

# St. Andrew's Church- Winter Newsletter

2022

## Minister's Message

Using only two words, Antoinette Portis tells the wonder filled story of a mother and young child who are on their way to the subway. The mother tells her son to hurry but he keeps asking her to wait as he notices so much happening all around them. There is a dog that needs petting. There is an ice-cream truck with pictures of delightful treats. There are fish and flowers to admire and a butterfly that inspires awe. Ducks need to be fed and rain drops need to be tasted.

The mother's word, "Hurry", relates the urgency of their journey. They have somewhere to be and a certain amount of time to get there.

The young child's word, "Wait", relates that there is so much to see and to do along the way. The child pauses to marvel at the world around him, to enjoy the journey.

At the end of the story, while the subway train sits in the station loading passengers, the boy once again says, "Wait". He has noticed that there is a double rainbow in the sky. His mother stops and looks. She agrees that they should wait and enjoy the beauty of the rainbows rather than hurry.

This story speaks to me of the push and pull of life. So often our word is "Hurry" – so often our word needs to be "Hurry" – yet there are moments that call us to wait, to slow down and notice the people and the world around us.

We are entering a time of year that is filled with the word "Hurry" and yet we are invited in the Season of Advent, perhaps even called, to wait. We are invited to slow down and linger in the story. We are invited to notice the wonder of God breaking into the world and take time reflect on what that meant to the people who were there when Jesus was born and what it means for us today. We are invited to be still in a time of already but not yet as we journey to Bethlehem and the birth of God's special Son.

As we enter the Season of Advent, may we find moments, may we make time & take time for moments, where our word is, "Wait".

Much Peace,  
Rev. Laura Duggan



## A Season of Giving

With gratitude in our hearts, the St. Andrew's family has been busy serving our community in many ways. The collection for **LOFT**, a street outreach service for those who are homeless was an outstanding success. Thank you to all that donated, collected & shared the gifts of hope. The Main Street **Tree Lighting** was an exciting, joyous & well attended event. Our church, along with the Citizens band, provided music & faith-filled song to lead the crowds & welcome the beginning of the Christmas season in downtown Newmarket. The **Santa Clause Parade** was an opportunity for St. Andrew's to offer hospitality, respite for those who were cold & hot beverages & snacks. Thank you to all who helped in the kitchen & in serving the crowds.

The **student Care Packages** are on their way to our St. Andrew's students to let them know that we are always with them in their lives, no matter where they are! We filled 21 boxes this year. Thank you to everyone that contributed shoeboxes, treats and prayers to these thoughtful, sugar-filled packages.

Women's Fellowship is collecting much needed items for **Evangel Hall** again this year. Please see the bin & list of items most needed in the narthex by the office door.

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Hello, Friends.

As I write this, I am still in the throes of Covid recovery. I tested negative after 14 days of positivity, and my energy and enthusiasm are slowly returning.

What a ride! The words of the Prophet Isaiah 40:30-31 have sustained me.

“Even those who are young grow weak;  
young people can fall exhausted.  
But those who trust in the Lord for help  
will find their strength renewed.  
They will rise on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not get weary;  
they will walk and not grow weak.”

These words have always encouraged me and kept me strong in my faith, and I am so thankful for the strength of faith you continue to model in what you have done and are doing in your life and at the church. This past Fall, many of you participated in the life of the church in a variety of ways, and I believe this positively affects our spiritual health.

There are so many of you to thank. Thank you to our grass cutters and hedge trimmers for maintaining the church grounds in a way that models we are faithful stewards of God's creation. Thank you to the Garden Club for beautifying our property in a way that highlights our own creativity. Thank you to our Audio/Visual Team for continuing to navigate challenging times and making our worship service available to those beyond our walls. Thank you to Andrew Cox for accepting the mantle of Loaves and Fishes Ambassador for the Canadian Food Grains Bank, following in the footsteps of Merv Jessop and Jeanne van Dalen. Thank you to more and more of you who are returning to in-person worship as you are able.

As you can see, our journey of faith is not so much about getting rid of what ails us or becoming passive, as it is about living well over the long haul.

Our walk in faith is not as much about solving life's challenges as it is our ability to manage them in hopeful and intentional ways. God's Holy Spirit helps us with this through praise, worship, and community life as Followers of Jesus Christ and His values. I pray your Advent and Christmas seasons are Spirit-filled and led, and I look forward to seeing you soon. May God's blessings, Christ's peace, and the Holy Spirit's guidance remain a strong presence within you.

Robert



Thank you to all that volunteered, attended & helped prepare for **Messy Church**. This fun & interactive evening event, led participants on a Journey to Christmas.

### **Tori Smit's Interactive "Living Room"**

Tori Smit, our Synod Consultant for Faith Formation, has created an interactive "google living room" again this year. Tori includes stories and wonderful activities for the season. It is lots of fun & worth checking out.

We will share a link in the announcement e-mail and in the weekly e-mail sent to Church School families.

### **Mitten Tree Sunday is Sunday December 4<sup>th</sup>.**

When we first began decorating the "Mitten Tree", it was something done by the children. Since that time, we have included some of our Elders, Grandparents and the Senior Youth Group. Now, I'm never sure if the smiles from the Senior Choir are genuine, or trying to mask some serious worry about all of the mittens, hats and scarves flying through the air very near their heads.... It is a time of laughter, celebration and incredible generosity, as we decorate the Tree with our gifts of warmth and caring.

These gifts, that we have such fun giving, will go to people in our community who need help staying warm this winter.

### **Church School Pageant – Sunday December 18th**

In the past few years, we have learned to be creative as the Church School students and young people have shared the Christmas Story. Parents and Grandparents have shared in the telling and in the music. At the beginning of the Pandemic, we asked families to record pieces of the story and a Pageant was "knit" together by our wonderful editors. Last year, we took turns in the Sanctuary, sharing different parts, which again were "knit" together by a wonderful editor. There were times that technology was our friend, and there were times that it was not.... But the story was still told and still shared.

This year, our children and young people, along with the choir, will share the story in a slightly new way, again. We invite everyone to become part of the telling. Everyone is invited to become a person who was there at the manger, from their seat in a pew, or upfront on the chancel, if they would like. Everyone is invited to listen to beautiful music, and to sing joyfully. Everyone is invited to hear and to know that they are part of God's continuing story.

### **Longest Night Service – Wednesday December 21<sup>st</sup> at 4pm**

A time of remembering loss and grief, and many other emotions, in the midst of a season where we are meant to be filled with joy and celebration.

A gentle time of remembering and hope

### **Join us on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the birth of Jesus**

A Service of Lessons and Carols at 7pm  
Lessons, Carols and Communion at 9pm

### **The Christmas Giving Tree**

The "Giving Tree" has been placed in the Sanctuary. It is decorated with ornaments that share ideas for gifts that can be given to help people in need this Christmas. Ornaments can be taken from the tree—the item purchased and then both the gift and the decoration placed in the box under the tree by December 22nd.

The gifts will be taken to the Salvation Army where they will be included in Christmas boxes.

**Offering Envelopes** are ready for pickup in the Narthex, starting Sunday December 4th for those that requested them. If you would like envelopes or want to arrange an alternative pick up, please see Cory P, our envelope secretary, or call the office.



### **A Note from our Clerk of Session**

Throughout the pandemic, the session continued to meet regularly via Zoom technology, then returned to in person meetings in April. Everyone realized how much we had missed the actual personal contact that a “real” meeting brings!

It has also been a sad time for the congregation and session. Early in the year we lost two long time members, Lillian Wilson and Roger Taylor and more recently, Nancy Cain and Don McCallum, (one of our elders) - all of whom were active in the work of the congregation until ill health and the pandemic restricted their activities.

St. Andrew’s has always been so fortunate to have those who live out our congregational vision of “seeking to share, show and speak the love and joy of God.”

September is also a time that we look forward to a new church year. We have fellowship once again after the Sunday service and the Corn Roast was a great opportunity to eat, laugh and sing together. The fall always brings renewed activities - Church school, choir, meetings and this year, the anticipation of “Messy Church”.

This is a wonderful time for all of us to renew our faith journey and once again reconnect to the family and community that St. Andrew’s continues to be for all of us.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Diane Hamilton  
Clerk



## St. Andrew's Financial Update Winter 2022

### 'Our Church Work' Current Operating Account as of October 31, 2022:

Revenues received: \$177,360  
Expenses: \$219,648  
Deficit: **-\$42,288** (negative balance)  
Cash balance on Jan 01, 2022: \$27,189  
Current cash balance: **- \$15,099**

Presbyterians Sharing: \$15,210 (our 2022 target \$20,000)

At the Annual Meeting in March, we projected finishing this year with a deficit of **-\$ 28,000** in 'Our Church Work' (Current) Account, even with the application of the January surplus (\$27,189). With the anticipated givings for this December, the Federal CEBA loan and the January surplus, we estimate that the deficit will be closer to **-\$5,000 to -\$10,000** (negative balance). This will be an improvement over the expected deficit.

In addition, we have accumulated just over \$15,000 toward our goal of \$20,000 for Presbyterians Sharing.

The Finance and Stewardship Committee would like to thank the congregation for your support of 'Our Church Work' (Current Account). It continues to be a challenging year for us all, as we gradually emerge from Covid-19 and cope with the current flu season and the current economic climate.

As we prepare for the Advent season, we recognize that home budgets will be challenged with personal Christmas expenses and the range of requests to support each other in our communities. As you plan your intended givings for this December, please know that St. Andrew's greatly appreciates your continued commitment to our operating accounts and seasonal Advent appeals.

John Hopkins (905) 853-7131

johnahopkins80@gmail.com

Finance and Stewardship Convener

On behalf of the Committee:

George Smith, Bruce Lindsay, Anthony Samuel, Cory Philip and Jane Martone



Through the season of Advent leading into Christmas, we will be singing your favorite Christmas carols in the sanctuary before worship. Please plan to arrive 10-15 min early if you want to participate.

## The Season of Advent

### 1st Advent– HOPE

**November 27** Everyone is invited to bring a Nativity Scene, an ornament, or a recipe, as we share some of our Advent Traditions at Coffee Hour.

### 2nd Advent– PEACE

**December 4** Come join in the fun as we ‘decorate’ the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary with Mittens, hats & scarfs. Thank you to everyone who generously donated these items for those who need assistance keeping warm this winter season.

### 3rd Advent– JOY

**December 11** Join us for a special Hot Chocolate bar & treats in the Fellowship hall following service.

### 4th Advent– LOVE

**December 18** Come journey with Jesus & Mary as our Church Family shares an interactive Pageant during worship.

### Longest Night Worship

**December 21** at 4pm Join us for this special service to remember those we have lost & grieve for in our lives

### Christmas Eve

**December 24** 7:00pm Candlelight service (family friendly)

9:00pm Lessons, Carols and Communion

**December 25** Christmas Day Worship