



# The Winged Ox

Christmas 2011



**It's a Wrap!**

A few snapshots from the December 10 fundraiser



## From the Rector

### The Greatest Christmas Gift

The kingdom of God is revealed in the smallest of things that are really the greatest of things. From the smallest of mustard seed come a great shrub. A young St Mary says yes to the angel, and a human carries God so that God can carry humanity. The Messiah comes in the person of a small baby, born in Bethlehem, who becomes the greatest of teachers. The Mystery of the Incarnation is beyond words but is being lived out in your life and in my life and in our life together. Together we are the body of Christ.

God gives us everything. Our generous God is *the* gift giver. God gave us everything, and when we turn away from Him, and pollute and corrupt creation, God did not cease *to care* for us. Sin is what separates us from God and from each other, ruining and breaking relationships. God planned to bridge this gap between humanity and Him: to bridge this gap between all of us. And with the help of many imperfect people (Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the prophets, King David and so on), God opened a path of salvation for all people. Our loving God, planned to renew creation, (ourselves included) and overcome the power of sin and death. Our charitable God chose to give up his glory and power, and empty himself, in order to become one of us! God chose *to care* for us, to be with us, to suffer with us and for us, so we could learn how to live again and be in right relationship with God.

In separating ourselves from God and our brothers in sisters, we lost so much; but God gave it back when God gave us Himself. God is self-giving. God restores us to communion with Him in Christ. Our generous God is *the* gift giver.

The best gift we can give is ourselves. Perhaps you have never thought of yourself as *gift*. Perhaps you have been too caught up in measuring your identity by your job or your lack of one, by your successes or your failures. Perhaps you measure who you are by all the things you have done, or the dreams you never fulfilled ... Our society often measures a persons worth in this way, but the problem with this is that it builds up a fear that we will never measure up ...

God made you in his image. God loves us for who we are, not for what we have done. In Christ we are forgiven and redeemed children of God. God gives us life, new life and eternal life in communion with Him for evermore. Thanks be to God!

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### Christmas' Other Characters

Not everyone associates December 25<sup>th</sup> with Santa Claus.

Santa Claus is another name for St. Nicholas, and Dutch children await his arrival on December 6<sup>th</sup>, when they will receive gifts, or coal if they have been bad. St. Nicholas/Santa Claus likely arrived with Dutch settlers to New Amsterdam/New York.

Bishop Nicholas also attended the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E., so spare a thought for him when you recite the Nicene Creed.

Scotland, thanks to the Puritanical influence of John Knox, did not begin to celebrate Christmas, except as a religious holiday, until 1950. Before then, it was not a holiday from work, and one would think, was free of the commercial excesses now enjoyed by Scots.

When I was growing up in England, we did not have Santa Claus, we had Father Christmas. These two are not one and the same. While Santa Claus is derived from St. Nicholas, Father Christmas is an invention of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Since Puritanism held sway in England, and Saints were frowned upon, Father Christmas, a jolly old man, provided a reason to give gifts on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Unlike St. Nicholas, who tossed his bounty through the open window, Father Christmas climbed down chimneys to

fill stockings left by the fireplace. (Open widows in the Netherlands in December are as unlikely as empty fireplaces in England in December.)

In North America we have conflated the two characters by having Santa Claus, dressed as Father Christmas, wearing a red robe. A sort of Yuletide multiculturalism.

When we sing of Good King Wenceslas, we commemorate one born near Prague, around 907 C.E. "Although Wenceslas was, during his lifetime, only a duke, Holy Roman Emperor Otto I, posthumously conferred on [Wenceslas] the regal dignity and title. And that is why, in legend and song, he is referred to as a King."

Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen and, spying a poor man gathering fuel for his meagre fire, wined and dined him. The location of the poor man's dwelling is mentioned only briefly as St. Agnes' Fountain.

Not to be confused with St. Agnes of Rome, a martyr at the age of twelve, Agnes of Bohemia became a member of the Franciscan Order of the Poor Clare Sisters, eventually becoming their Mother Superior.

Surely, one of the most overshadowed, forgotten and neglected (at least on his Day) is St. Stephen, the first Christian Martyr. Who, on December 26<sup>th</sup>, as we collect the wrapping paper, replace the batteries and face the decimated carcass of the turkey, gives a thought to St. Stephen? Perhaps the linking of Christmas feasts and Stephen is not so strange. Stephen was chosen relieve the twelve from the duty of waiting on tables, and to oversee the fair distribution of food to the foreign-born Hellenist Jewish widows who were being neglected by the Hebrew, Palestinian Jews. (see Acts: 6.)

All these stories have one common thread: The generosity which gift giving expresses, whether it be Nicholas or Wenceslas, Agnes' care for the sick and wounded, or food from Wenceslas and Stephen, is in response to the words '*...just as you did it to one of the least of these, ... you did it to me.*' (Matthew 25:40)

*Therefore, Christian folk, be sure  
Wealth or rank possessing  
Ye who now will bless the poor  
Shall yourselves find blessing.*

Merry Christmas. Feliz Navidad. Bon Noël. Gelukkig kerstfeest.

*Sheila Welbergen (with help from Google)*

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**Christmas Memories** – *Memories of the Christmas season, contributed by parishioners and friends.*

**Every Christmas**, on top of our tree, we put an angel which Michael Croft made when he was 6 years old. It is wrapped up carefully every year and kept for the following year.

God Bless.  
*Elizabeth Ann Croft*

### **Christmas Mouse**

In 1945, my husband, Jim, had just returned from naval duty. We had just been married and were celebrating our first Christmas in our first apartment. We bought a Christmas decoration that cost us more than we could afford at the time. It represented for us a return to civilian life away from the restrictions and austerities that had been an integral part of World War II. It was a church, covered with a white waxy substance to represent snow, with a Santa's sleigh and eight tiny reindeer that circled the steeple, playing jingle bells when a knob was turned.

A tradition grew up around the ornament. On Christmas Eve, when all the decorations had been put in place and the tree had been decorated, Jim would read the story of Jesus' birth from the family bible. Only then was the church unpacked and placed on the dining room table. The youngest child turned the knob that started Santa around the steeple to the tune of 'Jingle Bells'. As the years went by, and as the family grew, each of the four children, and then their children, learned to appreciate the tradition that had built up around the church as the real beginning of Christmas festivities.

In 1989, the tradition was broken. All the preliminary steps were taken, but when the knob was turned, nothing happened. All the children, some now forty years old, were disappointed, but Jim and I recognised that a mechanism could not go on forever. After all, the decoration was forty-four years old. However, Jim carefully removed the top of the church and, lo and behold, there was a little field mouse with her offspring, who looked like six pink jelly beans, cowering in the nest that she had made with the cotton batting that had been used to protect the fragile large Christmas balls.

The mental picture of the little pregnant mouse looking for a safe haven in which she could safely give birth to her offspring and finding it in the little church, whose entrance was so small that none of her normal predators could enter, stimulated our imaginations. It reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas – The celebration of the birth of Christ, whose mother, Mary, also had to find a safe haven where she could ‘lay down her sweet head’ while waiting for the birth of her child.

Living on a farm, we had been accustomed to accepting that all creatures are creatures of God. My husband carefully replaced the top of the church and returned it to the attic. It seemed like the ‘Christian thing to do’.

Shortly after Christmas, the top was once more removed. The baby mice were all gone. We removed the cotton batting that had been around the mechanism. The knob was turned, and once more the Santa’s sleigh and his reindeer turned around the steeple playing ‘Jingle Bells’. We were ready for the next Christmas, but, somehow, the tradition of letting the youngest child turn the knob on the church will never be the same as the Christmas of 1989.

We have added two little porcelain mice just outside the door of the church as a reminder of the incident. However, I don’t think that anyone in the family will ever hear the expression ‘poor as a church mouse’ without remembering the Christmas of 1989 with nostalgia.

*Jean Morrison*

*Submitted by Morgana Graham*

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God is like Hallmark Cards. He cared enough to send His very best.

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### **Thank You to St. Luke’s**





St. Luke's has been instrumental in helping to re-establish an award previously given by St. Alban's to a student at Lord Roberts School. It was an exciting day at the school on June 23, in their centennial year, when **St. Alban's Church Memorial Award** was reinstated. The award is given in recognition of academic progress and good citizenship and was presented to Tyler Kansky and Blaire Thorsteinsson at the Grade 6 Farewell ceremony by Vera Rosolowich, former People's Warden of St Alban's. The award is now administered by St. Luke's through the St. Alban's Anglican Church Trust Fund, which is appropriate, as St. Luke's is the mother church of St. Alban's. The fund is open for further donations. Thanks are extended for the support of Vestry and especially to George Baldwin, Treasurer. The hope is that this gesture will serve to keep the name of St. Alban's Anglican Church alive in the neighbourhood, and the recipients will realize the love and outreach that is extended.

*Submitted by Vera Rosolowich.*

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### **The Covenant for 2012**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, in some Methodist churches there is a Watchnight Service, to begin the New Year with God. The next Sunday, a Covenant service is held. Covenants are not unusual: God made a covenant with Abram, the Ten Commandments are God's covenant with His people, Israel. We celebrate the New Covenant in Jesus every Sunday.

As we approach the New Year, as a Church, or as individuals, there can be no harder words to say than these from the Methodist Covenant Service.

*'I am no longer my own, but Thine. Put me to what Thou wilt, rank me with whom Thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for Thee or laid aside for Thee, exalted for Thee or brought low for Thee; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to Thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine and I am Thine. So be it. And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.'*

*Methodist Covenant Service. Giving in Grace.*

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### **Why Do We Sing What We Do in the Eucharist?**

The Oxford Movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century inspired a number of 'reforms' in parish church music. The West Gallery choirs were replaced by surpliced choirs modelled on cathedral practice. The music of these establishments was replaced by that of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and other music felt to possess a sufficient degree of solemnity for Victorian sensibilities. Church organs were also installed. Many parish churches sought to emulate and imitate the high standards of cathedral worship and music.

The structure of our services is, essentially, divided up into two parts: 'Propers' and 'The Ordinary'. Propers are the seasonal components of a Eucharist service and change depending on the calendar. Each service on each day has a changing set of Propers. These Propers include sentences, collects, readings, and prayers. The Propers are determined, in our use, by the Revised Common Lectionary in use around the world. The Ordinary is the portions of the Eucharist that are always included.

At St. Luke's, we have a history of high standards in music, which has been the case since the parish was established. We continue to uphold the goal of rendering 'English Cathedral-style' worship to the Glory of God. To this end, we sing, chant, or 'intone' certain portions of the service where musical settings are available.

The following texts, if not sung by the whole congregation, are traditionally sung by the choir:

1. *Kyrie eleison* ('Lord, have mercy') and *Trisagion* ('Holy God, Holy and mighty')
2. *Gloria* ('Glory to God in the highest')
3. *Sanctus* ('Holy, Holy, Holy') and *Benedictus* ('Blessed is He')
4. *Agnus Dei* ('Lamb of God')

The *Kyrie eleison* was traditionally sung in Greek, the others in Latin. We commonly use English translations, depending on the text (modern or traditional) in use in a service. The *Kyrie* is used at St. Luke's during Advent and the *Trisagion* is used during Lent.

The *Gloria* is sung at our Eucharist services during seasons of the year outside Advent and Lent.

The *Credo* is seldom sung here, but can be if the occasion warrants.

All of these texts, along with the *Credo*, Responses, and Acclamations, are usually set to one theme by composers, and we use a small number of these settings here in the parish. In other services, music is derived from a number of sources and put together.

We have recently begun singing portions of the service that, over the years, have been said – the 'Amen' at the end of a Eucharistic Prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and 'Acclamations' in certain Eucharistic Prayers, particularly the 'modern' settings beginning on page 185 of the *Book of Alternative Services*. This has been done to enhance worship and, in doing so, returns us to common practices of the near and distant past. In addition, the rubrics allow us to chant or intone collects, prayers, intercessions, Old and New Testament readings, and the Gospel.

During Ordinary Time – that portion of the church year following Pentecost, we have begun singing the 'Alleluia' at the Gradual rather than a hymn – an ancient and accepted practice.

So, why do we sing portions of our services instead of saying the texts? Well, the answer is deceptively simple – in monastic chapels, parish churches, and cathedrals, public address systems were unheard of until late in the last century. Parts of the services were deemed necessary to be heard by the congregants in the nave, and this was accomplished by intoning, chanting, or singing the texts so that the sound would carry. Composers throughout the centuries have taken this task to heart and set a large number and variety of Eucharistic settings, motets, anthems, psalms, and canticles to music – often quite complex and difficult. Some, however, are quite simple.

We use the resources at our disposal to worship God and seek to enhance the texts so that we are brought closer to Him – the Lord of Life.

Blair Anderson

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## Signs and Symbols

*Sign, symbol, gestures and actions, music and words – all things sacramental – help us to live in this very moment the saving acts of God, in the living presence of the Living God. – Fr. Paul, Easter 2011 Winged Ox.*

*"The word liturgy means the activity of the people. So it is not just ceremonies that bring people into the Divine Presence, but the gathering as well. The mere presence of the people is part of the rite."*  
– Moore.

A sign tells you to do something: e.g. A stop or Yield sign.

A symbols stands for something else: e.g. A Cross for a church, an H for Hospital.

I think as I watch the candles being lit before the service, it is significant that while the Altar candles symbolize the Presence of God in the Light of Christ (*John 1.5*) that it is humans who strike the match, which lights the taper, which lights the candles.

It is one symbolic form of manifestation of God in Christ to His people, but we are responsible for making visible this symbol as it lights our worship.

Before we enter the pew, we acknowledge the altar, whether with a brief nod or deep genuflect we acknowledge that we are in the presence of the Great King upon his throne. (*Isaiah 6: 1-4*)

We first say a prayer as a greeting; an "hello" to God before we turn to greet a neighbour. "Be still and know that I am God" (*Psalms 46:10*).

We exchange to Peace "as an encounter (which) reminds us that we meet Christ in others and without this encounter it is impossible to meet God...The Peace and unity experienced provide a glimpse of the Kingdom which is yet to come". (*BAS p177*)

In the Offertory we offer to God symbols of our life and work, bread, wine and money, donations of food, because: "All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

At the Eucharist we ask God to "bless and sanctify (make holy) these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be to us the Body and Blood of thy dearly Beloved Son, Jesus Christ". These are not empty symbols: we take them, eat and drink them as food, not just for our souls, but as a reminder they are the elemental food and drink of daily life.

When we receive the wafer into our hands with the injunction to take and eat, we should remember that one translation of eat is to "munch". These are the Gifts of God for the hungry people of God, provided at a price "...Once for All," (*Hebrews 10: 10.*) and Real Food for real people to 'munch' on.

Grace before any meal is a subtle reminder that the food before us is a mundane form of the Eucharistic Meal.

Teilhard de Chardin wrote in one of his *Penses*, that, as he looked at the Host in his Pyx, it seemed to grow until its radiance filled not only his surroundings, but the whole earth. When he ate the Bread, even as he consumed it, he said *It consumed him*. It was not longer a Symbol; it was real in a spiritual sense and real in that he took it into his body as physical sustenance, no matter how frail a meal the wafer might be.

In our no-nonsense world we can lose the sense of Mystery. My Webster's NWD defines Mystery: 'To imply something beyond human knowledge or understanding. That which excites curiosity, wonder, but is impossible or difficult to explain'. (In N.T. a Divine secret.)

Is our curiosity aroused, our wonder re-kindled at every Eucharist as we hear: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ in the night that he was betrayed took bread'...and say 'Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again'?

We enter into the Divine secret and claim the Promise that: "His power working in us can do far more than we can ask or imagine." Do we try to live in the power of that Promise?

Before we leave to pick up our lives again, we say 'Thank you for having us' to our Host. I always hope as the candles are being extinguished that the Light and Presence of Christ is not so easily snuffed out of my/our busy lives.

Christ is the Light, but we are responsible for lighting the candles; Christ comes as we meet and greet other people; Christ shares his abundance as we share ours, Christ is the Bread and Wine, but we go out and feed a hungry world.

After I had written Signs and Symbols, I was at the Thursday Eucharist – while Fr. Paul was with the children at Vacation Bible School.

As the Anglican Communion does not allow unordained persons to consecrate the Bread and Wine, we had a Eucharist using the Reserved Sacrament, We stood before the altar as usual, but, instead of the Bread and Wine being given to us from the Celebrant and then to us by the Lay Administrants, we gave to each other. We took the Paten, took the wafer and passed the Paten to the next person, saying, The Body of Christ broken for you, and we took the Cup from the person before, drank, and passed it to the next person, saying, the Blood of Christ shed for you. In other words, we could not receive until it was passed to us, and another could not receive until we passed it on.

I have been to such Eucharists before and they never failed to bring home the import of what we are doing.

Surely the message there made up for the lack of a Homily.

*Sheila Welbergen.*

### **St. Luke's Haiti Ministry**

We are making good progress raising funds to educate students in Haiti. We have one more sale on Sunday, January 22, 2012, after the morning service, when we hope we will be able to raise sufficient funds to send all our students back to school next fall.

This week we received a newsletter from God's Littlest Angels and the Director, Dixie Bickel in Haiti. Over three hundred students are enrolled in the educational program and are attending school. This is quite an achievement, as ten years ago, the opportunity for educating students did not exist at GLA.

The new building has made progress, but due to the recession in the United States, money sent to Haiti is significantly less, and the new building has to be put on "hold" for the present time. There are a lot of infants in the old nursery, some have special needs and require constant care and medications. Money is not flowing into GLA as quickly as it is spent on food and medical supplies. Dixie fears that they may have to turn some children and families away, as they do not have the funds to care for the children.

It never ceases to amaze me that Dixie, the Director of God's Littlest Angels, can find the time to reply to an email I sent her recently. I had asked Don Seaton, our terrific editor, if he could please send me another copy of the October edition of the *Winged Ox*. Don, always kind and obliging, emailed me the *Winged Ox* which I promptly sent to Haiti, as we had made the front page! Dixie was delighted and here is her message.

*Hi!*

*I loved the newsletter! What a nice tribute to those you sponsor in Haiti. You have really gotten your church behind you on this project!*

*Please give our good wishes to the kind people at St. Luke's Church and I wish you all a Happy Christmas Season.*

*That is great that Glenn Thamer is speaking at the church. I hope that goes really well.*

*Blessings,  
Dixie*

Christmas cards arrived from the children we sponsor in Haiti. Here is one of the cards; others will be posted in the church, together with the latest newsletter.



*Respectfully submitted  
Colin & Elizabeth Briggs*

## **The Uganda Orphans**

In 2005, Stephen Lewis, then the Secretary General's envoy for HIV/AIDS, gave the Massey Lectures. He said, "Every time I travel to Africa, I encounter orphaned children who are desperate to be in school, who need friends and teachers and attention, who need one meal a day, who need the sense of self-worth that education could bring, who want so much to learn; and who are denied all of it because the costs of schooling are prohibitive."

These children have become orphans because their parents, especially their mothers, died of HIV/AIDS. They are most usually cared for by aging grandmothers who often have taken in the children of two or more families.

Ten years ago, our diocese undertook to provide funds so that these grandmothers might be able to send the children they care for to school. Our congregation agreed to participate in the diocesan commitment.

The Diocese transfers donations to Uganda and pays the exchange rate. Care is taken that the money is spent on education. \$100 provides an elementary school child a year of education, a school uniform, a mid-day meal and a health check each month. \$300 provides the same for a high school student.

Stephen Lewis went on to speak of the waste of human resources and the diminishing of the lives of so many uneducated children. Between 1939 and 1945, the world lost large numbers of children who, had they lived, would have made large contributions to the life of our planet. We can do our part to prevent HIV/AIDS from having the same effect in Uganda.

*Submitted by Edna Swallow*

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## **The Four Stages of Life:**

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus.
  - 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus.
  - 3) You are Santa Claus.
  - 4) You look like Santa Claus.
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## **Book Reports**

### **Catholic Cults and Devotions**

– A Psychological Inquiry.

*By Michael P. Carroll.*

*McGill-Queen's University Press. 1989.*

*"A cult is a group of people who all engage, individually or collectively, in some particular pious practice."*  
(intro: p7.)

I had not seen the sub-title when I requested this book from the WPL. I thought I would be getting just an historical over-view of the title's areas of discussion. "A Psychological Inquiry" was vastly more interesting than a mere historical back ground for each of the devotional cults, though that was provided.

OK so far, but the title of the first chapter gave me pause: *The Anal-Erotic Origins of the Rosary*. The author explained that it is the repetitive fingering and counting of the beads which qualifies it for the psychological enquiry, a quasi OCD. Muslims finger beads in a repetitive manner, and I should also point out that there is an Anglican Rosary. Chanting and mantras also qualify.

Subsequent chapters dealt with *The Angelus*, *The Stations of the Cross*, *Blood miracles of Naples*, *The Stigmata*, *the Forty Hours*, *the Brown Scapular*, *the Sacred Heart of Jesus (along with the Immaculate Heart of Mary)* and *the Splintering of Religious Devotion in Catholicism*.

To a non-Roman Catholic, some of the arguments surrounding the devotions seemed strange, to say the least. I have never been concerned about whether Mary's pregnancy started with the arrival and

words of the Archangel Gabriel, or when Mary accepted and declared she was the hand-maiden of the Lord. Lest I appear unduly critical, maybe some Anglican actions and devotional practices appear...odd?

Though the book delves into matters psychological, it is not a very technical book; in fact it should open our minds further to the psychological needs and underpinnings of what we all do in public and private devotions.

Sheila Welbergen

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### **The Soul's Religion**

– Cultivating a Profoundly Spiritual Way of Life.

by Thomas Moore.

Harper Collins. 2002

*“Nothing is more challenging, nothing less sentimental, than the invitation of spirit to become who we are and not who we think we ought to be.” – Moore.*

Moore spent 13 years as a monk, leaving before his final vows. He has degrees in Theology, musicology, philosophy, and a practice in psychotherapy. He is now married and has a family.

This book is hard to explain, but there is a clue in the title – that the Soul's religion is not necessarily the religion which is taught or practiced in churches.

Those who dig a little deeper into the early days of Christianity will discover that many of the teachings, writing and practices were suppressed, lost and generally ignored in the name of 'Orthodoxy'. *NWD: 'Orthodoxy: conforming to the usual beliefs or established doctrines.....conforming to the Christian faith as formulated in the early ecumenical creeds and confessions.'\*\**

Statements of belief can be barriers to faith and doing. Belief should not be used as a club, and it is not the same as faith. Faith needs to be lived out to give it wings, and when faith gets its wings, then the Soul's religion soars and maybe we recapture some of the Mystery of the unfathomable Emmanuel.

Still a practising Roman Catholic, Moore nevertheless rails against his church, which slams doors rather than open windows. “When will spiritual leaders of all stripes finally realise spirituality and religion are not enhanced by thought control?”

There is nothing wrong and everything right about listening to the promptings of our soul. *Moore: “I have little patience for the kind of belief that doesn't allow me my own.....His (Jesus) teaching is not a code of beliefs to be enforced and sanctioned but a living vision of how life might be.....I have become drawn more to the mystery of his presence in human spiritual history.... I see life through his eyes, rather than focus my attention on him”*

*(See Philippians 2: 5-6. Seeing things with the mind/through the eyes of Jesus.)*

In a chapter, *The Sacred Irrational*, Moore writes of a visit to the ancient sacred site at Newgrange, outside of Dublin.

“At the entrance to the chamber lies a huge stone carved with spirals spinning in several directions. These spiral images have been interpreted in many ways, but I think they portray the nature of religious knowing. It is not a straight line of reasoning leading to a clear answer, but rather a spiral and labyrinth taking you deep within...to get to the core of religion we may have to set aside secular methods and learn to work with and trust the less direct routes of traditional forms such as rituals, story and contemplation.”

\*\* The following web site, *The Council of Nicaea (Nicea) and the Bible*, gives you an idea of the circumstances surrounding the Council of Nicea: [www.tertullian.org/rpearse/nicaea.html](http://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/nicaea.html).

Sheila Welbergen

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## **The Memory Keeper's Daughter**

by Kim Edwards

Penguin Books. 2006

Dr. David Henry is an orthopedic surgeon who, because of a blizzard, is unable to get his pregnant wife to the hospital on time. He is forced to deliver the baby in his own clinic with his nurse, Caroline, assisting.

A healthy son is born. However, a few moments later, David realizes that a second baby is on the way. The baby, a girl, is safely delivered, but David realizes that the baby has Down's syndrome.

The decision he makes will change all of their lives. He gives the baby to his nurse, Caroline, to take to an institution that accepts these children, but he tells, Norah, his wife, that the second baby has died.

However, Caroline takes the baby to another city to rear her herself. Caroline sends periodic reports to David to tell him of the child's progress, but no address – only a box number. David sends money occasionally.

The situation changes when the two children are young adults, when David dies very suddenly. What will happen now? Will Norah discover that her daughter is still alive? Will the siblings meet?

This is a very beautiful and moving story. The author keeps the readers' interest right to the last page, wondering how it is all going to end. A very powerful story and highly recommended.

Maureen Hunter

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### **Hey kids!**

Read any good books lately? How about writing a book report about one of your favourites? Tell me the title, who wrote it and the publisher, and then tell enough about the story to get other kids interested, but **don't** reveal how it turns out. Email it to [djseaton@shaw.ca](mailto:djseaton@shaw.ca). and I'll print it in the next edition of the Winged Ox.

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### **Christmas Is Coming**

'Jesus is Coming! Look busy.'

– bumper sticker.

'I'm late, I'm late for a very important date.'

– White Rabbit, *Alice in Wonderland*.

Does the bumper sticker imply we are taking a breather after working hard, resting to spin out the job, or hoping that we will not get caught doing nothing?

"Be still and know that I am God." The Psalmist goes on to elaborate why God commands us to be still. Psalm 46 v.10.

Being still forces us to think of two things: we are finite, God is Infinite. That being the case, we should drop our hands, relax and *think*.

In our understandable eagerness to celebrate the coming of the Messiah, the Church, too, can fall into the 'busy' trap. Advent courses, Sunday school pageants, carol services, special Christmas music, setting up the crèche, decorating the church....Far be it from anyone to suggest that these things do not have merit and add to the Christmas celebrations, but if they leave us gasping, "I'm late, I'm late," then we likely *will* miss a *Very Important Date*.

This Christmas let us be still and hear not only the silence of that Holy Night, but experience the sweet balm of the Season.

**Merry Christmas      Feliz Navidad**  
**Vrolijk Kerstfeest      Joyeux Noël**  
**Frohe Weihnachten**

### **Realize the Value**

To realize the value of a sister or brother, ask someone who doesn't have one.  
To realize the value of ten years, ask a newly divorced couple.  
To realize the value of four years ask a graduate.  
To realize the value of one year, ask a student who has failed a final exam.  
To realize the value of nine months, ask a mother who gave birth to a stillborn.  
To realize the value of one month, ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.  
To realize the value of one week, ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.  
To realize the value of one minute, ask a person who has missed a train, bus or plane.  
To realize the value of one-second, ask a person who has survived an accident.  
To realize the value of a friend or family member, lose one.

Time waits for no one. Treasure every moment you have. You will treasure it even more when you can share it with someone special. Hold on tight to the ones you love!

*The origin of this letter is unknown.*

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### **A Christmas Prayer**

Holy Child, the world's true Light,  
Mould me, so like You I'll glow;  
Always keep me in Your sight,  
Show me where I ought to go.

Mould me, so like You I'll glow  
In the dim and gloomy parts;  
Show me where I ought to go,  
Kindling hope within all hearts.

In the dim and gloomy parts,  
Spread the Gospel, – joy, peace, love,  
Kindling hope within all hearts,  
Lead the way with thoughts Above.

Spread the Gospel, – joy, peace, love,  
Let the inner beauty shine,  
Lead the way with thoughts Above.  
Radiate the gifts Divine.

Let the inner beauty shine!  
Always keep me in Your sight!  
Radiate the gifts Divine,  
Holy Child, the world's true Light.

*M. Monica Smith-Harder*

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### **Milestones**

#### Weddings

Maggie Seaton and Craig Osman were married at St. Luke's on Saturday, November 19.

### In Memoriam

Edith Williams passed away 25 November 2011.

### **What Ever Happened to...**

For those of you "old" enough to remember Harold Macdonald, perhaps you also recall a young assistant curate by the name of Gary Hamblin. (In those days we could actually afford *two* priests!)

I recall the gasp of dismay when it was announced that Gary was returning to University for a degree in Social Work. Harold was very careful to explain that this did not mean Gary was leaving the church – just parish ministry. In those days it seemed the only acceptable alternative to parish work, for a priest, was to teach.

Gary, wife Joy, and children Tara, Natasha and Shireen eventually left Winnipeg and settled in the warmer climes of the Left Coast.

Gary started his own business, basically directing people to the appropriate Social Service Agencies. Sort of like our former Community Ecumenical Ministry. Gary stayed 'in the closet' about his ordination for a while – probably, rightly divining, that when it became known he was a priest, he would be snatched back into Parish ministry. Sort of like warm blood arriving at any Parish!!

His ordination eventually unmasked, he was an associate priest for a while, then retired from his business. He and Joy part-timed in Gibson B.C. until a full time priest was found.

Retired once more he was quickly placed at St. John the Evangelist in North Vancouver where he has been part-time interim for the past three and a half years. From a floundering parish to one with a weekly congregation of 200, he is now retiring again, probably for good, unless some Bishop catches up with him!

Joy continues on the executive (she is the Coordinator) of the South Fraser 'Gogo's, promoting awareness of, and raising funding for, African grandmothers caring for the grandchildren of mothers who have died from AIDs. In addition she volunteers a day per week in the Surrey Hospice, a residence for people who are at the end of life.

I was happy to spend an afternoon with Joy and Gary a year ago October.

*Sheila Welbergen*

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### **The Graham Family is honouring Thomas for his 80th birthday:**

Monday afternoon, January 2, from 2-4 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Delicious dishes will be served up by Delicious Dishes.

Entertainment music will be by RINN.

Come one, come all, have some birthday cake and join us in this celebration!

See you there.

### **Gleanings from the Parish e-Newsletter**

#### Annual General Meeting:

The AGM is fast approaching. In order for us to start to prepare for the meeting, all committees please submit your year-end report for inclusion in the AGM booklet to the parish office [stluke@shaw.ca](mailto:stluke@shaw.ca) by Friday, Dec. 30.

#### Tuesday Hospitality:

The Kitchen Party fund-raiser raised over \$450.00 for our Tuesday Morning Hospitality and money is still coming in. Thanks to everyone who came out to support our efforts, despite the weather! Thanks, too, to everyone who was unable to come, but still made a donation. It is much appreciated.

One of the folks who attend the Tuesday Morning Hospitality is in need of a table that would seat 2-3 people. Please contact Father Paul if you can donate.

[Paul@stlukewinnipeg.com](mailto:Paul@stlukewinnipeg.com)

2012 Church Calendars are here. Contact Judy in the parish office to purchase – \$10.00 each. 452-3609, M, Tu, Th, F, 8:00 - 11:30 am.

*St. Luke's Haiti Ministry*

Sunday January 22, 2012

*Bake Sale*

*Books, Magazines, DVDs CDs*

*Recycle Christmas Gifts, Get ahead with Spring Cleaning and help us raise funds to send children to school*

Your support by donating items,  
purchasing items,  
or just being with us is appreciated.

**The Hornblower**

A few evenings ago, in a traffic snarl, one of the inevitable horn-tooters began blasting his horn almost continuously. A man in a car alongside looked over and politely enquired, "What else did you get for Christmas?"

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**The Twelve 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.

- The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments
- Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.
- The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.
- The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.
- The ten lords a-leaping were the ten commandments.
- The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

So there is your history for today. Now you know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol.

Merry (Twelve Days of) Christmas, everyone.

**Dates to Remember**

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols – Sunday, Dec. 18, 4:00 p.m. Reception to follow in the Church House

Christmas Eve – Saturday, Dec. 24

Pageant and Family Eucharist with Carols – 6:30 p.m.

Choral Eucharist – 10:30 p.m. (Please note the change in time from last year.)

Christmas Day – Sunday, Dec. 25

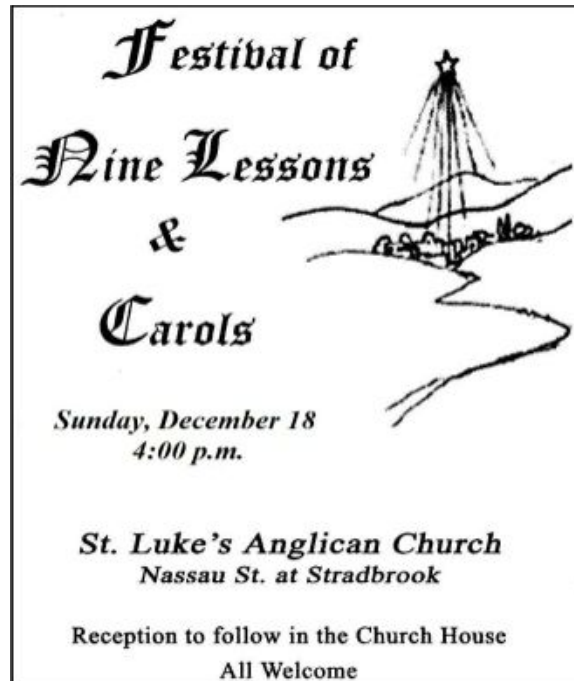
Holy Eucharist with Carols – 10:30 a.m.

Haiti Ministry Sale – Sunday, Jan. 22

Ash Wednesday – Feb. 22

Easter – April 8

Easter 2013 – March 31



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**THE WINGED OX**

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The **deadline** for submissions is one week prior, **February 12.**