



Priest-in-Charge Message: Advent/Christmas 2012

Dear Friends,
 The Season of Advent is a time of anticipation and expectation, a time when we prepare ourselves to see God at work in the world; it is a time 'pregnant' with Hope and coming opportunities. The Season of Christmas is a time of joy and celebration, a time when we thank God for Emmanuel (God is with us); it is a time of 'giving birth' to new possibilities and incarnating the Love of God in our lives.

"The Season of Christmas is a time of joy and celebration..."

Advent and Christmas are about new beginnings, and our preparations to begin again. One of the profound insights St. Benedict repeats in his Rule of Life is, "always we begin again." This is not an easy thing to do. It requires two difficult disciplines: to let go of what you have, and to live as if the best is yet to come. Or, in order to live as if the best is yet to come, you have to first let go of what you have. We have to give up our own agendas and expectations so that we can be open to contribute to the needs of the wider community. This is what living life to its fullest is all about.

We human beings are creatures of habit. The world socializes us to live as rivals

to one another, to compete for scarce resources, to protect what we have—to care for 'you and yours.' Life in Christ could not be more different. In Christ we co-operate with one another, we share scarce resources, we give what we have, and we care for every human being. This is what living life to its fullest is all about. Unfortunately, the habits of the world tend to crowd out the habits of our Life in Christ. That is why "always we begin again."

The message of Advent and Christmas is always relevant to our lives. It has even more significance this year, given that I am leaving at the end of

January 2013. With every ending there is a new beginning. We are all sad to see the present arrangement end, but I pray that in the spirit of Advent and Christmas we greet whatever new arrangement may be made with Hope and Joy.

Blessings for a Hope-filled Advent and a Joy-filled Christmas,

Paul Bowie+

Rev. 'd Paul Bowie

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A Word from our Wardens...

Here we are approaching Advent once again. It has been a busy fall with lots going on around the church.

Church school got off to a new year in September- thanks to all those who have stepped up to teach our youngsters. Your commitment is greatly appreciated. We have heard from a

number of sources how interesting the 'Christianity and Croissants' sessions have been. We have even noted some adults 'sneaking' out of services to join the children at these presentations. Maybe this is something we should be sharing with the entire congregation?

A large group of parishioners joined in on the trip to Cuba, organized by our resident travel agent Bobbie Carter. Unfortunately Bobbie was unable to join us due to illness but we had a great time just the same. The travel deals Bobbie has brought to the church have been great fun and we cannot thank →

her enough for the financial support she gives back to the church. The travellers all took a good number of items to donate to the Cuban people—school supplies, toiletries, clothing—all very much appreciated. And we got home in the nick of time—just hours before Hurricane Sandy hit!

By the time this newsletter is distributed the Fall Fair will have happened. I wonder if we will have been as successful as last year. Hours of preparation and planning goes into the organization of this major activity and the contributions of many make for a great day. Hope you were able to take part and attend. Thanks to everyone who baked, sold, set up, took down, sold raffle tickets and countless other necessary jobs I can't begin to list. The work parties for soup, spice mix, and hot chocolate making have been fun and the presentation of gift baskets is a relatively new direction for us—well received.

We had a moving service on Sunday, November 11th, starting with the laying of a wreath by one of our own veterans, David Schultz. O Canada was sung and a very moving sung rendition of "In Flanders Fields" was presented by Amanda and Ryan Bowie. Our VCC student Clara Plamondon offered up the sermon on remembrance with grace and poise.

We are approaching the beginning of the church year—December 2 is the first Sunday in Advent and the start of the new year. Advent is always an exciting time in the church as we anticipate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. The children will be presenting

a Carol and Readings Service on December 23rd. Please watch the bulletin for service times on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and December 30th.

Commitment Sunday is December 2, 2012. We hope you have all had a chance to prayerfully consider your commitment to St. Stephen's and complete your commitment card for the coming year. These cards are essential for us to budget and plan for 2013. This coming year is a milestone for our church—St. Stephen's

is 100 years old in September! More info on celebrations will be coming out in the New Year.

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Now for the sad news. Rev. Bowie has taken a full time position at a church in Mission as of February 1st, 2013. We are very saddened to see Paul, Juliette, Amanda and Ryan leave St. Stephen's, but happy that they will be with us through the Christmas season. A meeting is being scheduled in the beginning of January for Bishop Ingham and the wardens to discuss who will be taking Paul's place. We will keep you informed.

In closing, we wish you all a joyous Advent season, with time to reflect and consider what precious gifts we have received from God. May all of us be reminded of the true gift of Christmas and rejoice in the knowledge that He is with us.

Cynthia Collins

Valerie Krause

Yippee!

New Year's Day – I stop and stand,
Young otters hump across the sand,
tumbling, teasing as they run,
chasing each other to the sea,
quite uninhibited by me;
three little otters having fun.
They look so gloriously at home
in salty spray and curling foam,
so exuberantly alive.
Uplifting by their antics there,
I see black nostrils sip the air,
watch them surf the breakers, dive.

"Yippee!" I dream I hear them say,
"Come on in! It's New Year's Day."

I.D.

(contributed by Audrey Watson)

Parish of St. Stephen the Martyr, Burnaby

Advent and Christmas Services:

Advent 1	Dec. 2	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist and Church School
Advent 2	Dec. 9	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist and Church School
Advent 3	Dec. 16	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist and Church School
Advent 4	Dec. 23	11:00 am	Lessons and Carols (led by the Church School)
Christmas Eve.	Dec. 24	11:00 pm	Holy Eucharist
Christmas Day	Dec. 25	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist
Christmas 1	Dec. 30	10:00 am	Christmas Lessons and Carols. Joint Service with St. Margaret's at St. Margaret of Scotland
Epiphany	Jan. 6	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist

St. Margaret of Scotland

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Christmas 1	Dec. 30	10:00 am	Christmas Lessons and Carols. Joint Service with St. Stephen's at St. Margaret of Scotland
Epiphany	Jan. 6	9:00 am	Holy Eucharist
		7:00 pm	Evensong