

LENT / EASTER 2021

# Matt's Media



The Newsletter of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington

Published February 14, 2021

In this issue:	Christmas Market—NEW for 2021!	p. 3	Next issue:	Pentecost: May 23
	Club Matt Christmas Pageant	p. 4		Submissions due: April 28
	Christmas Reflection	p. 5	Editor:	Kathie Oakden
	What's Happening	p. 7		kathie.oakden@gmail.com
	Messy Church	p. 12	Layout:	Lisa Tait

## From the Pastor

Rev. Philip Stonhouse

***"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better." Ephesians 1:17***

Lent is a season of preparation. Just as the world was flooded for 40 days during Noah's time to prepare the land, just as there were 40 years of wandering in the desert before the Israelites entered the promised land, just as Jesus spent 40 days tempted in the wilderness, we spend 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter (excluding Sundays) to prepare ourselves for God.

For a long time, I have mused about COVID-19 as a time of preparation. During COVID-19, much of the busyness which previously filled our lives is not currently possible. With countless limitations on our regular activities, what is left? Beyond the ways you may have been participating in the St. Matthew's community through phone calls, services, Soup's On, Bible studies, and more... what we have left is a time where we might get ready and prepare ourselves for a time to come.

Traditionally over Lent people have fasted and prayed. The tradition of making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday came from the need to use up the eggs, sugar, and butter in the pantry before Lent. I would encourage you to think about how you are preparing yourself for God. Fasting is good because it teaches us to depend on and trust in God, but I would especially encourage a **commitment to prayer**.

Prayer is powerful. God works through prayer all of the time, but prayer also has the power to work on us too: preparing us and those around us. During Lent, we will be going through a sermon series on the Lord's Prayer and we will also host a short GIFT group about prayer. I would encourage you to join and to keep praying. Take dedicated time to pray, but also find those few seconds or minutes to pray before you start anything or after you end a task. Invite God into your life and work and watch Him show up for you.

I know prayer can be intimidating. What do I say? What do I do? It doesn't need to be complicated. Think about it like a conversation with God. Spend time speaking, asking Him questions, thanking Him, saying sorry, and recognizing the glory of who He is, but also take time to listen. He will speak if we are willing and take the time to really hear what He is saying to us.

## From the Pastor *(continued)*

As you have these conversations keep asking for guidance. Ask God to show you people in your life who need prayers or who may need a call. Ask God to work on the hearts of people you know so that they may accept Jesus. I encourage you to be open to His urging if He needs you to speak to one of them. Ask God where your next point of growth will be. Ask God how you might use the gifts He has given you to work for His Kingdom. We just finished a sermon study on the Church during which we explored our role as the workers of God's Kingdom. We are called, as a church, to be a people who prepare ourselves and others to receive God's Kingdom of love, peace, and justice. Just remember, the more prepared we are, the more able we are to receive.

As a child, I had a hard time understanding God's presence with me during prayer, so what I used to do was place a chair beside my bed. Then as I sat up or laid down, I would imagine and eventually know that God was there. I would have conversations (often very one-sided) but every so often when He knew I needed something He would speak or lead me. This is not beyond anyone. Just like every relationship, it takes diligence and openness. Let us take this time to prepare ourselves and others for God's Kingdom through prayer as we say together, "Thy Kingdom Come."

***"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people and his incomparably great power for us who believe." Ephesians 1:18-19***

I pray that this might be a blessed, life-giving, and fruitful time of preparation for you all.

Your brother in Christ,  
Rev. Philip Stonhouse



## Sermon Series

The Lord's Prayer  
Feb 14th-April 4th

What is God's Kingdom?  
April 11th-May 16th

Who is the Holy Spirit?  
May 23rd-July 11th

The Imminent Kingdom  
(The Gospel of Mark)  
July 18th-Nov 21st

## Wardens' Report

*Karen Lee, Stuart Watt, Shantelle Hampton and Lianne Thompson*

While we continue in lockdown here in southern Ontario, life at St. Matthew's proceeds as normally as possible. We are very grateful to Rev. Philip, Rev. Merv and the staff for their leadership, especially during these COVID-19 times. We are fortunate to be able to gather online for worship on Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m., followed by our coffee break time together. Sincere thanks go to our technical expert, Colin Hall, for his continued dedication to our online services. We thank Rev. Philip and Jeff Bonner for our online Noon Renewals through the week.

Sincere congratulations go to Lois Armstrong, Nancy Hurn and Deborah Hurn on their recognition by Yvan Baker, MP, for their significant community service. They were honoured by Mr. Baker at his online Community Levee on January 17, 2021.

As we look ahead, we realize that our facilities continue to age and that repairs will become necessary. These will be addressed as quickly as possible. It is anticipated that the Kingsley Play Space will be completed this spring.

Plans are underway for a couple of fundraising events to be held in 2021 to assist with reducing our deficit. Details will be forthcoming. Stay tuned!

As you journey through Lent, we hope that you will find the programs lead by Rev. Philip to be of interest to you. We pray that this Lent season will be a fruitful time of reflection for you, leading to a Joyful Easter!

## Loonie Toonie Jars 2020-2021!

*The Fundraising Team*

If you still have last year's Loonie Toonie Jar sitting on your shelf, we ask that you keep it for our 2021 campaign as well. Once it becomes safe, they can be brought to the church. We will keep you posted.

In the meantime, if you do not have a jar but would like to have one, please call or email the church office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca) and one will be delivered to your door.

All funds received will go towards helping to reduce the deficit.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

## St. Matthew's Christmas Market: Save the Date!

**SAVE the DATE:** Saturday, November 6, 2021 for St. Matthew's Christmas Market

This event will be held both online and in person (subject to government guidelines for COVID).

If you enjoy making crafts, knitted goods, woodworking items, carvings, preserves, or planning "experiences to offer" we welcome your creativity and participation. More information will follow in the weeks ahead.

## Club Matt Christmas Pageant

A happy custom of Club Matt for the whole parish is the annual Christmas Pageant. When it came to this year, we could not do without a pageant so we put on our creative hats and came up with a Zoom pageant. The script was based on our previous pageants (*Luke 2*) and easily divided into scenarios which were given to all the parish families and once again our Youth were great narrators. Rev. Philip was a great master of ceremonies and made sure all the kids were involved in the action.

The story began with the Wukasch family, as Joy and Thomas showed us how Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem to find “no room in the inn.” Jesus was born and drew oohs and aahs from all the kids on Zoom.



The scene then shifted to the shepherds in the fields at the Forbes'. The sheep was amazingly played by Meva and the shepherd, her guardian, by Logan.

They were soon joined by a host of angels who were in many homes around the parish.

The shepherds (represented by Kingsley) then went to Bethlehem to see Mary (Everley) and Joseph (Wesley) and the Baby Jesus at the Hamptons'. The Hampton family sang us a lovely verse of *Away in a Manger*.



While our pageant usually ends about there, this year we heard from Herod and three Wise Men/Kings who had gifts to bring to Jesus. The Kings (Coltrane, Noah and Liam) were spread around the GTA but all together in Zoom. They reminded us that this new king of the Jews would bring big changes to the world and that we all have gifts to bring to Jesus.

We all got involved in remembering that we can share this good news for the world as we sang, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*.

If you missed the pageant, you can get a link to the private video of the pageant with an email request to the office.





## Christmas Reflection

Bruce Gleeson

The 2020 COVID-19 ‘winter of our discontent’ threatened to establish a climate of despair like that in C.S. Lewis’s ‘The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe’ where “it was always winter and never Christmas.” The concerted efforts of our new priest, Rev. Philip Stonhouse and our new music director, Tyler Versluis, with technical assistance from Colin Hall and Mary Anne Perta, Rev. Philip’s wife, provided weekly support in our Sunday online worship through inspiring music and reassuring Gospel reflections. In September they produced three online Choral Evensongs with exceptional inspirational music. For the Christmas season, Tyler assembled a group of gifted musicians to create taped and live performances for a traditional Lessons and Carols service as well as our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Finally, Tyler and Erika Sitko, his wife, hosted a Zoom Carol Sing the week after Christmas that enabled both participants and listeners to, like Scrooge, “honour Christmas” in our hearts and look to the new year with hope. Philip’s and Tyler’s combined ministries created a Christmas joy to dispel the darkness and despair inflicted by the pandemic.

## Carol Sing

On Wednesday, December 30, Organist and Music Director Tyler Versluis and his wife, Erika Sitko, hosted a carol sing-a-long on Zoom.

Several people volunteered a favourite carol, told its history and why they liked it, then led the singing of their carol. Everyone else sang along, but MUTED! Tyler provided an accompaniment recording for those who wanted support. Others sang ‘a cappella’ which means ‘without instruments’ (from the Italian, meaning ‘in the manner of the chapel’). The program included:

*Sussex Carol*, Tyler Versluis & Erika Sitko

*Fum, Fum Fum*, Tyler & Erika

*O Come, O Come Immanuel*, Christine Ivy, accompanied on the organ by her mother

*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*, Erika & Tyler

*I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In*, Tyler & Erika

*Joy to the World*, David & Kathie Oakden

*In the Bleak Midwinter* piano solo, Sally Martin

*Little Drummer Boy*, Rev. Philip & his wife, Mary Anne

*Gloucestershire Wassail and The Marvellous Toy*, previously recorded, by Bruce Gleeson

*We Wish You a Merry Christmas*

This program was fun and informative. We learned surprising facts about each hymn, increased our expertise with Zoom and gained even greater respect for our technical experts.

## Thank You!

- Sincere thanks to all those who contributed the lovely knitted goods to the “Mitten Tree” box. Lois Armstrong will see that the donations are given to the Seneca School for those with special needs. All of your efforts are greatly appreciated.
- Our Carol Evensong fundraiser was a great success, raising \$2,502.30 to apply to the deficit. Many thanks to everyone who participated.
- Thanks for your support of the MacMillan Frozen Foods Fundraiser. The pick-up in December organized by Marguerite Locke and Helen Prankie ran very smoothly.

## Christmas Worship

The following is a selection of our Christmas Season celebrations, with links to YouTube recordings where available, for you to experience them.

*Blue Christmas, Wednesday December 16, 7:30 p.m.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzRU9AO\\_cwI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzRU9AO_cwI)

*Christmas Pageant, Sunday, December 20, 9:30 a.m.*

Please email the office for a private link. For the children's privacy, this service is not available on YouTube.

*Carol Evensong Fundraiser, December 20, 3:30 p.m.*

Choral Evensong with Carols and Hymns chosen by Tyler Versluis, our talented pianist and organist, with guest artists Nick Cooper on oboe and guitar, Ruth Ramirez Rivera on violin, and Bruce Gleeson, Erika Sitko and Tyler Versluis, soloists. Much of the music was recorded in advance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIAIB4V3gsE>

*Christmas Eve Family Service, December 24, 4:00 p.m.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akJYB45aKWc>

*Christmas Eve Eucharist "Darkness to Light", 7:30 p.m.  
(followed by Drive-Thru Eucharist)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xtIspsN8m0>

I had never attended the Blue Christmas service before, feeling the naming of the service amplified the feelings of those for whom Christmas was a difficult time. I listened in to this year's service and came away with a sense of peace and grateful remembrance of those not now in our company. The Taizé music, beautifully sung and played, gave a sense of peace and calm and hope and furthered the meaning of the scriptures read. Overall, this service left me with a feeling of gratitude and peace, much needed by all of us.

~ Sally Martin



Appreciative of the general invitation to receive communion (Bread only) following this 7:30 p.m. service, we left home immediately following the Dismissal so we could arrive at St. Matthew's before 9:00 p.m.. Fresh snow was falling on the trackless church driveway. The dark figure in a long cloak waiting near the office doors was Rev. Philip. He seemed as happy to meet us as we were to meet him. This was our first Communion since February. During a friendly chat Rev. Philip explained that the very warm, hooded cloak had been a gift from a retiring priest. Such is our peaceful Christmas 2020 memory.

~ Kathie & David Oakden

## What's Happening

Monday Wednesday Friday	12:00 p.m.	Noon Renewal on St. Matthew's YouTube channel (available at noon or any time afterward) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeTIBsRzvoz-zJcKv5nKb7g">youtube.com/channel/UCeTIBsRzvoz-zJcKv5nKb7g</a>
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	Soup's On: Soup Making for Toronto Urban Native Ministry
Feb 11–Mar 25	7:30 p.m.	Alpha Marriage Course
Tues Feb 16	6:00 p.m.	Shrove Tuesday service
Wed Feb 17 Ash Wednesday	9:00 a.m. 7:30 p.m.	Morning service (BCP) Evening service (BAS)
Sun Feb 21	12:30-1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	"Drive-thru" Communion York-Credit Valley Farewell Party for Bishop Jenny (on Zoom) <a href="#">Registration</a> required.
Feb 22-Apr 1	TBD	A Lenten Study on Prayer (various nights available)
Wed Feb 24	7:30 p.m.	Parish Council Meeting on Zoom
Sat Feb 27	4:00 p.m.	Messy Church (Register with Jeff Bonner or Dawn Mercer)
Sun Feb 28	12:30 p.m.	Vestry Meeting
Fri Mar 5		World Day of Prayer
Sat Mar 6	8:00 a.m.	Men's Breakfast on Zoom Contact Colin Hall ( <a href="mailto:colinhall1999@gmail.com">colinhall1999@gmail.com</a> )
Sun Mar 28 Palm Sunday	9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Family service Classic service
Thurs Apr 1	7:30 p.m. TBD	Maundy Thursday service Children's Drama
Fri Apr 2	11:00 a.m.	Way of the Cross
Sat Apr 3	7:30 p.m.	Lenten Recital: Tyler Versluis, organ (streamed on YouTube)
Sun Apr 4 Easter Sunday	7:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Sunrise service Family service Classic service

## World Day of Prayer: Vanuatu

The World Day of Prayer is fast approaching on March 5. Cathy Cross will send you a Zoom link when it becomes available. Please let her know ahead of time: [catherine.cross@sympatico.ca](mailto:catherine.cross@sympatico.ca).

World Day of Prayer Zoom Worship Service  
Friday, March 5, 1:30 p.m.  
Host Church: St. Gregory's Roman Catholic Church  
(Rathburn at Kipling)

Country: Vanuatu (VAH-noo-AHA-too)  
"Build on a Strong Foundation"



The service this year was written by the Christian women of the Republic of Vanuatu, World Day of Prayer Committee.

Vanuatu is a small country of islands located in the South Pacific Ocean. The black and white sandy beaches, coral reefs with coloured fish, lovely birds, and fruits and nuts in the forest all make the islands a pristine environment, even though they are vulnerable to frequent tropical storms, earthquakes, cyclones, tsunamis, and active volcanoes.

*What is The World Day of Prayer?*

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement which brings Christians of many traditions together to observe a common day of prayer each year. Through preparation and participation in the worship service, we can learn how our sisters of other countries, languages and cultures understand the Biblical passages in their context.

Each year, a different host country prepares the content, highlighting its culture and regional justice issues. For 2021, the country is Vanuatu.

<https://worlddayofprayer.net/vanuatu-2021.html>

## Thank You

Many recipients of the "Friends for Friends" Christmas parcels expressed their thanks for the care and effort that was put into these gifts.

*"Many thanks to each of you for the Christmas bag full of goodies. I really enjoyed opening everything—such a wide variety of gifts. This was such an unusual Christmas, but your caring for others remained the same..."* Doreen Gallagher

*"Thank you to everyone... to the Messy Church member who made the beautiful Christmas card and to the many people who purchased and assembled all the unbelievable treats... I was absolutely delighted with everything... you really made my day!"* Margaret Purser

*"Thank you to every person who helped to prepare the parcels...as I go through the items during the holy season, I shall give thanks..."* Irija Cook

*"Thank you to all for the gift basket and for thinking of me. I have to say that I particularly love the cork donkey! He will live on in our manger! I miss seeing you all, especially at Christmas time, and my love to you all and God's blessing to each and every one of you."* Marjorie Williams



## The Alpha Marriage Course

Marriage can be one of the greatest blessings, but that does not come without struggles. This is natural to any relationship as different people are learning to be together. The Alpha team has put together a great marriage course that can help any relationship to work through issues and become a healthy bond. Whether you are married or want to commit to one another more, this course is for you and will hopefully build a strong foundation for the rest of your lives together.



## Community Recognition Awards

Lois Armstrong and Nancy and Deborah Hurn were the recipients of 2020 Community Recognition Awards from Yvan Baker, MP for Etobicoke Centre presented at his virtual New Year's Levee on January 17. For many years, Lois has supplied hospitals with knitted toques and blankets for newborns and stuffed heart pillows for heart surgery patients.



At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nancy and Deborah began Soup's On to prepare a nourishing meal at St. Matthew's, with help from a rotation of choppers, and to deliver it to Toronto Urban Native Ministry (TUMN) at Holy Trinity Church in downtown Toronto.



## January Miniseries

This January, it was recommended to cozy up with a miniseries that retold the stories of the Bible.

You can still watch the story of Jesus in a free miniseries called *The Chosen*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=craeyJdrCsE>

Or explore The Bible Miniseries and its sequel, *A.D. The Bible Continues*.

## The Redress of God's Word

Tyler Versluis

Not too long ago, I was taking a walk down Spadina Avenue with a non-Christian friend of mine, who mentioned how confusing it is for a Christian to live and abide by the laws and customs of two different kingdoms: the world's, and God's. In Canada we are blessed to say that many of the customs and laws of our country work in harmony with the laws of God's kingdom, but it is not hard to find areas where contradictions lie. For example, in the year 2021 it is considered a practicality and almost a necessity to live with your boyfriend or girlfriend before marriage. But under the laws of God's kingdom this practicality is revealed for what it actually is: sin disguised as conventionality. Recently I was shocked to find out that one of the largest and most popular pornographic host sites on the internet is actually headquartered in Canada. The ubiquity of pornography – which warps and destroys the sensibilities of people – is another example of how the kingdom of the world paves over sin and ignores the massacre it leaves behind.

I am currently reading *The Redress of Poetry*, a series of poetry lectures by Irish poet Seamus Heaney, gifted to me before Christmas by Mr. Bruce Gleeson. In the opening lecture, Heaney discusses how poetry is useful and even essential to us, as it makes the world a richer and more complicated place. It “balances” out a world that is obsessed with making everything quicker, easier and cheaper. Just as poetry brings **redress** to the world – **a restoration, a rectification** – God's Word functions in the same way, by acting as a **counterbalance** to the ways of the world. In this broken place we can at least hope for a blissful equilibrium, where the will of God and Man hang in balance through the establishment of the Church.

In the same way that poetry complicates the world we live in, God's presence complicates our lives. “Why believe in something, when it's simply easier to not believe in it?”, the world demands of us. Why subscribe to doctrines and concepts that potentially alienate me from atheist, Muslim and Buddhist friends? Why bind myself to another world whose laws and customs demand that I act in transgression to the world's natural order?

I cannot answer these questions succinctly, but we know that our task is not easy, as Christ tells us. Even if you were born in the Church, the act of balancing the demands of the world and God do not get easier. In this day and age, the Devil rarely attacks openly, and instead sneaks in through the cracks of our apathy and lukewarmness, when sin simply becomes a cardinal normality.

Here are the opening lines of *Love III “Love Bade Me Welcome”*, by Anglican poet George Herbert:

*Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,  
Guiltie of dust and sinne.*

In 1911 the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams set the poems of George Herbert to music, his “*Five Mystical Songs*”, which includes *Love Bade Me Welcome*. I first heard this song during communion at a chapel in Grand Rapids, and it opened my eyes to what communion means. In the same way that God's Word must bring balance to the whole world – the external – God must bring balance to our own hearts – an internal balance. We cannot change the sinful nature of the world and of ourselves, but we can be redressed with God's medicine.

## Adult Discipleship and Growing in Faith Together (GIFT)

### *Surprised by Hope*

One of the first projects Christine Ivy, newly hired Youth and Discipleship Associate Pastor, had the privilege of working on at St. Matthew's was the *Surprised by Hope* GIFT Group series with Rev. Philip and Dawn Mercer. Christine was pleasantly surprised by the relevance of this study to our current situation with COVID.

Behind the scenes preparation required a thorough editing of the study guide to create a shorter, clearer, COVID-relevant program focused on the St. Matthew's community and suitable to experience on Zoom. A survey (DoodlePoll) was taken to determine the most popular times people were available in order to offer multiple evening (or morning) sessions, as needed.

As the start date approached, the province progressively tightened its COVID regulations. Ultimately, in-person gatherings were not permitted, including Wednesday Eucharist and the popular GIFT session afterwards. When the studies got underway, there were three groups, Monday evening with David and Kathie Oakden as leaders, Tuesday evening with Deborah Hurn, Nancy Hurn and Dawn Mercer as leaders, and Thursday evening with Ann Sim and Rev. Merv as leaders. The discussions were relevant, engaging, and practical, and the videos with N.T. Wright were easy to follow.

At the end of the study, a survey was taken of the participants. One discovery was that the concept of heaven – not just as a pie-in-the-sky vision for some later time, but as something we help bring about here, in our lives today – was a common theme of our learning. We are a “resurrection people,” as Wright said, and we are building that “kingdom of heaven” here on earth (‘as it is in heaven’ as mentioned in the Lord's Prayer). People enjoyed talking through new ideas with old and new friends, deepening relationships, and feeling free to contribute to the discussion or simply listen.

This feedback is important to the planning of future GIFT Groups and online learning. There were eleven respondents to the survey, whose comments are informing the planning for future adult faith learning opportunities such as the three-week *How to Read the Bible* GIFT course that began February 1.

### *Advent Devotional Calendars*

In December, Advent Devotional Calendars were put into the hands of as many parishioners as possible. This kind of material has in the past been distributed after services but due to COVID restrictions Christine Ivy, our recently hired Youth and Discipleship Associate Pastor, hand-delivered some booklets and mailed others to people who had signed up for a GIFT Group, even if they became unable to attend. For Christine, being able to visit a few people, physically-distanced at their doorstep, became one of the highlights of her Advent season. The visits gave her more clues about how wonderful the congregation of St. Matthew's is, even when we cannot congregate. If you were unable to receive and read the Devotional Advent Calendar, perhaps you were able to watch the devotional videos which she posted on YouTube, where she read passages from the booklet each day in Advent. This was another opportunity to experience unity in the Holy Spirit who keeps us together... even while apart.



## Advent Messy Church

*Jeff Bonner & Dawn Mercer*

Continuing online via Zoom, our Messy Church in November 2020 saw a session packed full of crafts and activities introducing and preparing families for Advent.

As usual, families received packages delivered ahead of the event containing all the materials. The activities ranged from mission-focused projects of creating cards and treats for isolated and less fortunate folks, to introducing Advent devotionals of a Scriptural chain garland and a gingerbread Nativity scene.

One particularly fun activity was a telling of the Christmas story led by Reverend Philip, with the children seeking out characters from the story around their house, as a kind of 'scavenger hunt' as we went along. These characters had been sent to parents in the package to be hidden around the house. It was a great co-operative and innovative effort that got the children moving and involved in the telling of the story.



Following the activities and crafts, we enjoyed a lovely time of worship and singing together, led by Reverend Philip and with special thanks to Bruce Millerd (Liam's Dad / Rev. Merv & Dawn Mercer's son-in-law) for providing us with musical accompaniment on guitar. Finally, we wrapped up the evening with star cookies and hot chocolate together. It was a wonderful start together for the special season of Advent.

## EGG-citing Messy Church

*Jeff Bonner & Dawn Mercer*

In which we explored how God cares for us.

The Disappearing Egg Shell experiment. Making meringues from egg whites. How strong is the egg's shell? How can you pick the hard-boiled egg? Make your egg float. Can you protect your egg from breaking? Get this egg into a bottle.

Do you want to join the next Messy Church on Saturday, February 27, 2021? Register with Jeff or Dawn to receive the Zoom link, the delivery of supplies (within our delivery radius) and information about the next session. [jeff.bonner@execulink.com](mailto:jeff.bonner@execulink.com) / [dawnmercerc@gmail.com](mailto:dawnmercerc@gmail.com).



## Forbes Family

Here is a little update from the Forbes. For those of you who don't know us, our three kids might be the most recognizable members of our family: Ethan our teenager, Logan, and Meva curls galore.

As with most of you, we are faring the pandemic as best as we can, juggling work from home with a house full of online students. Taking endless walks, spending an enormous amount of time playing "bored" games. The living room has become a work area and the kitchen is in operation pretty much the whole time our eyes (and mouths) are open.

We miss our friends at St. Matt's, and joining the virtual service has been a challenge for our family. Thankfully, there is Messy Church at the end of each month. It is the only social event that our kids attend right now, so it's a big deal in our house. The togetherness of Messy Church, the activities, the discussions, the meal, all make for a special afternoon.

And then, every Saturday afternoon, we are visited by an angel in the person of Dawn, bringing us Club Matt materials. Meva loves reading the stories and completes her craft package, and moves on to do Logan's package as well. As a matter of fact, on Friday afternoons, as soon as she logs off school, it's her cue for "God's art" (as she calls it) that will come the next day.

That's it from our household. We wish you all plenty of health, please stay safe until we see each other again, soon we hope.

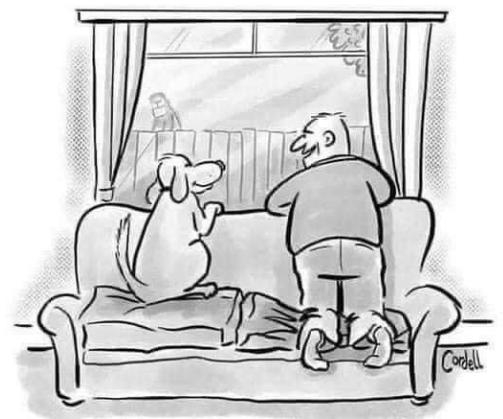
The Forbes Family – Aina, Logan, Meva, Ethan, Kareem



## Vanilla & Spice

Aina R'Abel Forbes has begun a business, Vanilla & Spice, <https://www.vanillaandspice.ca/> to help small Madagascar vanilla producers. Shantelle Hampton is using their vanilla. Read the entire Vanilla & Spice story on-line.

"Our vision is to supply Canadians with the highest quality vanilla beans and vanilla products. We source our vanilla directly from small, local producers in Madagascar and then handcraft our premium products in Toronto, Ontario. We also aim to support the local community in Madagascar and Canada and ensure that a percentage of our profits is redistributed to supporting charitable causes in both countries."



"Until now, I never understood why you got so excited when someone walked past the house."



## Bill Pierce – A Founding Member of St. Matthew's

*"Bill and Madeline were founding members of St Matthew's Anglican Church in Islington where Bill served as a Warden."*

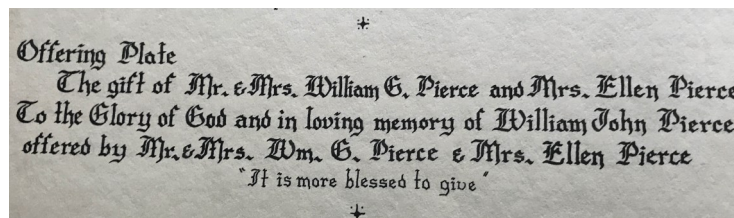
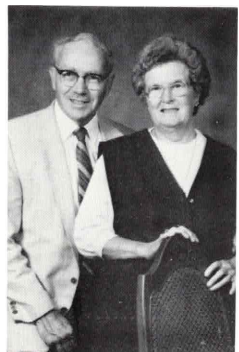
This statement caught the attention of several parishioners reading the article entitled:

"Bill Pierce was the teacher that every student wants, the volunteer every community needs and the loving father that every child deserves." [Toronto Star, January 10, 2021](#) (link is below)

The page-filling tribute describes Bill's noteworthy career as a high school science teacher who became the science coordinator for the Etobicoke Board of Education where he developed the innovative science kit for elementary teachers. Bill was 99. The Star relates that "in 1992, when his son Stephen was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Bill sat by his hospital bed, chatting with him about religion while his son was awake and watching him sleep when he wasn't. ... For many years he organized the Terry Fox Run in Etobicoke," ... devoting it so much time that he met Terry's parents. He carved shore birds, duck decoys and walking sticks.

Who was he? Do you remember them? Verna Wilkinson & Mary Wallace remember them, and that he left St. Matthew's after Madeline died.

Verna remembers a surprising phone call. She was busy with her new baby in her new home on Sara Lou Court. The unknown caller asked if her son (4-year-old Gordon) and little black dog were in the caller's back yard! Verna says the Pierces were members of the Couples' Club at St. Matthew's and that Madeline and Jean Good were very involved in the DCA, Downtown Church Workers. The Pierces dedicated an offering plate to St. Matthew's. The parish Photo Directory included their photo in 1988 but they were absent by 1992.



<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/obituary.aspx?n=john-william-george-pierce-bill&pid=197409904>

<https://www.thestar.com/life/together/remembrance/2021/01/10/bill-pierce-was-the-teacher-that-every-student-wants-the-volunteer-every-community-needs-and-the-loving-father-that-every-child-deserves.html>

## Church Records

### Baptism

Oliver Bromberg Kemp  
December 6, 2020



Levi Keith Davidson  
February 7, 2021

*"Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven."*

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**Pastoral Care:** Pastoral visits can be offered over the phone, by email or via Zoom. Due to current pandemic restrictions, we cannot offer visits. Please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca).

**Partners in Prayer:** Should you desire prayer for yourself or for another person, please make details known to Bob Holloway at 416-253-4909 or [rholloway@sympatico.ca](mailto:rholloway@sympatico.ca). Requests can be also be made through the office.

**Cycle of Prayer:** "Beloved, pray for us." This is Paul's way of asking the Thessalonians to pray for him (5:25) and it expresses the genuine need for believers to support one another through prayer. Each Sunday, we will be praying for individuals and families of St. Matthew's in the Prayers of the People. Each week, a few names will be mentioned in our prayers and we will have the opportunity to support one another through prayer. Please take the time to remember these people during the week in your own prayers as well. If you do not wish to be included in our "Cycle of Prayer" please let the office know and we will be sure to keep your name off the list.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry:** Prayer Shawls are provided to those who need the warmth and comfort of God and St. Matthew's. If you would like a shawl for someone, please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca). If you are knitting shawls for this ministry, please contact the office to arrange to drop them off.



March 28 Palm Sunday	9:30 a.m. Family Service 11:00 a.m. Classic Service
April 1 Maundy Thursday	7:30 p.m. Service Children's Drama
April 2 Good Friday	11:00 a.m. Way of the Cross
April 3 Holy Saturday	7:30 p.m. Lenten Recital
April 4 Easter Sunday	7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service 9:30 a.m. Family Service 11:00 a.m. Classic Service

### Join Us

**Monday-Wednesday-Friday**  
12:00 Noon Renewal on YouTube

**Messy Church**  
Last Saturday of the month  
Next Messy Church is February 27

**GIFT Groups**  
Prayer: February 22-April 1



### Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday  
9:30 - 3:30

The office is operating remotely.  
Telephone and email messages will  
be checked and returned during  
office hours.

**The Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Priest-in-charge**  
416-231-3060 / philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca

*The Rev. Gail Marshall, Deacon*  
*The Rev. Merv Mercer, Honorary Assistant*  
*The Rev. Milton Dorman, Honorary Assistant*  
*Christine Ivy, Youth & Discipleship Assoc. Pastor*  
*Jeff Bonner, Family Ministry Associate*  
*Tyler Versluis, Music Director and Organist*  
*Tom Travaglini, Sexton/Verger*  
*Lisa Tait, Parish Administrator*



### Sunday Services

*As of November 23, 2020 services are online only.  
Please visit our website or call or email  
the office for updates.*

9:30 a.m. Casual  
11:00 a.m. Classic  
Recordings available on YouTube

12:10 p.m. Online Coffee Hour

3962 Bloor Street West, Etobicoke, Ontario, M9B 1M3

Email: [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca) ♦ Tel: 416-231-4014 ♦ Website: [www.saintmatts.ca](http://www.saintmatts.ca)



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