

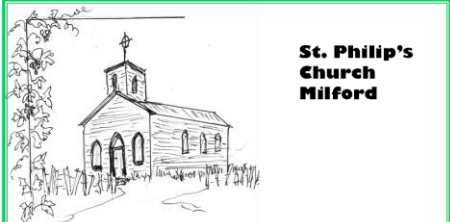
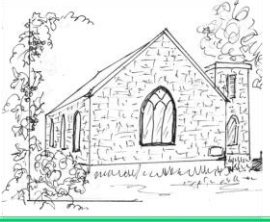


**Celebrating 100th Anniversary of St Philip's rebuilding Nov 15
With COVID-19 rules in force**



 <p>ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH IN MILFORD, ONTARIO: 1920-2020</p> 	<p>Memory book</p>  <p>100 Years Celebration</p> <p>1920 2020</p> 
<p>History book</p>	

Minister's message

“Lux in Tenebris Luceat – A Light Shining in the Darkness”

Dear friends,

In this past year, I've had a lot of opportunity to think about light. In this year, I have worked to update the lighting in my home. All new LED fixtures have been installed in every room, creating much brighter spaces, and drastically less hydro usage, achieving my ultimate goal of cutting back on my household's carbon footprint.

These very concrete thoughts on light and the life of our congregation also made me think of other expressions of light in our life together. As a congregation, as the work of renewing the lights in my home happened, the light and love of God shone forth in people of our congregation who have worked tirelessly to keep the life and work of this congregation shining in this community, even as COVID-19 has altered the way that we do everything.

But Advent is upon us, and Christmas will soon arrive. With the shortest day of the year fast approaching, I am also reflecting on another light. This birth that we are about to celebrate is often described in terms of light dispelling darkness. John's prologue says, "In him was life, and the life became the light of the world. And the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it." When the tiny baby Jesus is presented in the Temple, aged Simeon takes the child in his arms and declares him to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the Glory of God's people Israel." And still later in John, Jesus in one of his "I am" statements says, "I am the light of the world." And as we break

the bread in the Eucharist during this coming season of Incarnation, we do so with the words, “God here among us, light in the midst of us, bring us to light, and life.” This birth that we are preparing to celebrate is all about **light** for a darkened world.

You’ll excuse me then, if I tie the three together. The lights I’ve replaced, the light of those who uplift and sustain this congregation, and the light of Christ, which we celebrate whenever we gather, are all connected. The light of Christ entered into the world with his birth in a manger in Bethlehem. That light has been kindled in each of us through the encounter of our faith. But like the lights that illuminate our homes, our Lord has called us to go out into that darkened world, and shine His light for others. As we have encountered the light of Christ in our hearts, so we must go and be that light for others who may be struggling.

This congregation is a beacon in this community for those who are stumbling in the dark, or a lighthouse guiding those in danger of running aground. That is our call, at Christmas and at all times. Come and encounter the light of Christ here, but then go out there, and shine that light, because so many others are in need of the hope that our light has to offer. **Come in and see the Light of Christ, then go out and be the light of Christ in the world!** We are all called to be a light shining in the darkness, with the confidence that the darkness cannot overcome it.

Christmas Blessings! I look forward to seeing you this Christmas.

Faithfully

The Rev. Donald A. Davidson
Interim Priest-in-Charge

Wardens' report

As the days grow darker and the snow falls, we soon forget the intense heat and bright sunshine of this past summer and look forward to the seasonal joy of Advent and Christmas. During Rev. Ada’s leave, we are blessed to have Fr. Don Davidson to support us in worship and pastoral care and to guide us administratively through the details of operating during a pandemic, following the Diocesan guidelines.

Our “mini” 100th Anniversary service, led by Bishop Michael, was a wonderful way to remember our ancestors of 1920 and to celebrate the Christian journeys of those who have come to St. Philip’s since then for worship and service in our community and our world. In spite of the rigid rules that also prohibit group singing, we have been able to enjoy the music of soloists at every service since Sept 13 and were able to open the church for Sunday services on that date, as soon as the Diocesan rules permitted. We have missed our choir’s work under Mark’s skilled leadership, but we are most grateful to our gifted and enthusiastic singers, including Mike Langlois with his guitar, for enhancing the services and sharing their talents. Fr. Don’s beautiful tenor voice adds a special element to our music.

We are grateful to our parishioners for their willingness to follow the COVID Reopening Plan, cooperating with all the rules, adhering to the seating plan and observing the direction signs, but it has been so difficult to leave St. Philip’s without a coffee time visit with our church family members. In the place of face-to-face visits, we can always have another look through the History and Memory booklets that cement our history and stir up pleasant memories. Some of the stories and poems put a smile on one’s face. These publications were so popular that we had to order more copies!

The extensive work undertaken by the Present Anniversary Committee has been completed with special thanks to Arnold Robb’s leadership and the contributions (work and otherwise) of other committee members. The Future Committee is already planning for a 2021 celebration, hopefully to be a grand event. We have done our best to keep in touch with all anniversary fund donors and friends of St. Philip’s who are part of our history, and to keep everyone up-to-date about these plans.

Many thanks to everyone who helps to keep our church running smoothly. We offer a special Thank you to Leigh Scott for designing and making available by car radio our worship services in the church parking lot, to Elizabeth Hill for her work on the Parish website, and to Glendon Walker and Bruce Walker for updating our financial systems and keeping reporting requirements up to date.

This year has tested our bodies, our minds, our faith, and our adherence to the Great Commandments. The steadfast support St. Philipians continued to give, the work in preparing for the 100th Anniversary celebration of rebuilding the church, and the maintenance of contacts and support among ourselves as well as of the food bank and the local community are testimony to our faith, resilience and commitment as people of God.

We wish you a blessed Advent and Christmas. In spite of the limitations to gatherings and travel, we can be together for worship services at St Philip's.

Wardens
Sally Cowan, Josef Cihlar

ACW report

Thinking back over 2020 has made me very grateful for the blessings that God has given us at St. Philip's church. While the rest of Ontario has been battling COVID-19, we have been on the sidelines and relatively safe from the pandemic. Over the summer, our County was inundated with tourists and summer people and we still remained safe and healthy. Thank God!!

Of course, the ACW were not able to carry out our planned Schedule of Events but what we did accomplish makes me feel very happy, and yes, quite proud! While speaking to our good friends Noel Laine and Maria in Winnipeg, I told Maria that our ACW needed a project that we could do together while being apart, and Maria suggested we write a book! From there our Memory Book project was born and while it took a lot of "nagging" and deadline reminders to get contributions from some clergy and congregation members, past and present, I think it was a worthy project. The best part for me was reading through the entries – many times I got quite teary, knowing just how much our "little church that could" means to so many people. Sally and Paula and I talked, emailed constantly and finally met to put the book together and we made the deadline, our 100 Year Anniversary. Thank you all who sent us their memories!!

St. Philip's said a fond farewell to Jean Burrows who has gone to live near Renfrew with her daughter Alex, and son-in-law Kirk. Jean has been the ACW Secretary for well over 20 years and a faithful participant in every event that we held. We will truly miss her but wish her good health and good luck in this new chapter of her life!

Christmas is now just around the corner and it will be a very different one from those in the past. I do hope all of us have a joyful Christmas season, reflecting on our many blessings. hope we all have a wonderful and blessed Christmas season.

Alfie Deyo, President

Outreach / Future Committee report

We are most grateful to be able to have in-person Sunday services once again! It is so wonderful to worship our Lord together. Thanks be to God!

Our outreach/future committee has met twice in recent months. In September we learned that long-time member, Jean Burrows, would soon be moving to Dacre, Ontario to live with her daughter and her husband. Jean was at the first meeting of our current outreach committee when Debra McCaw, Marg

Ceh, Rev. Pat Patterson, Jean and I met in the fall of 1999. At that meeting we set a goal to have at least one annual outreach initiative locally, nationally and world-wide. We started with the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund as our international effort, Henry Bud as our national effort and the canoe trip and wagon ride and white gift Sunday as our local efforts. Certainly much has been added but we keep the three levels of support in mind. Jean worked hard for all our outreach efforts over the years and in so many ways. Every year she has been in charge of our Lenten collection for the Henry Budd College. We are forever grateful for her time with us and for all her faithful service. We wish her every best wish in her new home. Before Jean left for Dacre, Sally Cowan, Shirley Guy and I were able to have a short visit with her and Shirley presented her with a gift on behalf of St. Philip's. She was thrilled to receive two of Peggy de Witt's St. Philip's window photos in a frame as a token of our appreciation and a visible reminder for her time with us.

At the September meeting the future committee suggested we postpone the big November 15 celebration for the anniversary of the rebuild of our church as we are currently in the COVID amber phase with limited seating in the church and are not able to sing together or to serve food. We are thankful for Bishop Michael's visit this November 15 to help us mark the occasion in a special way. The History book and the Memory book were ready to share and the "100" cookies added to the joy of the occasion. We look forward to the day when we can begin to prepare for a celebration which will be able to include family and friends and the sharing of a meal.

Once again we mark food bank Sunday on the fourth Sunday of the month at St. Philip's.

In October the Valedictorian award of \$100 was taken to Athol-South Marysburgh School to be given to this year's recipient, Hazel Woodward North.

At our November meeting we discussed upcoming projects. We would like to find a way to support The Diocese of Ontario Refugee Committee. In the past we have had a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday. This coming year we are hoping to partner with a church in our diocese and find ways to support their efforts to sponsor a refugee family. We are currently working to gather more information for this project.

Thank you to Diane Walker for once again taking care of the collection of gifts for Operation Christmas Child, for all who contributed to this project and to White Gift Sunday. The white gifts have been taken to the Salvation Army in support of their community Christmas gift baskets. Thank you to those who prepared Christmas cards to be sent on behalf of St. Philip's congregation.

At this time of year we would normally be buying a Christmas cake and some ice cream to take to a seniors home and inviting people to join us there for a service and a time of fellowship. Sadly it is not possible this year but we are happy to hear that St. Philip's continues to financially support this ministry. Let us keep Rev. Fran and all involved in her ministry in our prayers.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the efforts of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. Please remember them and their good work in your prayers.

Our next outreach meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 13. Everyone is welcome. Please let me know if you wish to attend. Thank you for all your support for outreach efforts at St. Philip's.

Blessings, Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2021!

Paula Walker, Chair

Altar Guild report

We continue to seek new members for this rewarding ministry. If you are interested please speak to Shirley or to Paula. If you wish to donate flowers for the altar in memory of a loved one or to mark a special occasion please let us know. We have a flower fund and we thank you for all donations.

Thank you all for your support.
Respectfully submitted,
Paula Walker

Budget update to Dec 10

Operating Account

Income \$46,480.49
Expenses \$51,910.47
Balance \$2,211.82

Memorial Account Balance \$4,093.20

We have paid the central treasurer all we owe the central treasurer for 2020.
PWRDF has taken in \$7,080.00. We owe them \$2,685.00.
Beirut Fund - \$1,245.00.
Food Back - \$1,775.00.
100th Anniversary Celebrations - \$6,800.00 was donated.
All bills are paid.
Bruce Walker, Treasurer

Prayer Circle: a new group at St. Philip's



“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.”

This quote is from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 18, and the approach St. Philip’s Prayer Circle takes to prayer.

On the third Thursday of each month, at 10:00 a.m., the St. Philip’s Prayer Group meets in the Church Hall. We pray for the cares and concerns of the world, and each month there are always new and particular areas crying out for our prayers. We pray for God’s creation. We pray for those who have asked for our prayers. We uphold to God those close and known to us who have died and those who mourn. We pray for joyful events with equal vigor as for the heart-breaking. And we invite prayer requests from the parish in our weekly bulletin. All of these contributions form our prayers, but it’s important to note that there is plenty of space for silent prayer, and for those present to uphold people and events known to them alone, who need our prayers. We don’t need to know the reason for your prayer requests, but ensure that those reasons are kept confidential.

As with all gatherings at St. Philip’s, we always welcome new people to join us in prayer. There is no “membership” in this group, so please, just drop by the church at 10:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of the month. COVID-19 protocols are in place to keep everyone safe, so bring a mask and know we will be 6 feet apart.

If you would like to know more, please contact me at elizabethhillpec@outlook.com.

If you have a prayer request, being a need or a thanksgiving, or would like to join the daily prayer team, please be in touch with Paula at pbwalker@explornet.ca or call her at 613-476-6063.

Respectfully and prayerfully submitted,
Elizabeth Hill for the group

Prepare the way

Mark 1:1-8

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” This is how the Gospel of Mark begins. John the Baptist has been sent by God to prepare the people for the way of the Lord. John the Baptist came proclaiming a Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Some might think that to repent is to say we’re sorry and if we don’t then some vengeful God will rain havoc down upon us. But to repent is a turning around, a new direction of will, turning away from sin and turning to the Lord. John proclaims confess your sins! get baptised, prepare the way of the Lord. God is coming to us! This is fantastic news! God will come and fulfill all of God’s promises whether or not we do any of these things; but knowing God is on the way, why wouldn’t we want to do them?

I’m sure everyone has played a game of hide-and-seek when they were younger. It gets really boring if it takes a long time to be found. What’s fun about Hide-and-Seek is not the hiding but the getting found. Everybody likes to be found!

John tells us that one greater than he is coming and he will baptise with the Holy Spirit! John’s every word and act point to one mightier than himself.

Here begins the Gospel. Where does the Gospel begin for us? Does it begin when each day begins? What would it mean for us to say at the beginning of each day “Here begins the Gospel of Jesus Christ?” Would we be saying that in our lives that day, in our thoughts and actions, so far as possible, we would live as the Lord calls us to live, and others would see in our words and action some reflection of our Lord?

During the season of Advent, we are reminded that God is coming. We all have our different ways of hiding. But when John the Baptist shouts, “Prepare the way of the Lord!” it is as though God has just called, “ready or not, here I come!” And we remember; this is the God who always finds us. Let us open our hearts and minds and be willing to be found. Thanks be to God.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Fran Langlois

Editor’s note:

I am happy to be editing a newsletter with so much good news, especially in this year of COVID pandemic. Blessed Christmas to **You Reader** and to all your loved ones!

Josef Cihlar < robat58@kos.net >

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