

# IN TOUCH

*St. Mark's Presbyterian Church Newsletter – 1 Greenland Rd., North York, ON M3C 1N1 416.444-3471*

Christmas  
Issue II – December, 2018



May a Christmas Star  
Shine into your heart and burn  
In your spirit bright  
May Jesus' peace bless you and  
Bring true joy to you.



*Merry Christmas*



## St. Mark's is a warm and wonderful community!

It's been about half a year now since becoming the new senior minister and despite my regular absence from the pulpit I've never felt more at home and welcome here. My family and I have started to cultivate wonderful friendships and have gotten to know the good people at St. Mark's very well. And we have been most impressed with the sense of closeness and community.

All this reminds me of the Advent and Christmas season. As we know, it gets dark here pretty early now because the earth is at its farthest tilt from the sun.

This is known as the winter solstice. But the religious significance of Christmas is that here in the northern hemisphere this is a time when the earth is at its closest point to the sun and its yearly orbit. That's right, the closest to the sun. This is called the perihelion. It's quite appropriate then that Christmas represents Jesus the Son of God and the gift of God being given to the world. In essence he comes to us and is now dwelling with us. This is the powerful and profound message of Christmas. God is no longer far out in the universe unreachable to human beings. With the New Covenant the Christ child is now at his closest living reality to us, the world. This is what we celebrate at this time of year: the astronomical fact of the "sun" coming close to the earth invites us to rejoice in the "Son" coming to us and dwelling among us. This is the message that has the potential to transform our thinking, our ethics, our relationships with others, and indeed the world. And this is the message of God's greatest gift--it is the gift of Christmas.

During Advent we reflect on God's gift--the promised One who will be called "Emmanuel, God with us." And we are called to recognize all people as brothers and sisters; that exemplifies the heart, love and ministry of Jesus as represented at Christmas. This is the transformation of the world promised in the Scriptures.

In Jesus, God came to be with us, to save us, dwell with us, and restore us. In love and humility we are invited as community to live as the beloved sons and daughters of God. This is the gift of Christmas.

I pray that we would all embrace this profound gift of God and live it out in our lives as we reflect the will and heart of the Great Giver.

In tribute to the late Eugene Peterson, author of The Message version of the bible, I am glad to share these words:

"Glory to God in the heavenly heights,  
Peace to all men and women on earth who please him."

Peace and grace to you all this blessed season.

Rev. Daniel W. Cho  
Senior Minister  
St. Mark's Presbyterian Church



# Christmas

Submitted by Jean Parkes

From: "Soul Edition, December, 2007" Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church

My body grows round with wonder;  
 my soul swells with thanksgiving.  
 For God has been so good to me;  
 God did not say, "She's just a girl."  
 Once I was a slip of a girl  
 but now I am a woman,  
 one who can bring forth new life.  
 In all generations, I am blessed.  
 How can anyone miss it —  
 this new life in me is divine.  
 It is holy.  
 God grants new life to all who  
 have not lost a child's wonder;  
 they will be born again, and again,  
 and again.  
 God watches over them;  
 God's fierce love fills predators  
 with sudden fear.  
 The miracle of birth levels our  
 human differences; tough men  
 become tenderly gentle,  
 learned professors blurt out baby  
 talk,  
 even politicians fall silent in awe.  
 But the small and helpless are wrapped  
 warmly in soft blankets;  
 they are held lovingly in caring arms;  
 they drink their fill with eyes closed.  
 The rich, for all their wealth and status,  
 can go suck lemons.  
 That is how God deals with all of God's faithful  
 people,  
 all who do not put their faith in themselves.  
 So God has always done,  
 so God will always do,  
 from Sarah's miracle, to mine.

*A paraphrase of the Magnificat (Luke 1: 47-55)*  
 From: *Everyday Psalms* by Jim Taylor,  
 Wood Lake Books, 1995

... Without letting hysterical historical  
 histrionics...get things all muddy, let's take the  
 story – the legend – as Luke gave it to us, and tell  
 it with relish. Ask a woman who's birthed a baby  
 to tell it – to imagine what it might feel like to  
 walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem – or even to  
 ride a donkey (which isn't mentioned in the Bible)  
 – when you are 8.5 months pregnant.



And what would it be like to birth a child  
 in a smelly barn, with rats and  
 cockroaches all over among the mangy  
 beasts. Forget the sanitized manger you  
 see on Christmas cards and on front lawn  
 crèches. "How silently, how silently, the  
 wondrous gift is given," goes the  
 Christmas hymn, but I hunch it wasn't  
 given silently at all. A young woman,  
 probably 16 or so years, giving birth to a  
 first child without any anesthetic, would  
 probably have let out more than a slight  
 moan.

Jesus came into the world the same way he left it –  
 in screaming, bloody, pain. Mary was there both  
 times as she was there in the shadows through  
 Jesus' entire ministry. Let's imagine ourselves  
 into her story so that she can give us the Christmas  
 gift of courage and faithfulness.

*Ralph Milton*  
 From: *Rumors #376, 2005-12-11*



"May God grant you always...  
 A sunbeam to warm you,  
 a moonbeam to charm you,  
 a sheltering Angel so nothing can harm you,  
 Laughter to cheer you.  
 Faithful friends near you."



## Holly Tea and Bazaar 2018

The 63rd annual Holly Tea and Bazaar, held on Saturday, November 10, was again very well supported by the congregation and the community. The Holly Tea provides a venue for people of the community to relax and get better acquainted with friends and neighbours while enjoying a gourmet lunch. This formula has been a long standing “winner” and continues to draw people for a good time.

The Baked Foods were reunited in the Calvin room with the arts and crafts and the knitting and sewing teams. The “Christmas Shop” collectibles and jewelry boutiques shared space together in the Nursery.

Thanks to all the contributors who supported the bazaar and tea. Once again we received beautiful arts and crafts, excellent quality hand sewing and knitting and tasty baked goods and preserves. This year some residents of St. Mark’s Court who have formed a craft group graciously provided some of the beautiful crafts for the bazaar. Thank you for your gifts of love.

Home cooking is very important for the success of our renowned Holly Tea. The “home made” soup was again a favourite and received praise from the contented customers!

The raffle offered many varied and interesting prizes. Special thanks to those who contributed gifts for the raffle: Carina Organics, a Canadian company which specializes in organic hair and skin products, again offered 5 gift packages. A dinner for 2 at Windfields Restaurant and Jack Astors were also prize items. A large bag of 100 Lindor chocolate balls was donated by an anonymous donor and a wine basket was donated by the Holly Bazaar Committee.

There were again 10 prize winners at the 2:00pm ticket draw presided over by our new minister, Rev Daniel Cho., The lucky winners were: Dick M°Intosh (chocolate), Edith Luther (Windfields),

Trevor Carew (Jack Astors) and Paul Skelton (wine basket). The five winners of Carina Organics baskets were Scarlett Wong, Julie Hogg, Tom Kingston, Jenny Yejin, and Val M°Pherson.

After many years, Lois Kerr asked to step down from her responsibilities of the raffle which she had done with her daughter, Deidre. Joy Ho-Yen agreed to take on this role. Thanks Lois and Deidre for your excellent work and thanks also to Joy for filling in and making the raffle a success this year.

Follow up dates of Sunday, November 11 and 25 (arts, crafts, sewing and knitting) concluded the Holly Bazaar. Coffee mugs were again donated to Portland Place. The revenue to date from the Holly Bazaar is just over \$5,500.

To the many volunteers who looked after the preparation, serving and cleanup for the Holly Tea as well as those who helped with the promotion, setup, selling, raffle, finances and cleanup for the Holly Bazaar, we thank you! It takes many people to make this project a great success!

Special thanks to the committee members: Glenna Finch, Louise Folkes, Diane Kingston, Anne M°Pherson, Mary Jane Mills, Merle Morrison, Brian and Jean Parkes.

The Planning Committee will meet in January to discuss the future of the Holly Bazaar and Tea.

***Bill M°Gowan***  
***Acting Convener for the***  
***Holly Bazaar Committee***



## Dickin Medal for Gallantry The Animals' VC *Submitted by Sue Beard*

On November 22<sup>nd</sup> "The 75th Anniversary of the Dickin Medal for Gallantry" will be held in London England. This animal bravery medal is the equivalent to the "Victoria Cross" for humans, and was awarded to Sergeant GANDER, the regimental mascot of the Royal Rifles of Canada. Gander was a gigantic Newfoundland Dog who fought side-by-side with his human comrades, in The Battle of Hong Kong December 7-25, 1941. Gander engaged the enemy on the battlefield, as well as saving a group of injured soldiers from a grenade explosion. Gander is the only Canadian war animal to receive this prestigious war medal.

Sue Beard will represent Canada at this ceremony at the Imperial War Museum in London. She is a member of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association, and author with Sergeant Major George MacDonell, of the book "A Dog Named GANDER".

Through books and seminars about The Battle of Hong Kong, Sue tells the story of Gander and the brave soldiers of the Royal Rifles of Canada, the Winnipeg Grenadiers, and Brigade Headquarters, known as "C-Force" additional Commonwealth troops and The Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps, in their courageous defence of the British Colony of Hong Kong.



## A Sad Ending And A Happy Beginning

It is with a sense of sadness that we announce the closing of the Don Mills "Golden K" Kiwanis Club which has been associated with and met at St. Mark's for the last 25 years. During that time, the Kiwanis Club has supported many community projects including, of course, St. Mark's church itself. We bought the current new dishwasher, we contributed to the old dishwasher, we have supported Footprints Day Camp since its inception, we have paid \$2,400 a year to the support of St. Mark's, and we have supported literally dozens of other community projects from children's soccer to the Food Bank, to North York Seniors, Don Mills Collegiate music scholarships, and many more.

Last June we had a barbeque and celebrated 25 years at St. Mark's. It was a grand celebration.

But since that time, the members have come to the undeniable realization that the average age of our group is now 84, thus the annual fundraising sales of cases of grapefruit and oranges is just no longer possible for us, physically. It was a tradition for 25 years, but we can no longer handle it. Our most sincere thanks to those who supported our fundraising these past 25 years.

In fact, it is now time for us to face the reality that we can no longer be a club that offers service to others in the community. We had 60 members just 5 years ago; as of September 1, we had 35. Some have left because of the demands of a service club, others, sadly, have passed on. The amount of community service that we performed in the past is just no longer feasible. And while we have had discussions about closing the club, the fact is that most of the men enjoy meeting once a week just to keep in touch and maintain fellowship and support, -- and those are definitely good things. Accordingly, we have given official notice that we will no longer operate as a Kiwanis Club, and we have formed the Don Mills Men's Club, meeting each Wednesday morning as previously. Our club goal is simply "social". We currently have 28 members. Our plan is to continue our support of the Kiwanis Music Festival with our volunteer time, but not financially. However, as we close down, we will be donating \$5,000 to the Kiwanis Music Festival, plus we expect to be able to make one last contribution to many of the various community projects that we have supported over the years, -- a legacy of which we are very proud.

As the Don Mills Men's Club, we are delighted to welcome men from St. Mark's or the wider Don Mills

community who are looking for companionship and fellowship once a week. We meet in the John Knox Hall every Wednesday from 9:30 – 11:30 am. While we are saddened by the reality that we can no longer operate as a service club, we are nonetheless very happy to announce this new beginning. We have a strong core of men who will continue their mutual support, and we hope that we will continue to receive the support of the St. Mark’s community in this social and supportive endeavour.

Bob Killey  
President, Don Mills Men’s Club  
bob@killey.ca



## The Role Of Music In Christian Faith

St. Augustine House newsletter Fall, 2018  
Submitted by George Heldt

We asked Dr. George Weckman of Athens, Ohio, a retired professor at Ohio University, an associate member of St. Augustine’s House, and a church musician for six decades, to comment on the role of music in the life of faith and he offered the following:

“Music and faith are both major and complex parts of human life. They are as important as food. Like food everyone has to experience them, but they do so in many different ways. So a discussion of the role of music in Christian faith has to be just a little taste of what can be involved.

“We all know that religious groups use pianos, guitars, drums, organs and many other instruments. Congregations can sing in unison or in harmony, amplified or quietly. Compositions can be ancient or contemporary, rhythmical or chanted. My emphasis on the variety of musical styles, instruments and voices leads me to suggest that there are many faiths to which they correspond. There may be some people who can enjoy and affirm all kinds of music, all these faiths, but I, like most others love some and dislike others. I suspect that some people choose or affirm their creeds because of the way they are

sung and celebrated musically. A congregation may share my theological commitments, but use music which bothers me, so that I am uncomfortable, un-inspired and unhappy. Likewise, however, some places make the kind of music I enjoy accompanied by theological positions I deplore.

“The joy of a good religious life is found in the situations where music and theological commitment come together. This has always been Lutheran for me, for all my eight decades. Others move from one tradition to another. The spirit of ecumenism or catholicity involves accepting most of these possibilities, while being at home in one’s own. I can recommend my musical and religious life with denigrating others.

“Music preferences derive from one’s background and family heritage, from peer values and the promotions of the music industry. Familiarity and association are key factors, leading in many directions from tap to the symphony hall, any of which can be related to our faith. My favourite of these forms of music is the hymn: music and words together. It is an old form of music-making, but still alive and active. It can be sung in unison, in harmony, with or without accompaniment, with or without variations which are often commentaries on the text. It can be a solo, but is best as a communal activity. Since the poetry and the music of the hymn are independent compositions (rarely done by the same person) each can be wedded to the other of the same meter.

“We blend with other believers over the centuries and over the world when we sing hymns. Singing with others celebrates the communion of saints.” Modern communication and technology lift us from the narrow confines of a national or linguistic hymnic bondage to ever broadening music experiences of many nations and languages.  
*Deo gratias.*





Enid West  
October, 2018

Sadly, St. Mark's were not informed that Enid had passed away until very recently. Enid was a faithful member of St. Mark's and will be missed by those who knew her.

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In Remembrance....

Gordon Thomson  
December, 2017

May he rest in peace!

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### Upcoming Events

#### Kids' Zone

January 18, 2019

(Elementary schools only)

February 15, 2019

(Board-wide PA day)

9am-4pm

Extended care with pre-arrangement available

8am-9am and 4pm-6pm

#### Cupid's Lunch

Saturday, February 9, 2019

Watch for further details

## Year End Giving

**DEADLINE FOR THE 2018 TAX YEAR IS  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2018**

Before the end of December your 2019 offering envelopes may be picked up from the welcome centre.

**Please Note: All envelope boxes are set out in alphabetical order.**

**Once you receive your envelopes, PLEASE do not use them until January, 2019.**

For the first 2-3 weeks of use it is important that you write your full name on the envelope.

If a friend or neighbour are unable to attend on Sundays, please be so kind as to deliver their envelopes for them, it would be a great help.

If you currently do not use envelopes, please contact the church office or speak to one of the ushering team who will assign a set for you. Keep in mind that having donation envelopes ensures an accurate tax receipt at the end of the year.

Thank you!



## St. Mark's Telephone Directory

Plans are being made for a New Year distribution of the updated telephone directory

*Thank you for your patience!*





# Festive Calendar 2018

*An Angel Says....  
Christmas began in the  
heart of God. It is complete only when  
it reaches the human heart.*

**Advent II**  
**10:30am**

**Candle Of Peace**  
**Sunday, December 9**  
**White Gift Sunday**

We will be collecting White Gifts to support our Presbytery's ARISE ministry, led by Rev. Deb, for young women. Items include: individually wrapped wet-naps, bottled hand sanitizers, safety pins, Band-Aids, small Kleenex packages, hair elastics, feminine hygiene products, chap-stick, gum, chocolate bars, and hand-warmers. Thank you for your generosity.

**4:30pm**



**Christmas Fanfare**

An hour of special music featuring the combined choirs of St. Mark's and Myung Sung Presbyterian Churches. A Pot-Luck Supper will follow in the John Knox Hall.



**2:00pm**

**Afternoon Holy Communion**

**Wednesday, December 12**  
**John Knox Hall**

The celebration of Holy Communion, followed by a time of fellowship and Christmas refreshment served. All are welcome.



**Advent III**  
**10:30am**

**Candle Of Joy**  
**Sunday, December 16**

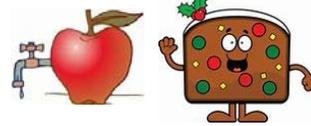
Service of worship with special Advent & Christmas music.



## **Christmas Fellowship Hour Following Worship**

### **Refreshments**

Join us in the John Knox Hall following the service for a special fellowship hour hosted by members of St. Mark's Session.



## **Solace Service & Anointing**

**7:30pm**

**Wednesday, December 19**

A service of inner healing, meditation, music and prayer for those who find Christmas celebration a bit of a challenge.



**Advent IV**  
**10:30am**

**Candle Of Love**  
**Sunday, December 23**



## **Christmas Pageant**



**Christmas Eve**  
**7:30pm**

**Christ Candle**  
**Monday, December 24**

**Candlelight Service (candles provided)**



**10:30am**

**First Sunday After Christmas**  
**Sunday, December 30**

Join us as we sing carols and celebrate the gift of the Christ child in a special worship service.



## **Notes.....**

Nursery care for children 2 years and under, children, and youth programs provided each Sunday.



**Poinsettia order deadline will be  
Sunday, December 16, 2018**

# KIDS' KLIPS



## Christian Christmas Word Find



### Jesus Is The Reason

D	U	S	E	D	L	O	G	A	L	M	E	S	S	I	A	H
R	M	H	B	R	L	Y	J	C	O	R	N	F	N	O	E	L
O	Y	E	P	E	A	C	E	O	N	E	A	R	T	H	R	E
L	R	P	H	C	O	F	S	Y	B	J	W	C	K	I	N	G
E	R	H	E	E	T	M	U	O	A	O	D	N	W	J	G	N
H	H	E	Y	S	L	R	S	J	P	I	H	S	R	O	W	A
T	K	R	J	A	L	H	M	T	V	C	H	R	I	S	T	S
T	N	D	L	L	I	D	T	A	P	E	M	A	Y	E	A	A
S	A	S	K	V	W	C	D	E	L	B	A	T	S	P	R	V
I	P	O	W	E	D	F	A	R	B	J	O	S	N	H	M	I
R	R	E	B	U	O	N	F	G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S	O
H	G	I	H	N	O	D	O	G	O	T	Y	R	O	L	G	R
C	S	F	W	A	G	Y	P	R	O	P	H	E	C	Y	M	E
S	C	O	Y	M	E	L	J	K	S	A	D	T	Y	L	R	G
I	T	W	B	M	U	A	I	N	C	E	N	S	E	R	U	N
E	L	P	O	E	P	L	L	A	R	O	F	A	Q	A	A	A
H	N	P	A	M	R	A	E	B	Q	D	N	E	I	G	A	M

Jesus  
 Angel  
 Rejoice  
 Magi  
 Messiah  
 Stable

Manger  
 Noel  
 Joseph  
 Savior  
 Incense  
 King

Gold  
 Worship  
 Myrrh  
 Mary  
 Emmanuel  
 Christ

Prophecy  
 Bethlehem  
 Good News  
 Shepherds  
 Great Joy  
 Eastern Star

He Is Christ The Lord  
 Glory To God On High  
 Town Of David  
 Peace On Earth  
 Good Will To All  
 For All People