

HONEY & LOCUST



St. John in the Wilderness Anglican Church,
Bright's Grove

Church Services

Merry Christmas!

What a marvelous Advent and start to Christmas we are having! Yes, omicron is here but we carefully got together at church for 4 services this past week. Sunday, December 26, Boxing Day we will have 8:30 am and 10:30 am Zoom services – please come join us in worship virtually. Reverend Amanda will send out Zoom links to the Boxing Day services on Christmas Day.

Adjacent is Lay Reader Nicole Grieve who gave a marvelous sermon on the 4th Sunday of Advent. Also pictured is Evan Iacobelli lighting the Advent Candles on the 3rd Sunday of Advent. Evan and sister Lanna read the Advent prayers, in the sanctuary Lay Reader Janice McAlpine, the Rev.

Amanda, Grandmother organist Susan Halliday and choir members Brenden Fraser and Ken Walker prayed with them.

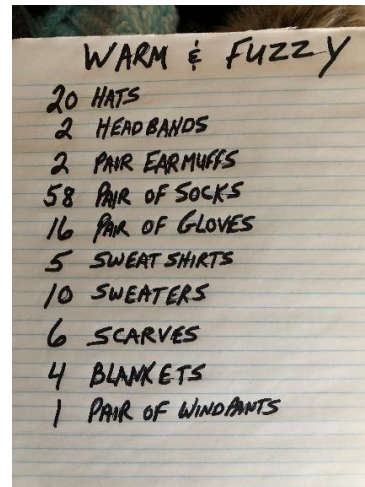




Above Brenda and Bob Clingersmith light one of the many candles lit at the December 21 Longest Night service. Below Lanna Iacobelli O Holy Night before the 4 pm Christmas Eve service.



WARM & FUZZY Campaign for the Inn of the Good Shepherd



Thanks to Nancy Mann, Karen Wilson, and Leslie Grieve of our ACW for organizing the parish for

donations to the Inn of the Good Shepherd Warm and Fuzzy Campaign. And, Thanks to

All of You in the parish who generously donated.

Karen Wilson is pictured adjacent with our donations as of December 19; she said: "I was blown away by how much was collected by our limited numbers allowed at church. I will be taking some very large bags to the Inn this week! The collection bin will remain in the vestibule in case we all get new stuff at Christmas and need to make space in our closets, haha! Well done everyone 😊".



Share Your Joy/Story in the Honey & Locust

If you have a paragraph or two you would like to publish in Honey & Locust, perhaps a hello/profile of a parish member, an update for a church/community group you are part of, a favourite project or memory or prayer you would like to share, a family update ...whatever is on your mind that might be meaningful/ joyous for your congregation to hear...please craft the words and send them to debwalker@cogeco.ca

Jean Dennis - Thank You and Blessings



Jean Dennis retired from our Altar Guild earlier this month. Jean reverently commented that she was "honoured to set The Lord's table and always felt his presence; it gave me a sense of peacefulness"

Jean has been one of the dedicated Altar Guild members who take turns setting the Altar for Sunday services. Once every six weeks she has set the Altar for the 10:30 am service, and one month in six she set the Altar for all the early services that month.

She also polished silver to keep it shiny and bright and helped with the flowers when

needed. She enjoyed her time doing Altar Guild duties in her quiet and efficient way. Jean recalled that Molly Birchmore recruited her to our Altar Guild over 20 years ago when Bruce Genge was our Rector.

Edna Braithwaite took Jean to St. John in the Wilderness in the spring of 1978; Jean has been attending ever since. She says she was well received at church and likes the "togetherness of people that care about people". Jean walks with Ann Hitchins, Edna, Pat Poland and others most mornings.

Jean and Bill Dennis have three children Wendy, Mark, and Mike who live in Sarnia. They have three granddaughters who live in Watford and Goderich; one, Meghan, is getting married in July Of 2022. They have a great-grandson in Watford. Jean grew up in Strathroy and Bill went to Kerwood Highschool.

THANK YOU, JEAN!

...Ann Hitchins & Deb Walker

Inn of the Good Shepherd - Thanks and Looking for Volunteers for January 1!

On December 4, you helped to feed 30+ people at The Inn – Thank you! Pictured on the next 2 pages are some of you who cooked and served.

I am looking for one more server for The Inn on Saturday, January 1 – start your year off serving a great cause!

On December 4, Betty Johnson, Aruna Anderson, Ingrid Schmid, Brian Bradford, Shaun Bourne, Nancy Mann, Sandra Lamoureux and Haley Walker served at The Inn. Pat Poland, Brenda and Bob Clingersmith, Sue Mayer, Leslie Grieve, Betty Johnson, and Sandra Fraser cooked. Norm Fraser, freshly shaven and with a big smile delivered Sandra's meat and potatoes and said hello to Sue Mayer.

Feeding some of Sarnia's hungry on the first Saturday evening of each month is one of our primary outreach programs. Our parish people are an integral part in The Inn's mission to provide services with dignity to local people who need food, shelter, and other essentials.





Bob and Brenda Clingersmith above.



Sue in her kitchen and Pat and Don Poland dropping off hot food.



Sue Mayer and Norm Fraser dropping off meatloaf and baked potatoes.



Such Smiles while feeding Sarnia's Hungry.

Thank you

...Deb

Merry Christmas!

It is Christmas, and I started asking young folk (who I taught Sunday School to over the years) for Merry Christmas pictures with a favourite memory...and then I added a few more along the way when I had my camera with me! Christmas love.



Mary Elizabeth, Brad, McKenna, and Camryn Carroll: McKenna fondly remembers being Mary in one of our Christmas pageants, Camryn loves opening presents. I sense if Mary could play hockey in the pageant, it would be even more fabulous for McKenna (a girl after my own heart).



Emily Grant with sons Lucas, Grant, and Benjamin Eddie...singing carols on my porch. A magical memory for all of us!



Ally Fraser with dad Phil, mum Tara, and Grand-mum Sandra. Ally lit the Advent

candle last week and read the prayers. Ally, "The Third Day of Christmas" will live in my mind as you and Lauren forever ❤️.



A tradition at Nana and Papa Clingersmith's house is to decorate the family Christmas tree. Lexi and Haley love doing this as there are decorations that their daddy got when he was a baby, decorations from when they were born and items that have been in the family for a long time. A most important part is when Papa puts the star on the top.

I agree, Brenda, and this year we put a driftwood star made by Nancy Mann on top of our tree. \$5 from the Honey and Craft sale this past summer at the church...but, truly, priceless!



Adjacent, Lanna and Evan Iacobelli say Merry Christmas to all. Two favourite memories at St. John in the Wilderness for them are making Chrismons

and learning the meaning behind them, as well as Friday night Christmas pageant practices! Below Dad Geoff, Mum Carolyn, Evan and Lanna are at our 4 pm Christmas Eve Pajama Mass.





Above Ron Jackson with daughter Joanne Coady and son-in-law Paul Coady wishing everyone a Merry Christmas on December 17. 62 years previous at Canon Davis church Ron and Joan took marriage vows. Ron said, with a twinkle in his eye, he put \$62.00 on the offering plate in celebration. Joan stayed home – Merry Christmas and Happy Anniversary Joan!

Adjacent is Morrie Sinkins with the flowers her family gave in loving memory of their mother and father Dr. Jim and Marnie Sinkins last Sunday. I did not ask Morrie for a favourite memory, but she often speaks of how she loved to bring her mother Marnie to church. Christmas blessings.

Durham Langille, adjacent, responded within minutes of getting a text request from me; he sent a selfie of him studying for his Christmas exams this year. Durham says, "the best thing about Christmas is spending time with family until the turkey comes out of the oven".





Harry, Lynn, Emma-Li, and Harrison Chadwick are pictured above earlier this year. Harry says their Christmas wish is that 2022 sees us all packed into our church, celebrating a great year together. Well said, Harry. Alleluia!

Below they are pictured at our Pajama Mass on Christmas Eve. Harrison, in his Leaf pajamas, placed Baby Jesus in the manger while we all sang "Happy Birthday Baby Jesus"



Merry Christmas from The Langille-Morgan Clan: Perrin, Peter, Durham, Eve, and Morgan. They helped us learn a Christmas song each year! Durham read the gospel at the Pajama Mass this Christmas Eve.





Merry Christmas from The Walker Clan: Ari, Ken, Jesse, Fran, Haley, Kenzie, and me (Deb). Nancy Mann, we love your driftwood star atop of our tree!



Harrison...
I too
believe it
IS the
year of
the Leafs!

...Deb

Lay Reader Janice Reflects



"The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death **LIGHT** has dawned."

~ Matthew 4:16 NRSV

Some Advent words have really pressed us to think. Others are pretty much what you expect in a list of Advent words. That's the category for today's highlighted word, don't you think? **Light**.

We're fortunate in the Canada with the way Christmas comes right smack dab in the middle of winter, close to the shortest, darkest day of the year. This is a story of light coming into the world. A great light. A light that shines in even the darkest of places and, maybe, especially in the darkest of places.

We all love the lights of Christmas. Twinkling lights of all kinds outside. The lights we put up on the tree and throughout the house. The candles we light in memory of a loved one or at a candlelight Communion service. All these lights, which light our darkness in different ways, point to the one who is light for us.

Hopefully, (and I'm sure you've already heard this this season or you will hear it before December 25th), hopefully, we find ways to allow that light to shine in us and

through us. What better purpose could we have in life besides allowing light to shine through us? Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let us pray:

In Canada at this time of year, God, it gets dark early. Dark outside and, for a lot of people, dark inside. Darkness is not always a bad thing, there is much we can learn and experience in the dark but we all know people who just can't see much light, who struggle to find their way. May they somehow find the light and walk in the light. May I find way to let your light shine through me. Amen.

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

Shine Jesus Shine!

Lord the light of Your love is shining

In the midst of the darkness, shining

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us

Set us free by the truth You now bring us

Shine on me

Shine on me.

[Shine Jesus Shine \(with lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

...Janice McAlpine

St. John in the Wilderness Mission and Vision

Our Mission

To Love God and to share His love with others.

Our Vision

To show a welcoming, visible sign of Christ in a growing community, and strive to meet the spiritual needs of everyone in a facility which is accessible, safe, environmentally friendly, and addresses the space requirements of all.

Yours in Faith,

Deb Walker, Peter Langille, Janice McAlpine,
and The Reverend Amanda Longmoore+
Wardens, Lay Reader, and Rector

"You will never look into the eyes of
someone God does not love."

Postscript:



When Deb asked if I had any pictures of Steve and I, I realized that we don't take pictures together very often! This is us back in late summer, we were having a picnic date at the Esli Dodge Conservation Area in Forest.

Both Steve and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. May the birth of Jesus, God's coming into the world, fill your hearts with peace and joy.

...Reverend Amanda