



The Mustard Seed

January 2025

Newsletter

of

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

47 McLachlin St. S., Arnprior
Ontario K7S 2Z1

Church Council

Andy Kalnins (Chair)	863-0202
Enid Blackwell (V./Treas)	623-7017
Debbie Witt (Sec'y)	622-1500
Karen Greening (416)	540-5354
Fred Steinke	298-5017
Mellissa Watt	858-9932
Pr. Sylvia: Cell:	(613) 331-1962
Home:	(873) 527-0136

See us on facebook:

St. John's Lutheran Church Arnprior
On the web: stjohnsarnprior.com

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is smaller than all seeds. But when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches." - Matthew 13: 31-32

Message from our Pastor

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:*

*To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.*

- Howard Thurman



1 Corinthians 13:13 - And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Dear friends,

Wow, what a December we have had. We started with mild days, and then we were plunged into a deep freeze, and it looks like it will warm up a bit in the days ahead. Through it all, I marvel at the beauty each day brings here in the "Valley."

We started a new ministry together - we waited with excitement for the Christ child, and I was able to do some visiting and offer some care. Then, COVID hit me, and truthfully I am feeling a wee bit sorry for myself as I isolate and work from home. A council member noted that it is important to do the right thing, even if it seems hard. But it still feels like a lousy way to start things together. (I am feeling better, but a bit up and down.)

Jesus had a rough go of his start in life - born away from home and family supports for Mary and Joseph. As an infant, his family was on the run, and as he grew into an adult, life was anything but easy.

Continued-->

Message from our Pastor, Continued

That quick snapshot of the life of Jesus helps me put my life into perspective. I am reminded to look at whatever happens through the lens of faith - perhaps we can all get better at that - I sure can. What matters most? - that your new pastor is a dud who doesn't make it through her first month without creating a problem - at Christmas? Or, that your councils immediately emphasised that I was to take care of myself first (and keep my sickness away) and that they were fantastically able to gather, worship and invite Pr. Norine to serve with love? Christmas will be celebrated with or without my presence!

I am more convinced than ever before that I am human, with bodily frailties, and that in spite of it I am loved by God and able to serve. We all are. God is all set to guide us exactly as we are.

Which is, in an odd way, a wonder-filled and humbling way to start ministry. I was thinking "life-changing sermons, glory-filled worship, profound visits, awe and wonder at my astonishing ability to share Gods love." Nope. Vulnerable. Uncertain. Human.

We are in good company - together - and with Christ. Because it is true - the greatest of these things is love. I am blessed and grateful.

(ps. "Better days ahead!")

The wisdom of Mary Oliver is something I will bring regularly - she is a treasure in my devotional life. Today, she is a guide to my thoughts as we look into 2025.

May we be a healing force in our care of God's creation. Amen. — Pr. Sylvia

I Worried

by Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers flow in the right direction, will the earth turn as it was taught, and if not how shall I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven, can I do better?

Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows can do it and I am, well, hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it, am I going to get rheumatism, lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing. And gave it up. And took my old body and went out into the morning, and sang.

January 2025 Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Fridays	1:00-2:00p.m.—Muslim Community—each Friday in the Lounge.
	Dance in January to be determined.
	Sunday School date for January to be determined.
Sunday Jan 5th	10:30 a.m. — Worship Service with Holy Communion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest musician—Lynn Zander Social/Levee follows service
Sunday Jan 12th	10:30 a.m. — Worship Service with Holy Communion
Saturday Jan 18 th	9:00 a.m.—Men’s Breakfast at PJ’s
Sunday Jan 19th	10:30 a.m. — Worship Service with Holy Communion
Monday Jan 20 th	1:00p.m. — Church Council Meets
Sunday Jan 26th	10:30 a.m. — Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday Feb 2nd	10:30 a.m. — Worship Service with Holy Communion



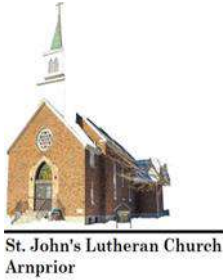
Teachers Against Poverty

The Outreach Team thanks you for supporting our Teachers Against Poverty (TAP) fund raiser this Christmas season.

One hundred percent of the Angel Tree proceeds stays in our community and will be donated to the TAP breakfast program, which is intended to provide students in need with a nourishing breakfast. As you know, it is difficult to learn when you are constantly reminded by a rumbling belly you are hungry!

Once the school break is over we will present to the Teachers Against Poverty team.

Sincerely, Outreach Team.



Draft Minutes of December 16th, 2024 Council Meeting

Attendance:

Pr. Sylvia Poetschke	Karen Greening	Melissa Watt (regrets)
Andy Kalnins	Debbie Witt	Fred Steinke
Enid Blackwell		

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Andy who welcomed everyone. Pastor Sylvia opened with a prayer.

- 1. Previous Minutes:** Debbie moved that the November 18, 2024 minutes be accepted as distributed. Seconded by Fred, CARRIED.
- 2. Service & Worship – Plans for Christmas Eve and Beyond:** Pr. Sylvia and Enid worked through a bulletin for Christmas Eve. A discussion was to include in the bulletin a note that offerings are gratefully received in the plate at the back on the table, and have some elements and 1 plate come forward. Andy will work on wording. Service will start at 7 p.m. with a children's pageant. Lynne Zander will be playing the organ. Real candles will be used this year. Since there will be no Christmas Day worship planned, a notice will be put on the doors and in the bulletins re: Christmas Day service alternative and invite to next SJL service. Dec. 29 will be carols and origins of songs. Pr. Sylvia is looking to establish a worship committee to help with planning of services.
- 3. Property:** Fred reported from Randy that the organ volume continues to be an issue. Ongoing attempts to correct this are being made. A plan for the accessibility washroom will be brought forward in the New Year. Pastor's office flooring has been installed. Pr. Sylvia is very grateful for all the work done in her office. Security cameras have been installed. Discussion with dance participants on installation of mirrors. Snow removal and property check schedule is complete. Extra smoke detectors have been installed.
- 4. Finances:** Operating income/expenses: Commitments received to date \$75,953.65. Nov. received \$6,387. We are presently short \$7,463 of being on target with total annual commitments budget of \$91,000. Dance/fundraising is a slight increase, but fundraising is under budget overall. Dance on break until January. Rental income at \$3,481 is over budget. Appeal letter e-mailed. Pastoral Ministry and Supply expenses \$27,020 to end of Nov. Other income/expenses: other income includes Outreach \$37, Food Bank \$50; other expenses include transfers to Food Bank \$220 and Fountain \$150. Request any remaining 2024 bills from members come in. Some discussion of plans/drafting of 2025 budget. A date of Feb. 23 for the AGM has been proposed. Enid motioned that the financial report to end of November be accepted as presented. Debbie seconded, CARRIED
- 5. Pastoral Care:** Christmas baskets have been prepared for shut-ins and Pr. Sylvia will come to meet these people in December and January.
- 6. Youth:** No Report

Close of Meeting: Next meeting: Monday, January 20, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Ended with the Lord's Prayer, led by Pr. Sylvia.

A Christmas Greeting

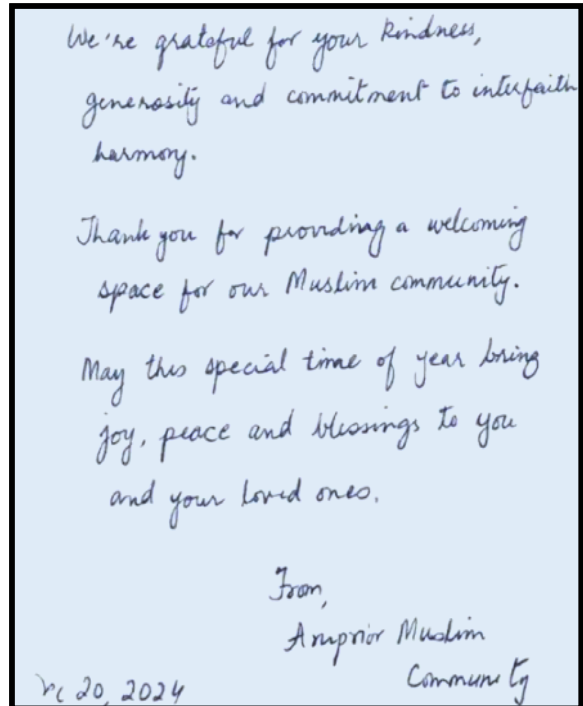
In late December, we received a lovely card with a greeting from our Muslim friends, which begins with the following words:

***'Warmest wishes to St. John's Lutheran Church
Community this holiday season!'***

It continues:

Along with the card, our friends left us a fine box of chocolates, which we will be sharing at social time!

We, in turn, are grateful that we have the chance to welcome others and share good space with our neighbours each week. Prayer time begins around 1 p.m. on Friday in the lounge, and lasts around 35 minutes. Know that, if you wish, you can join those coming, meditate, listen and pray, and meet some of this faithful and welcoming community.



Christmas Gifts

Flowers!

Thank you for donations for Christmas flowers:

- ◆ The Chippior family in memory of departed Jahn family.
- ◆ Barbara & Gerald Formuziewich.
- ◆ The Steinke family in memory of Ed.



Tree Decorations for the Children!

Thank you to Lynn Rosien for making and gifting special tree decorations for the children of St. John's and St. James. These were given out on Christmas Eve.



Last Minute Reimbursements



If you have any remaining 2024 bills for St. John's requiring reimbursement, kindly put bills with name and bit of detail into the Treasurer slot in the photocopy room. It would be helpful if you alert Enid by email eblackwell.ca@gmail.com or 613 623-7017. Book closing, year end work, and financial review for 2024 will be happening soon. Thank you!



Reports on Ministries Please!

Soon we will be reviewing the calendar year together, January to December 2024, and planning for 2025 as we work towards and meet in our Annual Meeting for 2024. The planned AM date is

February 23, 2025.

This time is an opportunity to reflect on all the ministries of faith and care we, as St. John's folks, seek to be and do within, in the local community and beyond in the wider world. Recording these reflections is a task, but important, as we go forward.

If all leads/groups would kindly forward **any written reports to our secretary Debbie Witt**, bkwdwitt@hotmail.com, **613 622-1500, by January 17, if possible**, that would be helpful. These get processed into our cumulative Annual Report and assist council with forward planning.

Last year, the Annual Report included the following reports: pastoral, chairperson, altar guild, kitchen/fellowship, children and youth activity, health and safety, outreach, communications, property, financial secretary, finance.



Now that Respiratory Virus season is here, everyone is reminded to stay away from others if you are symptomatic, and sanitize often.





Bob and Randy reading at the Lessons and Carols service on Dec 29th



Advent Candle Lighting





**Gerald's
85th
Birthday**



Christmas Eve Service with Children's Pageant



It's rare when all the planets align!



Did you know that French fries weren't cooked in France?
They were cooked in Greece.



"Remind me never to ask the Youth Group to help fold the church bulletins again."



The doorbell

A pastor is walking down the street one day when he notices a small boy trying to use the doorbell on a house across the street. However, the boy is very small and the doorbell is too high for him to reach. After watching the boy's efforts for some time the pastor walks across the street up to the little fellow and rings the doorbell. Kneeling down next to the child, the pastor smiles and asks, "And now what, my little man?" To which the boy replies, "Run!"

January 2025



BIRTHDAYS

- January 3rd—Shaundra Craig
- January 4th—Tessa Roberts
- January 15th—Floss Obst
- January 19th—Diane Boese
- January 31st—Lynn Rosien



VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

January 2025

DATE	READER	ALTAR	GREETERS	COUNTERS	SOCIAL
Jan 5	Mark Boese	Cathy & Randy	Andy & Cory	Andy & Cory	Social (Enid)
Jan 12	Cheryl Supple	Cathy & Randy	Andy & Cory	Andy & Cory	<i>Other Socials to be determined</i>
Jan 19	Joy Statham	Cathy & Randy	Andy & Cory	Andy & Cory	
Jan 26	Debbie / Jeff	Cathy & Randy	Andy & Cory	Andy & Cory	

PRAYER LIST

Please pray for these people in your daily prayers:

From our Congregation: Jaqueline, Vicki, Samantha, Pastor Norine, Karen, Mellissa, Gerald, Rachel and Beryl.

Friends: Terry, children Briar and Alivia, Lynne Z., Claude, John S. and Mary.

The Prayer Jar in the Narthex

This jar is a confidential place to list your prayer concerns and put them in the jar. NO ONE will be reading these at all. The Prayer Team simply raises up the contents in prayer without knowing what is requested on the notes.

Please feel free to add yours at any time, using the post it notes on the narthex table.