

The Parish Light

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter January 2016



ANOTHER YEAR IS DAWNING

Another year is dawning, Dear Father, let it be,
In working or in waiting, another year with thee.
Another year of progress, another year of praise.
Another year of proving thy presence all the days.
Another year of miracles, of faithfulness and grace,
Another year of gladness, the glory of thy face.
Another year of leaning upon thy loving breast,
Another year of trusting, of quiet, happy rest.
Another year of service, of witness for thy love,
Another year of training for holier work above.
Another year is dawning, Dear Father, let it be,
On earth, or else in heaven, another year for thee.

----- Frances R, Havergal

No one can believe how powerful prayer is and what it can effect, except those who have learned it by experience.
.....*Martin Luther*

Connected By Love

Well, here we are at the 2nd day of Christmas. Have you received two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree? I guess what I really want to say is that my prayer for each of you is that you will truly receive everything that God knows you need for Christmas. If you didn't unwrap it on Christmas day, there is still time. The Christmas season starts Dec. 25th and ends with that wonderful day – Epiphany.

The trick is that we have to be willing to receive the gifts that God has for us, whatever those gifts turn out to be. As I'm writing this I am listening to one of my favorite CDs; The Tenors – The Perfect Gift. I believe that the perfect and greatest gift is the gift of love that God has for each of us. That is the relationship of love; freely offered, freely given.

That love does not come and stay one day. Love came down at Christmas and it is here to stay. I pray that each of you will receive that love and then share it with the world around you. I know that Christmas can be an extremely tough time for many people especially as the culture around us pressures us to be involved and preoccupied with “stuff”. We think we need to have or get or give things. Yet when our hearts truly understand the incredible gift of love that God has given to us, and we are willing to receive that gift of love, we are then able to have or get or give love.

It is that love that we desperately need to pull into focus to rule our lives as individuals and as family units. It is also that love we must use to guide and rule in our corporate life as a parish. One of the ways in which we demonstrate that love is in our willingness to reach out locally and across the world. I am so delighted that the parish is sponsoring a refugee family. If in some way you haven't heard that exciting news – St Andrew's Zion in Colinton has taken the lead on this for us and is named as the lead contact with the Canadian Lutheran World Relief who is our Sponsorship Agreement Holder. I'm hoping that there will be an article elsewhere in the newsletter or on our parish website, www.paritynorthernlights.org. But if not, feel free to contact the committee: Henrik Asfeldt, Brian Hall, LeRoy Overacker or our deacon Rev. Bill Creaser.

We are entering that busy time of annual general meetings for each of our congregations and for the parish. Where is God calling you to serve? Please give this some prayerful thought as it is important to the ongoing life of the parish that we have committed people willing to share their talents God has given them for the purpose of sharing, not for the purpose of hiding the gift. In addition to AGMs, there is the Epiphany Celebration on January 6th at Perryvale and then at the end of the month, Terry Leer will be here – January 29 – 31st and will be leading sessions on prayer. He will also lead the fifth Sunday service at St Paul's at 11:00 am.

THANK YOU!!! to so many of you from our whole family. So many of you gave us wonderful gifts of food, items and money. We are blessed beyond measure by your generous thoughtfulness. Eric and Lydia especially appreciate the gifts of goodies that they got since I don't make any.

Every blessing to each of you.

Lesley

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## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

January 10<sup>th</sup> – St Andrew's Zion Church, Colinton

January 17<sup>th</sup> – St Paul's Church, Boyle

January 24<sup>th</sup> – St Thomas Church, Perryvale

February 7<sup>th</sup> – Christ Church, Wandering River

**February 14<sup>th</sup>, Parish Annual Meeting, St Paul's, Boyle**

**Your** attendance at your church's Annual General Meeting is important –

**your** feedback **is** important – **you** are encouraged to attend.

**Your** presence at the Parish Annual General Meeting is crucial to the ongoing life of our Parish.

Please be thinking of what your hopes and dreams are for your congregation and for our Parish.

**Where is God leading us?**



January 6<sup>th</sup> - Epiphany Celebration on at Perryvale – 6 pm – supper will be served.

January 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> – Rev. Terry Leer will be leading sessions on prayer at St Paul's

.....more information will be available to each church

January 31<sup>st</sup> – Fifth Sunday – St Paul's Boyle – 11 am – pot luck follows

## **COMMUNITY GROUP TO SPONSOR SYRIAN REFUGEE**

COLINTON, AB, December 31, 2015– The congregations of St. Andrew's Anglican / Zion Lutheran have undertaken to lead a community based sponsorship of a Syrian refugee family into the Athabasca community.

*“We know there is tremendous interest in the community to reach out to these families in need, yet we have also heard people express they don't know where to go, who to contact or how to help. We see the role of our congregations as providing a focus and leadership for a broader community effort.” – Henrik Asfeldt – Committee Chair*

There are many ways for community members to be involved. With Private Sponsorship, the sponsoring group is responsible for all material and financial support of the refugee(s) in addition to community orientation, settlement and emotional support during the sponsorship period. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for mid-January, community members are invited to attend learn how they can become involved in changing a life.

The application process and other planning have already started, there is a role for the community, and all those who feel compelled to act are welcome to participate. The selection of a family is expected to take place

in January with the arrival of the refugees as early as possible following the administrative processing by the applicable Government and Sponsor Agreement Holder agencies.

*“The community’s involvement is key to the successful integration of new families” – The Rev. Bill Creaser*

It is our belief that we are called out of love and compassion to serve others and to practice hospitality. Through sponsorship we can contribute to some refugees securing a safe home in Canada, and Athabasca, in addition to those refugees settled by the government.

While some refugees are able to flee to a safe country where they are provided protection, for most of the world’s refugees there is no immediate solution and in some cases they will remain in camp situations for years, decades or even generations. Sponsorship has a direct impact on the lives of individuals in need.

Tax deductible donations for this purpose are being accepted.

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact

Henrik Asfledt (780-675-5248), Brian Hall (780-213-0776),

LeRoy Overacker (780-675-3083) or Rev. Bill Creaser (780-327-9975).

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### **WHAT IS LOVE?**

Love is an attitude – love is a prayer, for a soul in sorrow, a heart in despair;

Love is good wishes for the gain of another, love suffers long with the fault of a brother.

Love giveth water to a cup that’s run dry; love reaches low, as it can reach high;

Seeks not her own at expense of another;

Love reaches God when it reaches our brother

.....Author Unknown