



News from the Pews for Sunday January 8th 2023

Happy New Year to all our readers!

This is the first of our “News from the Pews”, a revised version of the previous newsletter. News from the Pews will contain stories, pictures and happenings from, by and for the members of the congregation. It will also contain the “Minister’s Message”, Birthdays and Anniversaries, a Treasurer’s Update, Trivia, special requests from Bridges to Hope, and of course Special Events happening at St. David’s. Also, from time to time, there will be archival pictures and stories.

Minister's Message



Christmas has come and gone, and the more industrious among us have begun to clear away the decorations and prepare for the new year. I am not one of them, but I will say that I've at least *looked* at my Christmas decorations and *thought* about putting them away. But the tree hasn't dropped too many needles yet, and it still looks beautiful and festive, so for now I think it will stay up (at least in our house).

It did get me thinking about the process of putting away all those delicate little ornaments though, and the experience of boxing them up now to bring them back out next time, unwrapping and admiring each one again. I thought it reminded me of what grief is like. At first, grief is an ornament that hangs right in front of you, and can't be escaped. Then, it finds new places to hang; on a chair that used to belong to someone, on a song you shared together, or on the smell of their perfume. Each time you see it, you remember. In my case, it's a bit literal, since we have two little paw-print ornaments we got last year to put pictures of our cats in, not knowing neither of them would make it to this Christmas.

Eventually, you may be able to put the ornament away sometimes, and bring it out when you want to remember. The grief may be less intrusive, but it isn't really gone, either. It's just carefully stored, preserved, ready for next time.

But this is also the hope of one of my biggest hopes, because of what I know the Bible says about Heaven. See, Heaven is the land where you bring your box of grief, and the ornaments are transformed. The bitterness will be gone, the sweet will remain, and we will no longer suffer the loss of those things because loss will be no more. I have grief that I will carry with me all of my life, guarded close to my heart and packaged lovingly away. But there will be a heavenly tree for my ornaments one day, the grief will be transformed to joy, and then I will never put them away aga

Treasurer's Announcement

In Nov 2022, I was concerned that there would be insufficient funds to pay all our bills for 2022 and took that message to Session. An appeal was announced and although we did not meet the full “ask”, we were able to pay all 2022 salaries, bills and donations to others (Presbyterian Sharing, Bridges to Hope, PWS&D, Ukraine support, ANC House, AMS and the WA). However, we will be in the same state come February when we will have to dip into our Line of Credit (LOC) to pay our people, suppliers and the PCC.

What is going on with our finances? Like everyone else our expenses are rising and our income is shrinking. One example is our fuel bill. We are on a monthly pay plan and for the 2021 – 2022 plan period we were paying \$1,535 each month. However, at the end of the pay plan period in November 2022 we received a notice that we had an outstanding balance of \$3,711.43 due and payable. Our new monthly payment is \$2,597. That is just one example.

At the last Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) a **\$55,000 deficit budget** was passed. At the start of 2022 we had \$12,000 in a sinking fund to pay the government loan due Dec 31, 2023. For the first half of the year I put off what bills I could, I used the full LOC and dipped into the sinking fund when necessary to pay our people and what bills I could not defer. In June we received \$42,000 from the St. Aiden's Fund, allowing me to start paying off the LOC and some of our suppliers. That got us to November.

Enough of the bad news. I would like to thank all those who contribute to our church in so many ways, not just monetarily. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Special Appeal and to those who have made the decision to up their monthly givings. It's never too late to make a donation!

If you have some thoughts or suggestions on what to do and how to proceed, I would indeed welcome them.

Please look at the following trivia question, to see the evolution of the church during 1926. A time much like the one we are now.

Church Trivia Questions

For some time now, I have been leading up to an upcoming anniversary in 2025 - the 250th anniversary of this church.

Way back when:

Last week the question was: Was there any celebration of the church's 150th anniversary in 1925?

The answer is: 1925 was a bad year: declining membership, decreased offerings, sad losses including beloved Sunday School teacher Miss Lillian Cowan, and much needed repairs. So, at the annual meeting of the congregation (a contentious affair by all reports) a decision to mortgage the Allendale property was made. But nothing was allowed to spoil the year's great event, the 150th Anniversary lasting for a full week. Sunday Oct 18th His Excellency the Governor was at the 11 am service and Professor J. L. Paton MA recently appointed Principal of Memorial College addressed the 7 pm service. Other services were held throughout the week culminating in the Oct 25th services, with Rev. Power of the Kirk at the 11 am service and the 7 pm service was conducted by Rev. McDermott from the Fortune Bay Mission.

This week the question is: What happened in 1926 - another bad year?

Answer: They took out a bank loan, the last English minister left, the church was visited six times by the General Secretary of the British & Foreign Bible Society in Canada and Newfoundland – none other than Rev. J. B. M. Armour (father of Rev. J. S. S. Armour). The Queen's Road Church evolved into a small congregation of faithful people who worshipped regularly, had Communion once a month and operated on an annual budget of between \$3,500 and \$4,000. **They found a way to survive.**

Birthdays and Anniversaries and Graduations

Belated birthday wishes go out to Rukiya Yusuf who celebrated her birthday on January 1st! We know that Rukiya's family – including husband, Thomas and children, Shemsadin, Solomon and Beli and all her friends, made it a very special day for her! Congratulations Rukiya from your St. David's family! We hope you had a wonderful day and may there be many more birthdays to come!

Happy Birthday greetings to Stephen McKenzie who will be celebrating his birthday on January 8th. Stephen is the son of Cynthia and David McKenzie. Best wishes Stephen for a great day spent with family and friends and congratulations from everyone here at St. David's!

Happy Birthday greetings to Alexander Bassler who will be turning 10 on January 14th. Best wishes to Alexander for a great birthday spent with family and friends including his mom and dad, Sarah and Paul Bassler, siblings, Timothy, Julia, and Ritaj and proud grand-father, Gerhard Bassler. And Happy Birthday from your St. David's family!

Happy Birthday to Jayce Froude who will be 7 years old on January 12th! Jayce will be celebrating with his classmates, friends and family including Karen, Paul, Madelyn, Drayton, Scarlett and Carrie and of course his grandparents, Sue and Ken. A big day for sure! Your St. David's family wishes you a fun-filled birthday Jayce! All our love.

If you know of someone who is going to have a birthday or an anniversary in the coming days or weeks, please call or email the church

Bridges to Hope

It's a new year, and the demand for food assistance continues!

For 2023, Bridges To Hope will suggest a specific food item to be contributed by members of supporting churches on **the first Sunday of each month**. Of course, this item, and other non-perishable food items, can be given any other Sunday as well. These items are staples in the food hampers distributed and will go a long way to ensuring that hampers can be filled. **For the month of January, we are suggesting canned meat/fish.**

Thank you for your support!

This week's three best buys for your Shopping List are:

Orange Juice at Walmart	\$0.87
KD at Sobeys	\$0.97
Heinz Bean at No Frills	\$0.99

Upcoming Events

VOWR will be broadcasting three services from St. David's in the next couple of months, so please circle these dates on your calendars. Those services are:

Jan 22nd

February 26th and

April 9th (Easter)

The VOWR services are each Sunday evening at 7 pm. If you would like to know the full schedule of church services, please contact the church office and a copy will be sent out to you.

Good Companions and Friends Christmas Lunch

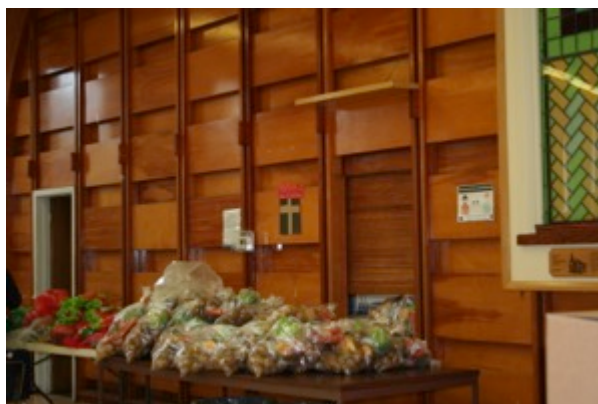
The Good Companions (GC) and friends met for a hot turkey dinner with all the trimmings on December 15th. This was a very special event – the first GC Christmas get-together since 2019! It was a great start to the Christmas Season. There were warm smiles, laughter and much chatter. The turkey dinner and the homemade dessert was enjoyed by all, but it was the opportunity just to get out and meet up with old friends – and some new friends - that made the day. After the meal, the tables were cleared, and space was made for bridge and carpet bowling.... a great way to work off some of that dinner! A big thank-you to everyone who helped out with the dinner - from prep to cleanup and everything in between - your support means everything!

Good Companion will start again for 2023 On Thursday, January 12th (from 2:00 – 4:00pm). See you then!!!

Christmas Hampers

The 2022 Christmas Hamper Project was another great success! There are many people to thank including: Lillian Crawford and Anne Calver who know how to organize and shop; Ian and Steve Bruneau who picked up the contributions from Community Food Sharing and got them to the Church Hall; Olive and Charlie Oliver who put the boxes together, labelled them and stacked them on stage; Eleanor Bonnell and Becky Quinton who sorted the food and helped organize the items on the tables ready for packing; Allison and Steve and Brian (and helper) who packed all the boxes; Becky and Cassidy Quinton, who kept the hampers moving smoothly from the Hall to the waiting drivers; and to all the drivers who dropped off the hampers to families in St. John's and metro area. It goes without saying that none of this would have been possible without the tremendous support of everyone from St. David's. Every donation you made, whether actual food, money or your time, went towards making this Christmas very special for many families. The Christmas spirit is alive and well. Thank-you all!

Below are a few pictures from Hamper Day. Who do you recognize?





A special thank-you to Jessica Thorne and Zack Barnes who not only dropped off some hampers but also helped wrap the special gift baskets!

Christmas Greetings from the Wamsteeker Family

It's always great to hear from the Wamsteekers and get caught up on how they are doing in Calgary. Diana always writes a beautiful note about how their year flew by and what the boys – Marcel, Grant and Cameron - are doing. And they are doing a lot!! We send special Happy New Year wishes to Mike, Diana and the boys (and let's not forget Sigi)! We miss you and wish you were here, but at the same time we are delighted that you are keeping well and enjoying everything Calgary has to offer! Keep in touch!

Dear Family and Friends;

December 24, 2022

We hope our annual Christmas letter finds you healthy and well, close to those you love this Christmas season. Our year has flown by with the boys growing and learning through experiences at home, at school, and the outdoors. Cameron, Grant, and Marcel are now in grade 7, 5, and 3 respectively.



One of our big highlights through 2022 has been biathlon and cross-country skiing. Cameron, Grant, and Marcel are all involved with Foothills Nordic Club. Cam participated in biathlon all last year and graduated up to using a .22 this spring, Grant has joined the fun in the eco-aims category (the lasers!). Marcel is patiently honing his classic and skate technique this year until he is old enough to participate as well. Cam is gearing up to go on a ski exchange through a federal grant program to Chelsea QB in February for a week of skiing.



The boys all enjoyed the flag football season, and Grant & Marcel ripped around the soccer pitch. Mike volunteered to coach and this past spring he ran the U8 team. Marcel and Grant persist in piano and are both gearing up to write their next level Royal Conservatory Exams.



We were very grateful for the opportunity to visit Mike's sister Jackie, brother-in-law Carlo and their boys Nils and Martin this summer in Copenhagen, Denmark. We are so thankful that we were able to see the sights with them and enjoy their home and company. We zipped up to Norway for a week away fishing and hiking while we were in Scandinavia. The boys' minds were blown.

Our cat Sigi (Sigrid) continues to be a wonderful companion, playmate, and family member and is now about 1.5yrs. She is an adventuresome sort and she (and her sister Ruby - Mike's parents' cat) have been trained to follow us while walking in the woods.

Mike and I continue to be challenged and growing at both ExxonMobil and Calgary Therapy Services respectively, and we are grateful to have rewarding employment and opportunity for growth and development in our careers.

We hope the upcoming year holds you well and we look forward to catching up in 2023.

Merry Christmas and warmest wishes for 2023;

Diana and Mike, Cameron, Grant, Marcel and Sigi W.

