



The Anglican Regional Ministry of Saugeen Shores, Tara and Chatsworth

Reverend Carrie writes . . .

Dear friends in Christ,

The season of Advent begins the new year of the Christian calendar and draws us into four weeks of preparation for the Christmas season. The word "Advent" simply means "coming". Christmas is coming and there is so much to do! Our calendars and the frenzy around us can be overwhelming as the month of December races by. Decorating, baking, gift buying, special events and family gatherings all demand our attention.

As we sit midway through Advent, with Christmas just a few short days away, I need the reminder that Advent provides. That reminder is simply, that in all of this "God is, God was and God will be". No matter how busy, how muddled, or sometimes how lonely we might get, we are never alone. God has always been with us, and will continue to be with us. I cherish the opportunity to think

about what the season really is all about, celebrating not only the birth of the Christ Child, but also the promise that God bless,
Carrie+

Christ will come again; that all suffering, poverty, pain and exclusion will end, and that we will live in the presence of the divine for eternity - whose kingdom will have no end! I cherish the promise of the one whose life, death, and resurrection demonstrates for us, the reality of God's great and powerful love for all.



As we spend time in prayer, in moments of silence and in worship preparing ourselves to receive this wonderful gift, my prayer for us all is that the worship, the music, the decorated sanctuary, the special events offered throughout our regional ministry will help calm our spirits, bring joy to our hearts, and knit us together in expectation of the Christmas celebration. My heartfelt prayer is that you will join with us in the preparation throughout this Advent season. May the blessings of the season be yours, and as you join family and friends in celebration this Christmas, may you take time to give thanks for the birth of Jesus, the Christ - God's gift to us!

A Prayer for Standing on

Tiptoe

On tiptoe we stand, Lord Jesus
eagerly awaiting
your full revelation
always expecting you
to come some more.

Our hands and hearts
are open to your grace.
Our lives still waiting for
the fullness of your presence.
We are those who have been
Promised a Kingdom,
and we can never forget
Yet we have a foot in both worlds
and so we stumble.

But still we stand
on tiptoe
Opening our kingdom-loving hearts
and our earth-eyes
We lean forward
and hope.

by Macrina Wiederkehr

Book Talk:

"The Handmaid and the Carpenter"

by Elizabeth Berg

This lovely novel reimagines the events of the familiar Christmas story. It follows Mary and Joseph into their betrothal as they are faced with an unexpected pregnancy. As the story unfolds we see their love and courage develop while dealing with threats to their lives, a most mysterious birth experience, and then their early years as a young family.



This book is beautifully written, imaginative and emotionally moving. If you own a comfy chair and find a quiet afternoon, you will no doubt read it in one sitting. Available now in your St. Paul's resource library.

Becky Peters (St. Paul's Resource Librarian)

TAIZE—A Budding Prayer Form in Saugeen Shores

A planning team met at St. Paul's Church on Nov 11, 2014, hoping to revive the practice of offering monthly Taize prayer gatherings among the various churches of Saugeen Shores. Since these early beginnings, we have been delighted to welcome an increasing number of folks from different denominations and backgrounds into this ecumenical form of common prayer.

For many of us, the name Taize has become associated with a chanted style of sung prayer. But did you know that Taize is an ecumenical community located in a small village in the Burgundy region of France? There, more than 100 monastic Brothers from different Christian traditions and from over 25 countries and every continent, share life together and offer hospitality to thousands of visitors each week. Many of these visitors are young people who come searching for meaning and peace, acceptance and a place to pray. The community holds 3 prayer services daily which include the repetition of chanted refrains, scripture readings and silence. Visitors participate not only in the rhythms of worship and silent reflection, but also in daily work and the conversations pertaining to the Bible teachings offered by the Brothers.

Taize began in 1940 when a 25 year old man, Brother Roger Schutz, began to offer shelter to political refugees,

most notably Jews fleeing Nazi persecution and later French war orphans and German prisoners-of-war! By 1949 Brother Roger had been joined by several more brothers who committed themselves to a shared life, celibacy, and an attempt to live the Gospel call to reconciliation. Some brothers have gone out from the community to live and minister in places of division throughout the world. Another priority is to seek harmony and reconciliation among Christians divided by denominational issues.



Taize worship remembers in a meditative way the central mystery of the Christian faith: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. The Cross is accessible to those who wish to pray there, symbolically bringing their burdens and the sufferings of all who are oppressed, entrusting them to God. The celebration of the resurrection recognizes Jesus' presence as the light of one candle which is shared by each person. We carry Christ's light into the world, desiring to bring faith, hope and love to dispel darkness. We come together to pray that the Holy Spirit may illumine our hearts and inspire us to live out the Gospel ways of peace, reconciliation and unity.

If you have never experienced Taize prayer, please give it a try! It is a quiet, gentle service with sung prayer, silence and readings. The next service is at St. Paul's on Sunday December 16 at 7 pm. You are most welcome!

(Becky Peters, Taize contact person)

Blue? Yes, blue as in “the blues”. As in "I am feeling blue."

Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holiday. For the most part, Christmas is a time of celebration and joy, but for many, however, this is a difficult time of year. Many people are carrying significant weights: grief, loss, depression, anxiety, financial stress, unemployment, uncertainty, aging parents, sick



children, recent diagnoses, or unknown illnesses. The public tone of the season does not always resonate with people’s private experience.

As a community, we are called to care for one another, to be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of those with whom we share any kind of community, and we are called to walk along side each other. So, be gentle with each other and be gentle with yourself if you find yourself feeling blue when all around you want you to be joyous. Lean into the promise of God. Lean into the one who knows your deepest joys and your deepest sorrows, and pour out your heart to the one who is always near—to the God of love- who was, who is and who will always be.

Prayer

Holy One, you are with us in times of trouble and in times of peace; in times of sorrow and times of joy.

When we are unsure of how to continue living and loving, your Spirit intervenes with sighs too deep for words. Speak for us now, Loving God. Comfort us with your abiding peace...Amen

Pastoral Care Visiting Team

On the first Sunday of Advent Rev. Carrie commissioned the Pastoral Care Visiting Team to be a presence in our Regional Ministry. The members of this team, Doug Goar, Becky Peters, Marilyn Stewart, Arlene Windsor along with Rev. Ann Veyvara-Divinski and Rev. Carrie Irwin have been meeting monthly. We share resources, have developed an information pamphlet, prayed together, learned together and are available for visits by just giving any one of us a call. The team offers a ministry of emotional and spiritual support to companion those in times of joy and pain. This ministry is prayerful, or conversational, to serve the spir-

itual needs. The Team is also trained in providing home communion if that is a desire. We are most fortunate to have such a team that is available at any time.



Christmas Eve Services (Monday, December 24)

St. Paul’s, Chatsworth – Eucharist at 4:30 PM

St. John’s, Port Elgin - Family Service (wear your PJs) at 5:00 PM

Christ Church, Tara—Eucharist at 7:00 PM

St. Paul’s, Southampton - Candlelight Eucharist at 8:00 PM

Joint Epiphany Service - Sunday, January 6 at 10:00 AM at St. John’s

Followed by: The Rector’s Epiphany Brunch



From the Priest Assistant's Pew

Is it Advent already? You mean Christmas is just around the corner? What? We all know that time has a habit of flying by but when I begin to reflect on all the changes that have happened in this past church year I can only imagine what the next year will bring.

I find the season of Advent to be the fastest of them all, but the most beautiful! The liturgical colour changes from green to purple (or in Chatsworth, blue) and each church begins to be decorated with such care and love. It is at this time in the craziness of the season that we need to take more intentional time to just sit in the peace and beauty of it all. We get frustrated, sometimes (okay, maybe often) at the amount of snow that we get so early in the season in the Bruce but it is that blanket of white that makes the stillness seem that much more still. In walking around the



neighbourhoods one can see the decorated homes on the outside and the Christmas trees being prepared inside. I love this time of year and remember as a youngster my parents taking me out to drive around Toronto to see all the lights or on Christmas Eve in London Ontario to see Victoria Park all aglow. It's that wonder, it's that magic of the lights and love that people put into their homes at this Advent season that means so much. Bringing joy is something that we all can do, whether we have lights to put up or not. A smile can bring the brightest bright to someone who may be in their darkest dark. May your season of Advent and the anticipation of the Messiah at Christmas be one of joy, hope, peace, love and light. May that light guide you into your new year.

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Ann Veyvara-Divinski

Blessing of the Animals Service

On October 20th we had a different kind of service at St. Paul's! We had a lovely Blessing of the Animals. Our four footed, feathered or scaled companions are often times like family to us and it only seems fitting that we honour them in God's presence. St. Francis of Assisi, for whom the Blessing of the Animals is dedicated, had a deep love of nature and animals and is known as the patron saint of the environment and animals; each October, many animals the world over are blessed on his feast day. On a



chilly, blustery day, three beloved pet dogs, and their owners gathered on the labyrinth to join in common witness to the love of God and the dedication of St. Francis to their beloved pets. Each canine family member calmly received a special blessing. It was a very special service for those that attended both from the community and from the Regional Ministry. We plan to make this an annual service to bless those animal companions that make our lives whole.

Rev. Ann Veyvara-Divinski

(Photo courtesy of Sandy Lindsay)

St. Paul's Anglican Church, 248 High Street, Southampton, ON, N0H 2L0 519-797-2984

St. John's Anglican Church, 516 Mill Street, Box 1059, Port Elgin, ON, N0H 2C0 519-832-5757

Christ Church, 56 Bruce Road 17, Tara, ON, N0H 2N0

St. Paul's Anglican Church, 57 Toronto Street (Hwy 21), Chatsworth, ON, N0H 1G0

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