

Not My Grandmother's Kitchen

It's a difficult time of year to work at St. Christopher's. These days, once or twice a week, the building is filled with the enticing aromas of great food: tourtières, chicken pies, apple pies, chutney. It's hard to wait for lunch. It's also hard to concentrate on work because the buzz in the kitchen is so inviting. Volunteers are working away together, chatting, laughing, and generally having a great time. I'd love to be hanging out with them! And sharing a common task is the best way to build community.

We see a lot of that dynamic at St. Christopher's: people coming together and growing closer to each other as they volunteer. Just this past week, in addition to all the preparations for the Christmas Market already mentioned, parishioners and their friends have helped with the Rummage Sale (which raised almost \$2,000!), prepared supper for 140 on Tuesday evening, and offered hospitality to over 250 at a funeral reception. That's just one week!

It continues to amaze me how hard people are willing to work to accomplish tasks they believe in and to build relationships that matter to them. We are so blessed at St. Christopher's to have a large volunteer base to draw from and skilled leaders to co-ordinate them. It's unusual these days.

At the same time, I think we are seeing some changing patterns in volunteering. It used to be that the backbone of the church was the

large group of women working as homemakers who were available to do whatever had to be done to keep the church going. That's certainly the way it was for my mother and grandmother. Nowadays, however, it is healthy retired folk of both genders who fulfill those roles. It used to be that men were available "after work" to help out around the church, but work is now global and 24/7. There is no "after work" anymore. Employers routinely expect employees to work beyond a "standard workweek". With two parents working in a family, that presents additional stresses. It used to be that children participated in one or two extra-curricular activities (usually within walking distance of home), but these days children have (and parents expect) a wider variety of opportunities available to them (if you're prepared to drive around a little or a lot). It's ironic (and maybe perverse) that children's schedules are more demanding these days while parents have less discretionary time available.

Beyond those changes in roles, work, and free time, the culture has changed. In my parents' and grandparents' day, people's lives were more institutional. They "belonged" to organizations, groups, clubs and felt good about devoting time and energy to institutional maintenance. People of my generation are far more selective about their volunteer involvements. They are more choosy because they have less time and because our culture

has become more consumerist and choice-oriented. That's the difference between growing up in the Depression and growing up in the Baby Boom. Who knows what volunteering will look like for my children's generation?

In spite of all those changes over the last fifty years, St. Christopher's has managed to keep pace and sustain a lively culture of service. I think it's because we're paying attention to what's going on in people's lives and we try to make volunteering worthwhile, manageable, and fun. Nonetheless, I think I'm beginning to see an emerging pattern. Our recent experience suggests there are lots of people willing to take on short-term tasks when you ask or invite them directly, but there are fewer people willing to assume long-term responsibility. That's a function of everybody's busy-ness and a marker of the shift from one generation to another. Instead of worrying about it, I think we should figure out how to work with it so that people continue to gather over common tasks and get to know each other better. In the future, we may need to rely on paid staff more to perform some of the planning and coordinating functions that used to be taken by volunteers – not because we don't value volunteers or volunteerism, but because people's lives have changed. It helps to explain why we need the staff we have.

It's important that we pay attention to these changes around

us – because, there are some things that need to stay the same. As it says in the old hymn: "Change and decay in all around I see. O, Thou that changest not, abide with me." Perhaps even especially as our lives become more atomized and connections with others become more superficial, we need to create safe spaces

- where relationships aren't based on the exchange of goods and services, but on the exchange of stories
- where people connect over what they can give each other, not over what they can get from each other
- where people meet across generational, educational, social, and economic differences in the interests of a common cause
- where people work together to become more whole in themselves and to heal the world around them.

You see, this working together at the church is about far more than busy work or fundraising. It is the work of affirming human worth, reconciliation, and transformation. It's about building a more human community. It's why we are here in the first place.



SPEAK FOR YOURSELF

by Rodney Lott

When I was studying my M.Sc. at Queen's University, I shared an office with several graduate students. One of my office mates was an absolute soccer fanatic. He knew all the teams, the individual players and their stats. He was as much of a soccer expert as I have ever encountered in my life. And, he would drone on, and on, and on about soccer. "When is this guy going to shut up about soccer this or soccer that?", I would lament to myself. "If I hear one more soccer statistic, I am going to be earning myself a red card really soon!!" Why was soccer so important to this guy? Why could he not stop talking about it? What was it about soccer that pumped this guy up?

It got me thinking about the subject of evangelism, something that I have never been very comfortable with. You might think that I, of all people, coming from an evangelical, Baptist tradition, would be quite comfortable with this aspect of the Christian faith. Isn't this, after all, what Jesus called us to do? "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20) Certainly, I participated in all sorts of evangelical activities, from singing in choirs in the mall, to being a leader in Christian Service Brigade (CSB), to my times being a camp leader, to a two week evangelical tour in Scotland

and with my involvement with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF). I was not unlike many group of evangelical folks, mentally salivating for the opportunity to share the Four Spiritual Laws with some "lost souls" (as if God and Jesus' message could be distilled down to a four step process!). On some level, I appreciated social and interpersonal benefit to these endeavours. Yet, deep down, something didn't feel right about everything that I was doing.

At times, I felt like I was one of those cheesy, sleazy salesmen, trying to sell someone a vacuum cleaner, a set of steak knives or something else they didn't need by whatever means necessary. The tone of the conversation, while being amiable, was adversarial with a touch of deception and ulterior motives. It wasn't about making connections with people, but about convincing them of their errors. It was about taking yourself and the other person through a range of emotions about their current state (i.e. guilt, shame and inadequacy) and then slapping the Good News upon them. It was very formulaic and lacking in sincerity and honesty. It assumed that others were stupid, misguided and "wrong" and that by telling them about Jesus and the Gospel, this would set everything right in their lives. In my earliest days, I felt proud and zealous when I would have a successful conversation with someone. I felt like I was doing God's will and that if I didn't participate in this tenet of the faith, I was being disobedient. Even worse, I would be

dooming someone's soul to eternal damnation. It was another successful statistic, another notch in the belt and another sound byte that I could add to my testimony to my community. As I entered into my university years, even with the support and affirmations of my fellow believers, I started having trouble believing that this was what Jesus was envisioning.

Many questions arose in my mind. Why would God want us to coerce people into the Kingdom? Isn't the good news something that is good and speaks for itself? Does God think other people are stupid? Why did I feel uncomfortable inviting people into my community despite my own positive experiences in the community? Why would this debate-style approach be effective in convincing anyone to become a believer? What is the conversation about: getting people in touch with God or getting more people into the pews? Is the Bible supposed to be a weapon that we use to pummel people into theological submission, or is it something that re-tells various peoples' stories of their experiences with God's love and vision for all humanity? And what do the people I proselytize feel like? What do "unbelievers" think of us? Quite recently, I got an example answer to this last question. I was in the locker room at the Aldershot pool, talking with one of my fellow runners. It was the weekend of the 10th anniversary of 9/11 and we were talking about religious fanaticism. "Given that religions start from a position that they

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HAVE YOU HEARD?

by Judy Jupp

- The Order of Niagara was awarded to Sandra Rudge, and Rob Pawson at Christ's Church Cathedral, on October 23rd. This award is given for outstanding service to St. Christopher's and to the Diocese. Congratulations to these two worthy recipients.
- Sandra Evans has assumed the duty of head grannie in Grannie's Place. Thank you to Sandra, and so many thanks to Joan Silmser who conceived of the idea, created the roster, and ran the ministry for twenty-four years. Nicole Dolson has painted wonderful figures on the walls, which must delight the children every Sunday.
- "Connect" is a program conceived by Mike, which connects teenagers who have gone to University or College, to parishioners.. There are 17 teenagers, and 5 adults who participate in this "connection". On Thanksgiving weekend, 10 teenagers came "home", and were welcomed at brunch with their parishioner partners.
- The rummage sale, held on October 14th and 15th was convened by Kristina Curtis, who was ably helped by many tried and true rummage sale runners. It was a big job, well done!
- The "Worthwhile" series of liturgy, convened by Mike, during the month of September was well received. Much planning and research is done each time the staff and lay planners undertake a series such as this. Hopefully we all now feel even more worthwhile.
- God speed to Elizabeth and Steve as they embark on their journey to Istanbul and other exotic places. We will welcome them back, thankfully, and listen raptly to their stories.
- CORRECTION —Last month's "Have You Heard", talked about Robert Stephen, and his ballet performance. This event is at the BURLINGTON Centre for the Performing Arts—NOT Toronto.. It will be held on December 1st!

From The Registry

Deaths

Sep 21 Kyle Denine

Oct 21 Jim Miller

Where does our imagination take you?



In the hilltop town of Assisi in Italy there are two beautiful basilicas. The oldest is dedicated to St Clare and her body remains beneath it, pilgrims kneel in prayer beside her. The newer Basilica is dedicated to the more famous Saint of the Town: St Francis. It was while he was still a young man, perhaps in his late teens, that Francis went to pray in a small chapel which now forms part of that old basilica. It was in a terrible state of disrepair. As he contemplated the San Damiano cross, he had the experience of Christ speaking to him from the cross. He said to Francis 'Build My Church'. Francis assumed the reference was the dilapidated Chapel and set about using his father's money to repair the building. After his Father in rage took Francis to court before the local Bishop, Francis renounced all he had and lived as a beggar in the region using what he had, including his own manual labour, to restore other Churches in the area.

Sometime later he heard a sermon based on Matthew 10, where Jesus sends out the disciples to preach the Gospel and tells them to "take no gold or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals or a staff". This seemed to clarify for Francis the calling he had to 'build the Church'. He

devoted himself to a life of poverty. He and his followers devoted themselves to prayer, to preaching the Gospel and to helping the poor. The legends that have become famous about Francis are the ones we remembered on October 3rd – the Blessing of the Animals, where Francis is said to have preached to the birds who flocked to the sound of his voice and to have mediated with a wolf that attacked a local village, bringing peace between the two.

Less spoken of is the incredible sacrifice made by one so young. Someone whose love for creation and his fellow human beings had life-changing consequences for the Church at the time and long after his death. Francis never sought to become a priest or take leadership in the Church, it was others that sought recognition from the Church authorities. He was just one young man who was attentive enough to listen, humble enough to serve, passionate enough to sacrifice all he had to build the Church in more than bricks and mortar and he had enough vision to see the all of God's creatures as his sisters and brothers. A couple of weeks ago I visited the same chapel in which Francis was called and I prayed that we, at St Christopher's, might be bold enough to follow his example.



Youth Service October 2011



Connect Brunch Thanksgiving 2011

WARDEN'S REPORT

by Lisa Morelli

As the newest member to join the Corporation, it is now my turn to write and let everyone know what the latest and greatest happenings are for the wardens. I must admit, the role has been exciting, informative and a bit overwhelming at times. When Steve invited me to become a part of the team of wardens here at St. Christopher's, I did not fully understand what a warden actually does. Sure, I saw them talking with parishioners, and carrying keys but as I was not a member of Parish Council, I really had no idea what a warden's job entailed.

Having been in my new position since Vestry (February 2011), I quickly realized how much there is to know, to do, to be aware of and to achieve. I have subsequently learned many new things about roofing, mould, contracts, budgets, and deadlines. I have been a nurse for 20 years and admit there has been a huge learning curve. Most importantly, my new role has given me the privilege of meeting many more parishioners and I hope to get to know many more people at all services. As it is a 5 year term, there is lots of time to acquire new knowledge and grow into the role. I believe the warden offers people a chance to hear voiced concerns, and to share them with the Corporation. I think of the role of warden as being the "go-to" person who is present each Sunday, should any needs arise.

We are now searching for a new music director and have placed advertisements in the diocese as well as the RCCO in Canada and the U.S. We wanted to be sure we were aware of St. Christopher's wishes for our new organist and thank everyone who took the time to fill out the survey. This makes our job of hiring a new staff person much easier.

Last year at Vestry, it was suggested that a nominating committee be formed to nominate candidates for election at our next Vestry meeting. Parish Council formed a nominating committee and we, the wardens, are working on updating job descriptions, so those interested have a better understanding of the duties and responsibilities involved.

We are currently searching for a new Property Chair who will oversee a short and long term plan for maintenance inside and outside the church.

The wardens will also soon be meeting to discuss the grant application for Open Doors to be submitted shortly.

I am constantly astounded at the amount of volunteering that occurs each day at St. Christopher's and often share with my friends how much we have to offer. Our programs and the way in which we include everyone in making decisions makes me proud to be a part of such a vibrant and caring church community. St. Christopher's is my home away from home.



Health care without the medicine

The cooling hand on the fevered brow . . . the quirky but brilliant surgeon with the incisive sense of humor... the post-op shenanigans when the scrubs come off... But that's television, not the reality of OHIP — or any other health service where, for every front-line nurse and doctor, there's a team of backroom specialists who may be non-medical but are crucial to the health of the service itself.

Be they number-crunchers or policymakers, no one's ever likely to write a prime-time series about them. But they're the stars of York University's Health Studies Program, which marked its 10th anniversary in July. One of its strengths, says Prof. Mary Wiktorowicz, is the capacity to take students who are sure they want to work in health care, but aren't sure where, and direct them to a field they may not even have known existed.

Wiktorowicz, a co-founder of the program, is chair of the School of Health Policy and Management.

Jennifer Catton entered the school by one door and, quite typically, came out another.

Jennifer graduated from York last year. She'd decided in high school on a career in health care and, figuring it would have to be a clinical position, enrolled in life-sciences at the U of T. She stuck it out for three years but wasn't enjoying it. She says York's health studies program gave her a

deeper understanding of health-care systems worldwide, the government policies that drive them, the technology systems they use and the "business competencies" they need. "I sort of fell across this and it seemed like a perfect fit for me."

Jennifer works as a business analyst in the Joint Department of Medical Imaging, involving the University Health Network, Mount Sinai and Women's College Hospital, and says it's "150 per cent the area I want to be in. It's very challenging and very fulfilling. "I'm much more comfortable in this role of helping maintain health care in Ontario and ensuring the system works efficiently." Recently, her job has taken her to hospitals across the province, helping figure out how to reduce patient wait-times for MRI scans. "The idea is to remove inefficiencies and tighten up the processes to get through more patients with the same resources," she says. "Working smarter, not harder. The results we've had have been cuts from 5 per cent to as much as 80 per cent. It's proof that the methodology works."

Jenny is continuing to study and may go for a master's degree either in health administration or business administration.

from article published on Wed. October 5, 2011 in the Toronto Star
<http://www.thestar.com/specialsections/schoolsguide/article/1065372--health>

Coming Events:

Remembrance Day Service

November 6th 8.00 & 9.30am

We ask that all Veterans from "any war", make themselves known to Ian Hay at 905.634.2852 prior to November 1st.

Burlington Civic Chorale

Burlington Civic Chorale performs with Adrienne Pieczonka, Soprano with special guest Laura Tucker, Mezzo Soprano November 10, 2011 8:00pm at The Burlington Performing Arts Centre – Main Theatre.

World renowned Canadian soprano Adrienne Pieczonka returns to her native Burlington for an intimate evening of music from Broadway to Bach. A 2010 JUNO Award-winner, Adrienne has been praised for the sheer beauty of her voice, as well as for her deeply compelling stage presence.

On this evening the Burlington Civic Chorale, directed by Gary Fisher and accompanied by Jennifer Goodine will perform excerpts from Gioachino Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle" and two Latin American pieces "Muie Rendera" by C.A Pinto Fonseca and "Te Quiero" by Alberto Favero. They will also accompany Ms. Pieczonka on "Ride the Chariot" by William Henry Smith.

For tickets, contact The Burlington Performing Arts Centre at www.burlingtonpac.ca

Christmas Around the World

St. Christopher's choir presents 'Christmas Around the World' a dramatic musical for Christmas with singers, actors and dancers, Sunday, December 11th; performances at 4:30 and 7pm followed by sweets and hot chocolate. This is a gift from St. Christopher's to the community.

GET CAUGHT HOLDING THE BAG!

by Carol Henley



Are you planning a trip somewhere near or far? Why not share your adventure with the rest of the parish? Take a photo of yourself with your St. Christopher's shopping bag at your destination or along the way and send it in to us for the Messenger!

St. Christopher's reusable shopping bags are now available for only \$3. Featuring our logo and address, they are an attractive way to promote our presence in the community. These reinforced cloth bags are 15"x13"x10" so they hold a lot! They can even accommodate a stack of tourtières or apple pies with room to spare for some mango chutney or other preserves. Buy a couple to be ready for the Christmas Market on November 12th.

The bags are available for sale in the Narthex on Sunday mornings or during the week in the church office. Get your cameras rolling so we can all see where in the world our parishioners (and their St. Christopher's bags) go!

Mark Your Calendars
Dec. 3, 2011 7pm

"We're having a Party"

Join us for a celebration of Mary Jane's ministry among us. More details will follow.



Blessing of the Animals





The Messenger is published monthly for the parishioners of St. Christopher's Anglican Church. All questions or concerns should be directed to the Messenger Editor, c/o St. Christopher's Parish Office, 662 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 3M8. Call 905.634.1809.

Thanks to this month's contributors: *Steve Hopkins, Mike Deed, Sue Nicolls, Lloyd Gesner, Lisa Morelli, Rodney Lott, Carol Henley, Judy Jupp, Ken Beeby and Sandra Rudge*

MAILING ADDRESS

Let's Stay Connected!

Sometimes, e-mail is the easiest and fastest way to share information or ask your opinion. Don't be left out of the loop! Please make sure we have your current e-mail address by sending a message to staff@stchristophersburlington.com.

If you no longer wish to receive a hard copy of this newsletter, please let us know.



Christmas Market

Sat. Nov. 12th 2011
8:00am to 2:00pm

Breakfast
8.00am to 10.00am

Luncheon
11.00am to 1.00pm

Bereavement Service

November 6th at 4.00pm

On this day we come together especially to remember all those who have touched our own lives, and those who have died in the past year.

Please join us in worship as we remember those we love and can see no more. This is a quiet, reflective service filled with reassurance, healing, and hope. To include names of loved ones, please call Sandra at the church office 905.634.1809.

Mending the Spirit

Managing Stress

Thursdays 7.30 pm in the Quiet Room
Nov 3 to Dec 8, 2011

You're Invited Blue Christmas

A quiet,
reflective
celebration of Christmas

Thursday, December 15, 2011
at 7:30 pm

All are Welcome