

LIFE @ ST. PHILIP'S



St. Philip's Lutheran Church | Toronto, ON



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DATES OF NOTE:

December 9 – Carols &
Gingerbread

December 10 – Silent Auction

December 14 – 50+
Christmas Luncheon/Concert

December 17 – Music &
Pageant Sunday

December 21 – Longest Night

December 24 – Christmas Eve
Worship

December 25 – Christmas
Day Worship

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday: 9 - 12

HOLIDAYS:

Margaret will be away from
Dec. 27 - Dec. 29

From Pastor Tuula

A character in John Updike's novel *Bech Is Back* describes his wife's religion this way: "Many of her crowd went to church as faithfully as they played tennis and golf and attended rallies to keep out developers. Yet, their God, for all his colorful history and spangled attributes, lay above the earth like a layer of icy cirrus, a tenacious and diffident other whose tendrils failed to entwine with fibrous blood and muscle." Updike puts his finger on important questions: Is God distant? Does our religion operate by the same rules as culture?

There was a time when I thought it was important that during Advent, we study Christianity's intellectual claims about Jesus. As I have gotten older, I know that Advent is not the time to address these issues. Most everyone is frazzled and distracted and worried not so much about the defining relations in the Trinity as they are about getting their shopping and cooking done.

Understanding is not the issue at Christmas. The issue is trust—and peace and hope. And you do not get those by someone explaining intellectual distinctions. They come through relationships.

When my children were young and asked me difficult and sometimes frightening questions, they really did not want an answer. They wanted a hug. They needed assurance that they were not alone in facing their concerns.

Christmas tells us that there is one who cares about us and comes to be with us. The simple story means that in this huge universe, in this frightening world, we are never alone. It means that God cares about how life is lived in the world. Jesus knew what it means to be

(...continued on next page)

tired and hungry and lonely, and he also knew what it means to be happy and loved and hopeful.

The birth of Jesus contradicts the idea of a God who "lay above the earth like a layer of icy cirrus." Instead, we encounter God in our enjoyment of beauty, friendship, and love. This is not a God "whose tendrils failed to entwine with fibrous blood and muscle." Quite the opposite. "The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

See you in church!
Pastor Tuula



December Events

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2023



ADVENT 1:
CAROLS & LESSONS ECUMENICAL WORSHIP:

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM*:
CAROLS AND GINGERBREAD:
ADVENT 2 AND SILENT AUCTION:
ADVENT BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM:
50+ CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON / CONCERT:
MUSIC AND PAGEANT SUNDAY:
ADVENT BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM:
LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP:
ADVENT 4:
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:
CHRISTMAS DAY:
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS:

(* ZOOM SETAILLS ON PAGE 7)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3 @ 10:00 AM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3 @ 4:30 PM
St. Matthew's Anglican Church, 3962 Bloor St. W.
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5 @ 7:00 PM
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9 @ 3:30 PM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 @ 10:00 AM
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12 @ 7:00 PM
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14 @ 12:15 / 2:00 PM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 @ 10:00 AM
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19 @ 7:00 PM
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21 @ 7:00 PM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 @ 10:00 AM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 @ 4:30 PM
MONDAY, DECEMBER 25 @ 11:00 AM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31 @ 10:00 AM

Finance Update

Please find below a financial update for the period of January to the end of October, 2023. November month end is still being finalized.

In September I reported a net loss of \$29,321 to the end of that month, I can now report that the loss as of October 31, 2023 has shrunk to \$21,020 as a result of increased donations.

With ten months (or 83%) of the year complete our spending is on budget with expenses of \$217,114 (82%) against income of \$184,887 or 70% of our approved budget of \$264,000.

As a result, at the end of October, we are currently running a deficit of just over \$21,000 which is approximately \$18,200 further in the red than this time last year.

Some year-to-date financial numbers:

	2023(Oc31)	2022(Oc31)
Income	\$196,094	\$190,541
Expense	\$217,114	\$193,348
Net Income (Loss)	(\$21,020)	(\$2,807)
Benevolence	\$20,177	\$19,495

Some of the key increases in spending include:

- Administration costs at the end of September are about 7% higher as a result of purchasing a new computer for the office
- Building and property costs are up 32% or \$11,400 primarily as a result of:
 - One time roof repairs \$6,600
 - Increased heating and hydro up 38% or by \$2,700
 - Insurance costs up 15% or by \$1,400 (total insurance cost is \$10,890)
- Employee benefits costs up 13% (determined by GSI)

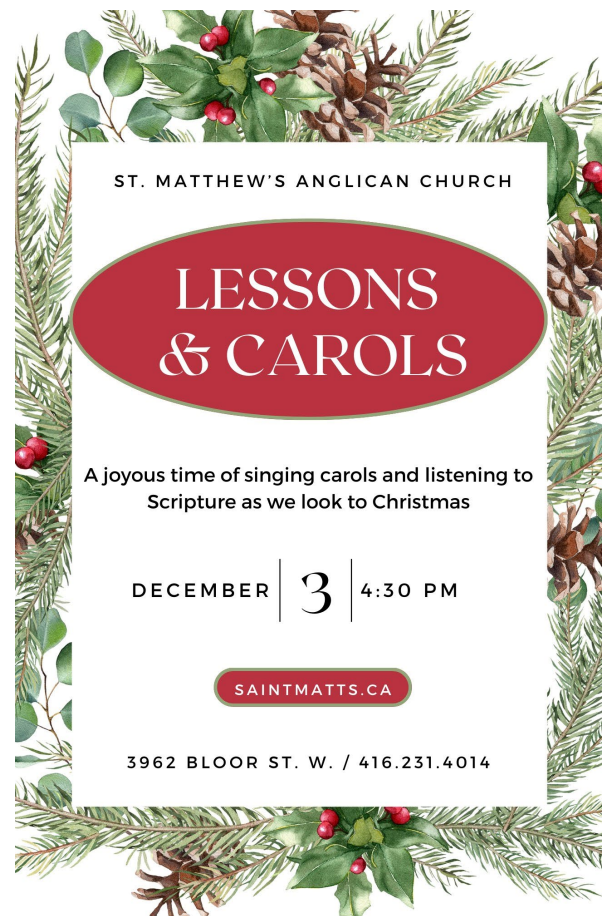
Thank you for your continued contribution to St. Philip's.

Gary Wuschnakowski

Music Notes

I'm glad to report that we have had several volunteers from the congregation sing with us during the Christmas season. However, there is still room, so do come along and "lend us your voice", even for a short while. Choir practice is at 7:30 pm on Wednesdays. We will be delighted to see you!

St, Matthew's Anglican Church will host a Christmas joint service. Some of our choir members will be singing, and our much-esteemed Joyful Noise Bell Choir is also going to play.



My very best wishes for much joy in your preparations for Christmas. The choir is also very busy and it is our pleasure to be working on quite a variety of seasonal music. We very much look forward to singing it for you!

Karen Quinton

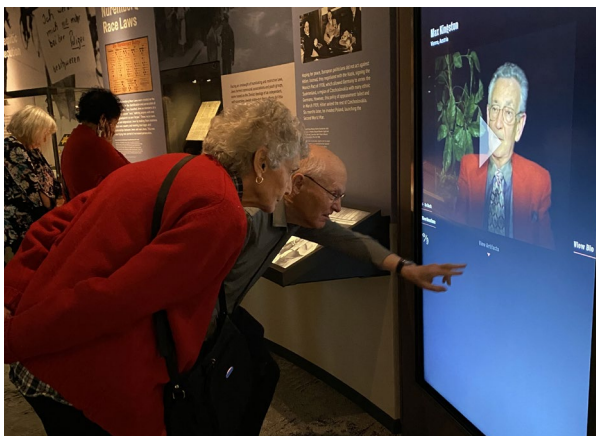
416.231.9247; kgquinton@icloud.com

50+ Museum Visit



On **Thursday, November 16** the 50+ group enjoyed a light lunch at the church before heading out to tour the Holocaust Museum. Everyone found the film and exhibits very informative and well laid out.

Please see page 7 for details on our next planned event.



Life @ St. Philip's

Refugee Family



The refugee family St. Philip's is sponsoring has arrived in Canada and are settling into their new home.

For safety reasons, information will not be shared by the public nor on the website.

(please see insert for full story)

Carols and Gingerbread



Decorate gingerbread and then sing your favourite carols. An event for everyone!

Please bring gingerbread: cookies, house, sleigh, or even a train – whatever you prefer. Find a kit or bake it...or just come for the carols.



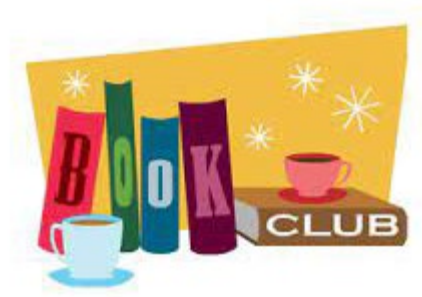
Jazzy Brunch

On **Sunday, November 12** we kicked off our Stewardship Campaign with a lovely brunch. Food was provided by Chef Camille and entertainment was provided by Mo' West Trio.

The food was amazing with various meal stations from waffles to home-made omelets. The trio kept us entertained the whole time.



SPLC Book Club



A neighbour, Eleanor Campbell, would like to restart our Book Club. The previous club ended with the pandemic. We'd like to call upon previous members and any new members who would like to join.

We are open to days/times of the week. Please contact Margaret in the church office at 416. 622.5577 to let her know of your interest and availability.

Personal Visit

On Pastor Tuula visited with Gus Berndt. He is 91 years young.



Messy Church



The Messy Church program has been continuing this fall. We gather once a month and participate in activities, share a family-friendly meal together, and end with a worship celebration. We just had our November session, where we learned about the story of Joseph and his brothers and discussed the theme of forgiveness. The creative activities included making “dirt pudding”, dreamcatchers, and a “coat of many colours” magnet.

Messy Church will be taking a break in December. We’re looking forward to seeing you again in the new year!

Please watch out for an announcement for our 2024 dates which will be finalized soon.

Messy Church is intended for all ages, and all are welcome.



If you’re interested in getting involved, please reach out to stphilipsmessychurch@gmail.com.

Dawn Pascoe

Amal Project



On **Tuesday, November 14** Amal Project participants enjoyed a lovely lunch in our Fellowship Hall/Kitchen. The women met, cooked amazing dishes, and shared lunch together forming friendships across cultures and instilling a true sense of belonging to the Canadian community.

Mitten Tree



Please donate today to Christmas baskets for 75 families who live about 3 km from the church. We learned about their struggles with food insecurity at our Good Food Market this summer. The baskets will be fruit and treat filled. They will be distributed at a gingerbread cookie decorating party on Dec. 20.

We are partnering with the nearby St. Timothy’s Presbyterian Church.

A \$25 donation covers the fruit for 1 family basket. Be a Christmas angel at 44 Willow Ridge and mark your donation for **‘Gifts and Gingerbread Cookies at Willow Ridge’**.

Also, please let the church office know if you are open to volunteering.

Eunice Hogeveen

Zumba: Dec. 4, 11 @ 1:00 pm
Joyful Noise Bell Choir: Mondays @ 7:15 pm
Girl Guides: Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm
Advent Bible Study: Dec. 5, 12, 19 @ 7:00 pm
 Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82170270457?pwd=Vi92VTJ1Y3A4V2ZzdFBgOWh1VVFJZz09>
 Meeting ID: 821 7027 0457; Passcode: 304607

Cover Girls: Wednesdays @ 10:00 am
Choir Practice: Wednesdays @ 7:30 pm
LAVS: Friday, Dec. 8 @ 6:00 pm
Carols and Gingerbread: Saturday, Dec. 9 @ 3:30 pm
Silent Auction: Sunday, Dec. 10 @ 11:00 am
50+ Thursday, Dec. 14 @ 12:15 pm
Music & Pageant: Sunday, Dec. 17
Longest Night: Thursday, Dec. 21 @ 7:00 pm

50+

CHRISTMASLUNCHEON / CONCERT
Dec. 14 @ 12:15 pm / @ 2:00 pm



Food: Festive Chicken Special with punch or wine and desserts.

Entertainment: New Horizons Band

Lunch Cost: \$25/person

Concert Cost: Freewill offering

When: **Thursday, December 14 @ 12:15 pm**

Register by December 10: By using the sign-up sheet in the narthex or call the church office at 416.622.5577.

Readings for December

First Sunday of Advent – December 3

Isaiah 64:1-9/Psalm 80:1-7,17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9/Mark 13:24-37

Second Sunday of Advent – December 10

Isaiah 40:1-11/Psalm 85:1-2,8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a/Mark 1:1-8

Third Sunday of Advent – December 17

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11/Psalm 126
Luke 1:46b-55/1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16/Luke 1:46b-55/Romans 16:25-27/Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Day – December 25

Isaiah 62:6-12/Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7/Luke 2:1-20

First Sunday of Christmas – December 31

Isaiah 61:10--62:3/Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7/Luke 2:22-40

Life Passages

Alex Kretchman passed away on **Tuesday, November 7, 2023**. A funeral service will be held at St. Philip's on **Saturday, December 9 @ 11:00 am**.



1927 - 2023



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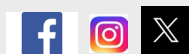
Mark Kieswetter, Music Director
Emeritus

Margaret Isaacs, Office Administrator
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'Friend' us [on Facebook](#)

Instagram: [@stphilipslutheran](#)

X: [@SPLConline](#)



Silent Auction



On **Sunday, December 10** we will hold a silent auction. Committees have donated baskets and you are encouraged to drop off bottles of wine to be raffled off.

Please leave wine bottles with Pastor Tuula or the church office.

Next...

Please submit articles and high-res photos (minimum 2 MB) for the next issue of LIFE by **January 26** ... send good news to Margaret Isaacs:
stphilip@bellnet.ca



About St. Philip's - Our Vision

Freed by the grace of Christ, we seek to connect with God, neighbour, and self.

Vision Statement: We are a diverse and inclusive Lutheran faith community freed by the grace of Christ to find God and self as we connect with our neighbours.

We practise hospitality of open hearts and open arms. We unite with partners to make a difference in our neighbourhood. We nurture community of Christ.

Values Supporting the Vision: Our Lutheran heritage of grace; our call to pray, worship, and learn as we grow in our Christian faith; our needs to gather and belong in Christian community; the call to love our neighbours as Christ loves us; the acceptance of all people as children of God; the opportunities to meet God everywhere.