

The People's Pulpit

ADVENT 2019



St Thomas sets its heart toward being a Christian Home which welcomes, encourages and seeks to inspire people.

St. Thomas Anglican Church

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ST THOMAS OFFICE HOLDERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND STAFF

Incumbent	Reverend Lee Lambert
Parish Administrator	Nicole Dallaway
Choir Director	Patricia Brush
Organist	Bonnie MacDiarmid
Rector's Warden	Ryan Dallaway
People's Warden	William Passmore
Deputy Warden	Pat McNally
Lay Members at Synod	Susan Lomas, William Passmore, Robin Tilgner
Synod Alternate	Jennifer Stipetic
Facilities	Stephen Dow
Treasurer/Bookkeeper	Ryan Dallaway
Stewardship Officer	Bob Lomas
Outreach Chair	Bonnie McNally
God's Garden	Merilee Clarke
Youth Group Leaders	<i>Vacant</i>
Vestry Recording Clerk	Nicole Dallaway
People's Pulpit Editor	Susan Lomas
Website & Facebook Administrator	Gary Graham
Projection Co-ordinator	Gary Graham
Altar Guild Co-ordinator	Arlene Simonovich
Anglican Church Women Co-presidents	Diane Clement and Judy Dallaway
Pastoral Care/Card Secretary	<i>Position vacant</i>
Cemetery Committee Contact	Gwelda O' Shaughnessy
Coffee Hour Co-ordinator	Susan Clark-Dow
Sides persons Co-ordinator	Nicole Dallaway (8:30)
	Diane Clement (10:30)
Co-ordinator of Liturgical Assistants	Nicole Dallaway (8:30 & 10:30)
Cornerstone Leader	Mary Passmore
Counter Schedule Co-ordinator	Bonnie McNally
Envelope Secretary	Bob Lomas
Fellowship and Fundraising	Nicole Dallaway
Fundsrip Co-ordinator's	Jodi Sullivan & Nicole Dallaway
Nursery	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Long Range Planning	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Open Table	Judy Dallaway
Prayer Chain	Roy and Eleanor Baumgart
PWRDF Contact	Barb Bottriell
Telephone Team	<i>Vacant</i>
Snowflake Bazaar Co-ordinators	Bonnie McNally, Judy Dallaway
Auditors & Financial Reviewers	John Smith

From our Rector: Rev. Lee Lambert

Positive Conversation



No doubt many of you have heard something about the work our St. Thomas Refugee Group has been doing with the Kanata Stittsville Refugee Support Group. Bonnie McNally and William Passmore have been working very hard to aid one particular family stuck in Jordan who are trying to reach their other family members here in Canada. It's a lengthy, and an arduous process; many, many individuals and families try (and fail) to come here. Contrary to popular belief, Canada's immigration system is one of the worlds most stringent. A friend I know who works in this branch of the government verified this to me a couple of years ago – she said our system is actually tougher, the thresholds higher – than in the American system.

I will name the elephant in the room though: refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Canada are a hot button issue - and have been for the past number of years. This family – whom I shall not name (they are under continuing threat by those who jailed and so badly beaten he has permanent damage to one leg) has been vetted by the U.N. and are eligible to apply as legitimate refugees. The question now is – as in a lot of things – paperwork and money. And, let's face it, money scares all of us. How much? When? Where does it come from? Is this the best use of our (limited) finances? Will I be allowed a say on whether or not we help with this? When these questions go unanswered, people get nervous and frustrated - and that is completely understandable. And so, hearing this frustration, the Refugee Group and myself got together and presented a two-page overview to council. I have included it below.

I apologize for any anxiety or division any lack of communication may have caused, but council did have a very open and frank discussion and they were able to pass this paper along to be considered for final approval by the whole parish at Vestry.

Please do read this short paper through carefully and remember:

- 1) St. Thomas will not be the sole sponsor for this family
- 2) The fundraising will not come from our operating budget, existing assets or pre-existing fundraisers.
- 3) The whole parish will have a chance to be heard and to vote at Vestry. Nothing has yet been finalized.

Please do not let frustration go unvoiced – please come to me with your concerns about our church discernment process and to William and Bonnie about the particulars of this family.

Lee

ST. THOMAS REFUGEE SUPPORT PLAN

Where we are:

As of today, we have raised \$3400 towards aiding the family. To date we are working away on their paperwork and have approached two Christian organizations to join us in forming a coalition. These organizations have been very enthusiastic. There is more to follow. As promised, we have formulated and propose the following plan for 2020.

What we recognize:

- We respect that many people have concerns: specifically, that general-funds money will be diverted, and that the process is not transparent. We also know that there is a great concern of ‘mission creep’ and that we will allow St. Thomas to get ‘boxed-in’ later – forced to pay out many unexpected thousands of dollars because other fundraising efforts did not materialize. We will not do this.
- We recognize that the funds which are raised by long-standing fundraisers (e.g. Spring and Fall Bazaars, Open Table etc.) are already spoken for. We will not seek them.
- We realize St. Thomas’ current debt load, and our recent, collective pledge to alleviate it. We pledge to not seek to take away monies from general funds or the money we need to pay down the debt.

What specifically is being asked (at Vestry):

1. That the proceeds from the ‘A Choired Afternoon’ in 2020 be again directed towards Refugee Support.
2. That private donations from individuals outside (and the willing inside) St. Thomas continue to be accepted through the end of 2020.
3. That the St. Thomas Refugee Group (STORG) will organize and hold one to three unique (new) fundraising events through the Spring and Summer of 2020.

What is NOT being asked:

- That St. Thomas assume the full financial responsibility of sponsoring the _____ family, but that STORG will provide leadership in an attempt to form a coalition.
- That St. Thomas will ever have to ‘go it alone’ as the sole sponsor.
- That St. Thomas invest its general funds or operating budget in this project.
- That St. Thomas will be subject to ‘hidden costs’ that may arise at a later date (these, *if* they do arise, will be the subject of future coalition fundraising efforts).

Expecting Success

Should we be allowed to allocate only ‘A Choired Afternoon’ and the \$1000 a year from Vestry in 2020 and again in 2021 we would, at the end of 2021, have collected approximately \$7000.

We realistically expect we can raise a further \$2500 during 2020 through new fundraisers and - God Willing – we will be able to do the same in 2021 as well.

In short: we expect that we can easily - without touching St. Thomas' budget - raise \$11,000 for this cause over the next two years.

In Summary

- We will not add to St. Thomas' financial burden.
- We are not seeking to be (nor will we allow ourselves to be) the sole sponsor of the family.
- We pledge to raise this money through fundraising and willing donation efforts.
- We will not seek to pull funds from pre-existing fundraising efforts.
- We will, position all our new fundraising efforts away from existing fundraisers so as not to compete with them for attendance.

Motion:

That we as Council voice our support for this plan being brought forward to Vestry 2020 for final approval.

Passed: Parish Council Meeting Held November 14, 2019

COMING TO ST THOMAS FOR HELP

This article is a reprint from the summer to provide background history.

On February 28 after our service and annual vestry, 2 Iraqi immigrants (a brother and sister) came to St Thomas' to ask for help for their brother who is in a refugee camp in Amman, Jordan. He is there with his wife and 4 children. They had heard from a friend that churches in Stittsville help to sponsor refugees.

In December 2018 the family fled Iraq for Jordan due to the war and persecution by the Shia majority where they were living. Their background is Sunni. In their words, "The brother went to Jordan because his home country Iraq has war and dangerous to live in it. He has a medical problem his leg is broken. He was injured and tortured, beaten with sharp tools, in addition to an attack that led to a broken leg and a deviation to his right ankle." The family is under a death threat from the "General Secretariat of Revenge".

His son is sick and he needs medical help. He suffers from mental development issues. He also has a systolic murmur.

After taking their details and sharing them with Bonnie McNally, our representative on the Kanata Stittsville Refugee Sponsorship (KSRFG) group, we presented them to the KSRFG committee. There we learned that there are already several refugees who have either been accepted whose applications are being processed or who are already under consideration. We have told the family that it will take at least 3 years for both funding and government approval. (The government only allows a certain number of refugee sponsorships/year).

So, in a real sense the global refugee crisis which we hear about on the news has come to St Thomas. The migrations by land and sea into Europe and the migrations from South and Central America to Mexico and the USA seem distant. Even the walk across the border from the USA to Manitoba and Quebec is not so close. But here a family in need has come to us.

This Iraqi family has come to St Thomas since their first visit, for worship and to attend Open Table. Parish Council has discussed their situation at length and has made this motion of support.

As I reflect on their situation I am continuously reminded of the parable of the Good Samaritan and the obvious encouragement to help and not to pass by on the other side. While the task of supporting an immigrant family seems enormous, I am reminded of Jesus's words in Luke Ch1v 37; For with God nothing is impossible.

William Passmore

Friends of the Family Funeral Committee

In the last couple of years some of those who help with this ministry have retired from helping. Please know that your service was much appreciated by the families and myself as coordinator. However, it is time to renew our lists for the future.

Beginning in January until Feb.1st there will be lists for you to sign if you can help with this ministry. There are many ways to help.

Sandwiches, squares and cookies, Kitchen help (cutting the sandwiches and arranging trays) Washing dishes (machine and by hand) set-up and take down of tables and chairs, making tea and coffee. Also we have LEADERS. Their job is to call the setup people, arrange for the kitchen staff and over -see the trays and the tables. The other way is to be a call person. When the lists are done the call person calls persons on the list so we have the sandwiches and squares to serve.

On February 1st I will formulate the lists and get them to the appropriate persons. Then we will be ready to serve our parish once again in this important ministry.

To all who have helped on the past know that the families are most appreciative and feel your support in their time of need.

Sincerely, Judy Dallaway Coordinator

Beric Graham-Smith

The Ottawa Citizen Saturday published an obituary for Beric Graham-Smith on 19 October. People who had been on the Building Committee during the 1990 construction of the "new" St Thomas church building had many meetings with Beric, and got to see his ability to "get the job done". Beric took over from an architectural technologist named Pierre, who did the original design. Unfortunately, when it came time to start to build, the powers to be pointed out that the drawings had to be signed off by a certified architect, and Beric was hired. Soon afterwards, with minimal change to the drawings, the drawings were approved, a builder was hired, and construction began. He was quite a diplomat during construction, mediating our occasional disputes with the builder. And they received a nice round of applause when introduced at our first service in the new church,

The obituary reads, in part, *"His life-long love of music brought him and Elizabeth together. He sang in many choirs from school days to the Ottawa Choral Society. Professionally, he was an architect and planner, coordinating projects throughout Canada over his 45 year career. Mottoes: positive outlook, well-balanced living, moderation in all things. Memorial service to be held at Saint Matthew's Church on November 9 at 1 pm, reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to St. Matthew's Church, 217 First Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1S 2G5."*

Submitted by Pete Torunski

The Church Gardens

As it comes to the end of the gardening season I would like to say many "thank you's". Firstly, to Pam, who, as always, does more than her fair share of the work and does a wonderful job of the arrangements in front of the main entrance. To Cheryl, who joined us this year, and is also a very knowledgeable and hard working member of our little team. To David who always comes to our rescue when a man's strength is required and helps in so many ways. To David and Ryan and his family who gave up a weekend to install our patio.

And lastly to all those who helped with the Fall clean-up. Without your help we would never have filled 72 bags of leaves.

Hilary Shouldice

Coffee and Chat



Coffee and chat has restarted after the summer break. The third Wednesday of each month, we meet in the Council Room at 9:30 AM for coffee, tea and a sweet treat. All are welcome.

For info or a ride, call Hilary Shouldice at 613 836 1633.

How many Activities have you enrolled your child in this fall that cost an arm and a leg? How many of these teach Christian Values for Life?

Well, do we have a deal for you. Sign up and receive, weekly, amazing, joyful, life affirming values, for all of your children, ALL FOR FREE at St. Thomas' Church Stittsville.

FREE

Christian Values taught Free

Take advantage of this time limitless offer.

St. Thomas's 'God's Garden' is designed to activate faith in children ages 3 1/2 through grade 6.

“GOD'S GARDEN” grows all year long.

A garden, that is gently tended on a daily basis, weeded, watered, fertilized, admired, appreciated, will grow faster and better than a garden that is watered once a week or left on its own.



“How do we nurture the garden on Sundays?” You may ask. Well, it is nurtured 4 times!!

1. Family Faith Activities

God's Garden begins every Sunday morning at 10:00 to 10:20 a.m. with the whole family being invited to take part in Family Faith Time.

This is the **first time** the children begin to hear the lesson of the week.



2. Children's Talk

At 10:25, we go into church together for the first hymn and the Children's Talk, where for the **second time**, the theme of the day is enhanced.

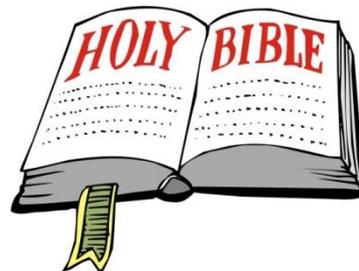


3. God's Garden Time

10:35 -The children will return to God's Garden where we will sing and pray and hear the word

together (using the Spark bible). We will then divide into age appropriate groups to inwardly

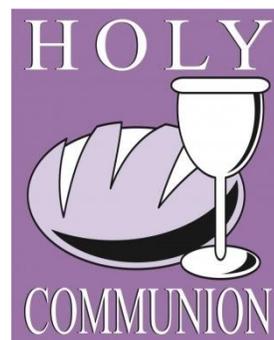
digest the word with activities and discussions. This is the **third time** the message is revealed



4. In Communion with our Christian Family

At approximately 11:05 - We join the congregation for the peace and communion.

This is the **fourth time** the children will experience the message of God's love for all.





Please arrive just before 10:00 for the Family Faith Activity. The activity will be explained and begin as soon as possible. (We only have 20 mins. and lots to do !!)

We invite you to help out on Sundays using your own personal gifts during the Family Faith Activity or to be one of our 'gardeners' for 'God's Garden' after the Kids Talk even if it is just once a year. (your personal gifts might be; cooking, sports, painting, wood working, gardening, storytelling, drama, music, dancing etc....) This is an easy and fun way to get involved with the children in our church.

“GARDENERS” WANTED;

Find out how you can help to inspire our children this year. Be a God’s Garden Teacher. It only takes ½ hour of prep time and ½ hour with the children. If you wish to get more information please call me at 613-831-7704 or e-mail godsgardenstt@gmail.com.

Register for God's Garden now.

We invite you to pray for our church and our children any time during the week that you feel called to do so.

*Let's have fun learning about our Faith together.
Alleluia ! is not just a word, it is a feeling of excitement.*

God's blessings are freely given to all. *Alleluia !*

Merilee Clarke God’s Garden Co-ordinator



REPORT FROM SYNOD 2019

Submitted by William Passmore

This year I had another opportunity to experience and enjoy Synod. I am reporting on the following topics:

Many Congregations, One Body

138th SESSION OF DIOCESAN SYNOD

October 24-26, 2019
Ottawa, Ontario

DATES AND LOCATIONS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2019
Christ Church Cathedral
414 Sparks St., Ottawa

7:00pm Eucharistic Service
Bishop's Address

All welcome
Reception to follow

DATES AND LOCATIONS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2019
St. Elias Centre
750 Ridgewood Ave., Ottawa

7:15am Registration begins
8:15am New member orientation
9:00am Synod in session

Guest Speaker

Canon Sue Garvey
*Retired Executive Director of
Cornerstone Housing for Women*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2019

St. Elias Centre
750 Ridgewood Ave., Ottawa

8:30am Synod in session

Guest Speaker

Albert Dumont
*Algonquin Spiritual Teacher in Residence
at Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa*

IMPORTANT DATES

AUGUST 15
Reports and Notices of Motions for
the Synod circular

SEPTEMBER 20
Synod registration deadline

GENERAL INFORMATION

SYNOD COSTS
Synod \$80 | Dinner \$37.50
Package (Synod & Dinner) \$115
includes taxes and gratuities

REGISTRATION
Online at ottawa.anglican.ca
or by mail.

DISPLAYS
For information, please contact
Patricia Cocker at p.l.c@bellnet.ca
with the subject line: Synod Display

- The 3-year Diocesan Budget 2020-2022
- Fundraising Workshop
- Youth Internship
- Innovation Grants

The budget covers the 3 year period 2020-2022 and so it is only discussed and debated once every 3 years. The budget sets our “Fair Share” portion of our own parish budget which in 2019 was \$26,000. The budget will stay at the same level for 2020, it will rise by 2% in 2021 and by .02% in 2022. 50 % of “Fair Share” goes to outreach (40% to Community Ministries and ministry to support clergy and parishes, 10% to outreach by the National Church to the North and overseas). The remaining 50% goes to fund the Bishop, diocesan , provincial and national church administration.

To understand better the work done by our Community Ministries, here are some facts:

- The WELL: 26,000 meals served to 380 women.
- St LUKES TABLE: 50,000 meals served to 240 individuals.
- CENTRE 454: 125 people come every day. Crisis support for 375 people.
- CORNERSTONE: 420 women served. 296 stayed in emergency shelter. 97 in spiritual programs.

- OTTAWA PASTORAL CARE: Now in Carleton Place and Manotick as well as downtown Ottawa.

“BEYOND THE BAKE SALE” was an interesting seminar that I attended. The issue facing many congregations is that the money made is decreasing and the volunteers are getting fewer and more tired. To address the speaker did a survey of parishioners and asked the following questions:

- 1) When you think of the Anglican church what comes to mind?
- 2) What are our biggest challenges?
- 3) What could we do differently?

In response people said that they preferred “experiences”. They liked entertainment. They wanted help with outreach. As a result, they had a food fair where local restaurants and food trucks helped with an event called “Taste of the Seaway”. They had a garden party with live music. They even had a barber competition! Financial results from these events were significantly improved. However they did not fill the pews but several people came asking for baptism and weddings.

YOUTH INTERNSHIP. This is a paid internship for youths 16-21 years of age. This ministry mixes experiential learning, group discussion and individual reflection. There are 5 components; work placements, faith formation, individual work coaching/mentoring, leadership skills development and an opportunity for a relationship with a Christian mentor. Work placements can be in a local Anglican church, a community ministry or an organization like a food bank, day care centre.

INNOVATION GRANTS: In the outreach portion \$50,000 is set aside for innovation projects. They can be applied for twice a year. They can be used to start up or expand ministries. They can be used for evangelism and to reach out to our local community. There is money for us to use. Let us be creative and tap into this!

Please feel free to talk to me, Robin or Susan to ask questions or talk about Synod.

OUR FATHER

I cannot **OUR** if religion has no room for others and their needs.

I cannot say **FATHER** if I do not demonstrate that relationship in my daily living.

I cannot say **WHO ART IN HEAVEN** if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.

I cannot say **HALLOWED BY THY NAME** if I do not have honour, glory and trust in him always.

I cannot say **THY KINGDOM COME** if I am unwilling to have his kingdom grow in my heart my home, my church, my country, and the world.

I cannot say **THY WILL BE DONE** if I am unwilling or resentful of having it done in life.

I cannot say **ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN** unless I am truly ready to give myself to his service here and now.

I cannot say **GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD** without making an honest effort for it or by ignoring the genuine needs of my fellow humans.

I cannot say **FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US** if I continue to harbor a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say **LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION** if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.

I cannot say **DELIVER US FROM EVIL** if I am not prepared to fight with the weapons of word and prayer.

I cannot say **THINE IS THE KINGDOM** if I do not give the king the obedience of a loyal subject.

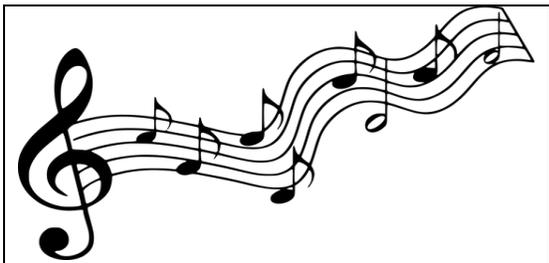
I cannot say **THINE IS THE POWER** if I fear what my neighbours and friends may say or do.

I cannot say **THINE IS THE GLORY** if I am seeking my own glory first.

I cannot say **FOREVER AND EVER** if I am anxious about each day's affairs.

I cannot say **AMEN** unless I honestly say "cost what it may, this is my prayer."

Submitted by Mary Passmore



A-Choired Afternoon'

The hustle and bustle of almost 70 members from six different choirs arriving all at the same time for a rehearsal for an afternoon choral event at St. Thomas on November 3rd created a very animated scene in our sanctuary!

“A Choired Afternoon” was the name of the event and it featured choirs from St. Thomas, St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Stittsville United Church, the Ottawa Harmony Singers, a vocal ensemble called Rare Blend, and the Goulbourn Male Chorus. Each choral group sang three numbers and the event culminated with all the choirs singing three numbers together in a massed group. It was a wonderful afternoon which provided excellent entertainment.

A freewill offering resulted in \$1400 being raised which will be given to the Kanata/Stittsville Refugee Sponsorship group of which St. Thomas is a member.

This was the third year ‘A Choired Afternoon’ has been held – each time at St. Thomas. It all began three years ago after the ecumenical Good Friday walk here in Stittsville when Bonnie McNally said to Pat Brush, St. Thomas new choir director, “Wouldn’t it be nice to have an event that featured all our local choirs,” and Pat Brush said “I’ve been thinking the same thing.” And so the two organized the first event in the fall of 2017 and expanded it to include two other musical groups that Pat is part of and also invited the Goulbourn Jubilee Singers as another local group to take part. The first ‘A Choired Afternoon’ was born and the purpose was always to do it as an outreach project and offer all the proceeds to a local charity.

Bonnie McNally is no stranger to outreach projects. She was one of the founders of the Ottawa Children of Chernobyl project a number of years ago that brought children affected by the fallout from the nuclear accident over to the Ottawa, so they could experience time away from the dangers of radiation. And she is now chair of our Outreach Committee.

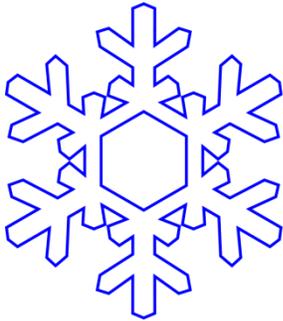
The type of music featured at ‘A Choired Afternoon’ is quite varied. Some of it is sacred as you would expect from church choirs, and there were some beautiful pieces among them such as “Love Grows Here” by St. Andrews, “I Will Sing” by Stittsville United, and “God is My Shepherd” by St. Thomas. But there are also lighter numbers such as “Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head” sung by the Harmony Singers and the lovely “I Gave my Love a Cherry” by the a

capella group Rare Blend. The Goulbourn Male Chorus sang “Still, Still Still” with special words for Remembrance Day. And the massed choir sang “High Hopes” among its three numbers. Our own Bonnie MacDiarmid provided much of the accompaniment for the choirs.

Altogether it was a wonderful afternoon of music with a chance to showcase our own local singers. There was a reception afterwards in our church hall for everyone and the treats were baked and provided by Bonnie McNally and her daughter Victoria. A true treat indeed. St. Thomas can be very proud of this event and grateful that Bonnie and Pat Brush have taken the trouble to organize and present it to the community. Plan to come and enjoy the music next year.

Barbara Bottruell

SNOWFLAKE BAZAAR AND LUNCHEON



Once again, our St Thomas Snowflake Bazaar and Luncheon was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who baked or made soup or donated items, to those who set up or tore down, who sorted and priced and manned the tables, to the folk who pounded the pavement for the Silent Auction, to the kitchen angels who provided the wonderful lunch and to our host of young people who served at the luncheon, to our ticket sellers and ‘floaters’, and our ‘money man’. And, of course, thank you to everyone who told their friends and families about the event, who came out on Saturday and supported the Bazaar. It was truly a collaborative effort!

The breakdown is as follows:

Books	\$ 352.75
Home Decor	557.55
Toys	87.80
Baking	1331.75
Christmas and Crafts	609.25
Silent Auction	2283.50
Jewelry	248.75
Luncheon	<u>640.00</u>

For a grand total of \$6111.35

There is still \$60 outstanding from the Silent Auction, as well as Christmas puddings, marmalade and zucchini loaves for sale (in the church hall after service every Sunday until they’re gone) I believe we also have a couple of donations which have not been factored in to the amount above. So the final total will be higher by at least \$200-\$300.

All in all, amazing!! Again, a huge thank you to all of you!!

Submitted by Bonnie McNally



THE GARDEN OF PURE DELIGHT

Oft as I walk in the Garden,
The Garden of Pure Delight,
I commune with my Lord, my Saviour,
And He guides my way all through the night.
He asks me to love my neighbor,
He asks me to love Him too,
He says “open your heart to the love that surrounds you,
That’s all that I ask of you”.

The Garden gives me a refuge,
And joy in the days of my pain.
Grief and fear can’t survive,
God says “keep love alive”
And “come back here again and again”.

Submitted by Joan Palmer

40 YEARS AT ST THOMAS *(part 2 – continued from October edition)*

After a very positive interregnum and the drama of the appointment process, Rev Ross Moulton became our incumbent. Married to Donna they arrived with much anticipation. The arrangement of sharing our priest and now our new organist with Christchurch, Ashton continued.

The Sunday School continued to grow and in May the children, some parents and leaders attended the Diocesan Festival of Joy an event held in Metcalfe, Deep River, Bell’s Corners and other places in the diocese. By this time there were too many children to be accommodated in the basement and the Stittsville Library, so the older class met before the service while the younger classes started at sermon time. Ross started the practice of doing children’s talks. He often asked rhetorical questions to which he got answers, that appeared to surprise him, much to the amusement of the congregation!

Soon with the growth of the congregation and an increase in offerings there was a sense that we could afford the full cost of a priest. So Parish Council and Vestry made the decision to ask Ross to become full time at St Thomas'. Bishop Ed Lackey and the diocese agreed. Christchurch, Ashton also became a single point parish and the formal partnership ended.

With the growth in the children's ministry, the Church School Superintendent brought the exciting problem of not enough space to Parish Council. Would the church consider getting a portable classroom? After much deliberation Parish Council said "let's build a new church!" After a vestry meeting the decision was made to plan the building of a new church. A project team was put together under the leadership of Brian Smith. The cost was \$670,000 and the decision was made to raise a third of the cost and to seek a loan from the Diocesan Extension fund for the rest. In early 1990 construction began.

By the early fall of 1990 construction reached the point where it was time to join the new building to the old and to renovate the old church. So we temporarily lost the use of our building. Where would we meet temporarily? We met in what is now the Medical Centre next to Greco. Previously it had been a Grocery Store before it moved to where Shoppers Drug Mart now is. Worship had a different feel. There was no communion rail, there so we had to stand to receive communion. For me this was a profound experience-making eye contact with the priest and the lay assistant and sensing Christ's special presence as the bread and wine were offered to me. In a sense it was a trinity; myself, the priest and Christ. The children met in the warehouse section and were fascinated by the huge freezers which we had to keep them out of.

In December 1990 the church was complete and we had our opening service-what an amazing experience. The church was formally dedicated by Bishop Ed Lackey on 31 March 1991, Easter Sunday.

Ministry in the church continued to grow. Pete Torunski had become our choir director in 1985 and working with Don Gillen the choir grew in size and ability. The desire for contemporary music arrived and Mary Passmore formed Cornerstone. Rev Ross honoured it by calling himself a "Cornerstone Groupie!"

By 1987 a Youth group started in conjunction with Richmond and Ashton. We encouraged our daughters go on Summer Camps at Circle Square Ranch in Arden, Ontario where they enjoyed horse-riding and waterfront as well as growing in their Christian faith.

The congregation as well as growing in numbers was becoming interested in spiritual growth. Several parishioners went on Cursillo weekends and an attempt was made to have an Alpha Course. In so many ways we were being blessed as a church.

However, time was going by and Ross had been with us for 10 years. His reputation had grown enormously and he received a call to go to Cornwall and become Archdeacon of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry. We were sad to lose him but rejoicing that he was being well recognized

and rewarded. He would eventually become Diocesan Executive Archdeacon. Sadly he died too young. He would have made an excellent bishop.

As St Thomas looked to the future, who would replace him? Would a female priest be considered? Would the desire for opportunities for greater spiritual growth be realized? Who could fill the very large gap left by Ross and Donna's departure? How would the church continue to progress?

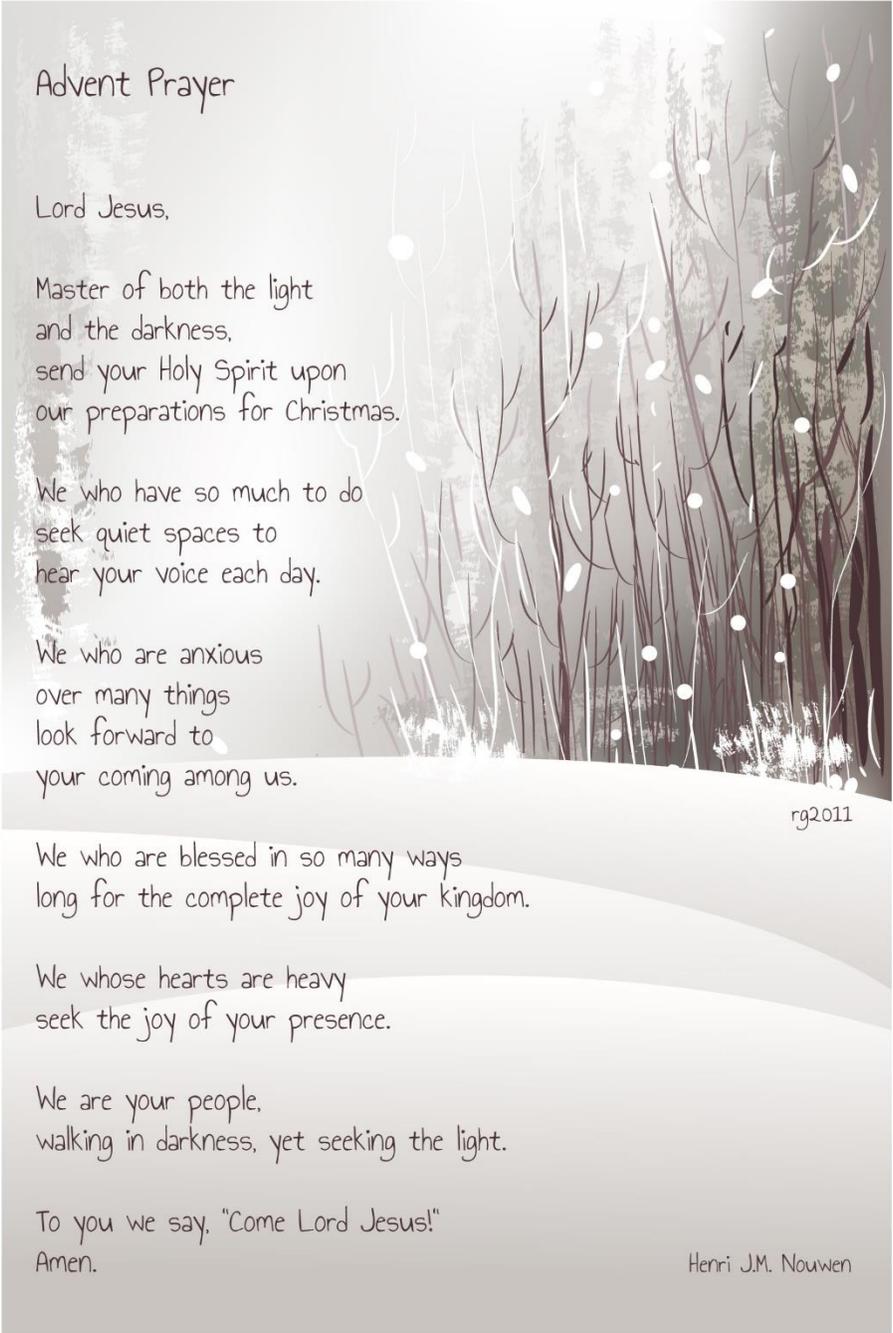
Submitted by William Passmore (to be continued...)

Poster designed by Gabe Dallaway



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Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light
and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon
our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do
seek quiet spaces to
hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious
over many things
look forward to
your coming among us.

rg2011

We who are blessed in so many ways
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy
seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people,
walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"
Amen.

Henri J.M. Nouwen

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