

OUR VISION STATEMENT

The Diocese of Moosonee – called by God to live and proclaim the Gospel



Emma Brooks and Emma Laiho of the 2nd South Porcupine Girl Guides served tea and coffee at St. Paul's Christmas tea and bazaar.

Girl Guides at St. Paul's

Article by Lorraine Laiho, Lay Reader, St. Paul's Anglican Church, South Porcupine.

St. Paul's Anglican Church in South Porcupine formed a new relationship with a great group of people in the fall of 2015. The South Porcupine Girl Guides and 1st South Porcupine Pathfinders and Rangers started meeting in the church hall. Every Tuesday during the school year, the young ladies fill the hall with laughter and fun.

The girls range in age from 9 to 17 years of age. The programming that they have is based on teaching the girls many different skills. They do the basic baking and crafting that one would expect, but they have also branched out to have members of the community speak about careers for women. Guest speakers have spoken to the girls about jobs in welding, plumbing, the Ministry of Natural Resources, and jobs in the financial sector. The young ladies are always ea-

ger to hear from others to help themselves broaden their horizons.

The guides take on outreach programmes each year. In 2015, the groups planted crops in the community gardens established by St. Paul's Anglican Church just outside the church building. The year, the harvest went to the Spruce Hill Lodge - a seniors' residence in South Porcupine. In the fall of 2016, the young ladies harvested again and brought the fruits of their labour to the South Porcupine Food Bank. They were able to see how they were going to be of assistance to families in need and just in time for Thanksgiving! In addition, the girls also assist with the teas and dinners which are held in St. Paul's. They feel that it is only right to help out their hosts who provide them with such a wonderful space in which to meet. The girls always enjoy meeting and



chatting with the people who come to these gatherings, and the community is always happy to see them assisting too.

This past spring the Pathfinders and Rangers went to a Girl Guide and

See "Canadian Girls" page 2

Floor Hockey & Jesus

Article by the Reverend Phelan Scanlon, St. John's, Foleyet, ON



St. Nicholas interrupted a floor hockey game but the children didn't mind - particularly when the pizza arrived.

The Church quite rightly struggles with the question, "how do we reach people outside our congregations?" When I was a young and green incumbent in a small parish in Peterborough 26 years ago, I was perplexed by this question. One day I was flipping through my day book and noticing all those names and words in dark print. Saints' Days such as All Saints, special days of penitence such as Ash Wednesday stared me in the face. "Why don't we 'do' these Holy Days more often?", I exclaimed to myself. "Why can't we be more like the Roman Catholics and push the Church Year?" It would mean more opportunities to get people out to church. It would give people more options if they were away on weekends. After all, we have a Church Year for a reason. It affords us Christmas and Easter so why don't we use it all the time? It can't miss ... so I thought.

A service was planned for All Saints at 7:00 p.m. No one showed up. Great. Disappointed and somewhat wounded, I remembered the night before -

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Canadian Girls Caring for & Helping Others from page 1



The President of the South Porcupine Food Bank, Richard Bouvier, happily received the good food grown by the girl guides on behalf of people in need in the Timmins area.



Isabella Brooks and Ava Venne were guides who helped at the Christmas tea.

Scouting Rendezvous on Manitoulin Island in Northern Ontario. A yard sale and a cookie sale were held to help the group to raise the necessary funds.

One young woman of St. Paul's parish, Emma Laiho, enjoys guides for a number of reasons: "I enjoy girl guides because it allows me to help out in the community on a greater scale than I could as an individual. I get to learn new things, and I've created some new friendships with people whom I wouldn't have met if it were not for guides. I have achieved my Canada Cord through programming since

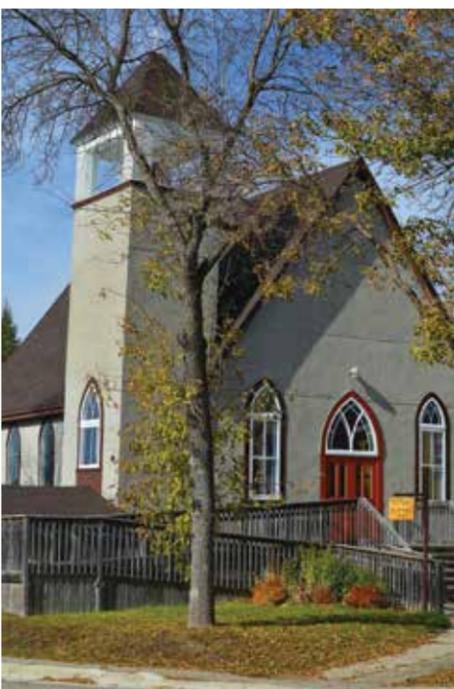
I was twelve. This is a huge achievement and it's the highest award in Pathfinders. I'm now working towards the Commissioner's Award, which is the highest award overall for Rangers. These awards make me proud to know that I have grown so much over the years to accomplish these goals." Lorraine Laiho, Emma's mother, is also a leader with the two groups. "I enjoy meeting with the kids on Tuesday nights. It's always a lot of fun to be able to expand their horizons and to assist with the other leaders to get the kids to step outside of their comfort

zones. We get them to try things that they might not think they are capable of. My daughter has grown so much as an individual over the past few years. She has taken on many leadership roles in assisting the younger girls in the group and she has become very confident and proficient with many leadership roles because of it. This is a wonderful experience for me as well."

The Guides, Pathfinders, and Rangers are very happy to call St. Paul's home and they hope that this partnership continues for many years to come.

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Centennial Celebrations in Iroquois Falls



St. Mark's Anglican Church, Iroquois Falls, is set to celebrate its centennial.

Article by the Reverend Patricia Dorland, St. Mark's, Iroquois Falls, ON.

One hundred years is not a long time in the European experience, but in Northern Ontario, one hundred years ago, the area around the Watershed was just opening up to pioneer families. People from Europe and the United Kingdom emigrated to Canada looking for work or a way to begin a new stage of their lives. They went to the forests, the mines, and the railways to gain employment or they applied for Canadian land grants. Many people dreamt of working the land into productive farms.

The Anglican parishes of Cochrane and Timmins have celebrated their 100th anniversaries and now the Parish of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Iro-

quois Falls is planning to celebrate their commemorative date on the week of April 28-30, 2017. As may be expected, the parish's history is intertwined with the Abitibi Pulp and Paper Company as it was the town's main employer. Company employees from all departments were also members of the Church of England in Canada, the Anglican Church's name at that time. The town of Iroquois Falls as a whole was made up of people from: Italy, Poland, the Ukraine, Finland, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, and French Canadians from eastern Canada, as well as, people of Jewish background, and undoubtedly many other countries not listed here. In this

See "St. Mark's Celebrates" page 3

St. Nicholas & Floor Hockey from page 1

Hallowe'en - All Saints Eve. I had no one out to the service but I had over 30 visitors, both adults and children, the night before. Why can't I get that kind of turnout for a church service? It's simple. People won't come to just another service that is indistinguishable from Sunday morning. It needs to be fun. It needs to be different. It all made perfect sense to me. The Church celebrates Saints' Days because they are feasts involving food, fellowship, laughter, and activity - as well as worship. Days of fasting worked in the Church because they offered a real spiritual and moral challenge to the participants. This approach could work.

Armed with my new insights, I sought the opinions of parishioners and colleagues. These were most constructive. The other clergy reminded me of the great Holy Day youth events run by the Reverend Philip Poole when he was rector of Aurora. I could have kicked myself. I had read about those events in *The Anglican*. Of course! The template was there all along. Now I knew what I was going to do.

St. Nicholas' Day was coming up on December 6th. Some basic principles had to be front and centre. The event had to be short. No more than an hour and fifteen minutes. With the attention span of children being shorter than it was in my day (and even shorter in an age of digitalized images and television shows which change camera angles every 1.2 seconds) there's no way I want to drag it out. Furthermore, I did not want to do all the extra programming work that would be required for the longer events (we had children's events that lasted 3-6 hours in York Mills). Short, snappy, focused events were needed to keep them active every minute and to leave them wanting more. In addition to being brief, the event had to have movement, games, and humour. Moreover, it had to be based on wor-



St. Nicholas, children of Pinecrest Public School, St. Matthew's, and the Living-Room paused between the floor hockey game and the worship service.

ship and faith. The story of St. Nicholas would be explained and worship would be brief and to the point. There would be a Eucharist no longer than 15 minutes (but, in reality, the entire event was in a Eucharistic context) in which kids would get to mention in prayer anyone they wanted. It would be more of a dialogue than a service.

It would also have to be real. The real Santa Claus would be discovered; St. Nicholas, the Bishop of Myra, and his Christian charity would have to figure prominently. The adult helpers and I would explain that Santa Claus is really St. Nicholas and that he is a very kind and generous follower of Jesus who just happens to be my boss in the Church. Each child was asked to bring an item of food for the food bank because St. Nicholas always gave to those in need. That's a lot to take in: Nicholas, communion, games, fun, and food (pizza, what is a feast without food?) Even St. Nicholas would make an appearance with a big cross on his Santa hat to mark him as a bishop.

I found a St. Nick in the parish; I delegated the pizza issue; the altar guild set up the communion down-

stairs; volunteers brought craft supplies; and all that was left was to have the event. I had expected about eight children. There were, in fact, forty young people and sixty adults. I had gone from zero to a hundred in a month. I've been doing those services ever since but never with those numbers. That night, on December 6th in Peterborough, St. Nicholas looked at his list and said, "I don't see your name on this list ---Phelan." People howled with laughter and so did I.

There are truly some great days in our Christian calendar that really help our youth to understand their faith. St. Nicholas, Candlemas, Ash Wednesday (no pizza here but they can make pretzels), Easter Season, Ascension (balloons going up and up), St. Michael and the Dragon, All Saints, and many others can all serve that purpose. A time of fellowship based upon: a thematic craft or game, a simple floor hockey game with expectations and rules based on Christian ideals can all lead to a meaningful service. One can add food, music and worship all within an hour. It takes a great deal of planning and it's over just like that. Hopefully, the lessons of these events

will remain etched in the minds of all who participate. Most would say that the real lesson with such days is that worship need not be stiff and dull. Christians can have fun being together; priests are human, and worship is for all ages. Faith has implications beyond Sundays and church building.

The best compliment that I have ever received from a child commenting on one of these days was from a boy about ten who said, "I didn't know God mattered before." That's why the Church matters.

This past St. Nicholas Day was celebrated at Pinecrest Public School in Timmins. Some students who also attend St. Matthew's Cathedral and some others who come to the LivingRoom in Schumacher played floor hockey in the school gym with Reverend Greg Gilson, several parents, and I. Then St. Nicholas put in an appearance just in time to correct me as I was talking with the students about St. Nick! The students loved it and laughed when I was caught out. Shortly after starting the service of worship, the pizza delivery man arrived and joined in our prayers before leaving the pizza for the eager young worshippers. Our Church calendar continues to work and to resonate with both the young and the mature.



The Reverend Phelan Scanlon conducted the Eucharistic Service in the gym.

St. Mark's Celebrates from page 2



way it was not so different from many other pioneer communities in the area.

Life was difficult at this time and long hours of work were necessary if one were to survive the long, cold winters. Moreover, the wild fires that broke out, the incessant bugs which were inescapable, and mud clogged roads combined to make daily difficulties for the early pioneer families. Life, however, was rich in the strong connections of family and community. People helped each other, made time for tea, and gathered

to play music and sing. Whole families also came together to worship God, to teach children Christian discipleship and to faithfully support each other in times of joy and in times of sadness.

Many of the pioneer families are now faded memories with called up names only bringing a vague familiarity. But these are the faith filled people who will be honoured as we all gather as the whole community of saints on April 29th and 30th of 2017. We are inviting all who have a story to share, or a mem-

ory to re-ignite, or a desire to reconnect with friends to our 100th Anniversary Celebration. The weekend will include many varied elements which will appeal to guests, visitors, and the broader community of Iroquois Falls. The Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Archbishop Colin Johnson, and Bishop Tom Corston will be joining us as our special guests and preside at the various functions.

Come and join us on this joyous occasion!



Tea for Two ... or Three

Article by Valerie Gilson, St. Matthew's Cathedral, Timmins, ON

St. John's Lutheran, St. Matthew's Cathedral, and St. Paul's Anglican Church all celebrated Christmas in November with a tea.

On Saturday, November 6th, St. Paul's Anglican in South Porcupine held their annual Christmas Tea and Bake Sale. People lined up at the doors long before opening time to scoop up the delicious cookies and treats.

The workers of St. Paul's begin in October to make the ever popular meat pies, and then quickly follow up with the baking of their special short bread cookies. For over 40 years now, they've been making thousands of cookies; it is mind boggling how many cookies they still make, though the workers are fewer than they were 40 years ago. If a certain table didn't have a mind of its own and collapsed itself when it was holding cookies which were cooling then there would have been even more! Cookies are packaged in special boxes and tins ready for gift giving. Along with all the loaves, square, breads, candy, and other fancy and assorted cookies and the favourite of Fr. Greg - butter tarts - they certainly put on a spread that is snapped up in no time.

The tea is poured by the local Brownies, Girl Guides, and Path Finders and the guests serve themselves with an assortment of finger sandwiches and



Jasmine Lafreniere and Paige & Lori McCord were three of the young ladies who served tea and coffee at St. Matthew's Christmas Tea.

goodies of every description and for every taste ... including peanut butter and banana rollups; yum!

Next up for a cuppa, just a few blocks away is St. John's Lutheran on Saturday, November 12th. St. John's held a 'new to you' sale along with their tea and bake sale. I was able to buy a number of story and craft books for our Sunday School which will be greatly enjoyed by the children. Vases, candles, decorations, fabric, rugs, books, china ware - too many lovely and necessary things to mention were quickly bought

so we could move on to the delicious luncheon.

Hot homemade soup is always a blessing on a cold winter day but it's not often found at a Christmas tea; St. John's certainly did not disappoint. Along with their various sandwiches, tarts, pies, and squares you couldn't possibly go hungry. As all of our churches are, St. John's group are also great bakers. Breads, cookies, tarts, and squares were there to be added to your Christmas fare.

One interesting point of note was

the entrance fee of socks to supply the local Yo! Mobile. The Yo! Mobile is a mobile shelter (van) that welcomes the homeless and the cold to sit inside for warmth and to have a light meal. The clients are offered new socks, mitts, and occasionally blankets to keep them warm. What a great idea from St. John's to think of asking their tea guests to bring socks. I'm sure the large box of socks gathered that day was a welcome addition for the Yo!

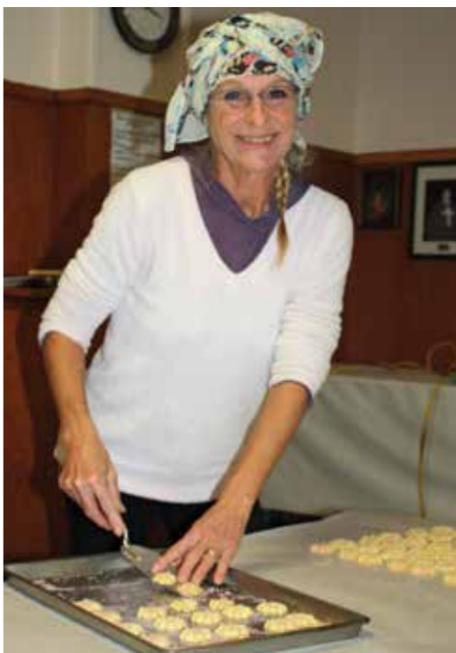
Last, but not least, was the tea held at St. Matthew's Cathedral on Saturday, November 26th. It is always amazing how many different ideas and themes can be found at a Christmas tea.

For the second year, St. Matthew's Poinsettia Tea offered a silent auction as part of their annual celebration. The silent auction consists of items donated by local businesses and members or friends of the congregation. Jewelry, purses, glassware, fabulous wreaths, quilted and clothing, crocheted or knit items, china - you name it, even an on site, home cooked, gourmet meal for eight; what an amazing assortment of items up for auction. Bidding is done via writing your bid on the auction sheet. This adds a bit of friendly competition and the entire afternoon is a lot of fun; the winners are happy and the good natured losers congratulate them.

The bake table is another beauty to behold ... candy, very fancy decorated cookies, breads, squares; you name it; it is there. The Sunday School always makes their contribution. This year, they made tiny Christmas tree decorations to sell; they were a big hit.

And lunch, there were: sandwiches, rollups, cheese, and sweets of every kind and, of course, tea. This year a special treat was added with live music provided by members of St. Matthew's choir and the local symphony. We were treated to music from the: flute, clarinet, recorder, and keyboard. Delicious music blended with lunch to produce both excitement and fun.

Advent wouldn't start the same, and Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas with tea!



Brenda Margrit was one of many volunteers who helped to bake cookies.



Talented parishioners from St. Matthew's provided lovely music at the Christmas tea.

PWRDF Needs All of Us Article by the Reverend Valerie Issac, St. Mark's Kapuskasing, ON.



Support Development

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

www.pwrdf.org



As the diocesan representative to the National Gathering of the PWRDF, I often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work some of my colleagues end up doing until I realize that all of us do a great deal of work. One of the most important tasks each parish representative has is to report back to the diocesan representative some of the activities that you have done throughout the year. It's the reporting back that lets PWRDF know how their national support is being used. It's also a way to hear back from the National Gathering as to how and where our funds are used.

See "Help PWRDF" page 5

At the last gathering in Toronto in early November, one of the major projects that was focused upon was that of the solar suitcase. We were told about the importance of being able to provide light for remote villages that provide birthing facilities. We were also told that as one of the suitcases



Happy Landings in the North!

Article by the Reverend Phelan Scanlon,
St. John's, Foleyet, ON

In early December, I got the word that I was to be sent to the combined Anglican and United parishes of Val D'Or and Wemindji. I was to drive to Val D'Or; stay the night at the excellent L'Escal Hotel; fly to Waskaganish in the morning; and then fly on to Wemindji on the 23rd to prepare for an evening Christmas Eucharist. Just the day before I found out that I had to do a baptism in Wemindji too. Now I had never done a baptism on Christmas Eve but I thought the birth of baby Jesus was a reasonable time to proceed. All these arrangements, by the way, were precipitated by the departure of the Reverends Rod and Lisa BrantFrancis in October. When I arrived in Wemindji, I thought of how difficult it may have been for Rod and Lisa to leave as it is a beautiful place with a contemporary church building and a lovely rectory.

After a brief and efficient ride from the airport and the welcome by John Mark and armed only with a BAS, a Bible and some M&M's, I went to the church and planned things out for the evening. Then I nodded off. It's pretty bad when your own sermon puts you to sleep! But a couple of candies later I was fine and found myself having a wonderful conversation with prospective Lay Readers, Dina and Frances. Frances later brought me a tray of food. I think that it was moose ... and I don't mean chocolate.

At 7:00 p.m. a good crowd began to roll in including lots of children who were bouncing off the walls. "Wonderful," I thought to myself. It had been a good decision to abbreviate the service and make sure that I followed Bishop Tom's advice to "plan a children's time." I wasn't sure if the 'children's time' was for me or for them. Whatever the case, I went through my Christmas check-list with the children; that is, a series of questions about what Christmas is or isn't:

"Is Christmas about this?", I asked - putting a wrapped box in a girl's hand. "No!" the kids intoned. "Is it about being a silly one-antlered reindeer?" as I put a broken hairpiece on her. "NO!" - these children seemed pretty smart. It went on like that with bobbles, wrapping paper, Santa's hat, a stocking for the fireplace. Every time the children said. "No".

Then I



did the part that I like best. I took a fried chicken bucket and stuck it on the oldest boy's head. "Is it about the Christmas Beast Feast?" That one got laughs. Then we talked about the beauty and wonder of God coming to be with us all. That took us to the baptism at which time I realized that I had misplaced my BAS. A priest without his book! So, I didn't bother. I looked at: the parents, the godparents, and the baby girl, and then did the promises from memory. At one point in time, I simply said, "We are talking about the love of God in Jesus tonight. Do you

want your daughter to know of this same love? To share it? To return it? To proclaim it?" I could see they were sincere. And so we baptized Gracelyne while we celebrated the birth in time of the timeless Son of God. Frances and Dinah did their parts. Everyone sang and prayed. We had at least a hundred people and it was a good night.

The next day it was John Mark's taxi

not figure out the ticket system at the exit gate, used her card for me. It's always interesting when you go to an unfamiliar church at night. You have no idea where you are. There was a huge church near the same address as our parish and I thought, "Is that it? It's too big. I can't do a service there." You can see that I've been in small parishes for a while. Furthermore, the steps had not been shovelled. What's going on here? Then I found the right church. It was small but I knew it was the right one because the steps were shovelled. You see what clergy have to think through? And you always wonder where to park. All these things running through our heads ... and people wonder why our sermons aren't always brilliant. Well, Kathleen and her family showed up and got the show on the road. It is a lovely church, cosy and warm. And, like Wemindji, beautifully decorated. I did the same kind of sermon with the children in a full church ... a nice feeling. The music was enchantingly beautiful as Kathleen's daughter and son-in-law provided piano, violin, and vocals. They offered a wonderful version of 'Ave Maria' after the sermon. As up North, we turned down the lights and sang 'Silent Night'. I never get tired of that. And so it was over. A blur. A Holy blur.

service that allowed me to get to Air Creebec and on to Christmas Eve at Val D'Or by way of Chisasibi and Waskaganish. This route made me more circuitous than Santa Claus. The landing in Waskaganish was so rough that I really thought that we were in trouble. The pilot told me afterwards that, "It was nothing." Nothing? Then why do I have the imprint of the plane's carpet in my temple?

I drove directly from the airport to the Anglican/United church pastored by the Reverend Cliff Dee after a kind flight attendant, seeing that I could

Off to the hotel to stick the diocese with the biggest room service bill they have ever seen, I thought. It was not to be. The kitchen was closed. But some delivery guy from a chicken outfit was there at the hotel desk making a delivery. "You", I called out to him, "Merry Christmas, and bring me some chicken!" He was unfazed. I pointed to a box near him. "I want whatever is in there", I demanded. "That's my laundry," came the laconic reply. "Oh, well, you can keep that." In time, I got my chicken. And then it was time for me to drive back to Timmins - on Christmas Day.

Help PWRDF to Help Others *continued from page 4.*

was being installed, a mother delivered her child in the dark and that the child was in distress. A doctor was part of the installation team and was able to resuscitate the infant. The light provided that extra security for a child born in poverty. This was one of the many success stories that have been

provided to us and as a diocesan representative I am honoured to be a part of this great cause that began here in Canada out of the Springhill, Nova Scotia tragedy.

I implore each one of you to let me know how you use the tools that PWRDF provides and what pro-

grammes or events you put on in your community so that I can provide that information to the lead team. As I continue to learn and grow in this role, I realize just how far and wide PWRDF reaches and how much of a help it is and that all of us are to others around the world and here at home.



Easter Message: the Fear & the Love Article by Archbishop Colin Johnson, Diocese of Moosonee

Fear motivates us to do many things. They often fall into the fight-flight pattern. We turn around and put up strong resistance, sometimes more than we thought that we were capable of. Other times we run away not simply in cowardliness but as an act of self protection. And sometimes fear just freezes us in our tracks. We have all experienced fear, and I suspect, we have all experienced the fight-flight-freeze syndrome.

In the Gospels, we see that pattern many times. The disciples run away when Jesus is betrayed. One of them picks up a sword and cuts off the ear of a servant before running. Earlier, unable to face the prospect of what is about to take place, they fall asleep - another way to run and hide. Peter, protecting him-

self, denies that he knows Jesus, and the rooster crows "Betrayer! Betrayer!" The soldiers guarding Jesus' tomb are paralyzed with fear when the great rock is rolled away. Why wouldn't they? They had participated in killing him and now feared his retribution. Even after hearing that he had been raised, the disciples hide out behind locked doors 'for fear'. Thomas went even further away.

Later, the new Christians were terrified of their persecutor Saul. His sudden conversion frightened him and Ananias who was sent by the Spirit to heal Saul. The young Christian community did not trust Saul who had to be brought in, introduced and vouched for by Barnabas.

In all of these situations, there is a word of the Lord: "Fear not!" That command (or is it an invitation?) is not only spoken but also put into flesh - there is a promise: "I am with you." Jesus is with us for healing not judgement, comfort and challenge, not punishment. On the cross, Jesus does not curse and condemn the soldiers and the high priests; he prays. He offers forgiveness to the people watching (and themselves cursing) at the foot of the cross. He looks with compassion on his mother and the blessed disciple, and forms a new community.

Raised from the dead, Jesus comforts Mary Magdalene in the Garden; forgives and re-commissions Peter; strengthens and empowers the frightened disciples; gives the information Thomas needs to overcome his doubt; and calls to his service Saul, soon to be renamed Paul, the old enemy of the faith. Later he calls Peter to baptize and welcome as Jesus' followers, the centurion, Cornelius, who surely was at the crucifixion.

What do we make of this, "Fear not"? The opening chapters of the first book of the Bible, "Genesis" tell the story of the betrayal of God's commandment by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We call it "The Fall of Creation", the first sin of humanity, who choose to follow our own path rather than God's. The story tells us that after they ate the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve hid themselves from God who was searching for them because they were afraid. Indeed, there were consequences for their actions BUT God did not stop loving and caring for them. In Eucharistic Prayer 1 in the BAS, we pray to God saying, "When we fell away from you in sin, you did not cease to care for us, but opened a path of salvation for all people."

In Eucharistic Prayer 4, we say to God, "We turn against you, and betray your trust; and we turn against one another. Again and again you call us to return. Through the prophets and sages you reveal your righteous lay. In the fullness of time you sent your Son, born of a woman, to be our Saviour ... by his death he opened to us the way of freedom and peace.

Joy Kogawa, a famous Canadian-Japanese author who is also an Anglican, write in her most recent book, Gently to Nagasaki, "For me, the big difference between Peter's betrayal and the betrayal of Judas Iscariot is the early-rising rooster, its feet rooted in the night, its voice in the morning crying good news. Take heart betrayer! You can make amends. You can be forgiven."

Our fears turn us away from God and from one another - in fight, in flight, in paralysis. We can express it in anger or addiction or indifference or acting out. We may think we are unworthy, or that we are too small to make a difference. Jesus, the whole of him: his birth, life, death, and resurrection, is God's invitation to fear not, and his continuing promise to be with us always so we can learn to fear not as we grow in love following him and serving one another in forgiveness and love.



'Twas the Month Before Christmas at Holy Trinity, Cochrane

Article by Archdeacon Deborah Lonergan-Freake, Diocese of Moosonee.

'Twas the month before Christmas, when all through the parish, every creature was stirring, even the mouse - well two of them actually. The greens were hung by the windows with care. Nativity scenes began to appear in hopes that the Christ child would soon be there.

The children were learning to chime the Psalms, while visions of decorating sugar cookies for seniors danced in their heads and lay readers, deacons, Sunday School teacher, priest and choir members in their robes had just settled down for a long winter's list of activities.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, it was Christmas Cheer with hot apple cider and cookies to offer. Down in the hall there arose such laughter, we sprang to attention to see what was created at Messy Church Christmas Celebration. Away to the Polar Bear Habitat we flew like a flash. The choir was singing, 'bring joy and good cheer'; it was so much fun they continued into town bringing Christmas Carols to shut-ins and



Lay Readers James Lonergan-Freake and Kim Skidmore served hot cider and cookies to the brave, chilled people of Cochrane who passed the church's door.

seniors wherever they were found.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow on the choristers on the church steps, gave lustre to the sparkling ice candles. To wondering eyes would appear the cast of A Christmas Carol bringing Dickens to life amidst the Christmas music and voices of the volunteers. There were no reindeer in sight but the Holy

Trinity sheep wandered in the town bringing delight, the Christmas story and an invitation to Church.

With the ladies in the lead, there were bazaars and a big dinner -the Taste of Tuscany. The Sunday School worked hard and presented a pageant; they baked and sold cookies so that 4 PWRDF goats could be purchased. Even the men got on the sleigh and

4 more goats were bought for Tanzania. There was even a tree decorated with blessing balls in thanksgiving for God's gifts.

Amidst mid-week and Sunday Advent services with candles lit each week, a Bible study and many other activities too numerous to mention were provided. With funds and food raised for the Food Bank and gifts for the Women's and Men's shelters, the folks at Holy Trinity rushed about like a hurricane, bringing love and laughter wherever they went.

And in a twinkling, once more we heard the angel saying: "I bring you good news of great joy for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." The prancing of children and celebrating of adults was a sign that the holy infant had once more arrived.

He spoke not a word, for his work has just started. But for the tired folk of Holy Trinity, a rest is in order. But as they went to their homes to continue the holy night, I heard them exclaim, "Happy Christmas to all and we'll do it all again!"



The LivingRoom Makes Community News

Article by the Reverend Catherine Murkin, St. Peter's on-the-Rock, Kirkland Lake, and the LivingRoom, Schumacher, ON



Esastlink News visited the LivingRoom and made the young people and the staff TV stars for its community programme.

It was a very cold, icy, Wednesday Youth Night at the LivingRoom. The two hour time slot between the day crowd leaving at 5:00 p.m. and the youth arriving at 7:00 p.m. saw us doing our usual crazy tidying of one event while setting up for the next. We were tired. Father Phelan had the onerous task of replenishing our much needed supplies, grabbing something gluten-free to bring back for the gluten intolerant member of our group (me), while being aware the clock was ticking and we had lots of preparing to do. While Father Phelan was running errands the LivingRoom Lay Reader, Jan Maloney, and I re-organized the room for that evening's Christmas Party. The kids were in for a big surprise!

Archdeacon Deborah Lonergan-Freake had called me a few days earlier to give me the good news that the LivingRoom was the recipient of a generous donation of Christmas gifts - toys from St. Michael's in Hamilton, Ontario. We did not expect that they would arrive before our party but they did! Phelan, Jan and I had spent a good part of the day discussing how we would distribute the gifts fairly. We decided on a random drawing of numbers, each time a number was called the child with that number would select a gift from the tables on which they were placed. We had also received small backpacks which we stuffed with a selection of: books, small toys, crayons, or pencils, and a gift certificate from McDonalds. We



The Reverends Phelan Scanlon and Catherine Murkin and Lay Reader Jan Maloney had a great deal of joy and excitement in preparing the gifts for the youth.

packed thirty expecting a large crowd. However, before the gift giving there was a pizza party and that meant we had to hide the gifts and the backpacks - not an easy accomplishment in this one room.

Soon enough it was 7:00 p.m. and there were kids at the door. There is always an excited buzz when we have a pizza party; add to that the nearness of Christmas to the mix and that created quite and energized atmosphere. This night was unusual and perhaps because of the cold only fifteen kids arrived. Easy peasey, a big sigh of relief from us because we were tired and we were in the midst of a clergy crazy Christmas - or was that crazy clergy? This night, however, would be a cake-walk thanks to St. Michaels and the

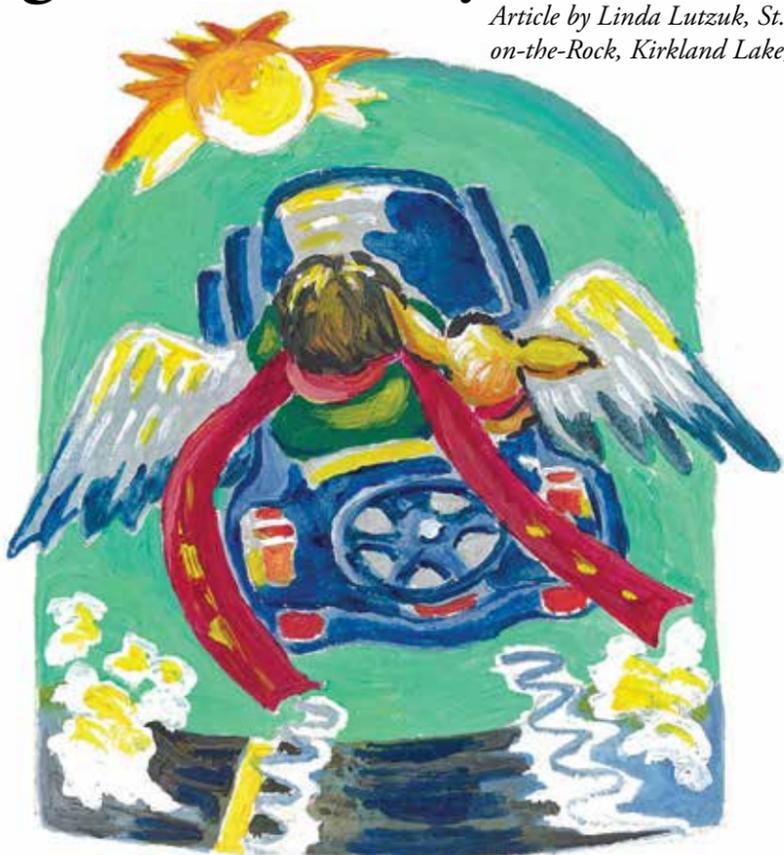
pizza.

Once the pizza had been consumed, we ushered the kids into the hall and closed the door ... the anticipation was palpable! The only other time that we had done this was for an Easter event and then when the door was opened a whole scene of Easter happenings was revealed - the Last Supper and the Crucifixion - I could hear them recounting the experience. As Phelan supervised the youth, Jan and I filled the tables with gifts. We were ready!

Due to the low numbers in attendance that evening, we were able to let each child pick a gift and backpack for their siblings. This was truly a blessing; it was a time of affirmation and we gave gifts to remind us that God gave the gift of His Son. Thank you, Father.

Anglicans in Rouyn-Noranda

Article by Linda Lutzuk, St. Peter's on-the-Rock, Kirkland Lake, ON



On December 16th, 2016, a cold windy Friday, Reverend Catherine drove to Rouyn-Noranda, her dog, Honey, safely ensconced in the back seat. The Anglicans in the community were delighted because this was the first of our proposed monthly meetings with Reverend Catherine. We had not had a minister for many years. In 2008, All Saints Church closed its doors for the final time. It was the end of services for the English Anglican community. Our church closure was even featured on CBC's *Tapestry*. We felt the loss deeply. Some of us make the hour plus drive to St. Peter's on-the-Rock in Kirkland Lake weekly but others in our small community are not able to make this journey.

We met from one to three o'clock at the Neighbours' Regional Association's office. This is an association which welcomes all Anglophones; it is a perfect meeting place. The Neighbours have graciously offered us a monthly space

in which to gather.

We began with a 'meet and greet' and coffee and cookies and conversation. Linda, Nicola, and Marilyn introduced Reverend Catherine to the rest of the group. A lively discussion about our experiences with All Saints Church followed. It was a chance for Reverend Catherine to hear some of our stories; they were stories which we needed to share.

Reverend Murkin led us, accompanied by a guitar, in singing, "*Hark the Herald Angels*". We were uplifted by the Christmas message and were ready to spread the good news to all of our long lost members in the English protestant community.

We are all looking forward to January 20th, when Reverend Catherine will return to Neighbours in Rouyn-Noranda. Only in the North would a minister travel 60 miles in the snow to give communion to six people! God bless you.



Christmas Eve: Northern Style

Article by the Reverend Larry Armstrong, St. James, Geraldton, St. Luke's Hornpayne, St. Stephen's, Constance Lake, and St. Matthew's/St. Paul's, Hearst.



The Reverend Larry Armstrong, like King Solomon, is faced with an annual problem of how to divide something - in this case Christmas Eve. Rev. Larry celebrated the Eucharist with his parishioners at St. Stephen's, Constance Lake First Nation.

Christmas Eve Services in four parishes has me almost as busy as Santa Claus. In fact, next year I'm working on a deal with the jolly old soul to borrow his sleigh and two or three of his flying reindeer. For this year, I had the good help of a nearby Deacon and an understanding parish which offered to celebrate a day

early. Each year it's a bit of a conundrum sorting out Christmas Eve for four far flung parishes of St. James, Geraldton, St. Luke's, Hornpayne, St. Stephen's, Constance Lake First Nation, and St. Matthew's/St. Paul's, Hearst. This year, with the generous help of the Reverend Deacon Anne Stenabaugh

of St. Mark's, Kapuskasing, my almost busier than Santa's Christmas Eve became just about perfect. It was at the annual Clericus Retreat in Cochrane this past September that Anne offered me her unsolicited assistance to me for Christmas Eve. There are not enough words to express my gratitude; I will simply say, "thank you, Anne."

At St. Luke's, Hornpayne, we celebrated Christmas Eve an evening early on December 23rd. This was first done in 2015 and it has worked out so well that it has made it possible for members of the other three churches to attend that it all but has become our own unique tradition. Unofficially, we call it the Eve of Christmas Eve.

Deacon Anne at St. Matthew's/St. Paul's, Hearst for an 8:00 p.m. service. I was off to St. James in Geraldton and then on to St. Stephen's, Constance Lake First Nation. This allowed me to be at home just before 2:00 a.m.

The realities of this ministry require a great deal of co-operation between all four parishes. While the story of Santa Claus relies on magic, the story

of Christmas is about the miracle and mystery of the birth of Jesus.

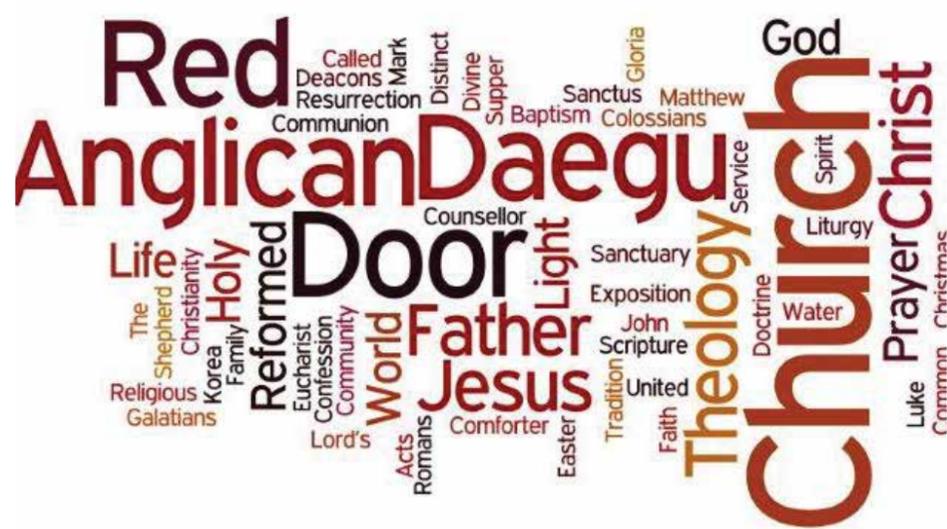
Like Mary and Joseph, our lives are fraught with struggles and disappointments. The journey is not what we wanted or expected. And just when everything seems to be as bad as it gets, suddenly there is an Angel saying "Do not fear for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy." Then just as we are pondering the message of that one Angel, the heavens are filled with Angels singing.

Just as Mary pondered all these things about the birth of her Son in her heart, I too have been pondering a number of things - though not always so quietly. Yet in the midst of all the mess of this world and especially in the midst of the difficult circumstances in our diocese and in my four parishes particularly, I'm wondering and pondering. "Where are the Angels? We could use some encouragement down here, God!" Well, of course, they are everywhere and much closer at hand than we know ... the Reverend Deacon Anne Stenabaugh for sure.

Good News for Our Diocese

Our diocese has received funding from the National Church to provide small grants to parishes for two purposes. The first is to assist in defraying costs of advertising or resource material related to acknowledging Aboriginal Day or holding an Aboriginal Day Prayer Service. The second is to assist parishes who may wish to change up the front doors of their church to a red tone. An explanation via web surfing provides the following: "The tradition of red doors dates back centuries. There are several meanings associated with red doors.

Red symbolizes the sacrificial blood of Christ that saves those who come to him. Red is also a reminder of the Passover and a sign of the Holy



Article by the Reverend Patricia Dorland, St. Mark's, Iroquois Falls, ON Spirit. Church doors began to be painted red as a way of remembering the ultimate sacrifice that others had made for their faith.

The red doors of churches traditionally indicated a place of sanctuary, refuge, and safety. Those in need would not be captured or harmed inside the holy walls of the church which offered physical and spiritual protection.

Some believe that the doors of the Wittenberg Cathedral, where Martin Luther posted his 95 theses, were red. Red doors on Protestant churches indicate their roots in the Reformation.

Whatever the meaning, many churches today are recognized by their distinctive red doors.

A Blue Christmas Service

Article by the Reverend Norm Wesley, St. Thomas Church, Moose Factory, ON

Together with many across the country, St. Thomas Church, Moose Factory, hosted its second annual Blue Christmas service on December 21st - the longest night of the year. The evening was filled with readings, and words of encouragement read by Caroline Chum, Curt Wesley, Deborah Lester, and Trudy Sailors. Music was provided by the talents of the island. Bertha Faries,

Marilyn McLeod, Robert Faries, and Victor Linklater performed inspiring songs that spoke of light, hope, and the spirit of Christmas. Candles were lit following each of the readings and these words spoken: "Jesus said, I am the light of the world."

The service ended with the passing of the peace and light and each person lighting a candle of hope for the days to come.



Jasmine Lafreniere supervised as James Alexander cleaned up at St. Matthew's Christmas tea.

