

Tidings

First-St. Andrew's United Church

VOLUME 14 ● NUMBER 4

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY 2004-2005

UNTO US....

by Reverend Dr. David McKane



Every child that is born is on a journey toward maturity. Every child that is born is on a journey of discovery, about self, about the world, about ultimate meaning, or God.

Have you ever noticed in the Bible that we are always on a journey? The children of Israel journey through the wilderness on their way to the promised land. Later they will experience the painful journey into exile and the journey to-

wards recovery and restoration. Mary and Joseph journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, that House of Bread, to birth One who will feed our spirits.

The Wise Ones journey in search of One who will be Light, Truth, Daystar from on high. We journey throughout our lives and every year we journey into Christmas.

In the Gospel of John the writer faces the challenge of finding language to explore the immensity of what we call the incarnation, of God's coming among us, of the transcendent entering time. That of course presumes a belief in the transcendent, something or someone beyond. That is where the writer begins, beyond time and space saying that the One who comes offers a light in the human darkness and shining vision of what it means ultimately to be human.

So much in our culture denies such a reality and such a vision. For many what exists in time and space is all that there is and within this we work and die. On this assumption the post-modern world is based.

Even our spirituality, itself a journey, tends today to be a journey inwards to a deeper understanding of the self rather than a journey outward to discover the Self beyond one self and thereby discover one's own true self in relationship with others.

There is no hesitation on the gospel writer's part to speak of our not knowing Him. Taken as a whole, the culture we live in does not know him. We know about him. We are aware of the endless opinions as to who he was or is or can be but do we know him as a source of grace and truth for our lives? Do we know him as one who constantly calls us to greater spiritual maturity? Do we know him as one who calls us on a journey -follow me. The Gospeler

says to all who received him he gave power to become children of God.

The operative word is become. This Jesus, the Word made flesh, this Dayspring from on high, calls us to a life time journey towards spiritual maturity.



INSIDE	
Council Report.....	2
Bishop Spang speaks.....	3
B a z a a r p i c t u r e s.....	6
The Kitchens of FSA.....	7

FROM COUNCIL

by Doug Jones



Seasons Greetings to all the FSA family. We have had a great fall season with all the marvelous musical and theological variety. Musical outreach through Jazz, small group and full choir has exceeded all expectations. Bishop John (Jack) Spong brought out a large segment of the London and surrounding population. I'm still receiving positive comments from individuals I would not have expected to be here. We also had

the very moving service on Remembrance Day, and our memorable Anniversary Sunday with guest preacher, Donna Sinclair.

In our "Celebration" service and luncheon afterwards, it was wonderful to see so many and to celebrate together with our First-St. Andrew's family. Wendy Thompson and Ian Wright did a great job with their helpers to decorate the Centennial Hall. About 350 members of our church family were able to share conversation and celebration of our combined family over the hot, roast chicken lunch and view the slide presentation showing the many activities over the past year. A special thank you to all the "Patrons" of the Luncheon who funded most of the cost and saved the coffers of the Church. A marvelous time was had by all.

Thanks to Wendy, Ian, the volunteers, and the staff team at FSA for their combined efforts on the Stewardship Campaign, as well as my fellow "servers" for getting everyone food in about 15 minutes, and of course the FSA strings under the leadership of Bruce Richardson who provided the music. Winner of the "door prize" balloon ride for two was Dallas Knight. What a wonderful sunny day, literally and figuratively, as we looked to our future and all we share in the First-St. Andrew's family.

Tidings

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Submissions are accepted only from members of the First-St. Andrew's Family. The Tidings Team reserves the right to select and edit submissions. Obtain information from Group and Committee Secretaries or members of the Tidings Team. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, not necessarily those of First-St. Andrew's Church.

This issue of Tidings is full of activities and events, so I will keep this message short. As the Christmas season is rapidly approaching, we on Council wish you and all your family a joyous and fulfilling Christmas season. We invite you all to the Annual Congregational Meeting after the Church service on Sunday, February 13th, 2005. If you are interested in being on a Committee, contact Bill Watson. The Council meets at 7:30 P.M., the 2nd Tuesday of every month from September to June. Council meetings are open meetings. Everyone is welcome at any meeting.

Respectfully

Doug Jones, Chair

IF MY OFFICE IS TOO COLD..... OR TOO HOT... IT MUST BE WINTER!



"The Property Committee must be testing the furnace"



Special guests on our 172nd Anniversary Sunday: Donna Sinclair, author and Observer writer, and husband Jim Sinclair, General Secretary of the United Church General Council. Donna's sermon was titled "The Next 172".

BISHOP SPONG

By Susan Shelstad

First – St. Andrew's launched its first Proudfoot Lecture on Mon. Nov. 8th with the well-known and controversial Bishop John Shelby Spong. The sanctuary was filled to capacity with a crowd of about 650 people. Many of those attending were from our own congregation and city, but people traveled from Windsor, Grand Bend, Woodstock, and many other places to see and hear him..



To prepare for his coming, we had two book study sessions on his most recent books, a sermon was preached on his ideas on Oct. 31st, and an article was printed in the London Free Press on the Saturday before his visit. The church phone rang off the hook after that, as people eagerly wanted tickets for the big night.

A few of us from the church met with John and his wife, Christine, for lunch the day of the lecture, and found him to be a warm and engaging individual. His lecture that night was based on his experiences of growing up in North Carolina with the prejudices of his culture, and how those prejudices were broken in his own life. Racism, sexism, Christian superiority, and prejudice based on sexual orientation were all addressed. Spong, in person, is so much warmer and funnier than he is in his writing. The crowd enjoyed a lot of laughter throughout the evening. Many found the question and answer time at the end to be the best part of the evening. His intelligence, faith, and pastoral concern were evident in the way he handled all the questions.

After the lecture people were invited to the lower hall for book signings, and he stayed until everyone in line had a chance to meet him. The lecture was recorded, and CD's will be available at cost.

It was a great evening. What a wonderful way to begin the Proudfoot Lectures!



CELEBRATION SUNDAY

On November, more than 300 members and friends of First-St. Andrew's gathered for a worship followed by a luncheon at Centennial Hall. It was the third year in a successful stewardship program.



Editor's note: Following his visit, John Spong wrote us:

Dear David, Sue and Ted,

We are now back in New Jersey with two full days before we head out on our last major lecture tour of the year which will take us to Houston, Dallas, Little Rock and San Diego. We will be gone for 10 days – we are confident that no tour will be any more fun or fulfilling than our time in Ontario.

To conclude that trip in 1st-St. Andrew's and to meet people the three of you – To address our biggest Canadian audience to date, to be the recipient of your incredible caring, to read Sue's piece in the newspaper and to have Ted making sure that every detail of sound and place was taken care of – Thanks to you all. We really loved our time in London.

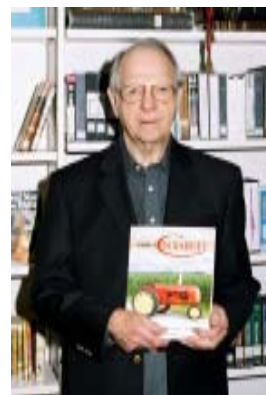
We also will enjoy the book on London. Our lives are so blessed when we meet people like you.

Chris sends her love - Jack

FSA SNAPSHOTS



(Right): Bill Cockshutt proudly displays a copy of his book "About Cockshutt" that he's donated to our Library. The book is about the history of the family and the tractor busi-



Corn Roast: To celebrate the Grow-A-Row campaign, members of the Stewardship Mission Outreach Committee prepared a corn and bean lunch. Members of St. Marys United Church joined us.



(Right): Ray Getliffe and Lorna stand beside a plaque at the John Labatt Centre following his induction into the London Sports Hall of Fame. Ray was an NHL player who is credited giving "Rocket Richard" his famous nickname



(Left) Ross Doddington (our Bass soloist) makes sure the organ pipes are tuned properly. Doddington and Doddington have serviced the organ for many years.



David McKane (left) and Ted Kostecki (right) pose with United Church Moderator Rev. Peter Short on his visit to Middlesex Presbytery in October.



Sonya Gustafson (our soprano soloist) with Oliver Whitehead and Friends following the "United In Jazz" concert at FSA in November

(Right) Ina Cavers celebrates her 96th birthday during a break in the Thursday morning Bible Study. (Below right) A week later, she met John Spong.



It was Ina who suggested to David McKane, when he began at FSA, that he should try to get Spong to speak here. He did..



(Left): Each year, Jean and Bill Knowles organized a lunch at a Habitat Build on behalf of First-St. Andrew's. This one was in south London and lunch fixings were provided by members of FSA.



(Left): Ann McPhail works on a portion of the Christmas Tree. Her job was to "fluff" the branches, while Graham Wagner (right) describes the tree that got away: "It was this big".



Changes...

**First-St. Andrew's United Church:
a Christian Family encouraging spiritual
growth through worship, friendship, learning
and action**

NEW MEMBERS

"We pray for God's Power to help you do all the good things that you hope to do and that your faith makes you want to do."

Glenda Baldwin
Scott Boorman & Rachel Conron, daughter Kayla
Julie Gray
Carrie Lynn Scott
Chuck Travis
John & Joanne Vis
Ruth Anne Williamson

DEATHS

"Well done good and faithful servant."

October 2 - Luella Catherine Hawken
October 13 - Dorothy Lovell
October 13 - Walter Keith Cartwright

MARRIAGES

*"Love is always supportive, loyal, helpful and trusting.
Love never fails!"*

September 18 - Barbara Adams & Randolph Weir
November 5 - Heather Lindsay & Randy Sidebotham

BAPTISMS

"I will be with you always, even until the end of the world".

Abbie Eileen Cull, daughter of Jennifer Cull
Jade Dawne Xiang Hong Mahabir, daughter of Helen Mahabir

DON'T MAKE THOSE PLANNED GIFTS AT THE YEAR-END

By Ted Kostecki, Community Development Coordinator



With the Sound of those secular Christmas "giving" messages ringing in our ears this season, we also receive all sorts of requests from many charities for financial gifts. Joan Hart, a Gift Planning Officer for the United Church, has the following suggestions to help you avoid making "Planned Gifts" that you could later regret.

Hurried Gifts. Because of our hectic lives, we tend to put off things until we have the time. Before we know it, the calendar runs out and December 31 has arrived. We rush to complete a year-end gift to receive the tax advantages. In our haste, we can make serious mistakes, which may haunt us later.

Impulse Gifts. Beware of knee-jerk decisions. With all the crisis-related appeals we receive at year-end, it's easy to get caught up in the emotion of the moment. As Christians, we often want to and do respond with a generous gift.

As Christian Stewards of our resources, we would do well to slow down, temper our emotions with prudence, and plan our giving in a way that accomplishes the most good for all concerned. Impulse giving may be OK for pocket change, but not for major assets that make up the bulk of our estates. **Tax-Dumb Gifts.** The opposite of a tax-wise gift is a tax-dumb gift. If you transfer appreciated securities to the church, 25 percent of the capital gain is included in your return. If you cash them in and give the cash to the church, 50 percent of the capital gain needs to be included in your return.

By taking time to plan your gifts, you will experience the joy of giving that accompanies the thoughtful gifts we give to those we love at Christmas. You will also be satisfied both in what you give and how you give those "Planned Gifts" to areas of work you care about, without feeling rushed.

CARING CHRISTMAS GIFTS

By Barb Dalrymple



London Conference of the United Church has published an alternative Christmas gift catalogue. These gifts support projects in Mozambique, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands where London Conference personnel are working.

Here are some sample Caring Christmas gifts

JAMAICA

Coconuts in 5 years, 1 seedling: \$3.57
Food for the table, 1 chicken: \$6.68

MOZAMBIQUE

Single bed-sized mattress for a girls' school: \$50.00
Tree seedlings for reforestation and planting in school yards—
banana, citrus, mango: \$1.00 per seedling
A bicycle to get goods to and from market: \$75.00

Copies of the catalogue are on the tables outside the chapel and sanctuary. Please return them after you have done your shopping.

HARD WORK X 2= UCW FUNDRAISING

This year, the Rummage Sale and Bazaar were both within a two week period, making for a tough schedule. But, thanks to some dedicated volunteers, both came off without a hitch. Here are some snapshots of the two events

The Bazaar.....



.... and the Rummage Sale



KITCHENS AT FSA

By Jean Comfort

Everyone at First-St. Andrew's has taken part in an activity that required some use of the kitchen facilities. As have numerous visitors and guests. We often take this important area for granted. So, here's a short primer on the Kitchens at FSA.

How are they used?

For food preparation for us and others, by: The Supper Club, the UCW, Circle of Friends, Membership and Nurture Committee for New Members, Teen Group, Coffee and Conversation, congregational snacks and lunches after morning service, Burns' dinner, Advent and Lenten luncheons, post-concert and public event refreshments, Hospitality Meals, special celebrations to honour birthdays and anniversaries and other groups who use FSA facilities. Kitchens are busy, important places in the church.



Who is responsible for keeping them in good working condition?

Ideally, it is the responsibility of all of us who use them. There are some rules that must be followed:

Care must be taken in the use of the equipment. Stoves, refrigerators and freezers must be kept clean and old food disposed of. Care must be used with the coffee makers so that electrical cords are not frayed. Pots and Pans must be cleaned after being used.

Safety and cleanliness must be maintained at all times. Sanitary conditions must prevail

when preparing and cooking food. The area must be cleaned up after meals.

The Kitchen Helpers?

The UCW has oversight of the kitchens so that the use is controlled and, if necessary, supervised. But there are other people involved:

Rusty takes care of the floors and helps in other ways to keep the kitchens clean. Helena comes each month to check and clean the cupboards, stoves and refrigerators. Maureen keeps the UCW informed about the use of the kitchen,

And, of course, the Property Committee is essential to keep the equipment functioning well.

The care of the kitchens is a big job made easier if each of us shares the load.

Finally, there's the Kitchen Committee of the UCW, Jean Comfort and Liz Galbraith, whose task it is to oversee the kitchens at FSA.

P.S. Did you know that United Church Women have contributed thousands of dollars towards the cost of dishes, stoves, a dishwasher and other equipment, and that we continue to pay for care and supplies?

ONE MORE STEP

On Celebration Sunday, the message from David and Susan was "One more Step". On their way into church, Members of the congregation were asked for their shoes which were piled on the chancel steps (picture below). The footwear represented the shoes in which people in the congregation walk as they take "one more step" in their support of the church.



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

In November, we remembered the brave men and women who served in the forces during the First and Second World Wars and the Korean Conflict.



MISSION SUNDAY SERVICE:

In September, Reverend Stephen Mparinkok of Kenya participated in our Mission Sunday Service



FSA Program Guide

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2004-2005

WORSHIP

- Nov. 28 1st in Advent**
9:00 & 10:30am
Lessons & Carols
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Dec. 5 2nd in Advent**
9:00 & 10:30
Communion / White Gift Sunday
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Wed. Dec 8 Christmas Hope Service**
7:45 pm Chapel
- Dec. 12 Christmas Pageant. 3rd in Advent**
10:30 am only
“Night of the Stars”
- Dec. 19 4th in Advent**
9:00 and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve**
7:00 pm Family Service
10:00 pm Candlelight Communion
- Dec. 26 1st After Christmas**
10:30 am Only
Guest Preacher: Rick Bain
- Jan. 2 2nd After Christmas**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan. 9 The Baptism of the Lord**
9:00 am
10:30 am Baptism
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan. 16 2nd After Epiphany**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Communion
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- Jan. 23 3rd After Epiphany**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan. 30 4th After Epiphany**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Feb. 6 Last After Epiphany**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. David McKane

- Feb. 8 Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Tuesday)**
Feb. 9 Ash Wednesday
7:45 pm Labyrinth Service, Lower Hall
- Feb. 13 First in Lent**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Communion
Rev. Dr. David McKane
Annual Meeting
- Feb. 20 2nd in Lent**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- Feb. 27 3rd in Lent**
9:00 & 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. David McKane

MUSIC

As always, our Advent and Christmas services will be filled with the joyful sounds of the season as sung and played by our various music groups. This year, however, you can take these sounds and memories home with you when you purchase a copy (copies) of our new C.D. “*Christmas Is Love*”. For \$20.00 you will receive a double C.D.! One features our Senior Choir, The Laudamus Bells, The Joyful Singers, piano and flute, while the other consists of Christmas pieces played by Paul Merritt on our magnificent Casavant pipe organ. All proceeds above costs will go to the Church.

What better Christmas gift could you give this year than *Christmas Is Love*. Pick up your copy (copies) at Coffee and Conversation any Sunday in December or from Maureen in the Church office during the week.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS CAROL SERVICE

Our Senior choir will be one of the featured choirs at this annual musical service at Metropolitan United Church on Sunday, December 5, at 7:30 pm

THE LONDON CITADEL BAND’S “FESTIVAL OF CAROLS” CONCERT

Our Senior Choir has been invited again this year to participate in the Salvation Army Band’s *Festival of Carols* concert on **MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 at 7:30 pm**. The choir will sing some carols alone and will help to lead the massed singing at this free concert.

Music

AT FIRST-ST. ANDREW'S

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

TEENS IN TRANSIT (TNT)

For young people in grades 7 and 8. This group meets on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am in the Upper Room during the regular church school year.

Leader: Nancy Howard (289-0540)

TEEN CONFIRMATION CLASS

A new class of nine young people (below) began meeting this fall. Confirmation will take place in the spring.



YOUTH COUNCIL

The Youth Council meets every second Wednesday from 7:30 – 8:30 p.m. in the Upper Room. 24 Hour Fast for the Mission & Service Fund will take place on Fri. Dec. 3rd to Sat. Dec. 4th. Keep an eye on the Sunday church bulletin for other special events.

Advisors: Erin Linforth & Jordan Berard (657-0515)

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

All members of the congregation, regardless of previous Bible study exposure, are invited to take part in an hour long study on Sunday mornings, from 9 – 10 a.m., in an informal setting, with a very friendly group of persons, over coffee. We are currently exploring the Gospel of Matthew, this year's lectionary Gospel focus, with a view to understanding how one early church community struggled to frame their experience of God in the light of Jesus of Nazareth — as a prelude to our own efforts to find new meaning in our present time.

Facilitator: Dr. Jo Ann Silcox (642-2152)

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

10 am in the Parlour. This popular lectionary Bible Study group is guaranteed to make you laugh and help you grow in your Christian faith. Why not join us?

We don't meet in December, but we begin again on Jan. 6th 2005.

Facilitator: Susan Shelstad (679-8182)

FRIDAY

ADVENT NOON RECITALS

12:00—12:30 luncheon (\$5.00) served following

- December 3** Brenda Joyce, *piano*
Brian Joyce, *double bass*
- December 10** Paul Merritt, *organ*
- December 17** The Laudamus Bells
Barbara Plante, *Conductor*

CHRISTMAS MOODS

Tuesday, December 7th, 2004 at 7:30 pm

The London Concert Band

Bob Kennedy, Conductor

Guests: *London Men of Accord Chorus*

Admission \$7.00 and \$5.00 students/seniors

A TASTE OF BURNS

Heathered Songs & Scottish Fare

Saturday, January 22 at 6:00 pm

with Pipes, Haggis, Supper and Entertainment by
"HAGGIS STEW". Supper catered by The Grosvenor Club.

"Immortal Memory"

David McKane as Robbie Burns

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CRADLE ROLL

A kit called *Growing in God's Love* is sent to families with a new baby to help celebrate important events to age 3.

Coordinator: Martha Bere (641-6947)

NURSERY

Our nursery is available at both services for infants to two years. The nursery room is next door to the Chapel on the main floor.

Coordinator: Judy Cull

CHURCH SCHOOL

Christmas Pageant "Night of the Stars" – Sunday, Dec. 12th during the 10:30 a.m. service.

Check out the Children's Library off the Fireside Room!

Church School Coordinators: Chris and Monique Silcox (293-3960)



PASTORAL CARE

In addition to the pastoral care provided by David McKane and Susan Shelstad, members of our congregation reach out to others in a variety of ways.

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

This group is for those who find themselves in the role of caregiver, and who are feeling a bit overwhelmed. Please contact Heather Bedford (685-1714) or JoAnn Silcox (642-2152) for further details.

CONGREGATIONAL VISITING TEAM

Our Congregational Visiting Team comprises members of our congregation who offer ongoing support to our shut-ins. We have a visiting team of 30 who maintain contact with the members of our congregation on a regular basis, and especially at birthdays and holiday times. If you are interested in becoming involved in this very rewarding experience, please call David McKane (679-8182)

PRAYER CHAIN

Do you need prayers for yourself or others? Call Maureen at the office (679-8182) and the name or concern will be passed through the prayer chain. First names only will be used unless permission is granted to use the full name. Confidentiality will be respected.

COUNSELLING TEAM

There is a counselling service available to FSA members staffed voluntarily by the following: Kerry Hill, a management consultant and career counsellor, Ardath Finnbogason-Hill, a nurse-educator with considerable experience in personal counselling, and Jo Ann Silcox, a psychiatrist, work as a team to provide initial assessment and follow-through counselling for individuals, couples, families or groups facing personal transitional crises. Referrals may be made through Ardath Hill at 657-3000.

RIDES FOR SENIORS

If you need a ride to and from church and/or church events, please call Helen and Bill Cockshutt (858-9454).

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Every Sunday, following our 9 am and 10:30 am worship services, the congregation is invited to remain for refreshment and the deepening of friendship. This is an opportunity for each person to make contact and share his/her journey as a valued individual within our community of faith. Volunteers are needed to make and serve coffee and to clean up.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION

A Baptismal preparation session is held prior to every Baptism (usually the Thursday evening) to prepare the parents who are bringing their children for Baptism. We explore the meaning of Baptism, and prepare for the Sunday service. Our next baptism is January 9. Call the church office if interested. (679-8182).

DREAM GROUP

Come and discover the amazing world of your dreams. We meet usually on the last Friday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Parlour. There is no meeting in December. For more information, contact Anne Cunningham (433-9663) or Susan Shelstad (679-8182).

LABYRINTH WALK

Our Advent walk will be on Sunday, November 28th at 7 p.m. in the Lower Hall.



SPIRITUALITY ON TAP

An informal evening of a movie and discussion about faith in a pub setting. The movie is at Rainbow Cinemas. The pub is the Elephant & Castle.

Both are at Galleria Mall. Watch the announcement insert for dates, movies and times.

COMING SOON FROM THE CD COMMITTEE:

*A closer look at The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown. We'll explore some of the interesting topics included in this bestselling mystery novel.

Wed. Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 2, 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the Chapel.



OTHER CD NOTES

LIBRARY

Our church library contains many wonderful things — good books for all ages, videos, and periodicals — all for your use. Come in and check us out! New material arriving all the time.

CD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Donations to this fund are used to help children, young people and adults attend programs and events such as youth retreats, camp, and Conference events. The fund is currently depleted after sending several children to camps this summer. Your help is appreciated.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Stewardship Mission Outreach is involved in the Hospitality Meals, preparing baby layettes, organizing food collection for the Youth Action Centre and St. Paul's Daily Bread, actively supporting the ELUCOC in special projects, working with St. Marys United Church in support of the Canadian Food Grains Bank, and occupying a chair on their board, sending two members to the LIFT Council meetings and more.

HOSPITALITY MEALS

This program runs year round on Mondays, 5:30 p.m. providing hospitality meals for more than 100 persons. One hundred or more volunteers have been involved, many of them from other churches. For information, contact Tom and Shirly Wynne at 474-4768, or the church office, 679-8182

FOOD BANK CONTRIBUTIONS

Please keep in mind the Committee's food collection for St. Paul's DAILY BREAD. Baby food is also a special need and may be left at any time. Baskets are placed at the entrance of the Chapel, and Narthex and Atrium entrances of the Sanctuary where you may leave your donations. Financial contributions are also welcome. Thank you for helping others!

GROW-A-ROW PROJECT

Over the past five years, money has been provided for the Canadian Food Grains Program through the efforts of St. Marys United Church and FSA. Donations are matched 4:1 by CIDA. This summer, the project used a farm outside London owned by Tom McLarty. The amount raised by FSA members this year was just over \$4,000. During the past several years, members of FSA and St. Marys United have donated more than \$84,000 to the Grow-A-Row project and when matched by the government, that means



\$420,000 worth of food was shipped to countries where the need is high. The two pictures on the left are of Reverend Stephen Mparinkok from Kenya. Stephen participated in our special Mission Sunday service. He also had a chance to visit the site of this year's growing operation near Lucan.

FRIENDSHIP & LEARNING GROUPS

FSA SUPPER CLUB (FORMERLY BIFOCALS)

The newly renamed Supper Club meets for Pot Luck and Entertainment, fellowship and varied programs. January 25 will feature Guests Deanne and David Peterson on "It's All About Relationships". On February 25, it's "Cards and Games Night" with court whist, bridge, euchre or your choice of games. March 23rd will feature "The True North Strong and Free" an armchair trip across Canada presented by Gib Cole. The season concludes on April 26th with "Let There Be Light-The Canadian Light Source" with Dr. Mike Bancroft. New members and guests are always welcome. Call Shirley Wynne, 474-4788, or June McKay, 471-5668, for information.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

All persons twenty and over who enjoy fun are invited to join with the Circle of Friends. Look for information in the weekly bulletin. Contact Ann MacPhail for more information at 645-8867.



This year, member of the Circle of Friends erected and decorated the Christmas Tree in the Sanctuary. The tree was a gift last year from the UCW. The tree is decorated with more than 3,000 little bulbs.

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

The purpose of the UCW is to unite women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and to provide a medium through which we may express our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. First-St. Andrew's has three units meeting monthly as follows:

The first Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the church parlour

The second Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. at 1 Grosvenor Gate

The third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the church parlour

New members are always welcome.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Marathon Bridge Group has started its season under the coordination of Jim and Jean Young.

A FINAL WORD

Christmas, Advent and Epiphany 2004-2005

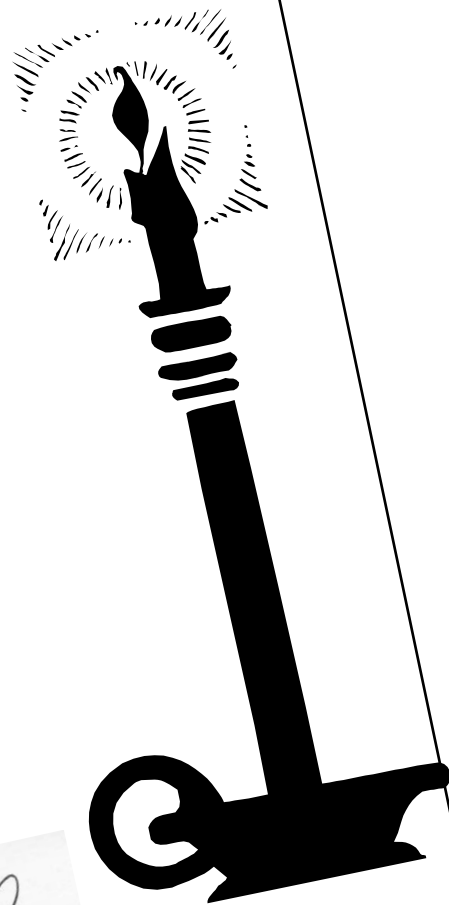
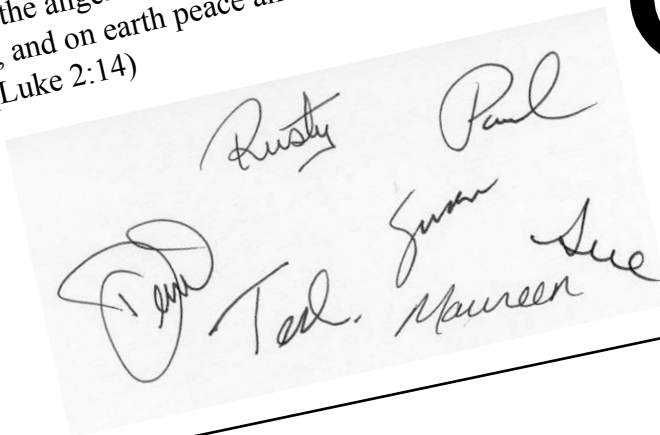


Christmas time is a remarkable time at First-St. Andrew's.

There is nothing quite so amazing as walking into the sanctuary on Christmas Eve, seeing that big tree all lit up in the corner, and the lights and decorations in the chancel and the windows. There's a feeling that something special is happening.

On Christmas Eve, the family service is special because our children are there... wide-eyed and wide-awake in anticipation of Christmas Day. And the traditional candlelight communion service with its special music always fills us with the deep joy of Christmas.

It is in gathering around Jesus at the moment of his birth that enter the realm of true joy and sing the song of the ages that the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" (Luke 2:14)



First-St. Andrew's Ministry
Rev. Dr. David McKane: Minister of Worship and Administration
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad: Minister of Christian Development
Paul Merritt: Director of Music
Ted Kostecki: Community Development Coordinator
Sue Scorgie: Church Administrator
Maureen Scarborough: Secretary/Receptionist
Rusty Robertson: Custodian