa would come. I remember one

year I was looking out the window and seeing the snow come down really heavy, I was so worried that Santa would not be able to find his way to my house. I fell asleep worrying about Santa. I woke up in the morning when everyone except my mom was still sleeping. The smell of food woke me up. I went to the kitchen wanting to eat but was reminded that we all must go to church for confession before we touched food. The problem was the church was located in a different city! It would take hours before we could have any food. Another test! By the time we return home it would be about 11am. If we were lucky a neighbour would drive us home faster. As soon as we got home my grandma would put together a plate for all the neighbours and our job as kids was to deliver the food to them. We would come back with plates of food from our neighbours. This tradition I miss the most because it felt that our community was eating together even though we wouldn't be in the same house. Everyone had a plate of food to eat at Christmas and there was no such thing as a poor person during this time. It was a great time for sharing and receiving. We shared our wealth with each other and it felt good even though we had to wait so long to eat.

Time to open the presents. We already knew what we would get: mittens, gloves, socks, hats and scarves



were the norm. It was a gift that we would look forward to and I remember smelling the new items just to have that feel of new even for a little while because we would go out wearing our gifts and showing them to our friends who pretty much got the same thing but most likely in a different color. As kids, what we looked forward to at Christmas was to get oranges and bananas from Santa as they were not so easy to find during those times in Romania. If anyone received them as gifts for Christmas they were considered the luckiest people on Earth. The smell of an orange represents Christmas to me. To this day, the time that I enjoy oranges the most, is during Christmas as they remind me of the good times spent with family and the community during the cold winter days.

*by Doina Oncel*

## Book Review : Mansions of the Soul

Dr. R. Thomas Ashbrook writes in his book, *Mansions of the Soul*, "God wants you to experience His love in ways that are perfectly suited to you" .. however, not only are we uniquely created, but we are uniquely wounded." Stepping through the lives of Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Abigail and Michael we draw near to be blessed Trinity from spiritual birth to sanc-

tified intimacy. Step by Step there is a sense of guidance in Scripture, international prayer, listening, accountability, worship and journaling that is shared in this masterfully written book to encourage and inspire the reader. One's own desire is awakened and kindled toward a deeper relationship with Father God, Jesus the Christ and Holy Spirit. It is enriching experi-

ence reflecting on God's love, patience and persuasion as we let go and embrace maturity. We come to recognise God's profound love and wisdom in drawing unto His likeness with deep abiding trust. Read, ponder and be blessed.

*by Adele Hartwell*

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Incumbent - The Rev. Canon Dr. Murray Henderson  
Wardens - Sue Spiering & Peter Patterson  
Student Assistant from Wycliffe College - Sam Adams  
Missional Support Coordinator - Bruce Smith  
Treasurer - Jeff Coatsworth  
Music Director - Tim Elia  
Music Coordinator- Marabelle McTavish  
Audio Visual - Jim Townley-Smith & Ian Hunt  
Youth Ministry - Dane & Juanita Neufeld  
Children's Ministry - Barbara Patterson  
Administrative Staff - Luisa McKee & Muriel Yoshiki  
Custodians – Lorne & Mae Grimmer  
The Open Door Editor – Doina Oncel



## Building Update

If you looked at our new building structure on the outside you would think nothing has been done on it for a while. Appearances can be deceiving as there are many things that have to be accomplished before the windows can be installed. There is yet another delay in getting the windows in. The frames have arrived from Germany but there has to be some manufacturing done on them before they go in. In some sections the glass

will be one inch thick.

Meanwhile the heating units have been installed on the roof and in the food bank room, gas lines have been run and dry walling has begun in the basement .

Our goal is to get the Sunday School rooms done before Christmas. The outside patio will be completed shortly.

*by Gord Glandfield*



## November Messy Church



At November's Messy Church, we learned that Elijah's big mistake was in giving up and wanting to quit. He did have a rather difficult go of things—always having to run and hide for his life and all. In the end, he trusted God and went on to have many more adventures in his life with God's help. All of the children participated in the telling of Elijah's



work in bringing King Ahab back into following God's rules for good living. The most delicious craft was the raven, made of a Half Moon cake with a chocolate cookie head, legs of licorice and a candy corn

beak. There was even a candy eye. Other crafts stemmed from the desert sands, the wind, and God's whispering voice. Thanks and appreciation go to our guest cooks, Grace and Kathleen.

**The next Messy Church will be December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4pm-6pm.** We will again be using the Lawn Bowling clubhouse on Royal York Road. We hope to be back in our own building for the January session.

