



# ST. PHILIP'S ANGLICAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Edition: Christmas

10 December 2023

Priest-In-Charge: Archdeacon Nancy Beale



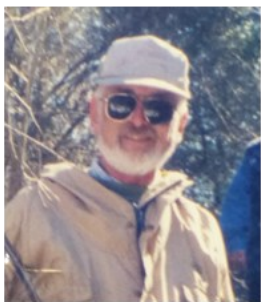
## Growing on the Vine: Rooted in Christ, Nourished by Prayer, Maturing in Faith

*WE AIM TO BE A CHRISTIAN CENTRE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD, BRINGING MEMBERS CLOSER TO CHRIST, PROCLAIMING THE WORD AND MAKING HIS LOVE KNOWN TO ALL.*

*WE SERVE OUR COMMUNITY IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT: WELCOMING EVERYONE, HELPING THOSE IN NEED AND SUPPORTING THE ENDEAVOURS OF OTHERS.*



St. Philip's in fall splendour  
Oct 10



Good Bye to Arthur  
Cole Oct 13





**Remembrance Day  
Nov 5**



**Bishop William's first visit; (at right) explaining the role of our Minister who was just appointed Archdeacon for Rural Ministry and Training Nov 12**

**Organic beekeeping**

Philosophy:

- o Bees first
- o Minimal intervention
- o Prevention over treatment
- o Protect the environment
- o Accountability




**Sustainability talk by Julie White Nov 18**



**Advent 1 –  
Lighting  
the First Candle  
and White Gift  
Sunday Dec 3**





## *Minister's message*

Driving home from a meeting this afternoon, I am reminded that our friends and neighbours are in high gear for Christmas, with carols blasting on the radio and the evening tv ads full of Christmas themes. Most of our local communities have already had their Santa Claus parades. The line from Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" echoes in my mind - "May your days be Merry and Bright...." or perhaps you are hearing choruses of "It's the most wonderful time of the year."

Over the years I have met so many people who proudly declare to me that they are "Christmas People." They just love Christmas, and one can't help but admit, there are some lovely seasonal activities that do bring joy to one's heart, even driving home in the evening past so many homes creatively decorated with bright twinkly lights. So many folks have their calendars booked with Christmas gatherings with friends, a meal with family, Christmas concerts or carol sings. The anticipatory joy that comes with the shopping for, and wrapping those special gifts, or baking special treats that family and friends will enjoy.

Unfortunately, for so many individuals and families, this is NOT the most wonderful time of the year. None of us have escaped the excessive increased cost of groceries this past year. For some of us, we are frustrated by it, or perhaps choose less costly items... but for many folks, they have had to make hard choices between things like groceries and fuel for the furnace. For many families, even here in our own area, it has meant that they are also planning on a "very skimpy Christmas." It does not lead one to feel very Merry, or Bright.

To that end, I have once again been heartened by the kindness and generosity of the parishioners in both of our churches. Once again this year, St. Philip's has filled the basket to overflowing with gifts for our White Sunday, and St. Andrew's has answered the Christmas wish list for many of our local children through their own Christmas Angel Project. These lovely gifts, in conjunction with our ongoing regular foodbank offerings have allowed our faithful people to make a difference in the lives of folks who may be struggling, right here in our own community. We have brought a little light into what may seem like a dark and gloomy time.

This is, indeed the story of Christmas, isn't it? The hope, the promise, the light and the joy of the Christ child, the baby Jesus, coming into the world, to save us from the darkness of sin and despair.

Please join us once again on these Sundays of Advent as we prepare our homes and our hearts to celebrate the coming of our Lord. Please plan on being with us for Christmas Eve, as we welcome the baby Jesus and celebrate the light and the hope that he came to bring. Not because of the gifts or all the trimmings, but because of the Love and Grace and mercy that the baby Jesus came to bring.... That's what makes it the most Wonderful Time of the Year!

Christmas services are listed in the wardens' report below. We look forward to celebrating this sacred season with you.

Your sister in Christ,

Archdeacon Nancy Beale+, Anglican Churches of St. Andrew's and St. Philip's

## *Wardens' report*

*For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. – Isaiah 9:6*

The weather is turning cooler, the nights longer, our hope grows as we look forward to the Christ child being born and things remain busy at St. Philip's. On October 21st a few of us were blessed to attend the *Service of Translation and Installation* for The Right Reverend William Cliff who is now faithfully serving as the thirteenth bishop of The Diocese of Ontario at St. George's Cathedral in Kingston.

On November 5th we held our *Service of Remembrance* led by Canon Fran Langlois after which we enjoyed some wonderful time together with our friends and families who brought along memorabilia such as photographs, cards, letters, and even more importantly, stories.

On November 12th Bishop Cliff was our preacher and celebrant during our Service of Holy Communion. During the Service he also led us in a wonderful prayer of dedication of the Nancy's new purple cincture representing her new office as Archdeacon. The purple sash was lovingly sewed by our very own Eleanor Johnston.

On December 6th some of us attended the *Service of Collation for Archdeacons* wherein our very own Nancy Beale was formally recognized as the Archdeacon for Rural Ministry and Training at the Cathedral in Kingston.

We cannot approach the end of 2023 without recognizing all that you do as a congregation to keep the ball rolling as we serve God in so many ways: by sharing our skills, reaching out to those in need, giving, praying, leading and warmly welcoming all to our church services and activities. We extend a big 'thank you' to Archdeacon Nancy for all that she does to accommodate the trial period of two Sunday services and for her energy and enthusiasm in supporting and leading two congregations. Thank you all, good and faithful servants.

2023 closes on a note of sadness with the loss of our good friend Arthur Cole who was such a faithful supporter of all St Philip's activities. On the other hand, we are blessed to have new faces in our pews as occasional visitors and as regular attendees. We look forward to a busy 2024 and hope you can join us for regular services and for some or all of the following events over the Christmas season!

***Lessons & Carols on December 10<sup>th</sup>*** at 4PM followed by a potluck and gift exchange in the Church Hall.

***Christmas Eve on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>*** with a Service of Holy Communion at 5PM with Archdeacon Nancy Beale.

***Christmas Day on Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>*** with a Service of Holy Communion at 10AM with Archdeacon Nancy Beale.

God bless.

Sally Cowan, Rector's Warden

Deb Sawle, People's Warden

## ***ACW report***

We are fast approaching the end of 2023, a year with many, many changes. The Covid19 pandemic has officially ended but people are still becoming ill and some precautions are necessary, some of us are still wearing masks and attending meetings online with Zoom. The Diocese also had many changes – we bid farewell to Bishop Michael at the Cathedral May 28th, and welcomed Bishop William (finally) on

October 28th! We celebrated with our priest when she officially became Canon Nancy and again as Archdeacon.

The ACW meets just about each month to plan events and the spending of funds raised. Although we have cut back a great deal, we are still pleased to offer assistance where we are able. Next year, we plan to hold a spring Yard and Rummage Sale and the ever-successful Pork and Corn Roast. The Christmas Carol service will have all of us joining for a potluck supper and “party”. On Sunday, January 14th, we will be celebrating ACW Sunday with a brunch following the service. Our ladies have been exercising their own “Thankoffering” on a daily basis for the past few months and are looking forward to telling you about it then.

We hope you enjoy a happy, holy Christmas and we wish you all the best in 2024!!

Alfie Deyo, President

## *Outreach report*

We have met twice since the August newsletter. Our meetings are announced in the bulletin and in church and everyone is always welcome. We hope you will consider joining us on January 11 at 10 am when we next meet in the hall.

We continue to host Saturday morning talks. On October 14, OPP Detachment Commander A/Staff Sgt Sean Guscott gave an excellent talk on online fraud and phone scams. It was very informative and much appreciated.

We have partnered with the County Sustainability Group for a sustainability series of talks. On November 20, Julie White, of Long Point Honey Co., spoke about honey bees. Julie spoke passionately about her bees and their role in sustainability. All the talks are held in the hall at 10 am. They will resume in the new year and will be promoted in advance.

Potluck supper movie nights continue to be held in the hall. The most recent was on November 23 with “My Big Fat Greek Wedding”. You are welcome to come to the supper or just to the movie or to both! Friends are also most welcome.

Sunday, December 3 is this year’s White Gift Sunday at St. Philip’s. These gifts are delivered to the Salvation Army to be added to their community gift baskets.

Thursday, December 7 is the date set for the McFarland Home Christmas service with Archdeacon Nancy. St. Philip’s will provide cake and ice cream for a time of fellowship following the service. Several members of the committee are sending Christmas cards on behalf of our church.

We are grateful for the support that St. Philip’s continues to give to our Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund and for the Picton United Church food bank. Please hold these worthy organizations in your prayers and give thanks for the wonderful work that they do.

Thank you to all for your generous support for outreach activities.

Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a most Happy New Year!

Paula Walker, Chair

## *Building Committee Report*

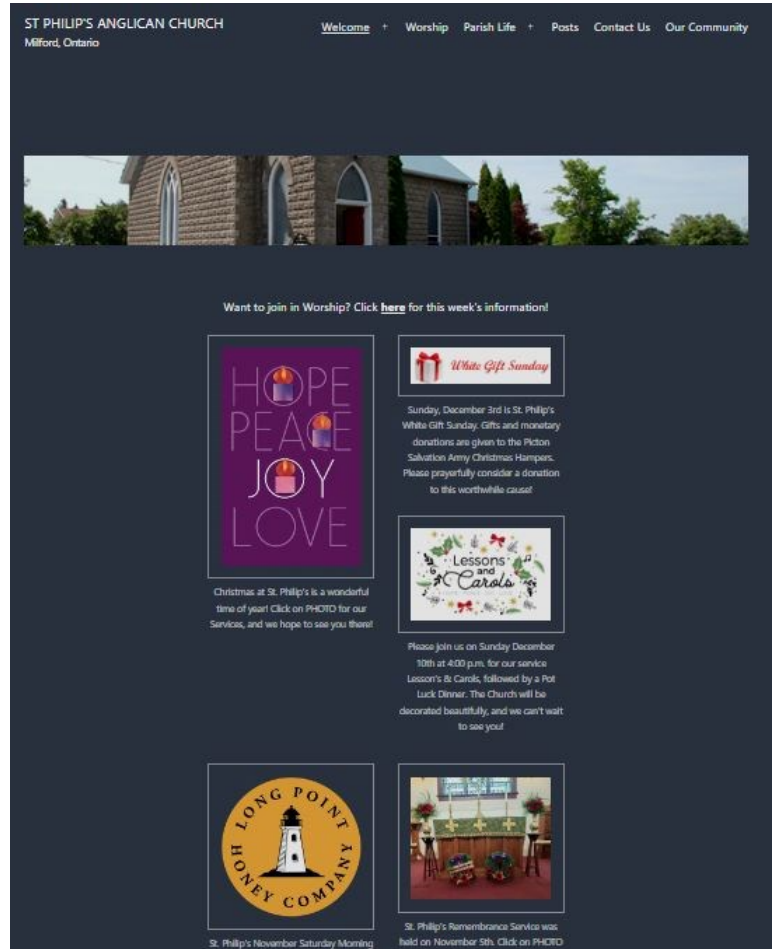
The Building Committee gives thanks that no repairs or other interventions into the condition of the church premises were needed since August. In December, the only planned action is replacing the front light with one offering a better visibility.

Ted Foy, Chair

## St. Philip's Communications Our website

As you most likely have noticed, our website is updated at minimum on a weekly basis, for our upcoming service, but also when we have an event to promote or report on. You will see that we are promoting our Christmas Services on our main “Welcome” page, as well as enticing people to click on the events and happenings and read more about us.

Time	Visitors	Visits
Today	12	34
Yesterday	27	57
Last week	270	674
Last 7 days	217	933
Last 30 days	980	2,582
Last 60 days	1,844	4,755
Last 90 days	2,713	6,780
Last 12 months	11,748	27,071
This year (Jan-Today)	10,586	24,467
Last year	11,053	29,163
Total	26,926	66,745



We have seen some promising activity on our website, where “visitors” are people coming to our site, and “visits” are how much activity there is on our various pages:

You will probably have seen our “Roots & Wings” article in each South Marysburgh Mirror edition, and if you haven’t, we will start posting these on our website as well. We put an ad in the December edition, inviting everyone to our Christmas services. And you will see our ads back in the Picton Gazette, also promoting our Christmas Services. Hope you like our website, and if you have any suggestions, please send them along to [contact@stphilipchurch.ca](mailto:contact@stphilipchurch.ca).

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hill, Communications and Webmaster

## The Beatitudes: A Reflection\*

Jesus is in Jerusalem. For the past three years he has been healing the sick, preaching and teaching his disciples, and the crowds that follow him about a new way of life, a very different way of thinking and behaving towards others, a radical way of how we should be living into the Kingdom of God; turn the other cheek, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

Matthew 5:1-12 is one of the most well-known passages of Scripture. It is the beginning of the famous Sermon on the Mount, referred to as the Beatitudes - blessings that show us a world as God wants it to be, wants us to be, a message about God's kingdom and his love.

Here, Jesus is reinforcing his teaching, preaching and actions. He is announcing God's new covenant, and Jesus urges us to pay attention to what he is saying.

Traditionally, it was believed (and still is believed by some even today) that if you had wealth and good health then you were blessed by God. But if you suffered from loss, poverty, or ill health, then obviously you were not favoured by God. I remember some years ago I was speaking with a lady who was suffering from poor health and constant family difficulties. She said to me, "I don't know what I have done to make God so angry with me." Surprisingly, another lady said something similar to me very recently. "I don't know why God is punishing me." This is not God's way. This is not what Jesus is announcing as God's new covenant.

Jesus is talking about the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, the persecuted. But who wants to be poor in spirit? In Jesus' teaching it is not necessarily the confident and the powerful who will inherit the kingdom. Who wants to mourn? Mourners sometimes go uncomforted. Who among us would admit to being meek? In our society today *meek* means *weak* and many people think that wealth and power are where our strength and success lay. But meekness does not mean we have to be a door mat! And what about those who long for justice? Some do not always find it. And certainly not one of us wants to be persecuted.

Here Jesus is *offering good news* to the humble, the poor, the mourners, the peacemakers. He is saying, if you are a person who is humble, if you are a person who comforts those who mourn, if you try to make peace with someone who has quarreled with you, if you can be a blessing to others then *you are living into the way God wants things to be*.

In the First letter of John we read, "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are." "Children of God; and that is what we are." The prophet, Micah reminds us of God's faithfulness and of our own need to live faithfully. As children of God, the Lord requires us to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God." That is all. That may sound quite simple, and it certainly is not always easy, but if we put our hope and trust in a faithful, loving God, it most definitely can be. Thanks be to God.

Canon Fran Langlois

\* A shortened version of a sermon, provided at Editor's request

**Editor's note:** This being the last newsletter of 2023, I take this opportunity to wish you the reader, and **all** your loved ones a joyful and peaceful Christmas, another opportunity to welcome the Saviour into our broken world.

Josef Cihlar < [robat58@kos.net](mailto:robat58@kos.net) >

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