

The Rock

"You are Peter and on this Rock I will build my church" Matthew 16-18

The online voice of St. Peter's Anglican Church
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"And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the **good news** to them." Luke 3:18



The Scene of The Nativity in front of St. Peter's in CBS. It is set up every year by Mr. Merv Rideout and Family – with our sincere appreciation and thanks!

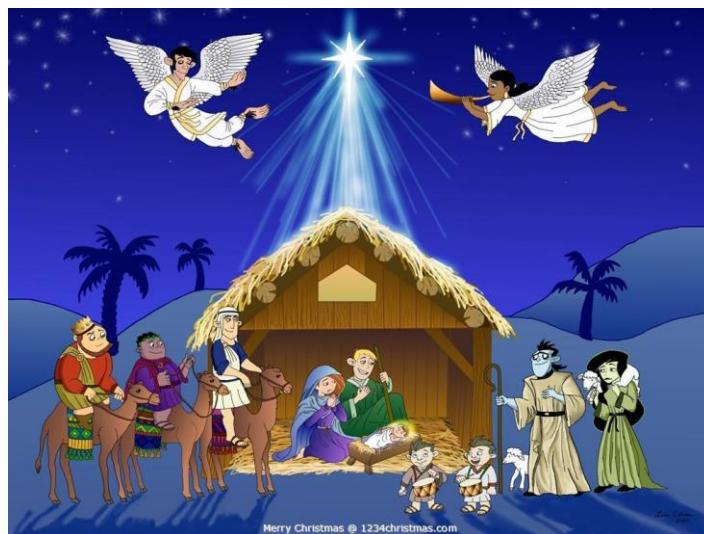
From the Editor's Desk

My Memories, Christmas and my Thanks

We all know this time of year can be busy, rewarding and sometimes overwhelming. Many are busy in the hustle and bustle of securing 'presents' to give loved ones and friends, even to the point of overspending. We are all victims to wanting the best for family and sometimes overlook how this 'season' of Christmas came about.

As a child, I remember the excitement of 'Santa' and the gifts under the tree on Christmas morning. I must admit, God hardly came to mind. I generally attended Church on Christmas Eve as force of habit or protocol – the thing to do - and not really to worship and give thanks for the new born King. I didn't really know what that was all about.

As I grew older, the out-of-focus Christmas picture started to come a little clearer, especially when 'the story' was thought in school (not anymore). Each year, leading up to the big day, our teacher would explain (I now know this process as the season of Advent) how the birth was about to happen - how Mary and Joseph looked for a room at the Inn and were eventually lodged in a barn – and then the greatest story ever, began to unfold. I am grateful for those teachings in School.



I have fond memories of the Christmas celebrations – the memories of the smell of freshly baked cakes and cookies still permeate my nostrils. The Christmas turkey and all the vegetables and peas pudding and salt meat and mother's 'duff.' My mind tells me nothing will ever smell or taste so good again. In the days to follow there were hot and cold turkey sandwiches and finally a healthy pot of soup!! Oh my, the memories!!

I remember the visitors - family and friends and sometimes strangers. Many would visit around the neighbourhood in search of good natured hosts willing to give up a slice of fruit cake or even a libation of their favourite cheer.

Most of all I remember the joy, peace, happiness and kindness that come with the season of Christmas.

I can relate much of that joy, peace, happiness and kindness to my time here at St. Peter's. I came into the job of Office Administrator 9 months ago and to say I have been warmly welcomed would be an understatement. You have been very patient with me, you have offered constructive suggestions, physical help and kind-hearted comments.

I don't know if I am the first man in the diocese to fill an Anglican Church role as Office Administrator, but I can safely say there are very few. I inwardly grinned a few times when people would call or visit and ask for the 'new secretary,' and how surprised they were that it was me, a **man**.

I am very humbled and grateful by your kindness to me, and it is never more evident than during this Christmas season. Thank you one and all for accepting and guiding me during the past 9 months, and I look forward to working with the greatest crowd around for some time to come.

To Rev. Jean, our rector, I continue to pray for your full recovery and look forward to your return to St. Peter's. Many thanks to Rev. Letto for his guidance and support during our rector's absence. We are lucky to have you!!

I also pray for our Deacon, Rev. Bonnie as she continues to recuperate from recent illness.

A sincere and heartfelt Merry Christmas to you all and best wishes for a happy and peace filled new year, and yes, **God Bless You All!!!**

“We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers.”
(1 Thessalonians 1:2)

Jack

Heroes of St. Peter's

ICROSS

(International Community for the Relief of Suffering and Starvation)

St. Peter's sets record in donating *Boomer Caps and Izzy Dolls*

By: Mabel White

This International Organization is a not for profit charity, run solely by volunteers to assist the poorest of the poor in countries such as: Ukraine, Afghanistan, Libya, and the Congo. The aim of ICROSS Canada is to gather and ship by our Peace Keepers, life saving medical supplies as well as Boomer Caps and Izzy Dolls to orphanages, and children suffering from HIV or living in deplorable conditions.

St. Peter's became a member of this wonderful organization in 2010. Our church family and friends have been donating wool and knitting Boomer Caps and Izzy Dolls since that time.

The Izzy Dolls were created by **Master Corporal Mark (Izzy) Isfelct's** mother who would send them over to her son (a Canadian Peace Keeper) and Mark would then hand out the dolls to children who had nothing. Mark was killed in 1994, but his one request was that the dolls keep being made and given to the children.

The Boomer Caps is named in remembrance of **Corporal Andrew James**

Eykelenboom, a Canadian military medic who was killed in 2006 in Afghanistan. He was known by his friends as "Boomer" and Boomer's legacy has continued by the knitting and distribution of the *Boomer Caps*.

The caps and dolls are blessed after they are knitted and picked up by John Metcalfe (a retired Peace Keeper) from Clarenville. He boxes them up and posts them to the Head Office of the Peace Keepers in British Columbia. The boxes are then boarded on the ships with the Peace Keepers going to the third world countries. Finally, they are distributed to the underprivileged children there.

The ladies of St. Peter's, with help from some ladies from outside the parish, have sent **22,881** caps and dolls, which I might mention is the largest amount received then by any other individual church. These caps and dolls have brought so many smiles to so many children. It has been a privilege and honor to be able to help in this worthwhile endeavour.

"The needy will not be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted perish." Psalms 9:19



Some of the Boomer Caps and Izzy Dolls on display before being shipped overseas.

From our Rector, Rev. Jean

Christmas Message 2017

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Christmas is the sacred celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, the Messiah and light of the world. It is a time when we are reminded of the greatest gift of all- the gift of love! We are also reminded of our need for this wonderful gift of love- a gift that lightens our darkness and heals our brokenness. “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.” (Isaiah 9:2).

Our world today certainly seems to be walking in darkness with so much injustice, violence and suffering. We, like the people of long ago, desperately need the light of Christ to extinguish the darkness and dawn a world of unconditional love and hope, and; a world of justice and peace. May each of us strive for this in our lives and may we be the beacons of God’s love and hope in our world.

I wish you and your families a very blessed Christmas! May this truly be a time of peace, love and joy for each of you. Take time for the simple things in life, for there you will find the gifts and the spirit of Christmas! My hope and my prayer for each of you is that 2018 will bring you an abundance of health and happiness!

At this time, I would also like to say Thank-you to each and every one of you. As many of you know, I have been recovering from an illness over the last several months. Many of you have been beacons of God’s love and light to me through your compassion, love and support. I am truly humbled and grateful.

I would like to leave you with a blessing that is printed with permission by the author John Birch:

May this eternal truth be always on our hearts
That the God who breathed this world into being
Placed stars into the heavens
And designed a butterfly's wing
Is the God who entrusted his son
to the care of ordinary people

became vulnerable that we might know
how strong is the wonder of Love
A mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp
A mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore.

Peace
Rev. Jean

Rev. Letto Writes.....

Christmas Message from St. Peter's Interim Administrator

“She gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger.” (*Luke 2:7*) That was 2000 years ago — a birth that changed the world. It's a birth that is eulogized in scripture, art, poetry, song and theology. It's the particular event that at the centre of this marvelous celebration that touches not only Christians but many people of other religions and no religion. Our world would be a much bleaker place if we didn't have an event like Christmas that brings out the best in the meanest of us.

Jesus' crib was the feeding bin of animals, but he had the most important thing that any child needs. Mary may have been only 14 or 15, but she believed her child was the most important person in the world. Joseph may not have been his real father, but he risked his life to protect Jesus from the cruel hatred of Herod. Surely, this helped Jesus learn how to turn the other cheek and reach out with respect and love to people his culture often despised.

“There was no place for them in the inn.” There's not much room for many children born this Christmas in refugee camps and homes threatened by terrorism.

Many of them will not live to grow up. But some will experience sparks of kindness in the rubble and turmoil of their lives and become advocates for peace and justice.

Sometimes you may feel as if *there is no place* for you where you work or even among the people you call your family. As you reflect on the meaning of Christmas, may you feel encouraged by the love and grace of God that is at the heart of Christmas. God doesn't promise any of us a life without disappointments and loss. But God does promise to be a light in the darkness, a spring in the desert and a companion who walks with us in difficult times.

This is faith. This is what Jesus came to offer people. This is what the church has to offer you today. This is God's gift to you. Accept it. Nurture it. And like Jesus, may you find in it the strength and courage you need to be a loving and giving person.
Merry Christmas.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Irving Letto".

Rev. Irving Letto