



News from

New St. James Presbyterian Church

A Mission Church

Following Christ, Worshipping God, Serving Others
December 1, 2020

From the Publisher

As we move into an Advent like no other that many of us have experienced, it is good to be reminded that the work of building God's kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy continues unabated in New St James. I hope this issue of the newsletter will serve as just such a reminder and give us all cause to sing with the angels who heralded the birth of Immanuel. In appreciation of all who are working to build God's kingdom in the pandemic, and with my thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter this year, I wish you all a joyful Advent and a happy and holy Christmas season. Gloria in excelsis!

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Welcome to Captain Rev Dr David Clark!

It is with great joy that the Session and Congregation extends our warmest and most heartfelt welcome to the Rev. Dr. David Clark as our new Minister at New St. James.

While we could not hold a welcoming reception, a Service of Induction (which was live-streamed and a video recording is available on our website) was conducted by the Presbytery of London on the evening of Sunday, November 15, 2020, to induct Rev. Clark as our called Minister. He has a broad range of ministry experience with other congregations and is also a Chaplain

Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session, and The Search Committee.

with the Canadian Armed Forces.

We are most fortunate to have been brought together with Rev. Clark and we look forward to working with him as he gets to know New St. James better. Due to the restrictions of the ongoing COVID pandemic, it may take a little bit longer for him to get to know people in the Congregation, but with your patience, your encouragement and your support, we are sure he looks forward to settling in with us and learning more about everyone and everything that New St. James has to offer.



Captain The Rev. David A. R. Clark, B.A., B.Th., M.Div., Ph.D.

A Brief Biography

David Clark spent his childhood in both Ottawa and South America. While studying for his B.A. at McGill University, he came to Christian faith through the ministry of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal, where he later served as Church School Teacher and Student Minister. In Montreal, he met his future wife, Meredith; they were married in 2006. He completed his M.Div. at the Presbyterian College, then was ordained by the Presbytery of Montreal in 2009.

He served as Minister of Calvin Presbyterian Church, North Bay, where he was also enrolled as a Chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces.

While serving as Stated Supply at St. David's Presbyterian Church,

Campbellville, David pursued a Ph.D. degree in Theological Studies at the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology (Wycliffe College). He completed this work after defending his dissertation, "Jewish Scriptures in Nazi Germany: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Old Testament, 1932-1945." During his doctoral work, he was appointed Adjunct Faculty at Wycliffe College (where he continues to teach theology) and also lectured in Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto.

David loves time with his family, which has grown to include three children (aged 9, 7, and 3) and a Standard Schnauzer. He is delighted to begin this new chapter as Minister of New St. James Presbyterian Church.

From the Minister

Emptied and Filled: Advent and Christmastide in a Pandemic

Dear friends in Christ,

To begin, I wish to express my appreciation for your recent kindnesses: despite the limitations of our current conditions, I have felt very warmly welcomed by the congregation. I am delighted, and grateful, to begin this ministry at New St. James. I look forward to celebrating and sharing in Christ's presence in the days and months to come.

As I reflect on Advent and Christmastide, I suspect that many may find themselves anticipating this season with dismay,

looking toward the coming days with a sense of disappointment, loss, or loneliness. As we diligently follow guidelines needed to safeguard one another's health, we recognize that many joyous holiday traditions simply must be deferred: this will not be the year for singing carols together, gathering for Christmas festivities, or visiting friends and family. Instead, this Advent and Christmastide may bring unwanted isolation for many in the congregation.

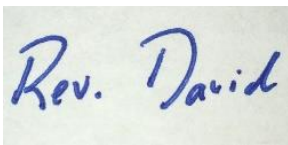
I discussed these difficulties with an elder here at New St. James, who wisely suggested that—as we cancel activities that normally fill this season—we may perhaps discover new and meaningful opportunities to reflect on Christ. This conversation reminded me of a letter

from Dietrich Bonhoeffer (a German pastor and theologian) to his fiancée, Maria von Wedemeyer. In December 1943, writing from a prison in Nazi Germany, Bonhoeffer offered this surprising message of hope:

I think we're going to have an exceptionally good Christmas. The very fact that every outward circumstance precludes our making provision for it will show whether we can be content with what is truly essential. I used to be very fond of thinking up and buying presents, but now that we have nothing to give, the gift God gave us in the birth of Christ will seem all the more glorious [...]. So let us approach this Christmastide not only undaunted but with complete confidence.¹

I certainly would not suggest that our circumstances are comparable to Bonhoeffer's conditions during his

Blessings of Advent,



The Rev. Dr. David Clark

imprisonment; however, I think we can learn something profound and helpful from his hopeful perspective on a Christmas without outward celebration. In Bonhoeffer's view, the more Christmas was stripped of its festivities and shorn of its usual jollity, the more Christmas could centre on God's gift to us in Jesus Christ. That is, the more Advent and Christmastide are *emptied* of our accustomed celebrations, the more we may find Advent and Christmastide *filled* by the presence of Christ.

This year, as we are often alone or separated, perhaps we may find new opportunities to recognize that—because of Christ's presence—we are indeed never truly alone. May God give us grace to rejoice in Christ's presence with us throughout the coming season: even as we experience emptiness in our homes and calendars, let us take comfort in the promise that we may yet be filled by the presence of Christ, who is God's gift to us all.

¹ *Love Letters from Cell 92: The Correspondence between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Maria von*

Wedemeyer, 1943-1945, trans. John Brownjohn (London: Harper Collins, 1994), 104.

A Word of Thanks

The Induction of Dr Clark on November 15 was the culmination of many months of work and prayer, undertaken by many people.

As I was leaving New St James that evening, the indefatigable Clerk of Session, Bruce Curtis, quietly handed me a gift and a card. He did so on behalf of the whole Congregation. His words of thanks and appreciation were heartfelt

With a thousand thanks, I am, and shall remain,

Your Ex Interim Moderator,
Rev Andrew Fullerton

and sincere, and I received them in the same fashion, believe me. The gift was a pair of hard-to-find theological books I had longed to have on my own shelves. It's a joy to have them now.

When I read these books and refer to them in the years to come, good memories of New St James will float to the surface and make me glad all over again.

From the Clerk of Session

As we head into the Season of Advent, we are reminded that it is a time of expectant waiting as we prepare for the celebration of the arrival of Christ on that first Christmas. Advent now gives us a time for quiet reflection after a very busy Autumn period of monitoring the developments related to COVID and completing our Search Process with the Preaching for the Call, seeking approvals for our new Minister and preparing for the Induction Service. As you read in this Newsletter about the many things which have happened, we can celebrate the achievement of those things and then return our minds to the true purpose of the Season.

On the issue of the Coronavirus, the COVID-19 Response Team has been vigilant in monitoring the situation and observing the successes and challenges of other Churches and other locations across the Province. With the second wave and the rampant spread of the virus across the Province and the

Country, it was the right decision to continue our suspension of in-person worship. A number of local churches which had returned to in-person worship have since re-suspended public worship and will not be re-considering this matter until late Winter or early Spring. We will continue to monitor the COVID situation, consider the advice of the health authorities, and wait until it is the safest and wisest time to resume public worship.

As we come toward the year-end it is always an important time to check-in on our Church finances and how we will meet our budgetary obligations. While we have not been meeting in-person for Worship, we still have expenses which must be covered, and we thank those who have continued with their generous offerings. The Board of Managers will be providing more information to you in this regard and we ask you to consider that information and respond as you are able. Further, with respect to 2021 Offering

Envelopes, Elders are reminded to pick up their District envelopes and Pastoral Care Baskets on December 5, 2020, between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Church, for delivery to members within your District.

Lastly, this is a reminder to all of those folks who have a report to prepare for

Best wishes during the Advent and Christmas Seasons,
Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session.

Live-streamed Worship – the next best thing to being there!

Given our inability to meet in-person for Worship Services during this period of the pandemic, we are fortunate to be able to live-stream a Worship Service from our own Sanctuary. We extend our thanks and appreciation to Torin Chiles for his music, Nawton and Tennyson Chiles for the Scripture Readings and technical production, and Rev. Dr. David Clark (and previously Rev. Mark McLennan) for leading us in very meaningful Worship. While it is not quite the same as being there, it does provide us with an opportunity to engage in Worship as a Christian Community and continue to build and nurture our faith.

Rev. Clark, as our new Minister, will ensure that meaningful and engaging worship opportunities are provided each Sunday morning. He is working on ways to help the members of New St. James

Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session

From the Music Director

One thing is for sure... This is going to be a Christmas unlike any other for all of us this year! I am delighted to be working with Rev. Dr. David Clark and I am also delighted that we are thinking about and

the 2020 Annual Report. We will be working on determining when and how we will hold an Annual Meeting in 2021, but we will need your reports to be delivered to Judi LeBlanc in the Church Office by mid-January. Judi will be notifying you of this date soon.

be more fully engaged and participating in Worship from their own homes. As part of that effort, Rev. Clark will provide an Order of Service which will be posted on the Church Website each week for everyone to follow and it will include various elements (e.g., Psalms and Prayers) which can be said in unison by both those at the Church and those at home.

In keeping with our tradition of lighting the Advent Candles and reading the PWS&D Liturgies, we will be posting the Advent Liturgy each week with the Order of Service so that everyone at home can participate and if they like, light their own Advent Wreath Candles at home. We look forward to sharing this time of Worship together through Advent and into the Christmas Season.

planning through Advent and Christmas even as I type this dispatch. Isn't it an uplifting, encouraging feeling to be preparing for Christmas despite the pandemic?

I saw a Facebook meme yesterday which reminded me that the first Christmas was a simple affair and that we can survive this Christmas even if it is a little more simple than we are used to, or than we would perhaps wish for. There will be traditions that we will miss – especially seeing the sparkle in the eyes of all our NSJ kids and singing those Christmas carols together on Christmas Eve – but Christmas will come again next year along with all the familiar and comforting traditions.

This year perhaps we can focus on the more intimate, and the more spiritual aspects of Christmas. This Christmas may be an opportunity, a gift, to reflect, to be calm, to be grateful, to reach out in new ways, spreading Christmas Light and Christmas cheer as we can, even if it IS through the small video squares of Facebook and Zoom. Christmas is coming, and perhaps those carols we treasure will seem even more meaningful this year as we sing them together this Christmas through the internet ether. We will remember and appreciate the powerful emotions we feel as we usually express our shared Christmas Joy

Merry Christmas to all,
Torin

Mission and Social Action Committee

The Committee has made the following donations:

\$800 to Mission Services of London,
\$800 to the Knox Teeswater Cropshare

Lyn Hill, Convenor

together in our beautiful NSJ Sanctuary. We will miss seeing our Christmas Tableau, but perhaps this year we can spend more time remembering the Tableaus from our past or imaging the Tableaus of our future.

I was in the Sanctuary this morning and it has been beautifully and lovingly decorated just like every year. While the camera does not do it full justice, please savour the beauty and let it carry you back to years past, Tableaus past, and Christmases past. Stay in the present – rejoice and be merry! AND let's take time to imagine Christmases FUTURE!

Lesley, Nawton and Tennyson join me in wishing you all a Happy and Holy Christmas. May all the unique blessings of THIS Christmas be yours. I will sing all the more lustily this season knowing you are joining me in the carols through Advent and Christmas, sharing Good News, good cheer and the Divinum Mysterium that kindles us and our faith as we embark on another liturgical year together.

program,
\$1,000 to the May Court Club of London for its school nutrition program,
\$1,300 to Mission Services of London for its Christmas hamper program.

Salvation Army Christmas plans

NSJ 28TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE 2020

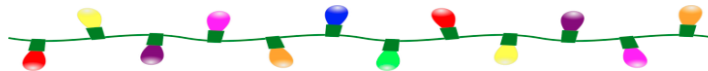


The Salvation Army is offering the Christmas Hamper program this year, and there will be a huge need for donations and support as the need in London is significant. Last year, with our help, over 6750 bags of new toys were donated for children aged 0-12. See the poster below for gift ideas and where the highest need is. A non-violent toy that does not require batteries is preferable, and please do not wrap the toy. Beginning on Monday, November 30 until Monday, December 7 you will be able to drop off your toy at the church. Donations will be picked up on Tuesday December 8. Please call the office to make an appointment (519) 434-1127. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Giving Hope Today

TOY DRIVE



Your generous donation of new, unopened, unwrapped gifts with a value of up to \$50 will help The Salvation Army provide a Merry Christmas to over 6,500 children in our community this year!

★ Highest Need

Infants & Toddlers

- Sleepers and winter apparel - Size 1+
- Soft blankets
- Hats and mitts
- Developmental Toys (i.e. Baby Einstein/Leap Frog/VTech)
- Light up and musical toys
- Cloth/Board books
- No button eyes or noses

Ages 4—9

- Family board games, puzzles
- Art and craft supplies
- Books, colouring and activity books
- Crayons, washable markers, pencil crayons
- Hats, mitts, scarves, socks
- Building Blocks (Lego/Duplo, K'Nex, etc.)
- Make believe toys

★ Highest Need

Ages 10-12

- Jewellery, watch, purse, wallet
- Books, diaries, journals
- Hats, mitts, scarves, socks
- Bath gift sets, lotions, body sprays
- Hair care accessories
- Youth make up/nail kits
- Sport items
- Art and craft supplies/models

Musical Meditations

I am pleased to announce that Musical Meditations is now online! Join us over the winter months from the comfort of your own living-room and listen to fabulous classical music presented by local artists, musicians with connections to New St. James, and special guests. Pre-recorded 30 minute concerts will be available for free viewing for two weeks on YouTube and the newly created Facebook page: Musical Meditations. We hope that you will consider generously

donating to the program in support of these artists.

Our first program features soprano Bethany Turpin. Bethany was a frequent visitor and soprano section lead guest at New St. James. She will be presenting a one-woman program entitled: I Speak Whale. On the program are "I Wish I Could Speak Like Music" by Ronald Beckett, "Lament of Isis on the Death of Osiris" by Elisabeth Lutyens, "Ariel" by

Jonathan Dove, and "Social Sounds from Whales at Night" by Emily Doolittle. This concert will be available for viewing from December 4-13.

Also in the works: harpist Noël Wan and baritone Patrick Murray, and Andrea Botticelli will play her newly acquired 1830's fortepiano with works by Schubert, Czerny, and Schumann.

Please join us!
Ariel Harwood-Jones

Women's Missionary Society

We are participating in the National WMS Christmas Service which will be held on December 9 at 1 pm on Zoom. This is the first time WMS has organized a National Service and we are excited to connect in this very special way during the Advent Season. The moderator, Rev Amanda Curry, will preach at the service. If you would like to join the service

please email me at reidc@rogers.com and I will send the link.

Our own December meeting will be on December 11 at 1 pm on Zoom. We are looking forward to sharing together in this special Christmas meeting. Please email me if you would like the link.

Cathy Reid

Pastoral Care Update for Elders

It is that time of year again when we ask our elders to deliver our Pastoral Christmas baskets. Six wonderful Highland ladies are helping me prepare them up on Thursday December 3 at 9:30am. We have more to deliver than usual this year because our church doors

are closed so I am arranging a drive by pickup for the elders on Saturday December 5 from 9:30-11:30am. I will notify you on Thursday by email if I have baskets for you so please reply to me and confirm your availability. Thanks.

Cathy Taylor, Convenor Pastoral Care.

A brief update and note of thanks

Thank you, New St James for all of your gifts during these difficult times. Your time, talent, treasure and continued prayerful support for the life and mission of New St James has allowed this church to rise to the challenges of 2020.

support of this church has endured, even while we can't be together in person. Please know that what you do is appreciated and makes a profound difference.

I'm pleased to report that the financial circumstances at New St James are stable at present. Your strong, faithful

Early in December, you will receive a letter that will tell you about our current financial situation and also appeal for your support. As I'm sure you know,

New St James receives a large portion of annual contributions in December, which is important as we settle the current year and plan for the next.

The Board is keenly aware that for many households, 2020 - and beyond - will pose financial concerns or constraints.

Steve Harris, on behalf of the Board of Managers

Northern Hospitality

Your Northern Hospitality team continues to serve the less fortunate as the number of attendees increases each week. We served twice during the month of November an amazing hot turkey chilli from the Looney Tunes cookbook.

We are planning to serve a hot turkey dinner on Monday, December 21 complete with real mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables and hopefully stuffing. Our special thanks to Cathy Reid's Burlington workplace who generously donate each year the well-loved Tim Horton gift cards to place in each take out meal. We are pleased to provide this Christmas dinner since many

Whatever the nature of your support, it will be appreciated.

We look forward to the time when we can safely gather together in worship. Until then, thank you for your astounding generosity of spirit.

organizations are taking the year off due to the pandemic. I will not be surprised if 75 hungry folks will be enjoying our take-out Christmas meal.

Thank you to so many who have been providing homemade cookies to complete their supper. I notice our attendees eating their cookies first as they have a short social distant visit with ourselves or a few of their friends before they head home.

Thank you all for your financial support to the Northern Hospitality mission so the less fortunate can feel the love of New St James.

Merry Christmas to you all on behalf of the Northern Hospitality team. God Bless.
Cathy Taylor

Condolences

To the family and friends of Jessie Horne who died on November 18.

To the family and friends of Betty Morris who died on November 19.

Contact List

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For children of all ages

Are you missing seeing the stained-glass windows in New St. James? Then here is your chance to make your own for Christmas! This is what to do:

1. Print the next page – or ask someone to print it for you.
2. Colour the picture any way you want.
3. Hang the finished picture somewhere in your house – on the fridge, on a bulleting board, in a window, anywhere for everyone to enjoy.
4. Repeat as often as you want. Maybe even have a contest to see the best one!



And finally . . . participants in Dr Clark’s induction service on November 15. To answer the question in everyone’s minds, no, the postlude was not “Bless `em all, bless `em all, the long and the short and the tall.”

