

# EPISTLE

**November 2018**



**St. James United Church**

[www.stjamesunitedchurch.com](http://www.stjamesunitedchurch.com)

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YOUR INVITATION TO

ATTEND COMMUNION

**ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH**

Date: Sunday, December 2, 2018

Time: 10:30 a.m. – Service of Worship

Please advise the church office (416-622-4113) if you wish a visitation from a minister or of any pertinent information necessary to update church records. Updates can also be sent to [stjames\\_uc@rogers.com](mailto:stjames_uc@rogers.com)

Outreach offering in support of:  
NA-ME-REZ (90%)  
Minister for Local Outreach (10%)

Next Epistle Deadline: January 27, 2019.

Please email all items to [sjepistle@yahoo.com](mailto:sjepistle@yahoo.com) if at all possible, or place in the Epistle mail slot at the church.

# Table of Contents

<b>Coral's Message</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Laughs</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Editors Notes</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Sunday School Updates</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Updates</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Spirit Filled</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Food Basket</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Family Piñata</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Laughs</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Spooktacular Halloween</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>M &amp; S</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Jamaica Night</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Ryde Lake</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Car Rally</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Out-Of-The Cold</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Taste of Niagara</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Remembrance Day</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Alzheimer Workshops</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Getting To Know W. Simone</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Message From A Friend</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Garden Closed</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12 Days of Christmas</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>UCC vs Gretta Vosper</b>	<b>15</b>		

## Dear Friends of St. James



As I write this message from a great hospital in W i a r t o n , it reminds me there were challenging times for Mary and Joseph. My challenge will be to recover as fast as I can so that I can continue to do God's work at St. James.

The journey to Advent had it's challenges for Mary and Joseph. It was their trust and faith in God and the support and kindness they received along the way that enabled Mary & Joseph to rise above and give birth to a blessing for the whole world. Sometimes, it is in our most difficult moments that we learn and grow the most. It is when we recognize our sources of strength and support, even from people we don't even know that we are able to come together.

St. James is an incredibly resourceful congregation and I have every confidence in the leadership that they will rise to the occasion and continue to provide excellent service to the community during my rehabilitation. My thanks goes to all of those who are filling the gap while I recover.

The doctors say I can expect a full recovery from my pelvis fractures and I will be able to join you some time in January.

Here are the highlights you will want to note for the coming month:



**Advent 1 - Hope Candle - Dec 2nd**  
Rev Wayne Mhyre preaching; Holy Communion and Outreach offering support to NA-ME-REZ and Minister for Local Outreach

**Advent 2 - Peace Candle - Dec 9th**  
Christmas Pageant - Join the Sunday School children as they recreate a Christmas Story

**Piñata Making Workshop & Games Night - Dec 14th from 7 - 9 p.m.**

**Advent 3 - Joy Candle - Dec 16th**  
Congressional Lunch by donation prepared by Chefs Julia and Pete

**Dec 16 - Candlelight Service at 7:30 p.m.**

**The Chancel, Senior and Junior  
Choirs share the message of  
Christmas in song.**

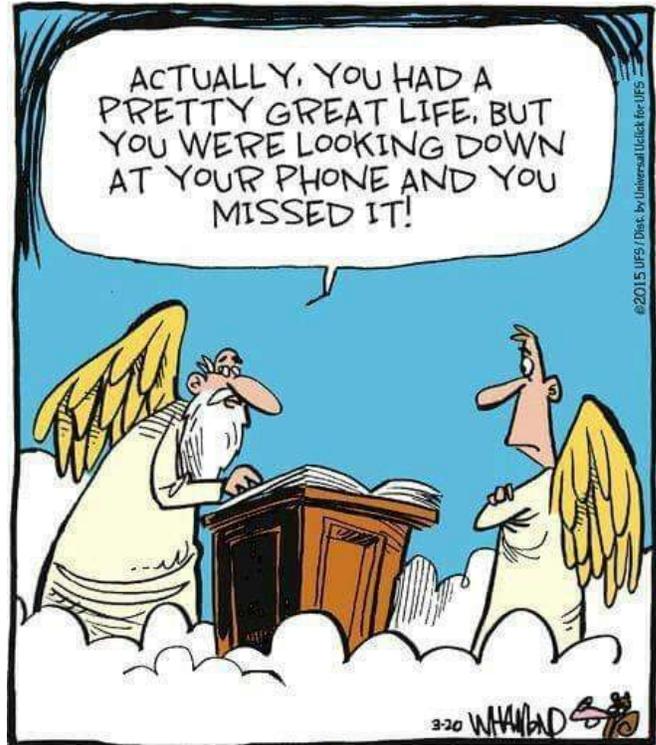
**Advent 4 - Love Candle - Dec 23rd.  
The gift of love. Enjoy Christmas  
carolling.**

**Monday Dec 24 at 7:30 p.m.  
Christmas Eve Service. Breaking of  
pinata.**

**Sun Dec 30 - Christmas Carol  
Stories and Hymn Sing**

**Wishing everyone blessings of the  
season and may you know Christ  
alive in your life.**

*Rev. Coral*



## Editor's Notes



'Tis the season once again when St. James is bustling with activity leading up to Christmas.

The three choirs are practising for the annual Candlelight service which is sure to be a hit. Invite your friends and family to this wonderful gathering.

On October 14th we had a successful Doors Open event. This event showcased what St. James had to offer and featured the Feel Good Food ministry. There were delicious appetizers, games, choir singing and even the local firemen showed up with a fire truck for the kids to enjoy. A week later there was a community Halloween Party with pumpkin carving and a haunted house. It was great fun for families with children.

You can see pictures of Doors Open on the Snapd website at:

<https://etobicoke.snapd.com/events/view/1195059>

In this issue, we get to know Wendy Simone, the new Director

of the Children and Youth Choirs. There are updates from the Food Basket, Sunday School and even the fund raising event - Jamaica Night.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to our fearless leader, Rev Coral Prebble for a quick recovery from her injuries.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition and we look forward to your future submissions. We hope you enjoy this issue. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

For your planning purposes, there are only 2 issues remaining. Here are the deadlines:

January 27, 2019

April 7, 2019

All submissions can be placed in the Epistle mailbox or via e-mail:

[sjepistle@yahoo.com](mailto:sjepistle@yahoo.com)

Your Co-editors,

Jennifer Flaxman, Jennifer Ling

*Disclaimer: Some of the articles submitted are intended for information purposes only and do not reflect the views of the St. James congregation.*

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

No changes this time.



"They say they are three kings."

**Congratulations!**

**Len and Doris Richardson**  
who celebrated their 72nd  
wedding anniversary on  
October 11, 2018.

*with  
Sympathy*

**Cliff Miller and the Miller  
family, with the passing of his  
sister Gay Stager in  
Cambridge, Ontario, October  
2018.**

**The family of Edna George,  
who passed on October 12,  
2018.**

**Norm da Costa and Leonor  
Hall on the passing of their  
father Arthur da Costa on  
Saturday, October 13, 2018.**

**Ben and Jackie Skopiwsky  
and family, on the passing of  
Ben's father, Stefan  
Skopiwsky, on Sunday,  
October 21, 2018.**

**Clive and Pat Dunstan, with  
the passing of Clive's brother  
in law, George Dunkley on  
Saturday, November 10, 2018.**



**We have just finished a successful flu clinic thanks to Toronto Public Health. Thanks also to the volunteers of the Tzu Chi Buddhist Foundation for their support that afternoon and to all the people who attended and received a shot. The high attendance helps to ensure that we will have a clinic next year as well.**

**We are getting a new van to replace our 2009 one! Thanks to Kingsway Kiwanis, and Barnaby Ross in particular, we received enough funding to pay for a new vehicle. We hope this means that we will not have to worry about raising money for a van for the next decade. We take this van to the Ontario Food Terminal, to Loblaws and other weekly business donors to pick up food. Such an extremely generous donation!**

**We are preparing for another busy December. We will be handing out turkeys from Second Harvest to families of 3 or more, and \$10 Walmart gift cards to all children younger than 18. We gave out 330 gift cards last December to this**

**group, and expect to need more this year.**

**James, an elderly gentleman who is in a great deal of pain and uses a cane, has been a long-time food bank user. He is unfailingly polite and thoughtful. He often refuses to take food items offered to him, saying “No, that ought to go to a family with children”. Last year, he uncharacteristically asked for a turkey, even though he knew we give them only to families of 3 or more. He explained that he was having 3 friends for Christmas dinner, and while they were all bringing items for the dinner, none could afford a turkey. One of our volunteers bought a turkey for him, and he was very grateful. He reported later that they had a wonderful time and a delicious meal. We’ve learned since that none of his friends are healthy enough to share a dinner now, and one of them has died. James refers to that meal each time I see him. He reminds us of the importance of treating everyone with kindness and respect.**

**This story and others have been key in our decision to give a \$10 gift card to singles and to couples without children. We want everyone to get a small gift at this time of**

year. While such a gift cannot change someone's life, we hope that it adds a bit of joy.

Submitted by Marie Truelove,  
Chair



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## LAUGHS

My grandson was visiting one day when he asked, "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?" Mentally I polished my halo, while I asked, "No, how are we alike?" "You're both old" he replied.



As of the end of October St. James M&S contributors have given \$30,704.12 to the Fund. That is 80.8% of our pledged donation for 2018.

Thank you to all of you who contribute to the United Church Mission & Service Fund. Your generous support means that ministries receive core program funding. We hope you will continue to be part of these hope-inspiring activities. Remember, you can provide additional support for specific M&S partners for special projects when you choose to give "Gifts with Vision". The new catalogue is here!

Marty Linton - Chair M&S  
Committee



The Ryde Lake dinner and silent auction held on November 3<sup>rd</sup> was a great success. The hall was filled to capacity and financially, this fund raiser was the most successful. The funds raised will go to the maintenance of Ryde Lake Camp.

Dates from 2019 Camping are as follows:

**Girls Camp 2019**

- I. July 14 -20
- II. July 21-27
- III. July 29 – Aug 3

Family Camping begins August 10 for three weeks. Last year there was a waiting list so don't be disappointed and register early. Registration begins in early January.

Submitted by Marg Arscott

## **OUT-OF-THE COLD**

St. James United Church will be providing a hot meal at All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church on Friday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Watch for details in January.



## **OUTREACH**

**In October, St. James made a \$414.00 contribution to Nature Conservancy of Canada through our communion Outreach Offering. Thank you for supporting our nation's leading not-for-profit, private land conservation organization. You are protecting Canada's most important natural areas and the species they sustain.**

**During Advent our Outreach Offering will be received for NA-ME-RES (Native Men's Residence) here in Toronto. This is their story – taken from their Facebook page:**

### **OUR STORY**

**In 1985, Na-Me-Res began offering emergency shelter to Aboriginal men who were without a place to live. Since then, a greater understanding of the underlying causes of Aboriginal homelessness has emerged. In response, particularly over the past few years, Na-Me-Res has either redesigned its programs or designed and implemented new programs to ensure it is meeting the unique needs of Aboriginal men who live in a state of homelessness. As an Aboriginal organization, Na-Me-Res strives to meet the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional needs of all clients by**

**providing them with access to a multidisciplinary care team, which includes Traditional Elders and teachers, case managers, counselors, client care and support workers, street outreach workers, housing support workers, aftercare workers, a registered nurse (RN), a psychiatrist, a medical doctor (MD), Oshkabaywis (spiritual helper), a life-skills co-ordinator, and other community service providers as identified. Based on a culturally responsive, strengths-based case management approach to client care, these programs include:**

**The Men's Residence – Clients who are homeless are provided with temporary shelter, assistance and support to secure housing appropriate to their needs. ...a 71 bed residence.**

**Sagatay (A New Beginning) – ...a safe and supportive learning and housing environment with 25 beds for Aboriginal men. Programs offered provide residents with the opportunity to develop the skills required to succeed in the broader urban environment as strong, self-confident Aboriginal men.**

**Apænmowineen (Having Confidence in Myself) – This six-month life-skills program is offered at Sagatay.**

**Aboriginal Outreach & Support Services – This service is provided to people living on the streets and in seasonal shelters, providing them with support and assistance as they transition from streets to homes.**

**Housing First Elder Outreach** – The Elder Outreach project started as a pilot project of our Streets to Homes/Housing First Outreach team in 2013, which has been in existence since 2004. ... The Elders bring culture and ceremony to Aboriginal homeless people wherever they are.

**Ngim Kowa Njichaag (Reclaiming My Spirit)** – The goal of the program is to assist all Na-Me-Res clients in claiming their culture, identity, role and responsibilities through the delivery of culture-based services within a safe, healing environment.

**Mino Kaanjigoowin (Changing My Direction in Life)** Mino Kaanjigoowin means finding the good to change yourself or your direction in life. The focus of the program is to support vulnerable homeless Aboriginal men with complex mental health and addiction issues in housing. ... The ICM (Intensive Case Management) team helps these men to obtain and/or maintain healthy living and housing in Toronto. The ICM team follows the teachings of the Medicine Wheel (interconnectedness of all life and the importance of balance and harmony in creation) to help clients find their balance.

**The O’Gitchidaa Mushkiki Wigwam** – This is the Anishnawbe name of our housing located in Parkdale; when translated into the English language it loosely means

the Warrior’s Medicine House. Na-Me-Res provides property management for two houses both of which opened in September 2012. You can see more about Na-Me-Res on their webpage. Please share your good fortune with our neighbours. Thank you.



## **A L Z H E I M E R WORKSHOP UPDATES**

Plans for the New Year include a series of eight workshops for couples (caregiver and person with dementia) that will stimulate mental and physical activities and improve understanding and communication for both. Sessions start in January and space is limited.

Education workshops will be provided monthly from January to June to improve knowledge of dementia and dealing with the disease. Support groups and individual counselling are also provided. This service is provided free by the Alzheimer Society of Toronto at St James United Church. A continuing community outreach service.

Submitted By Barry Holt

## **MESSAGE FROM A FRIEND**

Christmas greetings and the best of wishes for 2019 to all of you – but especially to those of you who remember me and have brought me through the last difficult year and a half. Your prayers for me and your messages, letters, emails, phone calls and even some visits have sustained me through the darkest of times and brought me such joy in brighter moments that I am forever grateful.

I am still struggling with health issues like the one which kept me hospitalized for the month of August and impeded my efforts toward a complete recovery but am improving again and listening to doctors, family and others who keep insisting that I am not your ‘normal’ 93 year old.

I do miss St. James and all of you there. Some day I will write and tell you about Deer Park/St. Andrews, the church I am currently attending. It is like the successful dream of what St.James and Bloordale had hoped for. I am not able emotionally to transfer membership yet because I am still “there at St. James” with all of you, but my two daughters have transferred their memberships from downtown churches because

they enjoy attending with me and being closer to their homes and found Deer Park so welcoming.

If you are like me, you will listen with delight to the wonderful choirs of St. James but you will not always hear, concentrate or remember the words. Such is/was the case with the title song on one of their CDs which has a history for me. Recently I searched out the words and have printed them out for you as my Christmas greeting.

**L o v e   C a m e   D o w n   a t  
Christmas ( words by Christina G.  
Rossetti )**

**Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love divine.  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and angels gave the sign.**

**Worship we the Godhead,  
Love incarnate, love divine;  
Worship we our Jesus,  
But wherewith for sacred sign?**

**Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours and love be mine,**

**Love to God and to all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign**

**With love and best wishes to  
everyone!**

**Irene Dean**



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## UCC vs. Ms. Gretta Vosper

*Disclaimer: The following is the work/opinion of Mhairi Godley.*

Gretta Vosper, a minister ordained in the United Church of Canada, has been calling herself an atheist for a number of years, denying the vows she took at ordination. A majority of her congregation at Westhill United Church think she is a good person, and accepts her views.

Over the years the United Church has been a leader on many important fronts: the ordination of women, communion open to all, acceptance of the LGBTQ2 community including the right to ordination, marrying same sex couples... All good decisions, in my opinion.

Toronto Conference has put a lot of time and effort into the case of Ms. Vosper: Should she be allowed to call herself a United Church Minister, with the title 'Reverend', or should she be defrocked, decommissioned, un-ordained? After a great deal of prayerful soul-searching by a number of people, Toronto Conference decided that she is unsuitable to continue ordained ministry because "she does not believe in God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit." In other words, she

completely rejects the basic beliefs of the United Church. This is oversimplifying the situation, but that is the gist.

For some reason, which utterly baffles me, Ms. Vosper wishes to continue to be a member of the United Church, and decided to sue. This action invites many questions, including why she would want to waste vast amounts of money to sue the church that nurtured her, but whose beliefs she has rejected.

If Westhill Congregation wants to continue with her as their atheist leader, I have no problem. If the United Church of Canada agreed to let them continue to use the present building, first removing the words 'United Church' from the building and all correspondence from that group, I would have no problem. If the United Church of Canada (or whatever agency deals with these things) agreed to give her a lump sum equivalent to her accrued pension, again, I could accept that.

However, this week, the United Church of Canada 'settled' with her, and the terms of the settlement are 'confidential'. From what I can gather, it seems she can continue as Rev. Vosper of the United Church of Canada.

I have a HUGE problem with that!

If you do too, I invite you to contact our new Moderator, Rev. Dr.

**Richard Bott, and the Executive of General Council. First, the Terms of the Settlement need to be published for the benefit of every member of the UCC. Second, I believe we should know and understand the rationale behind the decision.**

**Only when we know the full facts can we decide whether WE want to continue to be a part of the United Church of Canada.**

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## **LAUGHS**

**A Sunday school class was studying the Ten Commandments.**

**They were ready to discuss the last one.**

**The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was.**

**Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, "Thou shall not take the covers off the neighbor's wife."**

## **MORE LAUGHS**

**Six year old Angie and her four-year old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."**

**"Why" Who's going to stop me" Joel asked.**

**Angie pointed to the back of the church and said**

**"See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."**



## **“Dare to be a Daniel!” Sunday School Updates!**

October and November let us focus on the story “Daniel and the Lions’ Den” in Sunday School. We learned about Daniel, who kept praying to God and doing what he knew was right, even when a new law was passed that said people would be thrown into the Lion’s Den if they did not pray to the king (King Darius). We learned how God saved Daniel from the lions, and how the king changed the law to make people worship the one true God after Daniel emerged safely from the Lion’s Den. We also talked about how during difficult times in our lives, we often feel God’s presence helping us through, and we can find peace in knowing we are never alone. During the Sunday School lessons, we enjoyed watching a movie, making lion masks and magnets, using the computer lab to create our own versions of the story, and making lion-faced pizzas in the cooking workshop. Here are some pictures below.



Photos (above, Left to Right): Lion Face pizzas ready to go in the oven for our cooking workshop; a beautiful lion mask gets some finishing touches; our Grade 5 and 6 students work together to find the story of Daniel in the Bible; (left): “MMM...this lion is delicious!”

## **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT – DON’T MISS IT!**

This year, instead of having an “All Ages, Congregational Christmas Pageant” as we have done the last two years, we are changing it up by going back to a more traditional Christmas Pageant presented by Sunday School children and youth. The scripts will be reviewed in Sunday School during November along with some other Christmas workshops, and then the Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> during the church service. We have a humorous and enjoyable script which tells the wonderful Christmas story of baby Jesus being born. It will be enjoyed by all ages. Please note this date on your calendar, and invite friends and family members to attend.



## **A SPIRIT-FILLED SUNDAY!**

**“Spirit Sunday” was held on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Wayne and Marilyn Mhyre are to be credited with organizing this special Sunday of worship both last year and this year, in honour of “All Saints Day”.**

**Sunday School students were encouraged to dress up as Biblical characters, and they challenged Rev. Linda Maw and Rev. Coral Prebble to guess who they were at the front of the church during children’s time.**

**A photo of the junior choir singing that day shows the diverse array of costumes! We had animals from Noah’s Ark, Noah himself, strong Samson, brave Esther, and the princess who found baby Moses in the river, to name a few. We were happy to have youth participation as Jacqueline Miller lit the Christ Candle, and Laura Forgrave and Evelyn Kratt read the responsive scripture reading that morning.**



**Submitted By Karen Forgrave**

# Family Piñata Making Workshop!

## Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 7-9pm

Presented by the Christian Development Committee

Las Posadas (translated in English as “the inns”) is brought to our St. James family by Alejandra Olmos! This tradition is based on the biblical journey of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, and their search for an inn, or a safe place to stay, for the birth of Jesus. For 9 nights each year, Mexican families and neighbors participate as “innkeepers” and host a posada at a different house each night. At the end of the feast, merrymakers often celebrate by breaking open a piñata filled with treats inside. a Mexican Christmas tradition that has been



The past few years, we have enjoyed ending our Christmas Eve service with the breaking open of piñatas that have been made by Sunday School children and by families, under Alejandra’s guidance.

This year, you have a chance to make a little piñata for your OWN family, to take home and enjoy on Christmas Day, in addition to helping create a GIANT piñata that will be used on Christmas Eve at the end of our 7pm service.



On Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 7-9pm we will have family piñata making along with Games Night.

Please consider bringing a toonie to help pay for some the materials.

All are welcome – ages 4 to 104!

Light snacks provided.

## A SPOOK-TACULAR Community Halloween Party!



The St. James Community Halloween Party on Saturday, October 20th was a great success – we had over 50 children and their families attend. Thanks to multiple volunteers, the event had been well advertised in the newspaper, on social media, and through the delivery of flyers in several areas in Etobicoke. At the party, we had a fantastic haunted house that was set up by Jim Cormier, Ale Olemos as a fabulous fortune teller, pumpkin carving, a variety of games, and even “spider” cupcake decorating. Thank you so much to the MANY volunteers who helped to make this event successful, running stations, selling pizza slices, selling tickets, etc. A special mention to Gwen Mills for creating all of the ooey goey “touchables” (including “eyeballs” and “brains”!) and the Cormier Clan for volunteering in many ways!

By Karen Forgrave



# Jamaica Night!

“Jamaica Night”, organized by Tony and Jennifer Gray was held at St. James on Friday, November 2nd. Fellowship Hall was transformed with beautiful gold, white and black tablecloths and golden centerpieces and candlelight. White chair covers completed the look – it looked ready for a wedding, or a wonderful party, which it was! There was a Jamaican band (featuring Tony on keyboards and bongo drums!), and a wonderful Jamaican catering team. We were treated to “live food stations” where you could see the chefs preparing the food

dishes, everything from macaroni and cheese with jerk chicken to curried goat on rice. Desserts included authentic Jamaican fruit rum cake and assorted puddings to tropical fruit skewers. After dinner, the music got some people up on their feet, dancing, while others sat and enjoyed listening to the music or singing along. It was a wonderful evening – one that left many of us wanting more...a tropical trip in the future, perhaps? Or maybe another St. James “Jamaica Night”? Congratulations to the organizing committee of this wonderful event, which also raised over \$2400 for St. James! WOW!



The wonderful live music!



The catering team gets a standing ovation!

## **St. James U. C. Car Rally October 28, 2018**

**Eighteen intrepid souls set forth from St. James on a dull, dreary, drizzly day. They were en route to a little-known gem, the Brampton-Caledon Airport and Flying Club on McLaughlin Road. Of course, there were the usual clues to watch for on the way, including the large green smiley face.**

**The flying club has dual museum areas. One has several full size replicas of various war-era tri-planes (at least one of which will be flying at 1000 feet over Brampton on November 11, weather permitting). Enthusiastic and very knowledgeable volunteers guided us through and patiently answered many questions. We saw a ‘pickelhaube’, and learned how the allies recognized each other’s planes so they did not shoot them accidentally. There were many model planes 1:72 scale, as well as a several recreated scenes with ‘people’ reading authentic vintage newspapers. I think everyone agreed it was well worth the minimal \$5 donation asked! (They want to expand their facilities, so are fundraising.). We could hardly drag ourselves away to head to the restaurant there for a delicious lunch with an entertaining waitress who made a point of using our names. The only thing missing was**

**seeing a plane taking off or landing, but everyone had a great time of fellowship amid much laughter.**

**Lo and behold, after lunch the rain stopped and a watery sun was trying to emerge from behind the clouds. On we went to the little village of Inglewood where we spotted a red bike on a roof, a blue one hanging from a post (NOT to be confused with the blue flag hanging from a lamppost!) and the house with the interesting window featured on the sign-up sheet. Part of the Trans Canada Trail runs parallel to the railway track from the car park.**

**On the way to the Farm Market (The old Apple Factory) we passed the Badlands. Did you know there is now a car park for those wanting to walk on the new boardwalk to view this extraordinary geological wonder? The flat rate for parking is \$10. We drove by slowly without stopping!**

**We were disappointed to find that the chickens, ducks and goats had already gone to their winter quarters, but more than a few people enjoyed stopping and shopping at the Country Market.**

**Back at St. James the early arrivals demolished a pile of leftover Halloween candy! In the end, with some serious sleuthing and a lucky guess or two (e.g. aforementioned GREEN smiley face) John and Brenda Beaton, and David Godley**

were declared the winners, with Laura Forgrave, aided and abetted by her parents Karen and Steve, coming a close second.

Many thanks to Phyl Hampshire for yet again finding hidden gems of interesting places to visit. The Prize, you ask? I think it was the fun of planning next year's Rally!!

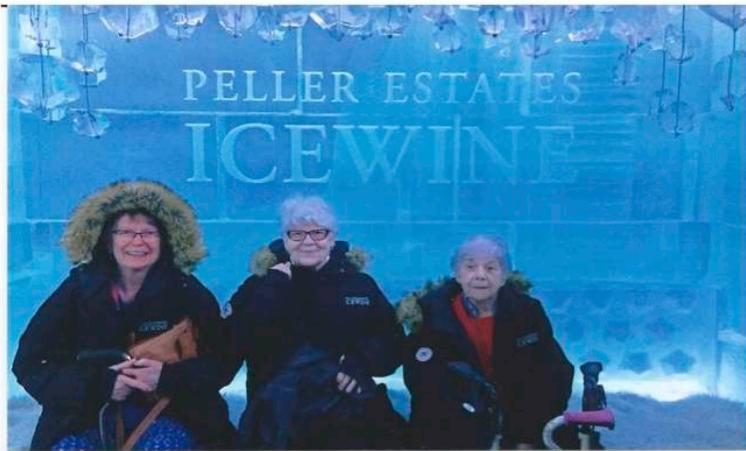
Submitted by Mhairi Godley



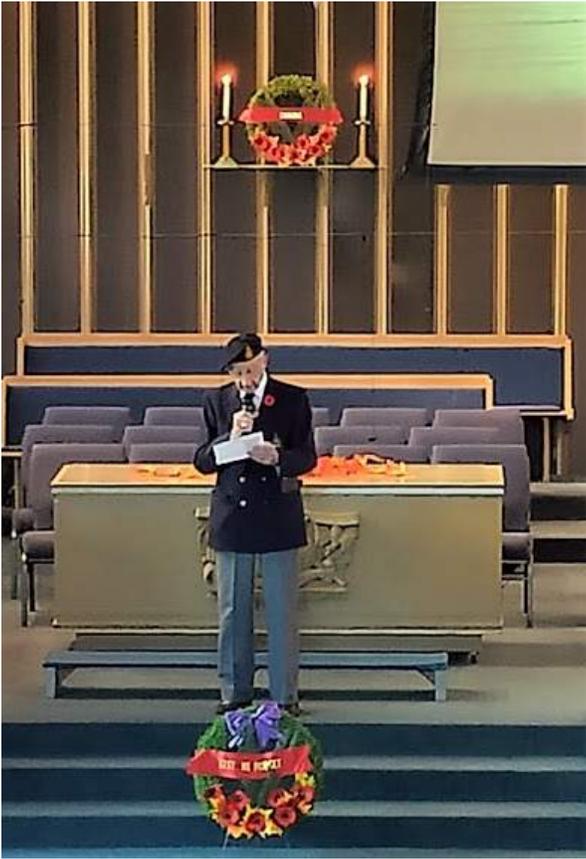
## A Taste of Summer and Winter in Niagara

Joanne Cooper, Pat Waugh and myself (Kay Baxter) spent a lovely week in May touring the Niagara region. We were based in Niagara Falls and spent time exploring places like the Knox Art Gallery (Albright), the Martin House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and even ventured into Buffalo. The highlight for us was the Shaw Festival's performance of Grand Hotel. These pictures were taken at the Jackson Trigg's winery outside among the grapevines and in the Ice Wine cellars of the Pellar Estate. As you can see we were suitably clad for each occasion!

Submitted By Kay Baxter



**REMEMBERENCE DAY**



## GETTING TO KNOW WENDY SIMONE



W e n d y Simone joined the St. James family as Director of the St. James Junior and Youth Choirs in 2018. The two

choirs sing regularly at Sunday morning worship services and for special events throughout the school year. The primary goal of the choirs is to foster a love of music while providing children and youth with an opportunity to contribute to the worship experience of the congregation. The choristers develop a love of singing and further their musicianship skills in a safe and supportive environment while enjoying a wide range of repertoire.

Wendy has sung in Greater Toronto Area-based choirs for over 30 years. Her love of choral singing and passion for high-quality music-making have granted her the opportunity to sing with such groups as: the Toronto Mendelssohn Youth Choir, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, University of Toronto MacMillan Singers,

Oriana Women's Choir, Ontario Youth Choir, and Amadeus Choir.

Wendy attended the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto and earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Voice, with a concentration in History & Theory. She also holds a Diploma in Early Childhood Education from George Brown College and a Bachelor of Education degree from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto.

Wendy is a certified member with the Ontario College of Teachers and has been teaching with the Peel District School Board since 2012. She currently sings with the St. Patrick's Gregorian Choir under the direction of Surinder S. Mundra, as well as the Chancel and Senior Choirs here at St. James. Wendy also performs with the Wavestage Theatre Company and has had leading and supporting roles in over 20 musicals since 2010. Although she may be a resident of Richmond Hill, Wendy is delighted to make St. James her second home.

## **GARDEN CLOSED**



**The garden is closed for the season. We wish to acknowledge and thank the following:**

- **Our anonymous financial donor**
- **Pat and Clive Dunstan for care of their Memorial Garden**
- **Clive for lawn care**
- **Betty and Bernie Ginger for donation of garden ornaments**
- **Norm DaCosta for trimming the yews (again) and installation of water system**
- **Al Graham Tony Gray, Brian Isard and Norm DaCosta for their expertise**

- **Sue Taylor and Conrad Aristodema for Saturday morning faithfulness**
- **Conrad for walking the property each Saturday and picking up 1 to 2 bags of garbage, then doing the heavy lifting**

**Thank you all so very much for making St. James a beautiful place.**

**By Joanne Atkins and Lila Bowen**



## The Meaning Behind the 12 Days of Christmas



From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.

When most people hear of "The 12 Days of Christmas", they think of the song. This song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian faith.

Each of the items in the song represents something of religious significance. The hidden meaning of each gift was designed to help young Christians learn their faith. The song goes, "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me..."

The "true love" represents God and the "me" who receives these presents is the Christian. Here you go:

The "partridge in a pear tree" was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.

The "two turtle doves" were the Old and New Testaments - another gift from God.

The "three French hens" were faith, hope and love - the three gifts of the Spirit that abide (I Corinthians 13).

The "four calling birds" were the four Gospels which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The "five golden rings" were the first five books of the Bible also called the "Books of Moses".

The "six geese a-laying" were the six days of creation.

The "seven swans a swimming" were the "seven gifts of the Holy Spirit". (I Corinthians 12:8-11; Romans 12, Ephesians 4; I Peter 4:10-11).

The "eight maids a milking" were the eight beatitudes.  
The "nine ladies dancing" were nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22 & 23)  
The "ten lords a-leaping" were the Ten Commandments.  
The "eleven pipers piping" were the eleven faithful disciples.  
The "twelve drummers drumming" were the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.  
So, the next time you hear "The 12 Days of Christmas", consider how this otherwise non-religious sounding song had its origins in the Christian faith.

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