

Enews to the St. Mark's Pews

88th Edition December 4, 2021

St. Mark's Anglican Church est. 1792

Niagara-on-the Lake, ON

Hear the Good News! Hear the Good news!

FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends,

This season of Advent has me thinking about time and history. There are many people who say that life and time are a great wheel that goes around in a circle which eventually winds up where it began, and then begins another long rotation. We might call this the cyclical view of history.

But the Christian view of life and history is not circular. It says life and time do not go around in circles but are always moving forward with purpose. Time has a beginning and will have an end, and it is moving on, in ways that are sometimes difficult to see and understand, toward the end. It isn't like a merry-go-round; it's more like a march.

This is a way of looking at things that comes from a way of knowing God. Our ancient forebears didn't think of God as the Unmoved Mover, as the Greeks did. They thought of him as the Mover of the Unmoved. They saw him doing things, working things out, and saw him behind everything in history, whether it was the great sweep and saga of the world, or the intimate and private lives of each and every person. And when Christ was born, they thought this was the most decisive move God ever made. It was a move to heal the deepest wound in human beings: the wound made by sin and guilt. It was a move to become involved himself in the entanglements of human existence, in things like families, and religions, and violence and hatred, suffering and death, and to become so thoroughly involved in these things that he could take them up and heal the wound.

So when I say that the Christian view of life and the world is always moving ahead toward a purpose, that life is going somewhere and we are going somewhere, it is because God once went somewhere. He came here to do something for us, to heal our wounds, to give us the confidence that we need to face the future without fear. He comes here now, in very different ways, of course, in different guises, but he still comes, and he asks us to go with him.

He asks us to go with him deeper into our own lives, into those dark and shrivelled places of our pain, regret, and self-pity, those places within ourselves where we harbour hatred, doubt and fear, but where we also keep hidden love, hope, and resilience. He asks us to stop telling ourselves the stories we've been telling all our lives—stories of disappointment, failure, betrayal, rejection and grief—and to listen instead to the story that he tells: our lives have a purpose more noble and joyful than could ever be believed, and there is something unique and precious only we can contribute to the world. He asks us to stop sitting still and looking into the dark and cluttered corner of the room we call life and turn around and walk through the door into the world with its infinite horizon that promises hope and healing.

He asks us, ultimately, to stop regretting the time wasted, lost, or stolen from us. He asks us not to dread the future, but to look forward to it with anticipation, even if that future is of another world into which we go only through death. This doesn't mean we should laugh off the present time. It means, rather, that we need to realize that we have only this one wild and precious life, and to spend it in regretful and longing looking back is to waste it. Who knows how much time you or I may have? We don't know. But this we do know: it is never too late to be loving, brave, accepting, courageous, generous and forgiving. Whatever time we have left, be it days or months or years, we have enough time to live truly and to love fully. Let go of the past—be it joyful or sorrowful—and open your arms to the surprising future of God's love, which even now is born among us and within us.

Grace and peace,
Leighton

FROM THE WARDENS

We are now in Advent and the month of December. As we often say "Where did the time go?" but it sure does. This weekend is the Rotary Tour and we are ready with our Cherry Pies (40 baked, the rest frozen and easy to bake). As well as pies, there are delicious specialities including cherry jam, pickled beets, chutney and stewed tomatoes. The sale is in Addison Hall from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Shop early as quantities are limited.

We are announcing the service times for Christmas:

Christmas Eve will be one service at 5 p.m.
Christmas Day there is one service at 10:30 a.m.
Sunday, Dec. 26 there is one service at 10:30 a.m.

The Newark Singers conducted by Michael Tansley will present two concerts on Sunday Dec. 19 at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Registration in advance is required and attendance limits are in effect due to Diocesan Covid regulations. Please email the office to confirm your attendance. There will be a freewill offering.

Please keep Jean Baker in your prayers as she recovers from a serious fall earlier this week.

Until the new parish administrator is announced, the office will be managed with the help of volunteers along with Gary Burroughs. Email communications are preferred. If you call and leave a message, we will respond as quickly as we can. If it is urgent please call either of the Wardens.

St. Mark's continues in a serious financial deficit due to the pandemic. This is the final month of revenue before year end and we sincerely request you consider sending a 13th month donation as was done last year. It was successful and helped reduce the deficit.

As always a reminder to advise the office of anyone who needs assistance in any way, a phone call, help with food pickup or a ride for appointments or some companionship over the phone, Facetime or over the fence.

Stay safe – keep well

Called to Life – Compelled to Love

Your Wardens

PARISH UPDATES

Keeping in Touch On-line

Our Sunday morning services are uploaded on Facebook after 10:30 am service. Simply go to St. Mark's Niagara-on-the-Lake Facebook page.

Please use this URL to watch:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Marks-Anglican-Church-Niagara-on-the-Lake-235477056649804/>

Our Enews and Order of Service can also be accessed through our website:

<https://stmarksnotl.org/news/news>.

<https://stmarksnotl.org/worship-ministry/order-of-service-bulletin>

FROZEN CHERRY PIES SALE

Please order by emailing Diane Turner at 19ab39@gmail.com.

Pies are \$20 and are sold frozen with easy-to-bake instructions

Christmas with The Newark Singers

Sunday, December 19th at 4:00pm or 7:00pm

Carols and Readings for the Festive Season

Free Admission, please registered by 12 noon Friday, December 17th by emailing Church Office to book a place as we are limited to 50 spectators per Concert.

There will be a freewill Offering plate at the back of the Church as you leave.

Come and enjoy some live music for the Season!

WORSHIP:



Diocesan livestream service is available at [livestream service of our Cathedral](#).

READINGS FOR SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

[Sunday, December 5, 2021 – Second Sunday of Advent](#)

Malachi 3:1-4 Malachi is a book of prophecy directed to the priests in the Temple. Priests have replaced kings as those closest to God on earth, but the priesthood is corrupt. The prophet speaks in God's name.

Philippians 1:3-11 In the verses following the salutation of the letter, Paul thanks God for the Christians at Philippi, for sharing in the community of faith ever since their conversion. He expresses confidence that God will complete, at the end of the era, the transformation to godliness already begun in them.

Luke 3:1-6 In language first used in the book of Isaiah to foretell the return of the Israelites from exile, Luke tells us that John the Baptist's mission is to prepare the way for Jesus, by inviting people to make new starts in life, to live ethically from now on.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In the parish cycle of prayer we pray for Catherine Bovaird, William and Jeanne Bradford, and Jodi Bradford and their families.

We pray for those shut in their homes: Fred Habermehl, Fred Dixon, Joy Ormsby, Selina Appleby, and Joan Draper.

In the Cycle of Prayer for the Niagara Diocese we pray for Holy Trinity, Niagara Falls, the Reverend Rob Duncan, Deacon-in-Charge, and the people of that parish.

In the Anglican-Lutheran Cycle of Prayer we pray for Archbishop Linda Nicholls and the staff of the Primate's Office of the Anglican Church of Canada, and Bishop Susan Johnson and the national staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.