



News, notes and updates about our church family at St. John's

**Advent
Edition 2010**

CRINGS



The Rock on Locke
320 Charlton Ave W.,
Hamilton, ON
L8P 2E7
Email:
office
@rockonlocke.ca
www.rockonlocke.ca

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

“O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height, In ancient times did'st give the Law, In cloud, and majesty and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.”

Advent is a time of waiting and of growing expectancy for the coming of Christ. In the darkest days of the year, the church lights candles of hope that the light will again dawn. In times of “lonely exile”, the church recalls that Emmanuel (God with us) has come and is coming again.

Advent is a honest time that allows that there are times when we feel the night more keenly than the day, but it is a time when we speak of hope because Christ has come and is coming.

As this Advent begins our parish family is working through the difficulty of coming to terms with the necessity for significant reductions in our ministry budget. This helps us to remember that many people are struggling during these difficult economic times. While economists debate the extent of the economic recovery, we know that many people are still suffering from the recent recession and that we have many neighbours who are in great need.

In the midst of all of these difficulties, however, we have the opportunity to give witness to our hope. Speaking about our future Jesus told us that even he himself did not know the day or hour of his return. There is uncertainty. But we can live with uncertainty because we have hope and faith in the God who comes to us. Jesus is among us. He promised never to forsake us. God is here. And Christ is coming again. Emmanuel.

As always, thank you all for your participation in the life and work of the parish. God is at work among us: bringing new people for us to welcome to our doors every week, giving to us the opportunity to care for those in need around us, even as we would serve Christ himself. Lives are being changed.

Come and be part of what God is doing. Come and find encouragement and hope. I hope to see you in worship during the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

Peace,

Worship Services

Regular Service times	Said Communion	8:15 a.m.
	Discovery Service	9:30 a.m.
	Sung Communion	11:00 a.m.
Wednesdays	Said Communion	10:00 a.m. in the Chapel

Special Seasonal Services listing on the back page

An Opportunity to help a family at Christmas

Looking for a special way to share your Christmas with someone less fortunate?

St. Matthew's House

invites you, your family, or group to help make Christmas more joyful for a family by participating in our

Christmas Adopt-a-family Program.

For over 46 years, The House has given Christmas new meaning for thousands of families. Last year, they helped **5,171** family members and individuals at Christmas time – an increase of 509 over the previous year. This year, as many or more families will be affected by poverty, unemployment and economic hardships.

Three ways you can sponsor a family:

1. Provide the food or grocery store vouchers for Christmas dinner for a family.
2. Provide new, unwrapped toys for children or gifts for teenagers. (These should be taken to the registry no later than **December 15th**).
3. **Complete Sponsorship**
Sponsor a small or large family by supplying the Christmas dinner, as well as one to two gifts for each child. St. Matthew's House gives sponsors first names of family members, plus ages and sizes of children. We suggest gift certificates for major grocery stores to cover the cost of meat for the size of family chosen. You can also supply the potatoes, vegetables and dessert. As a guideline, you should be able to sponsor a family of four for \$160 - \$185. Sponsors are asked to bring their donations to the **Wentworth Campus, Mohawk College, 196 Wentworth Street North, (main floor, south-east door)**, on **December 13th, 14th or 15th** for distribution to families.

Or, you can sponsor a family by giving a donation to St. Matthew's House Christmas Program. Income tax receipts will be provided.* Families registered at

Would you care for some hot cider and cookies?

Are you coming to the **Carol Service on Sunday, December 19th**? If so, come ahead of time and enjoy some old-fashioned apple cider and cookies as you get ready for a great evening of traditional carols and readings.



At St. John's we do it up right... and if you can't get there early, at least the scent of an old-fashioned Christmas will be lingering to set you in the right mood.

Don't miss it!

THE GIVING TREE



is put at the back of the church every year to remind us to give non-perishable items to St. Matthews House. We encourage you to donate by bringing in food items or make a donation or sponsor a family this Christmas.

Please

- Find a gift tag with item you would like to donate and take it off the tree
- Bring the tag and the item to church the next week
- Place the item in the special basket provided
- Hang the tag on the tree for someone else to use

Thank you

St. Matthew's House are eligible for assistance from only one agency, thereby avoiding duplication.

- If you require an **income tax receipt for in-kind contributions**, please take all gift receipts to St. Matthew's House, 414 Barton Street East prior to delivering parcels to the Christmas Program site.

If you would like more information about how you can help, please see Bill Giddens or Hal Devins at church.

"O Come, let us adore Him!"



EPIPHANY 2011: 10 a.m. January 10th

Before you have packed away the Christmas decorations and paid the bills for this holiday season, give yourself one more chance to enjoy the real heart of Christmas.

Come to the Epiphany Pageant on Sunday, January 10th at **10:00 a.m.** and celebrate the Epiphany story.

Witness the whole story of God's love for us, predicted by the prophets of old and announced by heavenly voices.

See young and not-so-young actors play the roles of shepherds and angels, wisemen and their pages, as witnesses to God's amazing love for us at Christmas.

Envision all the workplaces in our society and all the nations of the world paying homage to our Lord, born as a baby in Bethlehem.

Feast your ears with one last singing of your favourite carols of the season.

Where else can you see a live baby playing the role of Jesus and the story of Christmas retold through scripture in one brief hour?

Note the time change and don't be disappointed!



A recent workteam visit to Haïti

Submitted by Mick Stewart

In the early hours of Monday November 22nd, a tired but exhilarated group arrived back in Hamilton after spending 9 days working very hard at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer, at the small village of Deschapelles in the centre of Haïti. In the past, workteams to H.A.S. have comprised mostly St. Johns' parishioners but more recently workteams have been organized under the banner of Canadian Friends of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer and the members now are drawn from a wider field. Nonetheless, among the eight were two SJE parishioners – Mick Stewart, who led the team, and Andrew

Gumbinger – and two others closely associated with our church, Lil Stewart and Eileen Shea.

Additionally, we were very pleased to take with us 36 tiny toques beautifully knitted by Joan Seabrook, for preemie babies. They were well received!

We were at the hospital by direct invitation and request from the senior staff there, the first time that this has happened (previously when we have asked permission to take a group, the hospital has then looked at their needs and come up with some tasks). Their request was that we initiate and carry out inventory in their bulk stores, setting the model which the Haïtian staff can use for their year-end inventory in December and then emulate in the future.

The team was very efficient and contrary to the expectations by the C.F.O., managed to complete the whole inventory – housekeeping, mechanical and medical supplies – for which he was very pleased. In addition, they needed a rapid and

precise tracking system of the medications and hygiene supplies specific to the care of cholera patients during the currently-raging epidemic.

H.A.S. has treated more patients for cholera over the past month than were treated after the earthquake in January – which at the time was regarded as the most severe emergency they'd ever dealt with. One of our team is a nurse



and although she joined the team to help with the inventory work, she immediately accepted the request that she do nursing and she spent her entire week nursing cholera patients – again, a most valuable contribution to their needs.

The Managing Director requested that one of us deal directly with him on the cholera supplies and Eileen carried out this task superbly. She created on his personal computer, the inventory for cholera-specific items and also a tracking system for daily consumption, desired par-levels, time-lines for re-ordering, etc. The day before we left Haïti, the M.D. flew to the United States and is now sourcing what Eileen deemed necessary!

In addition to the work at the hospital the group managed to fit in visits to two local towns, a school and one of the hospital-run rural clinics, which they call “dispensaries”. In between times, many craft items were bought from local artisans, some for personal souvenirs and others as specified by

the committee chairperson for the Silent Auction which Canadian Friends of H.A.S. hosts on the final Saturday of February. And several people brought home coffee, grown on the nearby hillsides and roasted right in the market at Deschapelles; also peanut brittle made with Haïtian peanuts and cane sugar from their own fields ... it can't get more fair-trade than that!

Every afternoon we took a dip in the large wonderful swimming pool on campus, and evenings were spent socializing with some of the many physicians and nurses who have come short-term during the cholera emergency and who were living at the same guest houses as ourselves.

Mid-week our team was treated to the rare honour of dinner at the personal residence of the M.D. – another first – who has this

week telephoned the president of Canadian Friends for the sole purpose of saying how immensely impressed he is with what we Canadians are doing for his hospital. And in turn, we say *thank you* to the many St. John parishioners whose encouragement before we went and prayerful support during the nine days of our trip, gave us the will and the joy of serving in this way. *Mesi anpil!*

Advance notice of fundraiser for
Hôpital Albert Schweitzer

**Haiti Happening
Saturday February 26th, 2011**



(stay tuned for more information
about this event)

Raising the Roof Wrap Up

Submitted by Sarah Wayland, Chair

What was our mandate?

From March 2009 to November 2010, the Raising the Roof Group (RTRG) met regularly to study current materials on church growth and development, learn from other congregations, and make recommendations regarding what needs to be in place for growth at St John's. Members of the group were David Anderson, Sarah Wayland (Chair), John Bowen, Susan Little and Susan McKay.

What was our vision?

We began by identifying a number of key traits that we hoped could characterize our congregation, many of which already do:

- Nurturing relationships, warmth
- People growing in faith and learning
- Inspiring worship
- Strong community
- People using their gifts in ministry
- Extension beyond the walls of the building, both in service and in evangelism
- Positive energy and atmosphere
- Diversity: intergenerational, socioeconomic status, education, race/ethnicity, etc.
- Excellence in all we do
- Participatory, volunteer (unpaid) lay leadership
- Budget expanding every year, and we are always a bit short on funds
- Parishioners voicing ongoing concerns about next steps, acting as responsible risk-takers
- Presence of new, adult Christians

What has Raising the Roof Group done?

Over the past 18 months, members of the Raising the Roof Group supported a number of initiatives and worked with others to make them happen. Our group cannot take credit for them.

Rather, we planted some seeds, some of which have taken root and some of which – we must admit – have not yet born fruit.

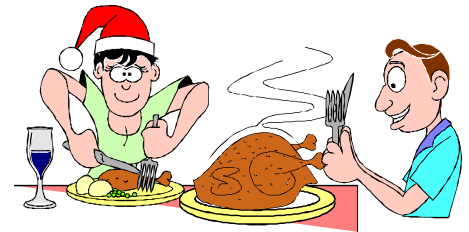
These are the ones that stand out in my own mind:

1. A Welcome Task Force was formed with the mandate of developing a protocol for welcoming guests and newcomers.
2. A “church audit” was undertaken in collaboration with Property Committee and Parish Council.
3. Persons responsible for the liturgy and music for the Choral Service formed a task force that worked on re-launching and promoting this service.
4. A publicity and marketing team formed to focus on promoting what goes on inside St. John's to the people who are not members of the parish. Calling itself Community ConneXions, this group oversaw the launch of the new St John's website, the participation of St John's in Doors Open Hamilton (May 2010), and improved event communication to the community.
5. “Principles for Community Living” were drafted to provide guidelines for managing and preventing conflicts in the parish. Feedback from past and present wardens was invaluable to this process. All the principles are rooted in the Great Commandment to love God with all that we are and to love our neighbour as ourselves.
6. Congregational care -- defined as the care of persons who have made St John's their church home -- has been relaunched.
7. A Faith Formation Framework has been developed, and pieces of the framework have been offered over the past year, including newcomer welcome meetings, Open your Gifts series (Lent 2010) and Christianity101 (Fall 2010).
8. Efforts are being made to create an up-to-date parish list that will be of use to various ministry teams.

Seniors Christmas Luncheon and Eucharist

Wednesday, December 15

10:00 AM



All Seniors are invited to join us for a BCP Holy Eucharist in the church, followed by a turkey lunch and Christmas singalong in the Lidgery Room.

RSVP:

Susan McKay for Signup
or call: 905 522 0602

9. Volunteer coordinators have assumed responsibilities for refining ministry descriptions, adhering to Diocesan standards for the screening of volunteers, and liaising with congregational care, faith formation and other ministry teams.

(More details on the above will be found in the Raising the Roof Group report to Vestry.)

In the end, we pray that we have planted seeds in the form of organizational frameworks, practices, and general enthusiasm that will continue to grow in the coming years. An important next step for St Johns will be to embark on a strategic planning process that can help us to better focus on who we are and what God is calling us to do.

So Little in the Midst of So Much

Submitted by Judith Purdell-Lewis

Some of the St John's congregation signed up to accept the Poverty Diet Challenge, but I may have been the only one who did it in time to include some thoughts in Wings.

- I found it hard only being able to eat a very limited diet (foods that may be provided for three days from a Food Bank), yet having so much in the house. People who have to live primarily on food from the Food Bank week after week are also surrounded by so much in this land of plenty. One such person is a regular Hamilton Out of the Cold guest who I met in Jackson Square last week. She had just come from the Food Bank where she had to beg for formula for her three-month-old baby (she was not due to go back to the Food Bank) and the Baby Bonus was not due for two more days. She was keeping warm amid the abundance in Jackson Square before walking the one kilometre in a biting wind to the Out of the Cold Wednesday dinner at Erskine Presbyterian church. That is tough!
- During my three days I ate only the "allowed" amount of protein – 1 can of tuna, 3 eggs and milk, and "allowed" amount of fruit and vegetables – one small can of each. I had bread and rice to fill up on, but it made me realize that the healthier food is more expensive and therefore there is less of it. It may also be why so many people living on Food Bank food do not **look** underfed.
- At the end of the three days I just wanted to "pig out" out on something I really enjoyed! My kindergarten teacher daughter sees the same reaction in her "welfare family" students who bring in lots of junk food on cheque days. It made

St. John's Christmas Bazaar

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their time, talent and treasures for last week's Bazaar. Thanks to those who took the time during the year to work on the Bazaar and to those who volunteered to work last Saturday. Thanks for the wonderful talent, the creativity of the crafts, decorating the Lidgey Room and foyer of the Church and making the delicious pies, jams and preserves. Thanks for the treasures, for those of who donated to the Bazaar and supported it financially on Saturday.

It was a great day and a lot of fun! Since it was a lot of fun we plan to do it again (but on a smaller scale). We will hold our **Second Chance Sale on Sunday, December 12** at all three services.

Sue Newbery
Bazaar Chair

me rethink how judgmental I can be and that experiencing part of another's life (even for a very short time) can be very good for me!

So – what did I learn and what am I going to do about it? I have more questions than answers but I **am** more aware than I was of the problem of poverty and the complexity of the problem. Both more food in total and certainly more nutritious food is needed in the Food Banks for the present. Is more education or more money in the pockets of the poor also needed? Again, I do not have the answers, but an article in the Globe and Mail on Saturday November 21 makes very interesting reading. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/to-end-poverty-guarantee-everyone-in-canada-20000-a-year-but-are-you-willing-to-trust-the-poor/article1806904/>. I will continue to give to the food banks and ponder what part God wants me to play in following his command to feed the hungry

Some Thoughts on God, our Church, and Stewardship

submitted by Dave McKay (stewardship coordinator)

As we, at St. John's, collectively face challenges and plan our church's future, I believe:

- "God is in charge" ... as David Anderson reminded us in his sermon on the 21st.
- God challenges us individually and collectively.
- God made it clear, over and over in scripture, that following Him would not be easy.
- Discerning God's plan requires significant prayer, thought and discussion.
- God expects us all to be His hands and feet in enabling and enacting His plan.
- Everything we are, and everything we have, is a gift (blessing) from God.
- God expects us to respond to our gifts (blessings), as we are able, in concrete ways.
- Stewardship is not fundraising ... it is deeply spiritual, very practical, a "way of life".
- A true spirit of thankfulness will inspire people to support God's work.

What would it look like if everyone at St. John's could accept at least the heart of the above thoughts?

- There would be over 100 pledge cards submitted.
- Thank offerings would be even more frequent and generous.
- The idea of proportionate giving, aiming towards the tithe, would be embraced.
- Each person would see themselves as "part of the solution".
- We would be able to overcome all of our challenges, so long as our way of overcoming them is truly in line with God's will.

WINTER WEEKEND

February 12 -14th, 2011

Want some winter fun?

Home cooked meals and a relaxing pace?

Family or singles, teens and seniors are welcome to come to our parish Winter Weekend at Faith Mission Conference Centre in Campbellville.



Come for a day or come for the whole weekend!

For a set fee, get all the fun and relaxation you want. There will be quiet time for those who want it at set points of the day and a worship service on the Sunday before the weekend winds up and sends you home.

Circle your calendar and plan to attend. Registrations available in January.

This annual event is sponsored by St. John's Programme Committee

For further information contact Susanne Adams (905) 575-1815 or sadams@mountainet.com or Susan Little (905)528-3326 or @littleivo@yahoo.ca



Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 12th at 2:30 p.m.

Christmas Cantata, dessert at intermission

At 4:00 p.m.

Jimmy Stahl Big Band

Come Join Us to Celebrate!

Christmas & Epiphany at St. John's

Sunday, December 5

Holy Communion <i>said</i>	8:15 a.m.
Discovery Service	9:30 a.m.
Holy Communion <i>sung</i>	11:00 a.m.
Second Chance Sale	following all services
Christmas Concert	4:00 p.m.
Advent Potluck Supper	5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 12

Holy Communion <i>said</i>	8:15 a.m.
Discovery Service	9:30 a.m.
Holy Communion <i>sung</i>	11:00 a.m.
Christmas Cantata <i>dessert at intermission</i>	2:30 p.m.
Jimmy Stahl Big Band	4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 19

Holy Communion <i>said</i>	8:15 a.m.
Discovery Service	9:30 a.m.
Holy Communion <i>sung</i>	11:00 a.m.
Nine Lessons & Carol Service <i>cider & cookies prior</i>	7:00 p.m.

Friday, December 24

Holy Communion <i>said in the Chapel</i>	10:00 a.m.
Family Christmas Service <i>carols from 6:40 p.m.</i>	7:00 p.m.
Midnight Mass <i>carols from 10:40 p.m.</i>	11:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 25

Christmas Day Service	10:00 a.m.
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Sunday, December 26

Holy Communion <i>said</i>	8:15 a.m.
Discovery Service	9:30 a.m.
Holy Communion <i>sung</i>	11:00 a.m.

Sunday, January 10

Holy Communion <i>said</i>	8:15 a.m.
Epiphany Pageant	10:00 a.m.