

We wish to welcome Wendy Williston & Charlotte Cromarty to the Team! Over the next while they will be learning the ropes and reading the fine print of all that the job entails!

Thanks to the Members of the 2015 Parish Council. We appreciate your Stewardship in life of the parish in all the areas you volunteer.

As we come together in Worship we gather as a faith community and in that space of time we pray, hear The Word, sing and celebrate together. As ASCEND takes flight this will be an exciting year at St. Georges.

Mary Ann, Mike, Wendy & Charlotte

It's that time of the year again, when we stand on the precipice of a new year and look forward to what is in store for us in 2015. The church has a monumental opportunity to provide healing, justice, care, and compassion in new and exciting ways — ways I believe are important for the church in the upcoming year.

**1. Review what happened in 2014. What worked? What didn't?** Where did we spend our money? How did we touch people's lives? What one word would describe 2014? Take some time and objectively look at what transpired in 2014.

**2. Honestly answer the question, "Why in the world would anyone want to come to this church?"** I believe this is the biggest question that every church must ask itself.

**3. Answer, "If we closed our doors tomorrow, who would miss us?"** Is the church a place to go on Sunday morning or an impactful piece of the community?

**4. Then ask the even harder question** — "If no one would miss us, then what are we doing here?"

**5. Speak up for the voiceless in our own backyard.** Instead of constantly looking at overseas missions, are we looking in our own backyard? Are there areas that we are missing because we think someone else is handling the problem?

**6. Have honest conversations about hard issues. We often fear talking about the burning issues because we are afraid that we might offend someone. And then we ask why the world beyond our walls often sees us as irrelevant.**

**7. Re-evaluate missions. What is the purpose of missions?** What is our mission as followers of Christ?

**8. Remember that failure is not a bad word. So you planned and planned and planned some more and your ministry idea that was supposed to bring people the good news didn't get off the ground. Well ... that's OK. Ministry is tough. Failure is never easy but it something we must see not as a negative but as a growing point.**

**9. Love the people, love the people, love the people.**

**10. Answer,** "If someone came to this community for the first time what would their impression be?"

**11. Stop the bodies-in-the-pews game. There is more to being a ministry of God than painstakingly counting bodies in the pews.** This is does not mean people who are missing are unimportant — it means the church needs to stop defining itself by numbers physically in attendance. What if we worried about how many lives we have touched, instead of the number of people that come on Sunday morning?

**12. Pray for ... everything. Patience, peace, mercy, safety,** movement of the spirit, direction. Start praying and never stop. The church, the world, and our souls need it.

**13. Increase giving. It takes faith to increase giving even during good financial stability but even more when it times are tough.** Have faith, take courage, and step out and increase the giving of the church. It doesn't have to be much, but it has to be some. Watch what happens when a little is given in faith.

**14. Decrease complaining. Yes, there is a lot to do and few workers to do it.** The budget may have its pitfalls and attendance is not what it once was 40 years ago, but that doesn't mean we have to let it affect us and our life. We have a lot to be thankful for. Attitude is important — especially in the church. If people are always complaining — especially about insignificant things — then this will spill over to all parts of the church.

**15. Don't give up on the church. I know what Christ said** — that the gates of Hell will not prevail against the church — but there are times when this feels untrue. While we might not always like the direction the church is heading we cannot give up on it. God has never given up on us — let's not give up on God.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM VESTRY

**\*Father Don's Sabbatical has been moved from 2014 to 2015 and has been approved.** Father Don will be away from St. George's June 1 – August 31. He will spend 4 weeks in the diocese of Columbia, South America and the last four weeks he will travel to a very remote part of Brazil. Anyone interested in joining him, is encouraged to contact him through the church office.

**\*Roof Update-** Three quotes for replacement of the roof have been reviewed and by the end of February, the committee will select a roofer based on feedback from the congregation. The roof is slated to be done in the spring, during the better weather.

**\*Pastoral Care Team** – Brother Mark noted that the work of the pastoral care team is done quietly

and faithfully. There is always room to join this group. Anyone wishing more information is encouraged to contact the church office.

**\*Beer & Bibles-** This group which normally meets Wednesday evenings, 7:30, at Casey's in the Sunrise Plaza, will hold special Lenten bible study with Bishop Terry. For locations, check the church website.

**\*Pneumonia Prevention Vests** – Fran Rothenberg recognized all those in the parish who contribute to this outreach programme. These vests are used in South America to prevent the onset of pneumonia during the very cold nights. There is always room for new knitters to join the team. Instructions will be provided.

**\*Budget Review** – A. Taylor reviewed St.

George's financial spread sheets. She is pleased to announce that there is a small surplus this year for a variety of reasons. The hope is we may have the same kind of surplus in 2015. Again, consider joining those in the parish who make their regular contributions through automatic debit. Put the counters out a job!

**\*Advertising in the KW Record** – after Parish Council conducted a survey of the congregation, they have decided to discontinue weekly advertising in the KW Record. More and more people use Google and Internet to check the activities at St. George's the exception to advertising in the newspaper would happen around Christmas and Easter services.

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

## *The story behind familiar faces at St. George's*



Allan and Susan Lee

**I didn't know what to expect when asked to meet and interview Allan and Susan Lee for this issue of the Dragon Flyer. After all, this energetic couple started attending St. George's about a year ago and I had not had many opportunities to interact with them. As their story unfolded I found it fascinating and was surprised when I checked my watch to find that we had been conversing for almost two hours. My challenge became one of reducing five pages of notes to a single page for our newsletter.**

Allan's formative years were spent in Galt graduating from Glenview Park S.S. in 1986. As a youth he was immersed in a wide array of activities including Lutheran youth groups, Scouting (he attended the World Jamboree in Kananaskis, Alberta), and all things musical. Allan's father played trumpet with the Galt Kinsmen Boy's Band. It took a little while for him to embrace his son's choice of playing tuba but did support him as he grew musically. Allan's musical talents led to scholarship offers at several universities. In the end, Allan chose to follow a long time mentor Jane Maness (K-W Symphony) and attend Wilfrid Laurier University, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Musical Performance in 1991. Allan's love of the performing arts has propelled him into roles of stage manager, lighting designer, and improv theatre with Theatre Laurier, Galt Little Theatre, and K-W Little Theatre. This is in addition to regular performances with a variety of local bands and orchestras. Technology is another

field in which Allan excels and his problem-solving abilities created job opportunities with several computer companies including Microsoft as well as Cooperators Insurance in Guelph. At one point on his career path he was District Manager for Waterloo Music (now named St. John's Music). He now does freelance work in the fields of music and technology.

Susan was born in St. Thomas and lived with her family on a farm near Aylmer until her father accepted a position as Agriculture Representative for the Lindsay area in Ontario. Susan attended high school in Lindsay but her family was soon on the move again, this time to Fergus. After completing grade 13, Susan opted for a program in music studies (with a minor in family studies) at the University of Western Ontario from which she graduated in 1994. With a teaching career as her professional goal she completed her educator training at Althouse College also in London. With declining student enrolment, landing a full-time teaching position in Ontario has become more and more difficult. Susan has paid her dues; starting with supply teaching in Lindsay and Fenelon Falls, to a long-term occasional position in Galt, to a mixed bag of math, family studies and music courses at Grand River C.I., to her present position as Department Head of Music at that school.

How did this couple with diverse backgrounds meet? In February of 2000, both were invited to perform in a concert by the K-W Community Orchestra. For Susan (trombone) and Allan (tuba) it was definitely not love at first sight (there was even the hint of competition between the two of them). Being invited back for a second concert sparked a little more interest although Allan confessed he was in a long distance relationship at the time and actually flew to Vancouver with a ring in hand. Second thoughts brought him back home "single" and it was Susan who initiated the next step in their relationship with an invite to the K-W Jazz Festival (even though Susan is not a big fan of Jazz). Within a few days including a 4 hour drive chasing late evening thunderstorms, Allan had met Susan's parents and the connection between the two became obvious. They were married in 2002 by former St. Paul's Lutheran Pastor Everett Mosman in the backyard of Susan's parents with the 50-piece Mississauga Pops Concert Band as a backdrop. Susan's engagement "ring" was actually a brand new Yamaha Bass Trombone that went along with the diamond

ring originally worn by Allan's grandmother. Exploring religious affiliations with Allan and Susan was quite interesting. If I have this recorded correctly, Susan was baptized in the United church but also attended Baptist, Missionary, and Presbyterian services during her formative years and the Anglican Chapel on the campus of the University of Western Ontario while studying in London. On the other hand, Allan's main parish was St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Galt, which is part of the Eastern Synod. For a time, the married couple were members of Historic St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Kitchener which was in the Missouri Synod. This branch of the Lutheran faith is very structured and conservative. This led them to explore other faith options that provided some formality but also more contemporary components within services and of course a vibrant musical feel. St. George's website convinced this couple to 'give our parish a try'. They have found St. George's to be a busy, happy and inviting congregation. Very quickly a connection was made with our Director of Music Rob which created opportunities to use Allan's and Susan's musical talents (if you attended the service of lessons and carols in December that talent was evident).

Allan and Susan share their home with two 14-year old tabby cats named Jack and Jill. They both said they are home bodies but have made some longer excursions to secure new instruments (Allan took Susan to Wisconsin to acquire a custom built trombone for an anniversary celebration). Susan likes to sew, tat, and cross stitch (she has some wonderful framed examples of her work). Allan invited me downstairs to view his hobbies - his collection of musical CDs and movie DVDs blew me away. Both like to share time preparing an evening meal (Allan is the main course guru while Susan who likes to bake specializes in desserts).

With commitments to perform with musical groups such as the Wellington Winds, K-W Community Orchestra, and the Stratford Symphony, as well as teaching and freelance responsibilities, this is one busy couple. With the recent announcement of our ASCEND campaign and even with their hectic schedule, the Lees are prepared to share their time and talent in the fields of music and technology as present workloads permit. We are fortunate that they found us - we hope that their association with St. George's will continue for many years to come.