



THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE PEOPLE OF  
ST. GEORGE'S OF FOREST HILL  
ANGLICAN CHURCH  
www.stgeorgesofforesthill.com

# THE DRAGON FLYER

CHRISTMAS 2013



## this issue

FROM FATHER DON  
FROM YOUR WARDENS  
WELCOME NEW LEADERS  
GETTING TO KNOW YOU  
MANY HANDS LEAD TO SUCCESS

## FROM FATHER DON



Dear Friends,

*"Break forth together into singing,  
for the Lord has comforted his  
people, and all the ends of the earth  
shall see the salvation of our God."  
(Isaiah 52:9-10)*

Advent reminds us of our need to  
prepare for the reign of God so  
that when Christmas comes we can  
have something to shout about.

What would Christmas be without these great words of comfort, redemption, restoration and hope from the prophet Isaiah? What joy must have filled the hearts of those who first heard those words! In the midst of their downtrodden situation, God delivers a message that has continued to stir the hearts and minds and wills of men and women throughout the ages. What joy must fill our hearts today in the midst of all the chaos and uncertainty of our time as we recall the promise of a new day when the reign of God will supersede that of the powers of this world!

We know all too well the plight of the working poor, the aged, and all those who do not have the basic necessities for daily living around us. Because of technology, we are also aware of the plight of people around the globe. People who are living with war, battling starvation, struggling after earthquakes and tsunamis, typhoons and droughts. We live in the in-between time, a time when God's instrument on earth, the Church, must make the reign of God a reality in the hearts and lives of those who are marginalized in society. It's not an easy calling.

It was to such an outcast group of people that God made a covenant, sent his messengers, and finally sent his Son. This Son came among us, and lived like us, so he could represent us before his Father and ours. Christmas then, must be about the family of God, the Church, coming together to recognize the great blessing God had bestowed upon us in sending his Son to be our Saviour. Such knowledge, being so wonderful for us, must cause us to break into songs of thanksgiving, and into actions that bring comfort, consolation, restoration and hope to all those who are looking for answers to life's difficult situations. Then, and only then, shall all the earth break forth into singing and all see the salvation of our God. A blessed Christmas to all of you!

Fr. Don +

## Christmas and New Year's Services

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

8:15 a.m. – *Holy Eucharist*  
10:00 a.m. – *Christmas pageant*  
12:30 p.m. – *Spanish service*  
7:00 p.m. – *Memorial service*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

8:15 & 10:00 a.m. – *Holy Eucharist*  
12:30 p.m. – *Spanish service*  
7:00 p.m. – *Service of Lessons and Carols*

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:00 p.m. – *Family service*  
7:00 & 10:00 p.m. – *Choral services*

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

10:00 a.m.\* – *Christmas Day BCP*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

9:00 a.m. \* – *BCP (note time!)*  
12:30 p.m. – *Spanish service*

\*NOTE: one service only!

## FEED THE HOMELESS ON DEC. 30!

Remember to sign up to work or bring food or monetary donations for our luncheon at St. John's Kitchen on *Monday, December 30*. St. George's teams of volunteers will be cooking, serving and cleaning up to provide more than 300 homeless people with a hot, hearty meal plus a cool treat. For more information, contact Ruth Pearce.

## LAST CALL FOR ZEHRS TAPES!

Please bring in your remaining Zehrs cash register tapes by Sunday, December 29 and leave them in the jar in the Narthex labeled "Tapes and Toonies." Loblaws (Zehrs) is cancelling their program at the end of December. Of course, we will continue to accept your "toonies" to help us buy material to make turbans for cancer patients!

## YOUTH GROUP RAFFLES PUMPKINS



To raise funds to support their activities, St. George's youth group held a raffle for carved pumpkins at the parish auction. Getting in the spirit were Nathaniel, Emmalene and Eric.

# WELCOME OUR NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CO-ORDINATORS

This fall, Karen Ascah and Susan Hipperson took over leadership of St. George's Sunday School. Both Karen and Susan had previously taught Sunday School. For the past two years, they were trained for the leadership role by their predecessors, Kate Durdan and Alison Olmsted.

Our new leaders are continuing to implement the Anglican curriculum entitled: "Grow, Proclaim and Serve." Karen says the curriculum has been updated and is more teacher and child friendly. For children in Senior Kindergarten to Grade 4, crafts are used to reinforce the lessons. Older students in Grade 5 and 6 have magazine articles to read. Also, each of our classrooms now has a CD player so children can sing songs that complement the curriculum. Summarizing their goal as co-ordinators, Susan says, "Our goal is to engage the children in a



**Karen Ascah and Susan Hipperson**

relationship with God that they can carry through to their daily lives – whether they continue to attend church or not."

While there are currently seven teachers, more would be helpful! There is no preparation required. Susan and Karen have all craft materials assembled so teachers can just come in and follow the lesson for the day. High school students are also invited to help out and earn volunteer hours! If you can commit to a few Sundays between now and next June, the children of St. George's would benefit greatly!

# NEW LEADERS REVITALIZE YOUTH GROUP

New leaders April Couzens-Brown and Alison Olmsted have implemented several changes this fall in an effort to revitalize our youth group and implement our RENEW goal to support youth ministry. In fact, it was April's son, Nathaniel, who attended a RENEW meeting last spring to encourage the congregation to continue and improve the youth program. Inspired by his enthusiasm, his mother agreed to be a leader.

Based on the ages of youth in our congregation, April and Alison have created a single group for students in Grade 7 and up. The group meets on even-numbered Sundays (teenagers need their sleep!) and have "socials" the third Friday of the month. They have also created a space of their own in a former Sunday School classroom.



**April Couzens-Brown and Alison Olmsted**

The program developed by the young people focuses on three areas: discussions and speakers, volunteer outreach and socials. In future, April hopes they will be able to participate in Deanery and Diocesan youth events. In the meantime, the young people of St. George's are having fun in a Christian setting with their dedicated leaders and other adult volunteers.

# FROM YOUR WARDENS



Susan Butt



Jesus Castillo



Nelson Cuthbert



Vivian Harris



Mary Ann Millar

## Dear Fellow Parishioners:

A heartfelt thank-you to the many volunteers who contributed their time and talents to fill our fall calendar with so many successful events, such as:

- “Start up Sunday” Registration and BBQ (Sept. 8)
- “Back to Church” Sunday (Sept. 22)
- Children’s Community Closet (Oct. 5)
- Road Rally and Dinner (Oct. 6)
- Parish Supper and Auction (Oct. 26)
- Fall Cleanup (Nov. 4)
- Remembrance Day Family Service (Nov. 10)
- Continuation of two, weekly Bible Study programs (Sept+)
- Weekly Spanish Lessons (Sept+)
- Christmas Market (Nov. 30)
- Angel Tree and “Share the Warmth” programs (Nov./Dec.)

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY:

The children and youth of St. George’s joyfully reflect the love of Christ. Our popular Sunday School resumed this fall under the guidance of new Coordinators Karen Ascah and Susan Hipperson, assisted by a great group of teachers. More teachers are needed and are always welcome! The Junior Choir continues to bring us joy under the direction of John Shaw and Karissa Forrest, assisted by Heather Porter. As well, about 10 teenagers meet bi-weekly with our new youth leaders, April Couzens-Brown and Alison Olmsted. Please encourage your children, grandchildren and youth to participate in these excellent programs!

**RENEW UPDATE:** As you know, at Synod in May, 2013, the Diocese of Huron launched a “Mission and Renewal Initiative” as part of its Strategic Plan. In response, your Parish Council undertook an extensive campaign to educate parishioners about “Renew” and to obtain input from as many as possible. We hosted several

“Parish Feedback” sessions last Spring, inviting more than 100 parishioners to answer four questions: 1) What does a successful Church look like? 2) What do we do well here at St. George’s? 3) What will a successful Church look like five years from now? 4) What could/should we be doing better? A summary of responses was made available to all parishioners in September for further study, prayer and ultimately action. We are very pleased to report that various committees have read this summary and are beginning to act on its recommendations! In October, we asked for volunteers to help develop our own “Parish Vitality” outcomes and a plan based on this summary. We are meeting and hope to have that available soon. If anyone else would like to contribute to this planning process, please contact any of the wardens or Father Don.

**WARDENS NEEDED!** Our congregation needs two new wardens to replace Susan Butt and Nelson Cuthbert. Susan is completing her fourth and final year. Nelson is now in his fifth and final year as Warden. Being a warden provides a wonderful opportunity to work within our Church in a new capacity and help in the many facets of our parish! If you would like to learn more about this opportunity to serve your congregation, please contact any one of the Wardens or Father Don.

## SECRETARY/VESTRY CLERK NEEDED:

Christine Ledbury is also leaving her role as Secretary of Parish Council and Vestry Clerk. She has done a wonderful job for many years and is ready to “pass the baton” as of the next Vestry Meeting. We thank Christine for her long-time dedication to St. George’s in both of these important capacities. If you are interested in either or both of these volunteer positions, or know of someone who is or would be, please contact any one of the Wardens or Father Don.

**FOND FAREWELL:** We said goodbye to Rev. Marita and Fr. Javier at a potluck supper this fall as their talents were needed in other communities. Rev. Marita has given so much to St. George’s during the past several years and we will miss her. We thank Fr. Javier for his work in helping develop and leading our Spanish worship community during the past year.

## CHECK YOUR DONATIONS SUMMARY:

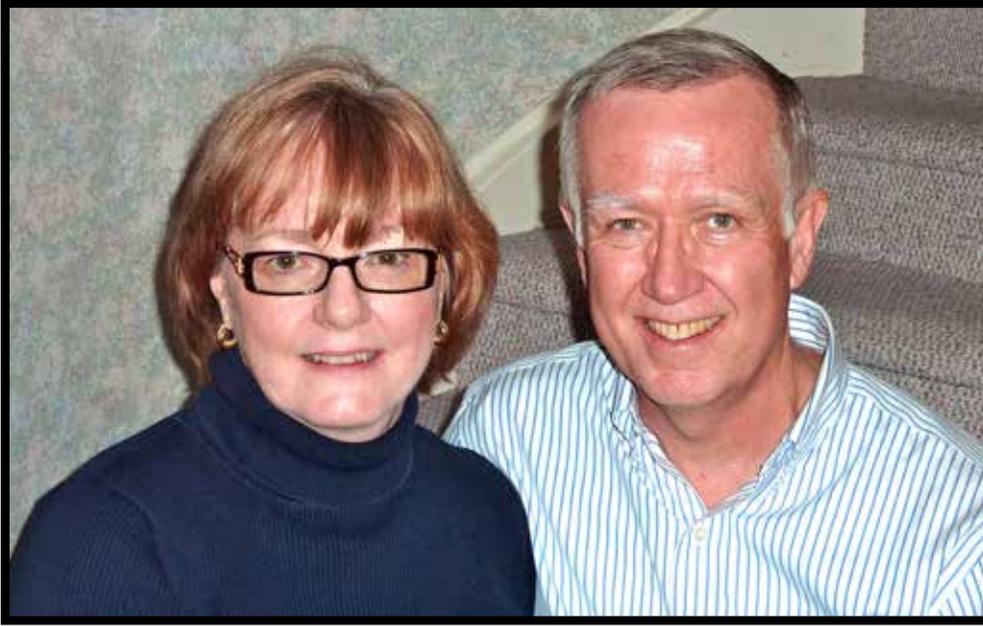
Envelope Secretary Nelson Cuthbert reminds everyone to check your recent year-to-date donations summary (Jan., 2013 to mid-Nov., 2013). If you have any concerns, please contact him directly (phone: 519-578-8671; email: cuthben@golden.net) or call Val, our Office Secretary (519-744-4751). Summaries are provided periodically throughout the year to assist you in tracking/reconciling your donations to St. George’s. A final summary will be issued in mid-February, 2014, listing your entire 2013 donations for income tax purposes.

**THANK-YOU!** We wish to extend our sincere thanks to our worship leaders: Fr. Don Davidson, Rev. Marita, Fr. Javier, Br. Mark, and MaryLynn Forrest, and to our music leaders: Robert Aszmies and John Shaw, for their dedication and ongoing service throughout 2013. Your Wardens are very grateful for the dedication of parishioners to St. George’s and look forward to many wonderful activities and accomplishments in 2014!

In closing, we encourage you, your family, and friends to take advantage of the many wonderful Advent services St. George’s provides. We look forward to worshipping with you and sharing together in the wonder of the Birth of our Lord. Wishing each of you a very blessed Christmas!

Yours in Christ,  
Mary Ann, Susan, Vivian, Jesus and Nelson

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU: *The story behind familiar faces at St. George's*



**Valerie and Nelson Cuthbert**

**They complete each other's sentences They check with each other before answering a question. Their favourite pronoun is "we."**

"They" are Nelson and Valerie Cuthbert, a couple who, since their respective retirements, have devoted even more hours to St. George's than before. Nelson has served as a warden for a record five years. For most of this year, he served as interim treasurer, while also helping us keep track of our donations as envelope secretary. He's organized the sidespeople for Sunday services for more than 20 years. He's very involved with the RENEW campaign. A previous Sunday School teacher and coordinator, Val has been instrumental in starting up and coordinating our Bible Study group. She also supports our after-service fellowship by organizing and training volunteers to make coffee and tea. Both sing in the choir each Sunday. And whenever there's a parish event such as the recent auction, you'll usually find Nelson and Val either leading others or helping out.

Why are they such dedicated volunteers? Nelson responds, "I want to keep a place going that will help combat the negative influences of the secular world. I see so many get benefit from St. George's, not just by going to church but through our outreach. I want to continue to see needs being met through Little Dragon day camp, and Moms and Tots. I also see a lot of potential in the RENEW campaign which is why I've devoted so much time to it. Plus, I

get a great deal of satisfaction from helping out."

A secondary school math teacher for 18 years and a vice-principal/principal for 15, Nelson found himself "in a vacuum" upon his retirement five years ago. Fortunately, Jim Stirling stepped in and encouraged him to become a warden.

**"So many people have difficulties in life and don't realize the importance of faith."**

**– Nelson**

Val says becoming warden helped Nelson with the transition to retirement: "It was a good thing for him." As warden, he sees the operation of the church as a whole. Plus he finds there are similarities between running a school and "running" a church with its teams of volunteers. It's essential to make everyone feel valued and get them involved. "It all boils down to fostering relationships. People have the Holy Spirit in their center and they will volunteer if asked. Otherwise they fade away," says Nelson.

Nelson's faith, not only in God, but in St. George's and its people, is very evident when he speaks. He feels strongly that we need to keep our church a welcoming place, both spiritually and physically. In his role as warden

he works with Murray Gamble and the property committee to keep the boiler repaired, the light bulbs changed and the paint fresh or whatever else needs doing. As Val comments, "You don't think about all the jobs that get done" - or who's doing them!

Upon her retirement, Val joined our choir, eager to get back to the singing she enjoyed as a child. "It's nice to come back to something you've done before. Going to practices is a fun thing too." In regard to her involvement in so many church activities, Val says, "At this time in our lives, we're able to do these things." She and Nelson often decide together what projects they will take on: "I look at what needs doing. I like variety." She credits her parents' involvement in the Anglican church as her inspiration.

Outside of church, Val enjoys gardening and participating in the Book Club. "I'm also learning to knit . . . dishcloths!" she laughs.

In addition to contributing his voice to our choir, Nelson has been a member of the Cambridge male chorus for more than 30 years. This fall, he joined the Ontario male chorus in Toronto. He is a talented musician, playing piano and pipe organ. (At age 16, he was the paid organist at a Baptist church!) Instructed by his father, an industrial arts teacher, Nelson is also a handy man who likes to work with wood. (He built five flights of stairs at the family cottage in Muskoka!)

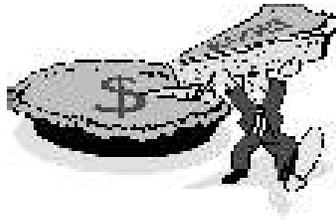
Nelson and Val met when they were teaching math across the hall from one another at Preston High School. They were married in 1980 and moved to Kitchener the next year. They visited a number of different churches, but quickly decided on St. George's after meeting Father Bob Bennett. They have a son, Rob (26), who is a mechanical engineer. Their 29-year-old daughter, Sarah, is married and works as a respiratory technologist at Grand River Hospital.

Nelson and Val are determined to help St. George's continue to move forward as a strong, welcoming, committed community of faithful people. They would be the first to say that they are just two of many talented people in our congregation. But we're blessed to have this dynamic duo working diligently on our behalf!

– Helen Hickman

## A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT:

# Our Budget... is it a Faith Statement?



What does your church's annual budget represent?

Is it a proud menu of the hopes, dreams and missionary ministries your congregation wants to accomplish in the year to come?

Or is it a life-support prescription for how the congregation expects to pay the staff, keep the lights burning, the sanctuary heated the roof fixed and the grass mowed?

If we view the budget – and present it to our congregations – as an administrative management necessity to ensure proper financial management, then we shouldn't be surprised to wind up with bare-bones measures that are grudgingly funded. If funded at all.

But if we present the budget to our congregations as opportunities to invest in the Kingdom of God and stretch ourselves to see how much we can do with even the nickels and dimes God has given us, then the possibilities increase.

In the end, a budget is a statement about how a congregation views the future. Do your people trust that ours is the God of abundance who rewards faithful stewards; a God that will stand behind servants who proclaim the Kingdom? Does your budget reflect the means by which we make the most of the abundance the Lord is giving us. Or, not? Put it this way: If an outsider looked at your budget, what would he or she conclude about your congregation's faith?

## KUDOS TO FRAN ROTHENBERG...

and her volunteers for their hard work in organizing and preparing our very attractive and useful parish directory. Many thanks also to our advertisers for their support.

Despite diligent proofreading, a few errors escaped notice. Please make the following corrections:

- Wayne & June Matheson's telephone number is: 519-746-2881
- Joan MacKellar's unit # is: 21 (not 20)
- Graeme Welsford/Sheri Armstrong's telephone number is: 519-885-0336

If you notice any other errors, please contact Fran (519-744-2502) so corrections can be published.

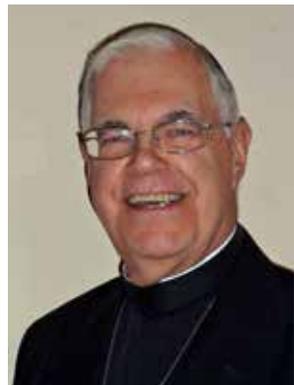
For anyone who did not purchase a directory and would like one, a few copies remain in the office. Cost is \$5.00 each.

## FAREWELL TO REV. MARITA

On Sept. 29, parishioners bid farewell to Rev. Marita Williams and her husband, Henry, while partaking in a tasty potluck meal. Rev. Marita will be assisting the archdeacon with the five Anglican churches in Cambridge, where she resides. At the same time, we also said goodbye to Father Javier, our Spanish priest, who will be taking charge of a parish in the Niagara area.



## FROM THE DEACON'S BENCH



**Blessed be your holidays,  
Cozy be your hearth;  
Merry be your family,  
Peaceful be your hearts.**

Happy are the people to whom such blessings fall;  
happy are the people whose God is the Lord.

Psalm 144:15

Happy Christmas everyone!

BM †

Brother Mark, S.B.



Mary Ann and Ron Millar planned and organized a successful road rally this fall. Nearly 40 participants toured throughout Waterloo Region, responding to clues at "hot spots" from New Dundee to Heidelberg. Their efforts were rewarded with a delicious potluck supper at the final mystery destination: the home of Charlotte and Bill Cromarty!

# PARISH AUCTION: MANY HANDS LEAD TO SUCCESS!

Thompson Hall was the site of another very successful Parish Dinner and Auction on Saturday, October 26. More than 25 volunteers plus the contributions of many generous parishioners and corporate donors helped to make the evening entertaining and fun!

A delicious lasagna dinner was enjoyed by all along with refreshments throughout the evening. Professional auctioneer Ken Martinow did a great job of keeping the auction interesting and lively. After expenses, we raised \$4,750 for our general Church funds – wonderful! Thanks to all participants for a great evening! We look forward to the Auction returning in another two years' time – see you then!

- Co-chairs Nelson Cuthbert and Jim Stirling



Gary Knoop awaits customers.



Auctioneer Ken Martinow keeps the event moving with help from Co-chair Nelson Cuthbert and others.



TOP: Our own "Vanna White" (a.k.a. Lillian Cressman) displays an auction item.

BOTTOM: The King family pitches in to clean up after the lasagna dinner.

# FIRST CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY CLOSET A SUCCESS!



On Saturday, October 5, our Outreach Committee hosted St. George's first Children's Community Closet event. Thanks to the generosity of parish members, family and friends, we had a fabulous response to our call for clothing donations. We filled 15 tables with clothing items in sizes from newborn to young adult. Through your generous support we were able to assist many local families. Remaining items were given to Share the Warmth, Salvation Army and Saint Monica House. Thank you for opening your closets and your hearts to our community. Please continue to set aside clothing for our next event in the spring.

# YOUR GENEROSITY HELPS HOMELESS!

Thank you to everyone who donated meat for this year's hamburger drive for St. John's Kitchen. We collected an amazing 71.5 lbs.!! St John's personnel were thrilled because they rarely receive meat donations!

- Outreach Committee

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