

The Epiphany Star

Ain't that Good News

A whisper of grace landed in my ear, "You're going to have a baby boy, Mary! Now ain't that good news?"

But my mind captured every question overwhelming me, and only one found its way free. "How? Can this be?"

"Mary, don't you know? Nothing is impossible for God! Nothing!"

And that's the only reminder I needed. Somewhere inside of me something was breathing life into my faith and calling me to speak. These words came from the gut of my soul where joy and pain, laughter and tears, life and death are born. They came from a place where God's Spirit dwells.

And that soul smiled as these words journeyed from my mouth. "I am the Lord's. Let it be."

Ciona D. Rouse

A Message from the Archdeacon:

Dear Friends in Christ,

This comes to you all with my very best wishes for a Holy and Happy Advent and Christmas season. I give thanks for the privilege of serving as your Archdeacon, and for your faithfulness in the ministries to which you have been called.

I would like to thank my colleagues in ministry for their prayerful and practical support, and to those of you who have helped me learn the ropes along the way.

In my travels across the deanery I have been blessed to meet some truly special men and women who, very simply, love God and God's church, and give an enormous amount of their time, talent and money to grow God's kingdom in their corner of the vineyard. Our congregations are unique in every way, shape and form, yet the love of Christ connects us one to another. Please pray regularly for your sisters and brothers across our deanery as they continue in the work that lies before them.

December Services:

- December 4
- December 11
- December 18
- December 24
7 p.m. &
10 p.m.
- December 25
11 a.m.

Church of the Epiphany



In Luke 12, Jesus challenged His followers to sell their possessions and give to the poor.

"For where your treasure is there your heart will be also."
(v.34)

The way we spend our time and resources says a lot about our eternal perspective.

In the midst of the busyness of the house decorating, gift buying, card writing, party planning, and Christmas pageant and service organizing, I hope that it will also be a time of inner reflection.

As you look back on the past year with the new opportunities you were given, along with the challenges and changes to your personal and church life, may you find the hand of God there. I watched some of you wait anxiously for news of a new pastor, and saw you welcome that person in love and openness. I walked alongside others of you as you faced financial challenges, or looked for new ways to be church. We did not always understand what was happening, but we placed our trust in God, and God did not let us down. Give thanks for that.

I pray that this will also be a time of looking ahead with hope and expectation to the new year and all that God has in store for us. We never know, do we, how it will all work out? If we believe that God is already at work in ways

that we cannot even imagine, we can look forward to something new and exciting. Let us keep our eyes firmly fixed on Christ and those dreams might just become a reality.

The reflection above, by Ciona Rouse, spoke to me on so many levels. The Angel's words to Mary, "Don't you know, nothing is impossible with God! Nothing!" was the only reminder Mary needed to say "Yes" to God. Not knowing or understanding everything that lay ahead for her, she was still able to believe that God could see the big picture and that it would all work out.

May Mary's faith and trust in God give us faith to look out beyond the laughter and tears, the joy and the pain, the death and the life to that place where the Spirit of God dwells. And as we journey into the New Year may be, with Mary smile and say, "I am the Lord's, let it be."

Peace, Joy and Hope to you all!

Anne
The Ven. Anne Germond
(Archdeacon of
Sudbury/Manitoulin)

Definition of Epiphany

e·piph·a·ny/i'pifənē/

Noun

1. The manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi (Matthew 2:1–12).
2. The festival commemorating this on January 6.



Definition of Advent

ad·vent/'ad,vent/

Noun

1. The arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.
2. The first season of the church year, leading up to Christmas and including the four preceding Sundays.



Christmas Message: How Should We Wait?

In the weeks leading up to Advent, the Gospel lessons came from Matthew 25, where Jesus describes his followers conduct in his absence. First came the story of the 10 bridesmaids.

Perhaps you remember it. In the story, the bridegroom is delayed from attending the wedding reception and the party cannot begin until he arrives. Five bridesmaids have prepared for just this eventuality by bringing extra oil for their lamps; five have not. The five who were ready went with the bridegroom when he came; the five who were not, were not admitted to the party.

Then came the story of the talents, and the three servants—two of whom emulated their master’s abundance and generosity and one who, paralyzed by fear, did not. Taken together the stories emphasize watchfulness, preparedness, and activity. These are to define how we wait for the coming of the Lord.

But what does watchfulness, preparedness, and activity look like? We might know a little about what they look like for bridesmaids and for investors. But what do they look like for us? How are we to wait for the coming of the Lord? That is the question posed to us by Advent.

For Advent does simply look back, to the first Christmas; nor does it simply look ahead to this Christmas (or any future Christmas). It looks further ahead, to the coming of Jesus, whether we understand that coming in personal terms—when he comes for us at death—or cosmic terms—when he comes “to judge the living and the dead.” How should the followers of Jesus wait for his coming?

It is hard for us to hear this question surrounded as we are by the rush to Christmas. Christmas—the annual orgy of mass consumption as opposed to the Christian Feast of the Incarnation—continues to creep well out of Advent and into All Saints. It gets louder and longer each year. Each year, I have a little more sympathy for the Grinch atop Mount Crumpet, who tries in vain to stop Christmas from coming.

Each year, it’s easier to lose ourselves in the hectic helter skelter of trying to purchase just the right present for Aunt Aganetha or whomever. And we forget to wait. But today—especially in economic times that are difficult for so many people—followers of Jesus ought deliberately to step out of the frenzied and false happiness of the holidays and attend instead to Advent and its question.

So let’s hit the pause button. Over the next weeks, as we prepare our parish and our hearts for the coming of the Lord, let’s attend to Advent. Let’s re-learn the virtue of waiting.

Specifically, let’s sit with the Sunday lessons through the week when we can—whether over coffee in the morning or at bed time or at some point in between. Let’s allow them to seep into our souls. And as we pray, let’s ask God, “How should we, the followers of Jesus, wait for his coming?”

And let’s be specific about it. How should I, a follower of Jesus, wait for his coming? What does watchfulness, preparedness, and activity mean for me? As I wait, this Advent, what is Christ in Word and Sacrament calling me to do? We may well be surprised to find out just how particularly the Scriptures will speak to our situations when we take the time to wait. When we tune out all the Christmas noise and learn again to listen. **Tim+**

**Better Beginnings,
Better Futures
Volunteers are
needed to help
serve at their
community dinners.**

**Contact
Melissa Long at
705 671-1941,
ext 219**

A Prayer for Peace in Our World

*Make your ways known
upon earth, Lord God, your
saving power among all
peoples.*

*Renew your Church in
holiness and help us to
serve you with joy.*

*Guide the leaders of all
nations, that justice may
prevail throughout the
world.*

*Let not the needy be
forgotten, nor the hope of
the poor be taken away.*

*Make us instruments of
your peace and let your
glory be over all the earth.*

Amen

Prayer Chain: Rachel Prichard

The Church of the Epiphany has a prayer chain which has about 30 dedicated members who love to pray for you or your friends, family, coworkers – whomever.

We receive requests as needed and our duty is simply to pray.

All requests are confidential but must receive the permission of the person being prayed for.

If you would like to join us or to request prayer please contact me at hrprich@cyberbeach.net or 705-522-3297



2012 Preview

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, joined other faith leaders and representatives on a tour of the London 2012 Olympic Park.

The visit also marked the launch of the Faith pin badge, the fifth badge created to celebrate London 2012's six strands of diversity and engage all communities in supporting London 2012.

Reflecting on his visit with the other faith leaders, the Archbishop said: *'The Olympic site is a really impressive testimony to what can be achieved by a clear vision, working with sustainable materials and a long-term conviction about the common good. It is very encouraging to see how communities of faith are being drawn in to this great enterprise of celebration and regeneration.'*

Finance Committee

• Michael Kawa
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Prayer Chain

• Rachel Prichard
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Servers' Guild

• Patti Brace
• pbrace@sympatico.ca

Sidespersons

• Barb Bolton
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Sunrise House

• Robin Bolton
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Women's Bible Study

• Rachel Prichard
• hrprich@cyberbeach.net

YBTN

• Jan Buley
• Jan.Buley@gmail.com



**Anglican Church Women –
Diocese of Algoma**

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Anglican Church Women in the Diocese of Algoma is to unite all women in promoting the love of Christ with their time, talents and resources.



**Mission and Outreach
Book Sale**

January 28-29

**Donations are needed
Help is needed to sort
and sell the books.**

**Contact Barb Bolton
for details at
boltonrb@persona.ca**

Anglicans Working on the MDGs

The Millennium Development Goals are eight international development goals that all 192 United Nations member states and 23 international organizations agreed, in 2000, to achieve by 2015. Our Primate, the National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Archbishop of Canterbury have all encouraged our work to achieve these goals.



Excerpt from a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper:

We're asking you to make visible your commitment to Bill C-293. This Bill, passed in March 2007, commits Canada to increase aid; improve trade rules that will allow poor countries to protect small farmers and staple crops; cancel crippling debts of the poorest countries; and, end child poverty in Canada.

Sincerely,

The Most Reverend Fred Hiltz
Primate, the Anglican Church of Canada

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop
The Evangelical Lutheran Church

SSNFUL Policy

The Church of the Epiphany strives to be a scent-free, smoke-free, nut-free and latex-free environment so that people with allergies are welcome and, more importantly, safe. This is a matter of Christian hospitality, which we extend to both regulars and visitors.

Servers' Guild: Patti Brace

The Servers' Guild has been active this fall. Along with serving weekly on Sunday mornings, the servers met for a workshop on October 29.

We brushed up on serving skills and ate pizza. We are pleased to welcome two new servers, Elizabeth Huska and Michal Vezina, and would be happy to hear from anyone, youth or adult, who would like to join us in this ministry.

Please contact Patti at 705-673-1216 or email me at pbrace@sympatico.ca

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YTBN

Youth Group: Jan Buley

The YTBN Youth Group (Yet To Be

Named) is now in its fourth year, and continues to attract an energizing and interesting group of youth between the ages of 8 and 15 from all over the city. The primary focus of the group is centered around **examining our place in the world around us, engaging in community and social outreach and exploring our collective spiritual journeys** through conversations, drama education, art experiences and collaborations with other youth initiatives.

The group plans together at the beginning of the year, so that events are organized "with" and not "for" and this year those plans have been diverse. Serving at **Elgin Street Mission** is always a highlight for the group, as well as learning about the art of hospitality and inclusion with persons who may be disenfranchised from society in many ways.

As well, we are big fans of the work of **Free the Children** and **World Vision**, participating in the **Vow of Silence** and the **Thirty Hour Famine**. In March, 2012, YTBN and the local clericus are sponsoring a weekend retreat for youth with Christian Harvey, a fabulous youth leader and magnetic drumming enthusiast!

We have recently collaborated with the Capreol Youth Group in a **"12 Hours, 12 Crafts"** partnership and the phrase "together we're better" was a lived experience for all of us.



We have had young leaders from the community visit our group and share presentations about **building orphanages in Kenya, offering education and friendship in India** and changing the world one step at a time.

This year, we also had exciting approval from the local clericus, with enthusiasm from Anne Germond to challenge all Anglican churches in the diocese to **"Ban the Plastic Water Bottle"** from our places of places of worship by December 1, 2011.

This kind of engagement as change-makers is tremendously empowering for YTBN youth, and I am honoured and grateful to witness their continuing growth as young leaders on the planet. I am also grateful to John Harvey and the congregation of **St. James Church on Paris Street** for providing a space for our monthly meetings. Please know that new members are always welcome to join YTBN and if there are questions, ideas for speakers, or other ideas, please

Sunrise House Update: Robin Bolton

Many of you will have heard about developments at **Sunrise House** during this past year through updates given during services in October at the time of our annual appeal for Sunrise House.

Many thanks to so many of you who have generously supported this outreach project in Uganda over the past five years. This brief article should catch up to date everyone who has not heard the latest.

As you may know, we have been supporting this orphanage in Uganda for over five years now. Initially we were providing funding for the education and boarding costs for around 50 children who have been orphaned by war or AIDS.

Last year much of this cost was undertaken by an American group called **Hope4Kids International**.

We, in turn, have asked that our contributions go towards the development and maintenance of a farm project which will allow the orphanage to provide food and income from a mixed market garden and livestock farm in order to reduce their operating costs and to teach the children practical farming skills.

To this end our money has helped purchase goats, chickens and cows for the farm as well as help with developing their market garden.

We feel this farm will be a really positive step towards self-sufficiency, hopefully for many years to come.

There will always be an ongoing need to replenish their animal stock and to keep the animals healthy through vaccinations and healthy nutrition.

You are invited to see photos on the bulletin board in the **Algoma Room**.

For more information, contact Robin at boltonrb@persona.ca

Submitted by Robin Bolton



Women's Bible Study: Rachel Prichard

On Mondays at lunch time, the women's Bible study meet to study the Bible, to pray, to laugh, to discuss, to worship. This is a very safe group – what is said with us stays with us and there are no wrong answers or dumb questions.

All women are welcome to join us – and we have several from other parishes as members.

The current book is "An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor. In January we shall start a new book which has yet to be chosen. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me at hrprich@cyberbeach.net or at **705-522-3297**



December 2011 Events

December 11
Creating for Christmas
Golf Girls Bake Sale

December 17
Christmas Cleaning Bee

December 24
Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Trivia

Bright, flaming red, star-shaped **Poinsettias** are known as 'Flower of the Holy Night' or 'Flame Leaf'. One of the most popular flowers in Central America, it was brought here by Dr. Joel Poinsett, the first US ambassador to Mexico, over a hundred years ago.

Like the Christmas Rose, this flower also represents our deep love for Christ and great devotion to baby Jesus.

Christmas Trivia

Christmas Rose as the name suggests is deeply associated with the faith, love and devotion to **Christ, our Savior**. This flower is English in its origin and is believed to bloom in the snow-covered mountains of Central Europe when the winter is at its prime, often during the Christmas season and thus, deserves to be known as the true Christmas blossom.

People also call this white colored flower with pink tipped petals by the name of Snow Rose or Winter Rose as it blooms during the Winter season at the time when all the other greenery bows down under a thick layer of snow.

Nominations Needed

At the 2012 Annual Vestry Meeting, the terms of the current chairs of Discipleship and Pastoral Concerns will end.

The Nominating Committee of Parish Council invites parishioners interested in, or with recommendations for either position to speak with **Jane Kvisto, Kym Marsh, or Bettina Brockerhoff-Macdonald** for more information.

