

# December

*When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us. Titus 3:4-5*

## Home for the Holidays

I attended boarding school from Grades 6 through 8. It was actually a military academy where we wore uniforms, stood in formation, drilled every day, exercised and studied in set times under strict supervision, and where cadets were expected to excel in the classroom as much as on the marching field. It was a disciplined way of life where we obeyed orders and were careful not to break the rules.

I actually got to enjoy military school, and the discipline and formation are still very much a part of my life. And yet, there was something missing – call it, if you will, the human touch: a kind word, a smile, a listening ear, an act of caring, a sign of affection. For these things, cadets had to look home.

So it was no surprise that cadets were overjoyed to be going home for the holidays. I still remember my Christmases at home – the Lionel trains around the Christmas tree, the gingerbread cookies, the peppermint candy sticks and the cinnamon candles. I remember the little plastic church that, when you turned the key, would play Silent Night. I remember the gathering of family and friends – there were always two or three tables filled with people. I remember the incredible food feasts on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and to this day I think of the heavenly banquet as a kind of Christmas dinner. But most of all, I remember attending Christmas Eve Mass with family – always a special occasion where I literally felt “out of this world” with angels singing, shepherds adoring and peace on earth.

Whatever your own experiences of Christmas, I hope you will agree with me that it is good to go home for the holidays – to be with family, to connect with friends, to rekindle our desire for a better world, a more peaceful planet and a more hopeful future.

Most of all, Christmas is a time to reconnect with God, to experience once again the feeling of being loved totally, unconditionally and forever by a God who never gives up on us, no matter how far we stray from him. Yes, I know...none of us are perfect, but the good news is that God loves us in our imperfections. In Jesus God became as we are to show us how much he loves us as we are. You are loved, you are *really* loved, by a God would do anything to welcome you home.

So this holiday season, why not come home for Christmas? Here at St. James, Advent Sunday is December 2<sup>nd</sup>. In addition to our regular services, we plan on having a parish luncheon along with Advent family activities after the 10:30 Eucharist. On December 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM, we will hold our annual Lesson and Carols for Christmas with Procession and Candle Lighting – a glorious way to celebrate the light of Christ in our world.

Then, on Christmas Eve, we will again offer three very different worship services – the 4:00 PM Children’s Christmas Pageant and Eucharist with special Claire Danaher and Steve Holowitz, the 7:00 PM Christmas Jazz Mass, and the

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## Westminster Chimes

### December 2012



10:00 PM Solemn Eucharist of Christmas Eve with Medieval and Renaissance Music. For those who prefer a more meditative service, on Christmas Day we will offer a 10:00 AM Book of Common Prayer Eucharist with Soloist and Hymns.

Since there are twelve days to the Christmas Season, we will have our regular services at 8:30 and 10:30 AM on Sunday December 30<sup>th</sup> and conclude the season with an Epiphany celebration on Sunday January 6<sup>th</sup>.

## Christmas Giving

A few weeks ago I attended a pension conference in Buffalo where a priest shared with me his experience of dire poverty in a Mexican slum. He then said something that startled me: that people in the United States spend more money on trash bags than people in 90 countries spend on everything. That suggests that Americans have an awful lot of stuff to throw away. That also suggests that people in 90 countries (and I presume they are from the poorest 90 countries) don't have the financial resources to buy much of anything. This is a stark, if not tragic, picture of the growing economic chasm between those who are rich and those who are poor.

We in Canada are not that much better than our American neighbours. According to Statistics Canada, 13.5 percent of Canadians live in poverty. Females in poverty are 14.2 percent. While these figures are disturbing, even more shocking is that billions of people in the world live on less than \$2 a day. Here in the London region welfare and government assistance rates have been rising each year for the past several years.

There is a temptation to think that knowing the numbers and feeling outrage somehow makes the situation better. It doesn't. I confess there are times when I am tempted to cynicism, making excuses for our poverty rate by citing Jesus' claim that "you will always have the poor with you" (Matthew 26:11). However, Jesus is telling us that people who are economically poor are part of the world's landscape as our brothers and sisters. And instead of trying to Photoshop them out of the picture (what politicians seem inclined to do), we had better try and do something about it.

So what do we do? Jesus is pretty clear about this. Give. He commends the widow for giving all that she had (Luke 21:4). He admonishes the rich young man

Whatever your worship preference, I hope you will come home for the holidays and celebrate Christmas with us at St. James. It was Robert Frost who said, "Home is where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in." Well, here at St. James everyone is welcome. We want you, we love you and we value you as God's beloved child. Come home to St. James – and we'll leave the light on for you!

Your Friend and Rector,  
The Rev. Dr. Gary Nicolosi

to sell all that he owns and give it away (Mark 10:21). One might think he is setting forth an economic policy that will cure poverty. He isn't. Jesus is proposing a spiritual discipline – a discipline of giving at a frequency and amount that will demonstrate to us that the accumulation of stuff which eventually fills our trash bags doesn't provide us with security or spiritual satisfaction.

There is a tipping point here: when we give sacrificially – beyond what initially feels comfortable – we are then better able to receive true and abiding riches by sharing with others. This is the paradox of the Christian life: the way to receive the blessings of God is to be a blessing to others. The only way to receive God's gifts is to share them with others.

The discipline of giving – and by giving I mean sacrificial giving rather than token giving – is a spiritual exercise that leads us to true freedom and joy. Jesus knew that. And he knew that the more we give away, the more free we feel – and the more inclined we are to work for the freedom of others.

May it be so!

*Gary Nicolosi*



HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?



# Our Mission, Vision and Values

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At its November meeting, Parish Council unanimously approved the parish's new mission, vision and values statement along with our church motto. The approval by Council culminated in a long process of reflection, submissions by parishioners and staff, discussions, and revisions, all leading to the finalized document.

We hope that members will be able to see their parish in this document, the hopes and aspirations for St. James as well as the work we are called to do as a church. The document will serve as the basis for our Renew Campaign as well as guide us in developing priorities for ministry, mission and maintenance.

Our thanks to John Sizeland, Erin Porter, Hilary Dencev, Jim Mays, Gary Koreen, and John Thorpe for the excellent job in developing this document. Dr. Nicolosi will speak and write about this document, including how it will affect our parish, in the coming year. Please address any feedback or comments to him.

## *Our Mission*

To experience God, to nurture faith, and empower people in a vibrant and caring church community.

## *Our Vision*

To be a church that:

- ◆ Experiences God through preaching, music and camaraderie.
- ◆ Nurtures faith as seekers experience Jesus Christ in a caring and loving environment.
- ◆ Empowers people to engage in current issues with critical minds and Christian hearts.

## *Our Values*

- ◆ We demonstrate our faith as we worship God through holy and diverse liturgies and musical styles, grounded in historic Anglican tradition.
- ◆ We are a community that embraces everyone on their journey of faith.
- ◆ We respond, with compassion, to the needs of our world, locally and beyond.
- ◆ We offer comprehensive family life ministries that provide a foundation for a lifetime of faith.
- ◆ We give generously and share our gifts and talents as we demonstrate our faith, maintain our sacred space and respond to the needs of our world.

## *Our Motto*

Experiencing God, Nurturing Faith, Empowering People





## To the Good People of St. James Westminster:

It was with mixed emotions that I assisted with my last services as Lay Reader at St. James Westminster. I was so happy that Christine, Julia, and Sarah were able to be there to share in this important time of good bye and transition. Thank you for the wonderful reception, your kind words, generous gifts, thoughtful cards, well wishes, and warm hugs.

Just in case you did not hear, I completed the diocesan requirements for ordination at the end of August and I have been called to serve as Assistant Curate (part-time) at St. Paul's Cathedral, beginning 1 December .

It has been an incredible honour and great privilege to serve for the past six years at St. James. I am very grateful to all of the clergy and church wardens for allowing me the wonderful opportunity of being part of the St. James' leadership team.

Thank you, again, most sincerely. You have all given me so much throughout the past six years. You have nurtured my ministry and I am most grateful to you for that blessing.

Please continue to pray for me and my family as we make this transition, and may God continue to bless you.

In love and friendship,  
Michael DeKay



# The Spirit of Giving

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AT CHRISTMASTIME, I AM ONCE AGAIN REMINDED OF HOW MUCH I LOVE AND AM CARED FOR BY THE ST.JAMES WESTMINSTER "FAMILY". I TRY NOT TO TAKE FOR GRANTED THE HEART AND SOUL OF THIS CHURCH AND THE MANY WAYS THE COMPASSION AND DEVOTION OF JESUS IS DEMONSTRATED BY THE CLERGY AND CONGREGATION OF ST. JAMES. IN A YEAR FRAUGHT WITH PERSONAL TRAUMA AND TRAGEDY, I WAS COMFORTED, STRENGTHENED AND RESTORED BY THE PRAYERS, WORDS AND DEEDS OF THIS COMMUNITY.

I HAVE AN OUT OF TOWN RELATIVE( A FAITHFUL NON-ANGLICAN CHRISTIAN) WHO IS AMAZED AT THE STORIES I SHARE ABOUT THE OUTREACH

PROGRAMS, BIBLE STUDIES, HEALING PRAYER MINISTRIES, FAMILY EVENTS, ETC...THAT OUR CHURCH PARTICIPATES IN AND SHE STATED, SADLY, THAT "THE MAIN ITEM THAT HER CHURCH CONTACTS HER ABOUT IS GIVING FUNDS TO THE CHURCH OR CHRISTIAN SCHOOL" RATHER THAN BE CONSOLED OR INVITED TO A SPECIAL SERVICE OR EVENT. I PRAY THAT MORE CHURCH COMMUNITIES ARE AND WILL BE MODELLED AFTER ST. JAMES. GOD BLESS YOU AT THIS SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR AND ALWAYS.

— A GRATEFUL MEMBER OF THE ST. JAMES WESTMINSTER PARISH —

## Special Thanks

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Special thanks to:

- ◆ Marcus Hahn and Terry Robinson for their ongoing work which is greatly appreciated and all the people who helped at restoring 105 Askin Street to its present level.
- ◆ To Connie and Sheila and the gardening crew for their expertise.
- ◆ To Michael Harwood and Duncan Archibald for their re-shingling of the back shed.
- ◆ To John Gutteridge for his pending arborist work in the church garden.
- ◆ To Gord Duplan for his assistance with moving our fallen steeple

The church thanks all of the above people for their hard work and conscientious endeavours in keeping the church in a functioning and beautiful state.

## Christmas Home Communions

The Visitation team will soon be preparing to take home communions out to those no longer able to get to worship services on Sundays. If you would like a visit, or know of someone who would, please speak to Rev'd Val or call the office at 519-432-1915. We would be pleased to visit and take Christmas communion and greetings from the Church to any wishing it.

# Let's Talk About Heaven

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## *An Advent Course Taught by Heather Nicolosi*

Our Spiritual Life Facilitator Heather Nicolosi will lead a 3-part study of heaven as part of our Advent celebration. **Let's Talk about Heaven** will be held twice each week: on Sundays, December 2, 9 and 16 from 9:30 to 10:20 AM in the Westminster Lounge, and again on Wednesday mornings, December 5, 12 and 19 beginning at 10:30 AM in the Westminster Lounge.

Heaven is a hot topic right now! Books written by those of all ages who have had heavenly experiences are popping up all over. TV and radio interviews abound on the subject as interested commentators try to sort out what it all means. Do you fear death? Do you have questions about the afterlife? Are you curious to know what heaven is really like? If so, then this course is for you!

The course will explore the Biblical view of heaven, hell and all places in between along with personal accounts of several people who have had heavenly experiences and now live to tell about it. We will also examine what some Christians are starting to discover...that heaven is closer than you think!!



## Journey Through the Book of Job

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Dr. Nicolosi will lead a new Bible study beginning on **Sunday, January 13 from 9:30 to 10:20 AM** in the **Westminster Lounge** and continuing each Sunday until April 14. Journey through the Book of Job is a study of one of the most philosophical books in the Bible that dares to ask the question, "Why does God allow suffering, especially to the ones who do not deserve it?"

While the Book of Job does not give any easy answer to this question, in this 13-week course we will grapple with the issues that make faithful Christians cry out, "Why me, God?" and non-believers respond, "What God could possibly allow innocent suffering? Therefore, God must not exist."

If you have ever been challenged by suffering in your own life, or gone through a particularly tough time, or experienced a difficult ordeal, or if you have known others whose trials and tribulations have tested their faith or shaken their trust in God, then you will want to attend this course. Handouts will be distributed at each session. Here are the class titles:

January 13 – When Adversity Comes  
January 20 – Going from Bad to Worse  
January 27 – What a Hurting Friend Needs Most  
February 3 – Why Bad Things Happen  
February 10 – When Life Isn't Fair  
February 17 – The Benefit of Suffering  
February 24 – Putting Pain in Perspective

March 3 – The Fine Art of Listening  
March 10 – Where Is God When I Hurt?  
March 17 – The Purpose of Suffering  
March 24 – Strength in the Night  
March 31 – Easter Sunday, No Class  
April 7 – God's Non-Answer to Job's Pain  
April 14 – The Rest of the Story



## **An Important Celebration for the Venerable Jack Doidge**

On Sunday, November 4th, at the end of our monthly Sunday afternoon service at Grand Wood, we paused to extend best wishes to the Venerable Jack Doidge on the occasion of the anniversary of the 73rd year of his ordination. Matt Martin preached, Steve Holowitz and the choir sang, Father Gary brought congratulations, and of course, there was cake. It was, all in all, a lovely event. So, congratulations Jack!

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## **Prayer Shawl Thank You's**

*Recently I was hospitalized and the day following surgery Reverend Val visited and gave me a beautiful Prayer Shawl from St. James Westminster. As I wrapped this around my shoulders I felt the magic of all the Prayers that had Blessed this Shawl and felt truly warmed and comforted by it. Thank you to the Prayer Shawl Group for such a wonderful gift. I will always treasure it.*

A Very Grateful Parishioner

*I want to thank the person who knit and prayed making my prayer shawl. Rev. Valerie brought it to me in hospital. It was very comforting and I knew there were many prayers that went into it. It kept me cozy and it was wonderful to know I was in your prayers. Thanks again.*

Love and hugs, Jean McBride

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## **Homecoming and Home Communion's**

On the Saturday of Homecoming at UWO, Mike DeKay and I took Home Communion to 7 shut-ins from St. James. Some live in nursing homes, some in their own homes and some in apartments. Two nursing home ladies each had a friend or relative with them who joined us in Holy Communion. Driving along Richmond Street North, the sidewalks were a sea of purple as the Homecoming celebrations began! We use the BCP Prayer book because most are familiar with the service and can follow along with the prayers. People are so grateful for the visit and we really enjoy our time with them and are always asked to come back. This is a very special day for us.

Mike DeKay and Marg Hessel



# Kitgum School Update

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In November we sent \$2212.25 U.S to the numbered account in Kampala. A letter was also sent to Rt.Rev. Benjamin Ojuang asking for a reply. Each American dollar is worth more than \$20.00 in their money so it should give them quite a bit to work with. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Love and hugs, Jean McBride



## A big Thank-you from Huron Church Camp

for all the St James' campers, staff, donors and volunteers who have contributed so much to our Diocesan Camp Ministry over this past year!

A reminder that online registration for 2013, **A Hundred Thousand Welcomes** should open on January 15.

[www.huronchurchcamp.ca](http://www.huronchurchcamp.ca)

We can't wait to see you!

Blessings from Gerry,  
your Family Ministry Director and Director of HCC

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## Where Two or Three Are Gathered

*"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."* Matthew 18:20

On **December 11, 2012**, we will be gathering in the Westminster Chapel for an informal time of prayer. We will begin at **7:00p.m.** and plan to be together for about an hour. Are there situations or people that you would like to come and share; or perhaps you would like to come and lend your prayerful support to the needs of others. All are most welcome.

Don't forget to pick up your Fundscrip cards!

Christmas Shopping? Don't forget your Gift Cards! Check out the Fundscrip Table in the Parish Hall after the 10:30 service!

*(FundScrip is a Canadian fundraising program that asks supporters to pay for their everyday purchases (i.e., groceries, gas, gifts and household items) with gift cards bought through the FundScrip program. A percentage of the gift cards purchased is donated to the church and is designated it for the Pilgrimage Fund.)*

**FundScrip**



**STOP!**

## **Keeping Sabbath in Everyday Life**

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*Lenten Retreat: Friday February 22, 2013 and Saturday, February 23, 2013  
Reserve Your Place Today!*

As spots for this retreat fill very quickly, please let Rev'd Val know if you are interested in attending this year's Lenten retreat at the convent of the Sisters of St. John the Divine in Toronto. We will leave London on Friday, spending some time together as a group on Friday evening, and then will join with others for this quiet day on the Saturday. The topic for Saturday will be Keeping Sabbath in Everyday Life. This Quiet Day will explore the biblical and theological roots of keeping Sabbath, and invite participants to reflect on their own practice and experience of keeping Sabbath in their lives. The leader is the Rev. David Harrison, rector of St. Mary Magdalene, who finds himself in the midst of a life-long struggle to stop and rest. The cost for the Friday and Saturday is \$100. Transportation to be decided depending upon participation. Please speak to Rev'd Val by December 9th if you are interested in participating.

## **Thank you Note**

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On behalf of myself and my family, I wish to extend sincere thanks to the Rev'd Dr. Gary Nicolosi, the Rev'd Val Kenyon and parishioners of St. James for your continued care and concern.

All of the cards, prayers, phone calls, visits and flowers have been very much appreciated. Thanks again.

Love,  
Lena Nolan

## **The Very First King-Sized Bed**



**Thank God for that bed and the baby who slept there!**



Let this be a sign to you:  
in a manger you will find an infant  
wrapped in swaddling clothes

### ***Do you know where the Christmas Creche comes from?***

*Many years ago, St Francis of Assisi wanted to find a way to teach the people about the birth of Jesus. He wanted them all to experience what it would have been like for a tiny baby to be born in poverty and humility. He found a rough cave, built a stable and had a local man borrow animals and even find mother with a new born baby! Everyone gathered in the woods that night and it is said that when St Francis picked up the little baby, imagining he was the Baby Jesus moved him to tears and filled the woods with resounding rejoicing!*

*Setting up a nativity scene at home is a wonderful way to invite your family into the story of Jesus birth. And don't forget about our Annual Christmas Pageant where our young people will tell the story (don't worry...we will stay inside the church) and become for us, the living nativity!*

### ***Good news...It's time to get ready for our Annual Christmas Pageant!***

Come be part of the story of Jesus' birth on Christmas Eve, Monday December 24, at 4pm. There will be a rehearsal on Saturday December 21 from 10 - 11:30 am, There are lots of parts for all ages! Sign up by contacting Gerry Adam or Laura Manias [family@stjameswest.ca](mailto:family@stjameswest.ca)



# Announcements

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**Bishop Robert Bennett** will be here at St. James Westminster Church on **Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup> for the 10:30 Eucharist**. This is the Bishop's annual visitation to the parish, in which he will preach and celebrate communion. After the service, we will hold a reception for the Bishop in the parish hall. Please plan on being at St. James for this festive service and welcoming our Bishop to the parish.

**Advent Sunday is Sunday, December 2.** There will be a parish lunch after the 10:30 service. A freewill offering will be received to help cover costs. There will also be an Advent Fun Time for the whole family with games, activities and stories. Be sure to be here to herald in the Advent Season.

**HURRY UP AND WAIT!** – an Advent event for all ages, Sunday December 2, right after the 10:30 service. Stay for lunch and join us for a story and an opportunity to create something to take home to remind us all about this waiting and wondering time! Help us to create hope-filled messages of love and care for homebound members of our parish and pick up some resources to use as we journey towards Bethlehem. Children under 6 should be accompanied by a caregiver. RSVP [family@stjameswest.ca](mailto:family@stjameswest.ca)

**Attention youth:** To celebrate the Christmas break come out for a movie pizza night at St James. December 21st at 6pm. Bring \$5 for pizza Contact Matt Martin if you will be joining us - 519 438 8783.

## Thank you from the Breakfast Club

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The St. James Children's Breakfast Club has touched many lives and filled many tummies since it began in 1995. Maggie graduated two years ago but often stopped to visit on her days off from highschool. Her brother Ben, came only once this year before they moved to the country. The following note was left in "the kitty" along with their usual 25-cent donation for Breakfast Club.

October 12, 2012

*Hello everyone at Breakfast Club,*

*All I have to say is Thank You so much for putting together this program and for taking the time and effort in your life to keep it running. I have enjoyed every morning of Breakfast Club. My brother also loves coming out to eat and talk with everyone. We are moving this weekend, but I'm sure we will be back to pop in and say "Hi".*

*Thanks again,  
Maggie and Ben*

May I add my thanks to all the faithful volunteers and congregation donation that make this program possible.

Carolyn Fryer (Convenor)





## Christmas At St. James

**Sunday, December 9 at 2:30pm** - Brassroots concert with St. James Choir

**Sunday, December 16**

10:30am Special seasonal chamber music with Alexandre von Wartburg (bassoon), Eliza Lam (piano and harp), Ingrid Krozman (flute) and Kathleen Gahaghan (harp)

4:00pm CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS WITH PROCESSION AND CANDLELIGHTING  
Nursery available for children under 3.

**Monday, December 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES**

4:00 PM Children's Christmas Pageant and Eucharist - Music led by Claire Danaher and Steve Holowitz

7:00 PM Christmas Jazz Mass

10:00 PM Solemn Eucharist of Christmas Eve with Medieval and Renaissance Music and Carols

**Tuesday, December 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY**

10:00 AM Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion with Hymns

**Sunday, December 30 – CHRISTMAS I**

8:30 AM and 10:30 AM Christmas Eucharist with Mr. Matt Martin, preaching  
Guest Denise Pelley- gospel music for the Christmas season

**Sunday, January 6 – EPIPHANY SUNDAY**

8:30 Prayer Book Holy Communion

10:30 Family Eucharist

**Sunday, January 13 – BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

8:30 Prayer Book Holy Communion

9:30 Rector's Class on the Book of Job in the Westminster Lounge

10:30 Choral Family Eucharist

Any and all candidates for baptism are welcome on this day.

[www.saintjameswestminster.ca](http://www.saintjameswestminster.ca)

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