

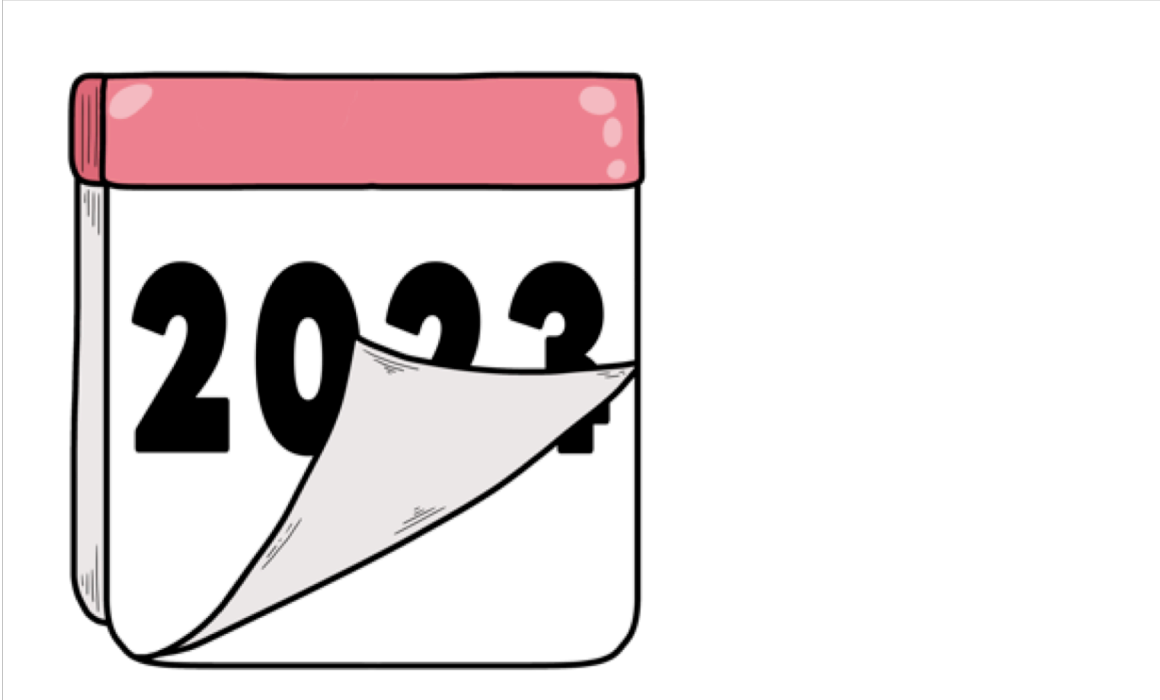


News from the Pews for the First Sunday of Advent December 3rd, 23

“News from the Pews”, contains stories, pictures and happenings from, by and for the members of the congregation. It also contains Birthdays and Anniversaries, a Treasurer’s Update, News from other Church Groups, Boards and Committees, special requests from Bridges to Hope, News from the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and of course Special Events happening at St. David’s. There is also the “Features with Pictures” page(s), this will have little stories and pictures of happenings at St. David’s.

We hope you enjoy.....

Minister's Message



This Sunday marks the start of the church season of Advent, and thus the start of a new year in the church's calendar. It is a time of expectation, looking forward to Christmas and remembering the coming of Christ as a baby in a manger, and also looking forward to the return of Christ in glory. We cast our eyes forward with hope and faith, because we believe that God is good and God is mighty. In this day and age, it is not common for people to look to the future with hope, yet that is what our faith lets us do. This year at St. David's has been a busy one. Churches in Canada are struggling, and we are no exception. Our expenses are higher than the gifts we receive, and this threatens the long-term survival of our church. A changing culture means that regular attendance at Sunday morning worship is not the priority it once was for many people. Lives are busy, and long-term commitments are hard to make. People prefer to give charitably to specific causes rather than the institution of their local church, in part as a consequence of the sins of the wider Church like the residential school

system or systemic abuses of those within the LGBTQ+ community. Apologies have of course been made by every level of our church, but wounds like these do not heal quickly or easily.

In a time when the church struggles to reach people who would rather be out doing something else on a Sunday morning, it has been a joy for me to see the great effort that St. David's has put into reaching out to our community this year. After years of the church sitting empty during the pandemic, it is now hard to find a time when there isn't a group from our community using the building. In a city that is full of people who attend church less and less often, it is a good thing to be a church providing welcome and warmth to so many different groups.

There are so many people in our city, and the business of our church building highlights that reality. We could hardly be busier during the week. The question before us then, is how to grow our congregation. We are very good at attracting renters, but less familiar with attracting worshippers. This year, I hope you will join me in praying that we would find ways to invite others to participate in our worship, in our missions, and in our church family. Whether it be building bridges with rental groups, inviting people back who we haven't seen in a while, or hosting events that unchurched folks feel welcome to "come and try", please pray that we would reach the souls in need in our community.

For in this season of Hope, we know that the future of this town is in the hands of a loving God. May we discern a path forward that has us shine with the power of Christ's love in our community. May we make a difference in the lives of the little ones, feeding the hungry and visiting the lonely. May we preach the Gospel that fulfills the longing hearts, and proclaim hope and joy in a world of fear and bitterness.

I hope to see you at our Christmas services this year, and I invite you to consider what this church can be doing to be more reflective of Christ's love. Join us in worship and in making the world a better place. This is your church, and despite our struggles, we have resources enough to make a difference with your help.

The church did not begin with riches, but it did begin with people acting

with love for the Lord in their hearts. The world will not be made whole with riches, but with people acting with love for the Lord in their hearts. May we be those people!

The Meaning of White Gift Sunday

The tradition of White Gift Sunday has its roots in a small Methodist church in Ohio in 1904. What began as a humble way to reflect on the love and devotion of the giver and not the value of the gift has grown into today's white gift services in many churches across several denominations.

The story is told that a minister's wife initiated the idea to solve the problem of inequity of gifts given at the Sunday School Christmas party. Instead of focusing on receiving gifts, the focus shifted to bringing gifts to Jesus that could in turn be shared with people around the world who did not have much. All the gifts would come wrapped in plain white paper, so that no one would know which was an expensive gift and which was a more modest one. No one would feel ashamed of their gift and everyone would share in the joy of giving to others.

Here at St. David's, we have observed White Gift Sunday for many years during the season of Advent. In keeping with the spirit of the first White Gift service, all those attending would bring a gift of toys, food, personal care items, etc. all wrapped in white paper or in a white bag.

This year, on the three Sundays in Advent, please bring a gift if you are able, for a child, youth, man or woman. The gifts will be distributed to various organizations in the city before Christmas. Food items will be either included with the Christmas Hampers or given to Bridges To Hope.

This is one way we can show God's love and our caring commitment to the people of our community. Please consider how you can help.

Treasurer's Report

To everyone who considers St. David's their "home" church, please consider your church as you look ahead to the remainder of this year and to 2024. I'd like to acknowledge the support we have received this year from people who donate through your envelopes, via e-transfers and through the monthly PAD contributions. Thanks to those who attended the concerts regularly and heard some really great musicians. I'd also like to acknowledge the WA who have shown support in many ways: having the painting done in the hall foyer, in the tower entrance and the lobby outside the offices, and by pulling off great enjoyable bridge parties. That's just the tip of the iceberg! By the way, the WA have kicked off this year's hamper project with a \$500 donation and are always looking out for, and finding, food deals for the hampers. Thanks to everyone.

This weekend the Session and the Board are having a joint meeting. What will be discussed? The 2024 budget. Next week you will hear the results of that meeting.

Thank you to all who are continuing to donate to your church through your envelopes on Sunday mornings, by e-transfers, or through your monthly PAD contributions. My thanks go out to elders and friends who happily and gladly pick-up envelopes from those not able to get out and help by dropping them off at the church office.

By the way, the sole email address we are using to accept donations is stdavidsnfld@gmail.com and this one is linked to our bank account and it will automatically accept all donations.

Birthdays and Anniversaries (December 3 - December 10, 2023)

Happy Birthday wishes go out to Doug Hudson who has a birthday coming up on December 4th. Doug will be celebrating with family and friends, including his parents, Sylvia and Dave Hudson. Everyone here at St. David's wishes you a great day Doug! Enjoy!

Happy Birthday to Geoff Hudson who will be celebrating his birthday on December 6th! Geoff will be celebrating with family and friends, including his mom and dad, Sylvia and Dave Hudson. Best wishes from everyone here at St. David's Geoff!

Happy Birthday to Andrew Ellis who will be celebrating his big day on December 9th. Andrew is the son of Neil Ellis and grandson of Barbara Ellis. Congratulations Andrew from your St. David's family and our best wishes!

Happy Birthday to Noah Venth who will be celebrating his birthday on December 9th with family and friends, including his mom and dad, Kirsty Gillies and Robert Venth and proud grandparents, Penny and Stewart Gillies. Best wishes Noah from everyone here at St. David's and we hope you have a wonderful day!

Happy Birthday to Paul Chancey who will be celebrating his birthday on December 10th with family and friends, near and far, including his wife, Holly, and two sons, Noah and Joshua, sister Kathy and of course, proud mom, Betty Chancey. Best wishes, Paul from everyone here at St. David's. We hope you have a great day!

Happy Birthday to Sophie Burness who will be celebrating her birthday on December 5th. Even though Sophie is currently going to university in Nova Scotia, her family and friends here at home and in far away places, will be celebrating with her. Sophie is the daughter of Heather and Brad Burness and grand-daughter of Edith Peach. Best wishes Sophie from everyone here at St. David's. We're thinking of you and we hope you have a wonderful day!

St. David's Upcoming Events and Notices

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS 2023

Preparations are well underway for Christmas Hampers . . but **help** is still needed!

Here's how you can help:

- Make a monetary donation ... just indicate that donation is for "Christmas Hampers"
- Donate a gift card ... can be used to purchase food items for hampers
- Donate non-perishable food item(s) ... see Hamper contents below for suggestions
- Volunteer to deliver a hamper or two ... **NEED 15-20 DELIVERY PEOPLE THIS YEAR!**

Each Hamper has a value of approximately \$100 and contains

*Turkey (10-12 lb.) ***

*Vegetables - Cabbage, Carrot, Turnip, Potatoes ***

Flour (2.5 kg)–

Sugar (2 kg)

Onions (2-3 lb.)

Oranges (3-5 lb.)

Apples (3-5 lb.)

Tuna (170 g tin)

Green Peas (tin)

Corn (tin)

Evaporated Milk (tin)

Cheese Whiz

Peanut Butter

Juice (1 Litre)

Milk (2L 2%)

Cranberry sauce (tin)

Cereal (Box)

Teabags (72/144)

Coffee (Instant)

Margarine (454 g)

*Eggs (1 dozen) ***

Bread (1 loaf white)

Bread (1 loaf w/wheat)

Bread Crumbs (1 pkg.)

Savoury (18 g)

Cheese (block)

Crackers

Cookies

Beans (tin)

N.B. An item with a strikethrough indicates that we already have enough of that item for forty (40) hampers – our initial goal. We will do more if funds permit!

**** These items are usually provided by Community Food Sharing Association.**

DELIVERY DATE: DECEMBER 20,2023

Two persons required for each delivery - Hampers are heavy!

Further info/questions?

Please contact: Lillian Crawford (754-2362/691-3057)

Anne Calver (682-4329) Church Office (722-2382)

Sunday School

This week we are molding clay but remember God is the potter and we are the clay.

AMS

The month of November was dedicated to collecting “lovingly used” Winter Coats... we would like to thank all who so generously supported this endeavour.

AMS Meeting

Our December meeting will be held today **December 3rd** after Sunday Worship. It will be a **joint meeting with the AMS members of St. Andrew's (the Kirk)** and will take place at 12:30 in the Armour Room.

Prayer Shawl Ministry/Knitters

The Prayer Shawl Knitters will be holding their next monthly meeting on **Tuesday, December 5th at 10:00am in the Armour Room**. No knitting experience is required ~ please join us for a friendly and fun group for a morning of knitting and fellowship.

Bible Study

“Sandwich and Scriptures”, the St. David's Bible Study group takes place in the **Armour Room every Wednesday at 12:30 pm** ~ so bring your lunch and we will make the tea (or coffee!), we would be delighted to have you join us!

Bible Study has adjourned for 2023 and will resume in the New Year... the date to be announced.

Pickleball (games for our congregation)

The fall pickleball games are well underway. Pickleball takes place every **Wednesday afternoon from 2 to 4 pm**. If you'd like more information, or if

would like to get some education on the rules and instruction on how to play, please contact the office.

Good Companions

The **Good Companions** is a seniors group that meets once a week in the church hall and Armour Room to share in some activities. If you would like to try your hand at carpet bowling, join a game of bridge or 120's or maybe a friendly game of Scrabble, please join us on **Thursday afternoons from 2 pm to 4 pm**. All are welcome! **The next meeting is : Thursday, Dec 7th**

St David's Bridge Lunches for December

The December Bridge Lunch is **Tuesday December 12th 2023 in the Church Hall**. The doors open at noon for those early comers! We can accommodate between 20 to 22 tables, if you haven't booked your table, please contact Heather or Lillian. Remember the lunch will be a hearty meal which includes the surprise and delicious "mystery" soup, the regular array of favorite soups, plus those very decadent desserts. There will be prizes plus an enjoyable game of bridge for everyone. See you there!

Other Community Announcements

Topsail United Church Coffee Group will be holding a Christmas Bake and Craft Sale on Saturday December 9th, from 10 until 1 P.M, in the Church Hall. All are Welcome.

Coastal Sounds Concert and Canata

Coastal Sounds Choir Association are thrilled to announce, A CELTIC CHRISTMAS, Choral Concert and 10th Anniversary Cantata, on **Sunday Dec. 3 at 7 P.M. at All Saints Anglican Church, Foxtrap**, with Special Guests Matthew Byrne and local Members of NLESD. Tickets are \$ 25 and are available by our website: www.coastalsoundschoir.com Donations for the Community Food Sharing Association Greatly Appreciated.

New Choir – Spiritoso Singers

Would you like to join a fun choir this fall? Join the Spiritoso Singers!

We are a brand new, Christian-based, SATB choir, led by Sarah Templeton and Chris Morano. If you are aged 13 to 103 and have a little bit (or, a lot) of singing experience, this is for you!

Rehearsal dates are every Saturday up to December 2nd from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm in the St. David's sanctuary. **There will be a Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 3rd**. A portion of the proceeds of the concert will go to the Spear Fund, a charity that works to end child trafficking worldwide. For more information or to sign up, go to:

www.feldenkraisforsingers.com/spiritososingers

Bridges to Hope

Weekly "Flyer" Specials – Useful items for Bridges To Hope – Dec. 7 - 13, 23

Sobeys -	Catelli Pasta – 2/\$3.00
	Kraft Peanut Butter - \$5.77
No Frills -	Lantic Sugar - \$1.99
	Dole Pineapple - \$1.29
Dominion -	No Name Evaporated Milk - \$0.99 **
Walmart -	Herbal Essence Shampoo - \$2.96
Colemans -	Favorite Pieces & Stems Mushrooms \$0.99

** With PC Optimum card

Bridges To Hope are asking their partner churches to contribute a specific item each month and the item for **DECEMBER** is **Canned Meat**. Other non-perishable food items are always welcome and appreciated!

Bridges To Hope are also in need of cat food (hard & soft). They don't need dog food as they have a steady supply from the Doghouse store downtown.

Features with Pictures



Inem, Penny, Lillian, Harriet, and Nnene - tea party ladies with Tilley.

When you look around the Sanctuary this Sunday, you will notice that it is starting to look *a lot* like Christmas!

Our sincerest thanks and appreciation to the McKenzie Family, who generously supply and deliver the beautiful wreath that adorns the area above the Sanctuary Entrance. As well, the arch over the doorway that leads us to coffee hour in the hall.

And thanks to Pam and Penny, we are also reminded we are in the season of Advent ~ with beautiful boughs, berries and holly that grace the front of church – complete with our Advent candles: purple, pink and white.



“The look tells it all.. happy working with greenery!! . I picked this greenery from both our gardens just ahead of the scheduled snowstorm!”

Penny

Mission Moment for December 3rd



On World Humanitarian Day, we honour countless individuals who have dedicated themselves to making a difference in the lives of others. Humanitarian work is often challenging, and those undertaking it face many risks, yet they continue to work tirelessly, motivated to help others and improve the world. From PWS&D partners who deliver food, water, and other essential supplies to those who work without respite to rebuild communities after disasters, humanitarian workers play a crucial role in ensuring the well-being of those in need. We also recognize the need for sustained support and investment in humanitarian efforts to address the root causes of human-made crises and provide lasting solutions for those in need. On World Humanitarian Day, let us recognize humanitarian workers and renew our commitment to supporting their vital work.