



THE *ST. MARGARET'S* BEACON

Issue 7

St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church

December 2013

OUR MISSION

Our mission at St. Margaret's is to be a loving, leading community of God's people, dedicated to involvement in the life of the parish and surrounding community, following the example of Christ and welcoming all in friendship.

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IN HIS SERVICE

THE SIMPLICITY OF CHRISTMAS

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). After we lost our dog "Max" to disease in March of last year we struggled with whether or not to replace him. It was hard to imagine another dog that could take the place of our beloved Lhasa Apso. However in May of this year we became aware of a breeder whose dog had just delivered a litter of Shih Tzu puppies. My wife and I have differing stories of how we actually came to the place where we were ready to visit a breeder; however, the second we saw Maxine we knew she was ours! Her face seemed to draw us in and I felt that somehow she was already a part of our family!



Despite some of the frustrations of "puppy rearing" Maxine has worked her way quite nicely into our home and our hearts. The moment I step through the door of our house I know she will be jumping high with excitement and it is quite endearing to have her climb into one of our laps and snuggle quietly. **You see, it's really not all that complicated to figure out what's going on.** Maxine wants to love us and have us love her back in return. That really is the long and short of it!

I imagine a parallel between our experience with Maxine and our relationship with God. Christmas is a time to remember how God's love came into our time and space to take on human flesh, and as our opening verse suggests, dwell among us. I believe that verse is "key" to our understanding God's intention for humanity. Later on in John's Gospel we read the infamous 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". It's simple, God's love for us caused Him to find a way to dwell in our midst so that, as St. Augustine said, we could love Him and enjoy him forever! In other words, he came to love us and to be loved by us in a relationship that will last for eternity.

In the midst of all the busy activity that is associated with this season, may we never lose the simplicity of Christmas. And I pray we will not just dwell in the "story" of God's love, but that as we dwell in the story we would actually embrace that love and allow it to embrace us in meaningful ways

In Christ's Love - The Reverend Stephen Pessah

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

PASTORAL CARE AT ST. MARGARET'S

Submitted by Margaret Paradis

What is Pastoral Care? The shortest definition I could find reads: **"Pastoral Care is journeying alongside". That definition fits well with our church. Pastoral Care at St. Margaret's has always been essential to the life, health and growth of our congregation and it seems to come naturally to those who attend our church.**

When my family and I joined St. Margaret's 19 years ago, the pastoral care team consisted of the late Grace Bod and the priest. The congregation was fairly small and Grace knew everyone. If you missed a Sunday, she was on the phone checking up on you. If someone called for help, Grace made sure the needs were met. She always had a listening ear. We all missed Grace when she left us but happily the church grew. The pastoral care team was formed and was coordinated by Patricia Bohle. **Under Patricia's leadership the role of Pastoral care changed and grew and more needs were met.** When Patricia moved on we were fortunate to have the Rev. Canon David Clark fill the position of Pastoral Care coordinator. To become a more effective team, Fr. David found it important to make sure that those interested in the ministry were properly trained. Because of his back ground, Fr. David led several training sessions and filled us in with what we needed to know to become effective Pastoral Care ministers. He recognized that people had different gifts to offer and divided the pastoral care into categories. Each category was given a coordinator and each coordinator formed a team to meet the different needs.

What are the categories and what do the members do?

PRAYER CHAIN: Gail Jones is the coordinator for our prayer chain. When a parishioner has a concern that needs prayer, Gail is contacted then she passes this request on to our prayer warriors.

CASSEROLE MINISTRY: Sometimes illness or various crises can make meal preparation difficult. Barb Winkle makes sure food is prepared for those in times of need.

FUNERAL RECEPTIONS: When there is a death in the family, Maggie Prentice and Colleen Hamann make sure a reception is organized after the funeral only if the family requests that we provide a reception.

CARD MINISTRY: Jackie Macey sends cards to people celebrating special events, to those who are ill or to those who have lost a loved one.

TREE OF REMEMBRANCE: The coordinator for this ministry is Ron Steffler. The tree of Remembrance and the Christmas Doves offers us a way to acknowledge our loss by writing a prayer or note in a card and putting it on the Christmas tree during Advent. After Christmas the cards are safely kept then burned and the ashes are spread in the church garden at Pentecost.

VISITATION MINISTRY: Margaret Paradis and her team visit the sick and shut - ins, whether they are home or in the hospital. Often times communion is given at the same time.

HEALING MINISTRY: Coordinated by Susan Cronje, once a month the church has a healing service where during communion anyone may go to a prayer station for prayer and anointing with oil.

I am very proud of our pastoral care team. They are an extension of Christian love. We must not forget that God is always in the midst of our times together, helping us share the burden of those finding it difficult to carry the burden on their own. When I sit in church on Sunday, I see pastoral care going on around me all the time. I see people listening, supporting, encouraging and befriending. As Christians, we are called to offer help and caring to others, and everyone is in need of pastoral care at one time or another. As loving Christians we should all be in tune to the needs of others. Let us all remember the question the bishop asks during confirmation. **"Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?" Let us answer, "I will with God's help".**

LAY ANOINTERS

From The Diocese of Toronto
Website—Healing Ministries

The Bishop's Committee on Healing was formed to support the ministry of healing in the Diocese. It was established in 1971 by Archbishop Lewis Garnsworthy. The formation of the Committee has helped to re-establish healing as an integral part of the ministry of the Church. One of the responsibilities of the committee is the annual training of Lay Anointers to support pastoral care provided in parishes. Each anointer is licensed by the Area Bishop, and works under the supervision of parish clergy. Further support is offered to lay anointers through refresher days held each year on topics helpful to their ministry.

LAY ANOINTERS

Submitted by Barbara Semsch

Maggie Prentice, Carl Dicks and Barbara Gaye Semsch had an inspirational spirit filled weekend of learning and quiet reflection at the "Lay Anointers Training" at "The Convent of the Sisters of St. John the Divine". We renewed friendships, made new friends and met Bishop Linda. The weekend covered all aspects of the Ministry of Healing which increased our knowledge through the motivational and informative talks, supportive practicums, prayer and teachings. Fellowship was a highlight as we had inspirational morning, afternoon (Eucharist) and evening worship in the chapel and on Saturday night we enjoyed a few laughs with a favourite "The Vicar of Dibley". We agreed that we grew both personally and spiritually over the weekend and left with an awareness of ourselves and an inner peace. We look forward to becoming licensed Lay Anointers to be a vehicle of God's grace in the "Healing Ministry" for our family at St. Margaret's.



THE REWARDS OF VOLUNTEERING

Submitted by Barbara Semsch

Volunteering for many causes over the years is my way of lending a hand and giving back to the community. The blessings that I receive, the people I have met and connections of life stories that have been shared have enriched my life for the better. For the past twelve years I have volunteered faithfully as a Head Timer for the Barrie Wheelchair Rally in order to raise money for the Simcoe County District Disability Association. I became involved as I met a dear friend of mine Sarah, who has been in a wheelchair since she was six, when she fell off a swing. I am also a member of The Gryphon Guild which has been in the city for some 45 years. I so enjoy ushering with this group of ladies. Over the last 12 years we have shared our lives, fellowship at the meetings, and host an Author's Night each year where we highlight two authors and give the money raised to a different local charity. This year we supported "GAP", the food bank at The Elizabeth Fry Society. At our Christmas gatherings we support "The Busby Center". The opportunity to usher at the Gryphon Theatre at Georgian College or The Mady downtown has provided laughter, great music, musicals and many dance recitals. We are always looking for additional members who enjoy the Arts. For the last five years a highlight for me at Christmas is wrapping presents at the mall for the "Alzheimer's Society". The best part of wrapping is connecting with everyone, hearing their stories and wrapping their presents creatively for the special people in their lives.

During the year at school I am very active in supporting students who struggle with reading through various reading activities and Rainbows. Lastly, I always have time for family and friends who need me to walk with them or just to lend a hand.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Submitted by Barbara Tomkins

My husband Jim Tomkins, volunteers with the Red Cross Meals on Wheels. Fourteen years ago, he started with Trinity Anglican with their group. Then just over 10 years ago he moved over with the Red Cross directly. He delivers meals every two weeks or more and when there is a shortage of drivers, he is available when asked.

He goes every two weeks to RVH at 3:00 p.m. to pick out his preferred route. He waits until 4:00 when the meals come from the kitchen, with the hot meals arriving for his route in a large insulated carrier bag, the cold items in another. He checks his route with the meals and then heads off to deliver them to the recipients between 4:30 and 5:30. There are usually 10 meals on his route. Jim has worked alone for some time but the Red Cross usually matches up drivers and deliverers so two people do the route. Jim prefers the same familiar route as it gets more difficult to find the houses in the winter with early darkness and snow.



In September of 2012, our then 14 year old granddaughter asked to join him delivering the meals to work her necessary volunteer hours for high school. She told him this year she would like to keep volunteering with him as long as she is in high school near us.

The attached picture is Jim being congratulated by the Town Crier for his 10 years with the Red Cross.

OUT OF THE COLD AND VISTA *Submitted by Shelley Sweazey*

As long as I have been at St. Margaret's (since 2000), we have been involved in doing Outreach with the Out of the Cold program. This worthwhile program's mission is to provide safe, respectful and welcoming overnight accommodation and meals to the homeless from November to April. One Saturday a month, St. Margaret's is responsible for delivering three large pans of lasagna, hot and ready to serve to Collier St. United Church. Collier St. is one of six host churches that provide the facilities needed for providing meals and overnight accommodations. With the exception of one year that I can remember where we made meatloaf, we have always prepared lasagnas. Thanks to the kindness of many parishioners, "many hands make light work". As much as this program was once considered a temporary solution, the increased number of homeless people has made this program a necessity. The program also has 1000 volunteers who are provided with training and support. If you are interested, you can find more information on their website, www.barrieoutofthecold.org.

The Vista program, although not really a community outreach program, is an outreach program for St. Margaret's as it does raise funds to offset our operating costs. Once a month, from September to June, a vista order is placed. The program is simple. Gift cards are purchased for numerous retail stores, restaurants, gas stations etc at face value. This means that our parishioners do not pay any extra to purchase gift cards. However, St. Margaret's receives a percentage rebate on the sale of all gift cards, anywhere from 3 - 8% usually. Gift cards are handed out the week after the order is placed. If you are interested in ordering cards, a cheque must accompany your order for the cost of the cards. We are always looking to get more parishioners participating in the program

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD *Lorraine Whitwell and Heather Forest Seniors' Building*

Last year, St. Margaret's Parish decided to participate in the Missional Transformation process guided by a team of people and beginning with "A Parish Day Apart" last January, followed by meetings by small groups to discuss what we learned and how to implement initiatives in our parish and our neighbourhoods. Last spring and summer a group from St. Margaret's decided to "adopt" Hanmer Park close to the church and visited twice a week to help clean up the park and engage in conversations with the community. This type of initiative will continue next year.

Lorraine Whitwell who has been part of the Missional Transformation initiative from the beginning reached out to others living in her seniors' apartment building in Barrie. With her leadership and encouragement, friends and neighbours worked together to make life better for others in the community. Many residents already knit for their families and charitable causes. Lorraine thought of school children in the area, many of whom do not often have warm mitts and hats. She put up a notice asking for knitted donations of hats and mitts as well as spare wool. The weekly "Pass the Word" announcements in St. Margaret's bulletin also asked members of the parish to donate wool or knitted goods. As a result, an entire table of beautiful hats and mitts was donated to school children. These gifts were enthusiastically welcomed by West Bayfield Public School and St. Marguerite d' Youville Catholic School in the

parish neighbourhood. The schools will distribute the hats and mitts to their students in need. Each knitted item came with a tag "made with loving hands" from St. Margaret's Church. This is a photo of some of the items knit and donated by Lorraine and her group.



Lorraine also sought donations of toys and clothes and building residents donated a van full of goods which they delivered to the Women's and Children's Crisis Centre. A sincere letter of thanks from the Centre has been displayed at the apartment building. Often older people living by themselves are lonely and do not eat properly. Lorraine and her friend Marilyn started a bottle collection and used the money from recycled bottles to subsidize a shared meal like a pancake breakfast or pizza supper. Lorraine herself cooks and delivers an entire meal to interested residents every Thursday for a small charge to cover the cost of ingredients.

Lorraine provides an example to all of us – how one person encouraging and working with others can make a tremendous difference in our community.

Thank you to all the people of St. Margaret's who contributed food throughout the year to the Barrie Food Bank and to coordinators Pam and David Williams who volunteer with this community organization.

Thank you to Rev. Stephen, Celine McCarthy Beckett and Wendy Pettey who administered St. Margaret's Christmas Hamper Program this year and to all who support Outreach Fundraising throughout the year.



EDUCATION, FELLOWSHIP, CELEBRATION

PRAYER BEAD WORKSHOPS

On Thursday November 21, Margaret Paradis presented two very interesting and full workshops on making Anglican prayer beads or an Anglican Rosary. According to Wikipedia, the English word bead derives from the old English noun *bede* which means a prayer. Hindus and Buddhists used prayer beads from earliest times. Jewish people do not use beads but often touch the knots called *tzitzits* on their prayer shawl at specific times during prayers. Both Catholic and Orthodox Christians have used prayer beads called Rosaries for many years. Touching the beads as you pray helps you stay focused.

An Anglican Rosary was not created until the 1980's by an Episcopalian Priest in the U.S. It consists of 33 beads divided into four weeks, with a cross at the bottom, an invitational bead and four cruciform beads. The four groups of seven beads form the weeks. **Margaret's sister gave her an Anglican Rosary as a gift and Margaret presented these workshops to share her knowledge and encourage others to make and use their own Rosaries.** From a cross and small pile of beads and string, Margaret guided us in putting together our own prayer beads to complete the Rosary.



We were given some prayers used in the Anglican tradition and adjourned to the sanctuary for a quiet time to pray. Before this workshop many of us did not know much about prayer beads, especially in the Anglican and Episcopalian tradition. These workshops were a wonderful time of fellowship and learning. Thank you so much for your leadership Margaret.

TRUST

Tiny hand curls round my finger,
drowsy eyes close peacefully,
O gift of tender babyhood
reveals God's trust in me.

Love enough have I to care for him,
love enough to watch him grow,
but will I rise to meet the test,
the pain of letting go?

For my heart within is aching,
and the aching will not cease,
though the knowledge of God's love for him
should surely bring me peace.

And was it so with Mary,
or did she feel no qualms
and feel secure in motherhood
with infant Jesus in her arms?

Tiny hand curls round my finger,
worry eases and grows mild:
I'll surely rise to meet the test
if I trust God with this child.

Elizabeth A. Morley

THE GIRL'S STILL GOT IT! YOU BETCHA!

Submitted by Lee Willcock

A small group of about fourteen of us signed up to “take a walk with Ruth and the God who rocked her world” and we did. The book was entitled The Girl's Still Got It written by Liz Curtis Higgs (who could best be described as the Erma Bombeck of Theology) It was based on the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament of the Bible. This chapter is described as “one of the most beautiful pieces in the Bible” and is best known for Ruth’s “whither thou goest, I will go” bit. Still repeated at many present day weddings, its theme is loyalty and faithfulness arising from commitment. Our Canon Elizabeth Morley accompanied us on this journey of faith and it was a wonderful journey of sharing and learning which she guided in her quiet, wise and loving way. There were also many good giggles along the way including some belly laughs as this worldly and wonderful group of women aired their thoughts answering some of the questions Liz Curtis Higgs presented at the end of each chapter.

We began the Bible reading with Naomi (Ruth’s mother-in-law) whining about what had befallen her after the death of her husband and her two sons. She has two very pleasant daughters-in-law who are there for her and a comfort of sorts. Looking ahead frightened her. It was not a pretty future for women in those days with no men to provide. No OHIP, no old age security pensions, no CPP . . . gadzooks it was tough! Our hearts went out to poor Naomi! We discussed and

sympathized about losing a husband, children or loved one in any day and age and the requirements of a faith to move on.

As the story continued, Naomi had moved to Moab with her husband when times were tough in Bethlehem and lived there for about 10 years. Her sons had married Moabite girls – a different religion from the sons and their parents. After the men in her family expired, Naomi decided the best thing for her to do was to pack up and leave, going back to her roots and religion in Israel. She tells her daughters-in-law of this decision and is prepared to say goodbye and leave them in their home town. Both girls offer to accompany her but Naomi tells them to simply go back to their families in Moab. That is when we get Ruth’s beautiful statement of loyalty and commitment. Orpah, one of the daughters-in-law leaves but Ruth hangs in there with Naomi and they travel back to Bethlehem unsure of what the future has in store. As Liz Curtis Higgs puts it, “that’s what Ruth does. She loves Naomi, she embraces Israel and then she takes a giant “leap of faith”. The prayer stated by Liz Higgs was “Lord, help us to love others as you do. Unabashedly. Unconditionally.” That sent us home with something to think about, and work on, and come back next week to share.

Naomi and Ruth arrive back in Bethlehem where they are greeted by some of Naomi’s old friends

(who also had to listen to her whine about where life has taken her). Naomi sends Ruth out in the fields to glean leftovers from the harvest to sustain them. “The plot thickens and sex rears its ugly head” . . . a well-to-do kinsman named Boaz is in charge and Ruth catches his eye - she gets special treatment plus a load of barley to take home. When Naomi hears about her kinsman Boaz and what he did for Ruth, she is delighted and comes up with “a cunning plan”. Liz Curtis Higgs has lots of imagination and humor with the story of Ruth getting all prettied up by Naomi and sent back to spend the night with Boaz. What a gentleman he turns out to be and he too has a plan. You can well imagine the fun we had with our discussion on this part of the story. After some wonderful stories and much sharing we decided that the moral here was that God has a plan for us, - we need to do our share to help it happen.

Liz Curtis Higgs heads up the next part as “Our Hero Makes His Move” , which entails Boaz cleverly working things out with the local kinsmen so that he gets to marry Ruth. Everybody’s happy: Naomi Ruth, Boaz (but we were not too sure about the kinsman). Ruth and Boaz have a son and we can only assume, live happily ever after. As the story ends we are reminded that his family has descendants to King David – that was part of God’s plan. At the end of our journey, the author asks “Have You Got It? Are

you ready to trust God (as Naomi and Ruth did) with your whole heart, with your whole life, with everything". Try answering those questions! We did try and it was a wonderful learning experience as we shared thoughts, concepts, experiences and the best part was not necessarily the book and Liz Curtis Higg's take on the story of Ruth; it

was getting to know each other; listening with an open heart to new ways of thinking and understanding how our differences help us to grow in faith rather than apart. We made new and special friends.

We will always have that sharing experience with us and the knowledge that we are loved. That surely

is God's plan and one of the best possible reasons to attend a study group at our church. Try it – you'll like it!



The Girl's Still Got It
Study Group

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Submitted by Wendy Pettey



The Children's Christmas Party was held on Saturday, December 14th and, despite the cold and blustery weather, several children came out. There were lots of crafts to make and a delicious birthday cake to celebrate Jesus' birthday compliments of Eileen Cunningham. However, the highlight of the afternoon was a very special visit by Santa Claus.

Many thanks to Bill Goodyer for organizing this event and to all the volunteers who came out to help/host a craft!



MERRY CHRISTMAS

