

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2005

PARISH VISITOR

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Please remember that we are no longer mailing the Parish Visitor, except by request. Copies are available for pickup in church and on our website.

Advent to Christmas



Calendar of Events

From lighting the first candle on the Advent Wreath to lighting the Christmas tree, we have a number of activities planned at Advent and the community to help you celebrate the Advent and Christmas season.

Sunday, December 4, 7-8:30 p.m. – Carol Singing

Here we come a-wassailing. To help the Anniversary Fund grow, Kevyn Dawe will put a brandy snifter on the piano. Free will donations to the snifter will encourage his fingers to play the carols you request. Everyone is asked to bring Christmas goodies to sample during intermission. The ELW will provide coffee and juice. Invite your neighbours and friends to join you.

Tuesday, December 6, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Ecumenical Worship for Those Who Mourn at York Mills United Church.

December 24, Christmas Eve
Worship at 7:00 and 11:00
p.m.

December 25, Christmas Day
Worship at 10:00 a.m.

December 31, New Year's Eve
Service at 7:00 p.m.



Advent's Christmas Tree – 2004

Peanut Shell



Can we be getting this close to Christmas? The Fall has gone by quickly and now we are listing our Advent and Christmas events. Please attend as many as you are able.

As we read in the Mission Report, we can all be missionaries. We also read in the Stewardship report that we all practice stewardship – sometimes we are better at both of these than others. We have some catching up to do before the end of the year so please think about how you can be a missionary and how you can practice better stewardship in the time to come.

Everyone enjoys coffee hour on Sundays and we need some more people willing to host these short times. If it weren't for coffee hour, we wouldn't get the chance to meet a lot of our visitors and catch up on news with each other. Please let Fran know if you haven't been a host and would like to take a turn now and then.

We still have copies of the Windows booklet available. They could make a stocking stuffer for a friend or a handy information book on these windows for yourself. Please see me if you would like one.

Everyone who attended the anniversary dinner this year had a great time and learned something as well. The silent auction was a new concept for some people, but everyone got involved and bidding was heavy on some items. We do need to meet our commitment for the Anniversary Fund, so by supporting the auction and filling your cans provided by the Sunday School children are ways we can do it and have some fun as well.

Our next *Parish Visitor* will be available New Year's Day and the deadline for copy is Christmas Day. I can't do too much about the holidays falling on deadline days, but I like to keep your newsletter on schedule.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Judy

Congregational Council Update

Congregational Council made a change to its structure at its October meeting. The Finance and Stewardship functions have been merged and will be called Stewardship/Finance Committee. This change is a result of there not being a current real role for a Finance responsibility.

In the financial area we noted that we need to increase giving to meet the budget. Claus Brandes has prepared interim financial statements which are now being distributed, and he will also make a temple talk to remind our members of their responsibility to meet the budget.

At the meeting we accepted the resignations of two Council members – Martin Gangadeen and Tara

Lindemann. Tara has also resigned as Chair of the Education Committee. We are now looking at options available to continue the Sunday School function.

We will need to elect additional Council members at our annual meeting. If you would like to nominate someone, please speak with Carol Peck.

Heinz Weltner has completed construction of two kneelers which will be dedicated soon. We thank Heinz for making these kneelers and Hilda Ficek for donating them to the congregation.

Council agreed to let Confirmation Class students serve as communion assistants.

Council's next meeting will be on November 28. ♦



Support our Church Publications

We received a special envelope in our boxes for support of *The Eastern Synod Lutheran*. Please remember to contribute your share. That way Synod funds can be allocated to other necessary ministries.

It's also time to renew our subscriptions to *Canada Lutheran*. The cost for *Canada Lutheran* is \$14 for a subscription through the congregational subscription plan. Please include your renewal and indicate it on your regular offering envelopes. ♦

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

2800 Don Mills Road

North York, Ontario • M2J 3B6

(416) 493-1435

The Rev Michael Mills, Pastor

(416) 691-3774

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

(October–June)

The *Parish Visitor* is produced

for our members and friends.

Judy Baribeau, Editor (416) 264-4527

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Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Mission Report

There are many ways for all of us to become missionaries. In the July/August *Canada Lutheran*, there are several articles that perhaps can inspire us.

Three people decided to help immigrants establish themselves in a community. These three started Heart Housing Inc. The organization buys a house and through interviews decides who should get the house. In turn they encourage people to donate their time to make repairs and renovations. Put yourself in the shoes of these immigrants from Asian and African countries coming to such an unknown land as Canada with a vastly different culture. How to fit in? To have a house would be a great responsibility. Read the article on Page 9.

There is a wonderful story on Page 11 of how the determination and perseverance of one woman changed the way the forest won the war against the desert in Kenya.

At each quadrennial meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Women, a new mission project is chosen. For the next four years, in a joint outreach project with Canadian Lutheran World Relief, they decided to concentrate on Chamanculo, Mozambique.

The dream of the national youth was to build at least one and at the most five houses with Habitat for Humanity. Until my own daughter worked on one of these projects, I didn't realize that the people chosen to occupy the houses have to put so many hours of work on the house. They are required to have jobs; the house is not given to them; but the terms make it easier to get themselves established.

Some of our ELW's projects are make-up kits, layette kits making quilts and other projects which are sent overseas through CLWR.

Our own outreach has us participating by our financial aid to build low cost housing at Lester B. Pearson Place

(NJC-TUCT project). Advent has also committed to helping an immigrant family to be united by guaranteeing money. Last Christmas shoe boxes were filled by the Sunday School students as gifts to be distributed to children in need. There are many activities we are asked to participate in. Whatever it may be, do so with a willing and joyful heart. Probably you may have some ideas of your own you want to work on.

Mission is not only what we do overseas through our missionaries in the field, but the every day things we may do to help others. Extend a friendly hand to any newcomers to our church and make them feel welcome. It makes such a difference to the person visiting.

Our missionaries overseas would appreciate a Christmas greeting and a note from you. You can get their addresses from the ELCIC website (www.elcic.ca).

Joan Fox

Mission Representative



All About our House

This will be an abbreviated article in comparison to last issue. All has been going according to the status quo.

We have to say thanks, once again, to Heinz Weltner for creating two new kneelers that grace our worship area. We must also thank Hilda Ficek and all those who contributed to the Art Ficek Memorial Fund for these lovely kneelers. They are certainly a wonderful addition to our worship area.

He said "let there be light" and there was light. And so it is in our kitchen

thanks to a generous donation from the Schickedanz family for the light fixtures. They were installed by Claus Brandes, thanks Claus.

Also, not to be out done, the Advent Lutheran men have to be thanked for their contribution to the upgrading of the hallway lighting fixtures leading to the Fellowship Hall. We now have a painted ceiling as well as new lights.

Now I would like to mention to you a concern that I have. Every Sunday we all enjoy coffee, tea and "a bite" thanks

to the generosity of our members. However the time has come when some of our "senior" members have had to say that they can no longer take their turn at hosting. I am asking that if you would like to take part in this very appreciated ministry and have not as yet been contacted PLEASE contact me and I would be more than happy to add your name to the hosting list.

That's a wrap, thanks for reading.

Fran Brandes
Property Chair



Evangelical Lutheran Women

The Toronto ELW-Conference Fall Event was held October 15 at Advent. Seven congregations were represented with a total of 36 people. This included a guest presenter, Robert Baechler, and the ACW (Anglican Church Women) representative Lorna Krawchuck. Shirley Fingler (ES-ELW and N-ELW director at large) was also present. Toronto Conference Dean, Pastor David Tin and Advent's Pastor Michael Mills were unable to attend.

The focus for the day was "Mentor and Leader", introduction to the 2006 Bible Study, and Rob Baechler's presentation of slides and information about Africa as well as some *imagining* of Chamanculo (Mozambique – the

ELW's international project for the next several years) done by his wife Arden.

A skit promoted *Columbine*. Sperling Church Supplies, Fair Trade Coffee and ELW silk scarves were available for our shopping pleasure.

The Roll Call offering went to support Grace gifts, Chamanculo and international relationships.

A great big thank you to everybody who helped out with baked goodies, Walter Rothenburger and Bill Bartlett for the fruit trays, and the kitchen crew – Cynthia Stewart, Sonja Brown, Erna Krause, Sonita Dillon-Rhodium and Chloe Shantz-Hilkes.

We didn't exactly sing in the rain, but we did walk. Nine ladies from Advent

participated in the walk "In Memory of Brenda" on Sunday, October 23. Despite the drizzle, it was a nice time to admire the fall colours and get some fresh air in our lungs followed by refreshments at Tim Horton's. Over \$300 was raised and more is coming in. This year the funds will go to support our 40th Anniversary Fund.

Our next meeting is on November 9. Brit Missirlian will show pictures and talk about churches and other vacation memories from her trip to northern Norway.

And don't forget, on December 4 we hold our annual Bake and Craft Sale after church.

Brit Missirlian

Stewardship Matters

Stewardship. Ugh! There's that word again. We can't avoid it. It just doesn't go away. We're all stewards of everything that is around us; in some ways we are better and some ways we are worse.

We talk about proportionate giving, tithing, and other ways of determining what we will give to others or do for others.

At our last Congregational Council meeting we discussed our stewardship as a Council. I brought this up because in my role in preparing the monthly newsletter for the Toronto Conference, I read many congregational newsletters. In many ways our congregations are the same. We worship, we have social events, we hold learning events, we are active in our communities, and we run deficits in our current accounts.

There is one way Advent has been different than other congregations. We haven't been in the practice of designat-

ing special offerings (those that we put into the pink envelopes that are in our boxes) to causes outside our own current account. One congregation gives 10 percent of everything it receives for Benevolence. The past feeling has been that we need these offerings for ourselves. Yet, in our stewardship recommendations, we ask everyone to give a portion of what they receive to the church and even indicate on our envelopes the amounts for Current, Benevolence, GHDA, Mortgage and from time to time other causes.

I have challenged our Council in preparing next year's budget to designate these special offerings during the year to causes other than ourselves. It could be GHDA, the 40th Anniversary Fund, Eva's Place, or other causes that may come up during the year.

As a start, Council agreed to designate the offering from this year's Anniversary envelopes to go toward

our 40th Anniversary Fund.

I encourage you to support the designations Congregational Council will announce during 2006.

Other Gifts

With Christmas coming up, many times we don't know what to give to someone because he or she has everything and says not to get anything. If you still want to give a gift, why not make a donation to Advent's Endowment Fund, the 40th Anniversary Fund, GHDA or another worthwhile program for the church. Your gifts will be most appreciated.

Remember that you can make bequests to the Endowment Fund in your wills or designate memorial donations to this fund. The sooner we build up this fund, the sooner we can begin doing ministry with the earnings from the fund.

*Judy Baribeau
Chair, Stewardship*

Good or Bad



Advent Carrying God Within Us

At twenty-two Michelangelo was commissioned by French Cardinal Jean Villiers to carve a marble statue for a memorial in the *Chapel of the Kings* in St. Peter's. His figure of the dead Christ, life-size, is unimaginably well-crafted and is considered one of the finest technical works Michelangelo ever executed, even though it was only his second commissioned work. Yet it is not Christ, but Mary, who dominates the work. At seven feet two inches (a full foot taller than me) she looms large as she cradles the body of the dead Christ in her lap. The folds in her robes are so excessive that if she were to stand upright she could not walk without tripping. What is most outrageous about this first of Michelangelo's pietas, though, is that Mary is depicted as a teenage girl. The mother is younger than the son.

Art is never more concerned with history than truth. And Michelangelo's pieta reminds us of the same truth that Luke does in his gospel, namely: when Mary gave birth in a shelter near Bethlehem – she was a young girl. No more than a child, herself. And she would have been more than a little anxious. Luke says “deeply disturbed.” Who can blame her? Pregnant, no father to speak of, she must have had a whole bunch of unanswered questions in her heart. “Will Joseph stick around?” “Will my parents welcome me home?” “Will friends stand by me?” “Will the people who don't understand drag me into town and stone me for sleeping around.” “Will there be someone to help me when my time comes?” “Will the labour be hard?” “Will I survive this birth?” Poor Mary, she was feeling like her options had just about run out.

There is a whole lot of talk these days about all the choices people have, and about how it is up to each of us to choose our own lives. More often than not, it is my experience that our lives seem to

choose us. Our best laid plans are interrupted by life's own plans for us. Surprise babies are one example. Our lives are also interrupted by sudden illness, aging parents, divorce, the economy, death. Terrible things happen and wonderful things happen, but seldom do we know ahead of time exactly what will happen to us. So it was with Mary. Life took a left turn.

Now, even when life does change unexpectedly there are still a few options. First, we can be stoic and refuse to accept the change. This can require a lot of energy, though, because ignoring life despite the best evidence is a difficult thing to do. If that doesn't work, we can become angry, actively defending ourselves against the unknown and spending all of our time trying to get our lives back to the way they used to be. And then, of course, we can become bitter, comparing ourselves to everyone else whose life is more agreeable than ours and lamenting our unhappy fate. All of these are real options. Another option, of course, is to say “Yes” to change. In difficult circumstances we can decide to be a bit of a sojourner in faith, a test pilot, a person with a child's heart. We can decide to take part in a new thing with no guarantees. In the words of Pastor Barbara Taylor, we can even “agree [to something as bizarre as] smuggling God into the world inside our own bodies.”¹

Think about that for a moment. What would happen if we were to take seriously the idea that each of us is called to carry God in our own bodies? By that I mean, what would happen if we were to let our actions embody grace and goodness even when the rest of the world is changing so fast that we can't quite make sense of it all?

It's no small order, but at some point Mary had to say “Yes” to the task of becoming a mother to a child whose

father wasn't in the picture. I don't think that meant she was unafraid. Deciding to say yes would have been for Mary the same as it would be for us – there was fear and uncertainty and confusion. But Mary, apparently, was not willing to let her fears keep her locked in her room.

It might be worth mentioning that Michelangelo was always troubled by criticism of his pieta.² Even in his old age he would embark on tortuous explanations of why he carved Mary to be younger than Jesus, none of them (quite frankly) very convincing. I wonder if he didn't just want Mary to be a young, frightened, powerful girl who showed a bit of courage even though all the doors were closing around her.

Do we, each of us, have the same option to carry God with us? To be decent people even when life is at its most tumultuous? To place our trust, when the going gets tough, in something bigger than circumstance itself?

Meister Eckhart, a medieval Christian writer wrote: *We are all meant to be mothers of God. What good is it to me if this eternal birth of the divine son takes place unceasingly but does not take place within myself? And, what good is it to me if Mary is full of grace and if I am not also full of grace? What good is it to me for the Creator to give birth to his Son if I do not also give birth to him in my time and my culture? This, then is the fullness of time: When the Son of God is begotten in us.*³

Blessed Advent and Christmas seasons,

Michael

- 1 Barbara Brown Taylor, *Gospel Medicine* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1995), 150-153.
2. Nathaniel Harris, *The Art of Michelangelo* (New York: Gallery Books, 1989) 23-25.
3. *Meditations with Meister Eckhart*, Matthew Fox, ed., and trans. (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Company, Inc., 1983), 74, 81.

Advent and Christmas Diversion

This puzzle contains words associated with Advent and Christmas. The letters may be used more than once and words can be found going in any direction.

C	O	R	N	A	M	E	N	T	Y
O	A	H			O		O	N	C
O	H	R		T	T	R	E	E	E
K	A	P	O	A	H		L	V	H
I	N	S	E	L	E		F	D	P
E	G	H		S	R		A	O	
W	E	E	E		O		W	D	R
O	L	E	N	H	O	J		E	P
N	S	P	A	T	I	N	S	E	L
S			C	H	A	I	A	S	I



Advent Windows Booklet

Copies of the booklet are still available from Judy Baribeau at \$5 each. We had a few extras printed, so if you would like one and did not order one, they are available first come-first served.

Putting Christ into Christmas

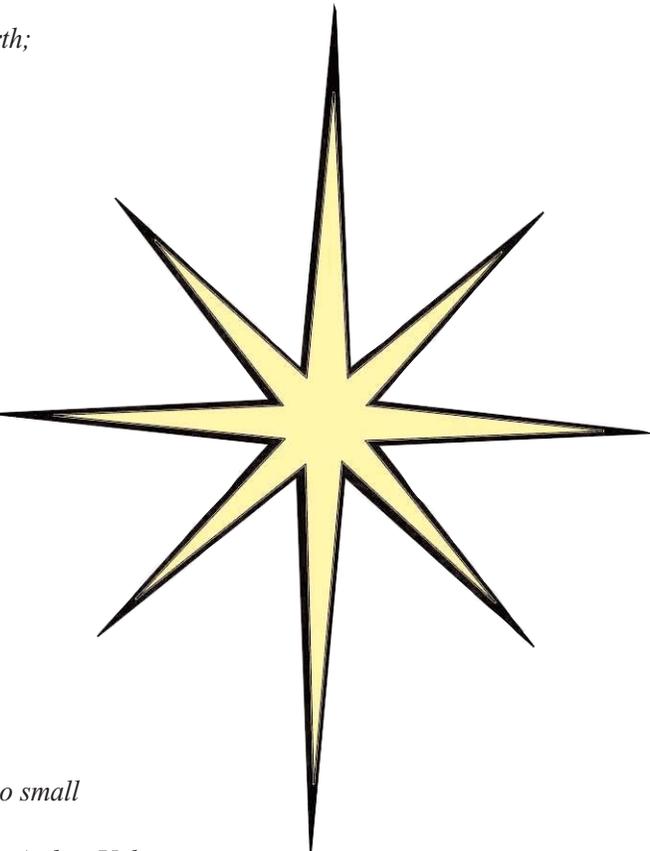
*'Twas the night before christmas, the eve of Christ's birth;
 Many people were resting all over the earth.
 The shepherds were watching their sheep in the night,
 When all of a sudden they saw a bright light.*

*And what to their wandering eyes should appear
 But a beautiful angel, high up in the air;
 His face was all shining; his garments so bright
 That the shepherds began to tremble with fright.*

*But as he came nearer, the words that he said
 Soon gave them to know there was nothing to dread;
 He told them of peace, with no fear or danger,
 For their wonderful gift they would find in a manger.*

*So leaving their sheep, they went into town
 To seek for this gift; they looked all around.
 They came to the stable, the covers they lift,
 And there in the manger – God's wonderful gift.*

*So pure and so holy, so full of God's love;
 They knew it was Jesus, God's gift from above
 And so as we think of this Savior again,
 May our worship this Christmas not be in vain.
 Let us love Him and trust Him; there's nothing that's too small
 May the Lord richly bless you. Merry Christmas to all.*



Author Unknown

Treasurer's Report

Commitments	Received to November 6, 2005	Received to November 6, 2004	Required November 6, 2005	Surplus/ Shortfall
Current/Loose	\$ 63,834	\$71,760	\$81,520 *	\$(17,686)
Mortgage	4,887	6,710	6,710 **	(1,822)
Sunday School	373	148	148	225
Sub-total	69,094	78,618	88,378	(19,283)
Facilities	44,611	39,664	32,921 ***	11,689
Regular Benevolence	8,868	8,810	8,810	58
Total Commitments	\$122,573	\$127,093	\$130,109	\$(7,536)
Other Giving				
GHDA	\$4,172	\$4,036		
40th Anniversary	\$4,840			

* 2004 Current and Loose increased by 13.6% as per Budget

** Same as 2004

*** 2004 x 83% as per Budget

*Fred Roth
Treasurer*

Silent Auction a Winner for 40th Anniversary Fund

Thank you to everyone who brought and bought items at the Silent Auction which was part of Advent's Annual Anniversary Potluck Dinner. Twenty-one items were sold for a total of \$1,482.75 for the 40th Anniversary Fund. For anyone who has not paid for their items, please enclose it with your offering envelope and mark it "Silent Auction, 40th Anniversary".

Rebecca Taylor is looking for recipes from the dishes brought to the dinner to

include in the upcoming Advent cookbook. Remember, the proceeds from the cookbook will also go towards the 40th Anniversary Fund.

Thank you again everyone. It was a fun evening with good food, fellowship and the Advent/ELCIC trivia quiz where we all learned something new about our church. Now, what is the colour of the carpeting in the sanctuary?

Judy Baribeau



Many of us have been emptying spare change from our pockets into the coin bank which graces the dining room table where the flowers used to sit. Some of us have been digging through the bottom of purses or maybe beneath the couch cushions looking for spare change. Found money has been a wonderful addition to the beautifully decorated banks.

Even though many of us forgot to bring our banks in for the first Sunday of November, I am pleased to tell you that we have already brought in \$223.41 to add to our 40th Anniversary Fund. Thank you. I imagine I'll have much more sorting, rolling and counting to do next week and in the months to come. Don't forget, the first Sunday of every month bring your can and make some noise filling up the house. Together, our small offerings become great.

Rebecca Taylor



Join
us on
December 4,
7:00 p.m. for our
Carol Service

People and Events Summary

Worship Services and Meetings

Worship services are held every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

Men's Breakfast Group – meets at 9:00 a.m. the first Saturday each month at the Wexford Restaurant, northeast corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Warden Avenue.

ELW Meets Wednesday, November 9, at 7:30 p.m. See Page 4 for details.

Congregational Council meets Monday, November 28, 7:00 p.m. at the church.

ELW Bake and Craft Sale – following the service on December 4.

ELW Christmas Party, December 9 at the home of Anneliese and Danny Schickedanz. See poster on bulletin board for details.

Seniors meet November 1 and 15 and December 6 and 20 at 1:00 p.m. at the church.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Sympathy

■ To Alex Otten and his family on the death of his wife Joan on October 3. The funeral was held at Advent on October 7.

■ To Kevyn Dawe, Rebecca Taylor and their family on the death of Kevyn's mother, Esther Dawe, on October 16.

We remember

■ Joyce Strebel who is home recovering from knee surgery.

Advent's Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 5, 2006, following the service.

Help us keep our contact list current

We try our best to ensure that our contact list is current, but people do move and change their email addresses. Please give any updates for your address, phone number and email to the church office or Judy Baribeau at gandjbaribeau@rogers.com. That way we can ensure you will always get your *Parish Visitor* as soon as it is available. If you prefer to receive your newsletter by mail, please let me know as well. We respect the privacy laws and this information is only given to those who require it for church use.

jb

November/December 2005 Volunteers

Volunteers assist with the worship services. The *Parish Visitor* lists those who have agreed to assist each Sunday as a reminder and a thank you for serving. In addition to the areas listed below, we invite you to provide altar flowers for special occasions in your lives. If you have questions about them, please speak to the Altar Guild person for the particular Sunday.

Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister	Reader	Ushers	Counters	Coffee Hosts
November 6 Elizabeth Lancia	Alfred Schurr	Gabi Schickedanz	Chris Moeglich	Nicole & Brian Peck	Walter Rothenburger	Carol, Nicole & Brian Peck
November 13 Judy Baribeau		Lester McLean	Walter Rothenburger	Hildegard & Heinz Weltner	Rebecca Taylor & Brit Missirlan	Schurr Family
November 20 Carol Peck		Nalini Beekie	Alfred Schurr	Alex Otten & Cindy Xue	Sonita Dillon-Rhodium & Walter Rothenburger	Sonja & David Brown
November 27 Carol Peck		Peter Buckley		Alfred Schurr & Linda Wang	Kristin Doak & Brit Missirlan	Sandra & Lloyd Carlsen
December 4 Carol Peck		Robert Wraith		Michaela Ehring & Chris Moeglich	Judy Baribeau	Latchman Family
December 11 Kristin Doak		Lester McLean		Fran & Claus Brandes	Brit Missirlan & Carol Peck	Adele & Peter Buckley
December 18 Carol Peck		Jim Doak		Joan & Arie Fox	Judy Baribeau & Kristen Doak	Fran & Claus Brandes
December 24 - 7:00 p.m.		Jackie Fromme		McLean Family		–
December 24 - 11:00 p.m. Brit Missirlan		Fred Roth				–
December 25		Ingrid Schurr		Hildegard & Heinz Weltner		–
December 31 - 7:00 p.m.		Peter Buckley				–