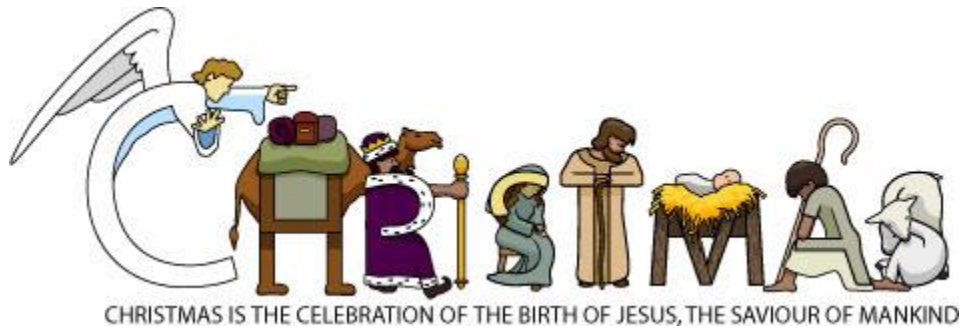


The Parish Light

Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter December 2016



Greetings from Rev. David Greenwood, Interim-Priest-in-Charge

As we approach the season of Advent and Christmas, may you be truly blessed.

Christmas is an interesting season in the church -- while in society it has become a very big thing, with many retailers utterly dependent upon the season to be viable or not, in the Christian year Christmas does not stand on its own.

In Christmas, yes, we celebrate the birth of Christ -- and the intrusion into history of our Lord is, indeed, a big thing. But it was not through the birth of Christ that we received salvation -- rather, it was through His death on the cross, and subsequent resurrection.

Therefore, the true power of Christmas is that it is a promise, a foreshadowing if you will, of our deliverance at the hand of God -- a deliverance which we remember in Good Friday, and celebrate in the feast of all feasts, Easter.

This Advent season, I encourage you to look forward to Christmas and all it entails (my favourite hymns are the Christmas hymns, speaking as they do of God's redeeming love come to earth for us, and with their joy-filled tunes) -- I pray it is a time of joy and peace for you. I pray also, that it is a time in which you can look past Christmas and with a grateful heart, acknowledge what the birth of Christ was the necessary first step towards: your salvation through the free gift of God.

May you be filled with the Father's love, surrounded by the Holy Spirit's presence, and given the delighted hand of Christ in your hand as you walk with Him, this holy season. I also want to thank all of you who have warmly welcomed me into your lives, and I look forward to meeting all those who I have not yet have the privilege of as of yet. Your caring welcome has made my coming here much easier, and very much a blessing -- I am having fun and that is directly due to your care and companionship.

May God bless you richly.

Merry Christmas.



The Optimistic Farmer

C is for the Christ child

..... and for the cows that didn't go to the auction, but maybe NEXT YEAR

H is for Holly

..... and for the hay that the grasshoppers ate, but maybe we'll get a crop NEXT YEAR

R is for Reindeer

..... and for the rain that we hope will come NEXT YEAR

I is for the Icicles

..... and for the insurance for our crops that we'll take out for sure NEXT YEAR

S is for the Star

..... and for the snow and cold that we go out to feed our animals, but spring will come again NEXT YEAR

T is for the Christmas Tree

..... and for the new tractor we are dreaming about getting, maybe NEXT YEAR

M is for the money that we are all short of, but it is bound to be better NEXT YEAR

A is for Angels

..... and for the alfalfa seed that will maybe germinate NEXT YEAR

S is for Santa

..... and we hope that Santa will be good to us so we will still be farming NEXT YEAR !



UNDERSTANDING CHURCH POSITIONS

Priest-in-Charge or Incumbent (or Rector): The Priest-in-Charge is the Bishop's local Parish representative. The Priest-in-Charge is responsible for the care of the people in their Parish. These responsibilities include:

- Leading public worship and administration of sacraments
- Exercising and enabling Pastoral care
- Facilitating Christian spiritual development and fostering discipleship
- Assisting the church to discern and pursue its part in God's mission of justice, peace and love in the world
- Exercising leadership in the councils of the Parish
- Overseeing administration of the church's ministries and management of its ministry resources
- Engaging in continuing education, personal spiritual and professional development

The Ordination Rite for a Priest contains these words:

“As a priest, it will be your task to proclaim by word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to fashion your life in accordance with its precepts. You are to love and serve the people among whom you work, caring alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. You are to preach, to declare God’s forgiveness to penitent sinners, to pronounce God’s blessing, to preside at the administration of holy baptism and at the celebration of the mysteries of Christ’s body and blood, and to perform the other ministrations entrusted to you. In all that you do, you are to nourish Christ’s people from the riches of his grace, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.”

Associate Priest: The Associate Priest has a similar background and training as the Priest-in-Charge, though they likely have different skills and capabilities. They assist the Priest-in-Charge to exercise all their duties to the fullest.

Deacon: The Deacon has a specifically Pastoral ministry. They are to care for all in need (whether in the church or out of it), particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely. They may teach the members of the church in its traditions, beliefs, and customs. They are to teach the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world, and show the world the care and love of the Church. They assist the Priest in public worship and in providing of God's word and sacraments. As such they frequently read the Gospel in worship, and may take Reserved Sacrament to those who cannot make it to public worship. They may facilitate or lead the Prayers of the People, bringing the concerns of the world to the people of the Church.

Wardens:

The **Peoples' Warden** shall be elected at the annual parish meeting or special meeting of the congregation. As an officer of the parish, the peoples' warden is the chief representative of the parishioners. Duties are a special interest in the well-being of the parish, representing the congregation in bringing up issues and concerns with the Incumbent, and as indicated below.

The **Rector's Warden** is appointed by the Incumbent, previous to the election of the Peoples' Warden. Duties shall be as a consultant and confidant to the rector and as indicated below.

1. Wardens, along with the clergy, are responsible for taking a leading role in ensuring that, to the greatest degree possible, the local parish
 - is effectively managed
 - provides a high level of spiritual and pastoral care
 - pursues the mission of the church.
2. Wardens have diocesan responsibilities including ensuring that the constitution, canons, regulations of the diocese and the bylaws of the parish are adhered to within the parish. The peoples' warden (as chosen by the Parish Council) is an ex-officio member of synod and therefore is the communications

officer for the parish. The parish rector's warden receives clergy mailings when the parish is without licensed clergy.

3. Wardens serve as advisors and confidants to the rector on a regular basis. They may also on occasion be required to fulfill the same role with the bishop in relationship to the parish.
4. The wardens along with the treasurer are the signing officers for the parish.

The Diocese of Edmonton has a useful web page about Wardens:

<http://edmonton.anglican.org/category/resources/wardens-handbook/>

Parish Councils

1. The incumbent of the parish and the wardens are ex-officio members of the parish council.
2. The council shall have such authority as according to its charter issued by the Bishop, with the terms of its organization that have been agreed upon, especially the authority and responsibilities between vestry and parish council; and such authority as agreed-to by the Parish Vestries.
3. The council shall elect one of the peoples' wardens as their ex-officio member of synod.

Parish Vestry

1. The vestry shall consist of elected parish members, the incumbent, other clergy licensed to the parish, wardens, and deputy wardens, if any.
2. The vestry shall be responsible for carrying out the administration of the parish on behalf of the congregation and for providing the necessities for the worship and work of the parish.

Parish Membership

Each parish shall maintain a parish roll of all individuals who:

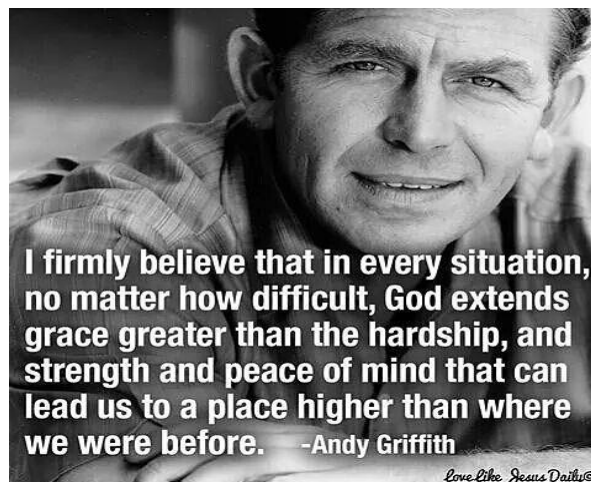
1. are baptized
2. identify with the Church
3. demonstrate genuine interest in the parish.

Everyone on the parish roll fourteen (14) years of age and over shall be considered a registered parish member.

Active members of the congregation attend public worship, receiving communion on a regular basis, and live a lifestyle consistent with that expected of a practicing Christian.

God bless you all;

- David



Our Christmas Prayer

God grant you peace at Christmas and fill your heart with cheer;
God grant you health and happiness throughout the coming year.

God guide you with his wisdom and keep you in his care;
This is our special wish to you – this is our Christmas prayer



Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve Services:

St Thomas, Perryvale 9:00 am
Christ Church, Wandering River 1:30 pm
St Andrew's Zion, Colinton 5:00 pm
St Paul's, Boyle 7:00 pm

***** There will be no services on Christmas Day *****



Annual General Meetings:

St Thomas, Perryvale January 7th, 2017 at 11:00 am
St Andrew's Zion, Colinton January 8th directly after church

Christ Church, Wandering River January 13th, 2017 at 11:00 am
St Paul's, Boyle January 15th, directly after church

PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, ST PAUL'S BOYLE (5TH Sunday)
..... directly after church service

- Parish Council will meet on Jan 14th at 2:00 pm in St Paul's, Boyle
- St Andrew's Zion Annual Christmas Concert – Wednesday, December 21st at 6:00 pm
- All Saint's Carols & Lessons Service – Thursday, December 22nd at 7:00 pm

The Christmas Pageant

My husband and I had been happily married (most of the time) for five years, but hadn't been blessed with a baby. I decided to do some serious praying and promised God that if he would give us a child, I would be a perfect mother, love it with all my heart and raise it with His word as my guide.

God answered by prayers and blessed us with a son. The following year, He blessed us with yet another son. The year after that, we were blessed with a daughter.

My husband thought we'd been blessed right into poverty. We now had four children, and the oldest was only four years old. I learned never to ask God for anything unless I meant it. As a minister once told me, "If you pray for rain, make sure you carry an umbrella." I began reading a few verses of the Bible to the children each day as they lay in their cribs. I was off to a good start. God had entrusted me with four children and I didn't want to disappoint Him. I tried to be patient the day the children smashed two dozen eggs on the kitchen floor searching for baby chicks. I tried to be understanding when they started a hotel for homeless frogs in the spare bedroom, although it took me nearly two hours to catch all twenty-three frogs.

When my daughter poured ketchup all over herself and rolled up in a blanket to see how it felt to be a hot dog, I tried to see the humor rather than the mess.

In spite of changing over twenty-five thousand diapers, never eating a hot meal and never sleeping for more than thirty minutes at a time, I still thank God daily for my children. While I couldn't keep my promise to be a perfect mother, I didn't even come close. I did keep my promise to raise them in the Word of God.

I knew I was missing the mark just a little when I told my daughter we were going to church to worship God, and she wanted to bring a bar of soap along to "wash up" Jesus too. Something was lost in the translation when I explained that God gave us everlasting life, and my son thought it was generous of God to give us his "last wife".

My proudest moment came during the children's Christmas pageant. My daughter was playing Mary, two of my sons were shepherds and my youngest son was a wise man. This was their moment to shine. My five-year-old shepherd had practiced his line, "We found the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes." But he was nervous and said, "The baby was wrapped in wrinkles clothes."

My four-year-old "Mary" said, "That's not wrinkled clothes, 'silly. That's dirty rotten clothes.'" A wrestling match broke out between Mary and the shepherd and was stopped by an angel, who bent her halo and lost her left wing.

I slouched a little lower in my seat when Mary dropped the doll representing Baby Jesus, and it bounced down the aisle crying, "Mama-mama." Mary grabbed the doll, wrapped it back up and held it tightly as the wise men arrived.

My other son stepped forward wearing a bathrobe and a paper crown, knelt at the manger and announced, "We are the three wise men and we are bringing gifts of gold, common sense, and fur."

The congregation dissolved into laughter, and the pageant got a standing ovation.

"I've never enjoyed a Christmas program as much as this one," laughed the pastor, wiping tears from his eyes. "For the rest of my life, I'll never hear the Christmas story without thinking of gold, common sense, and fur."

"My children are my pride and my joy and my greatest blessing," I said as I dug through my purse for an aspirin.