



Messenger

November 2023

Issue 260



FROM THE RECTOR'S STUDY



I learned a new phrase two weekends ago when I stood with members of our congregation in a site that local Indigenous people call a "place of conscience." Our tour of the Mohawk Institute in Brantford was an experience of embodied learning. We watched a video that allowed us to hear survivors tell their stories of neglect and abuse, their wearying labour, their loneliness, hunger, disconnection, humiliation and grief. And we stood together in parts of the building our guide called "places of pain," particular rooms in the residential school that were the favourite haunts of the predators who abused so many children over the years.

I also learned that the Mohawk Institute was a school in name only. Like residential schools across the country, it was really a working farm where students received only the most basic education, and were prepared to work the lowest status and lowest paying jobs – general labourer, laundry worker, seamstress. Residents at the Mohawk Institute were required to raise livestock and food crops for sale, but were not allowed to eat any of the crops they farmed. Maybe this is why the Indian Residential Schools were the

only schools where those completing their studies were called survivors, not graduates.

We have more learning to do – I hope St. Christopher's will soon have the opportunity to watch a video where survivors talk about their experiences at the Mohawk Institute. I am grateful to you for helping to make St. Christopher's the sort of place where together we risk and learn and grow and change.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our congregational meeting on October 1 where we began the work of renewing our parish Mission Action Plan. I was overly optimistic about how much we could accomplish in the hour I allotted for that meeting. So thank you to Christyn Perkons for facilitating follow-up gatherings for each of the three areas of focus for our plan.

I'm delighted for you to see all the interesting and exciting new directions we have chosen for St. Christopher's over the next 12-18 months. Each item in the plan is designed to connect more deeply with God's call as individuals and as a congregation to collaborate in creating God's new society.

The summary of our refreshed parish Mission Action Plan appears

elsewhere in this edition of the Messenger. Please contact me or the church office so we can help connect you with any parts of the plan you feel drawn to.

Our 2023 Stewardship Campaign is underway. This campaign is about nurturing the renewed energy and growth we are seeing right now at St. Christopher's. It's about rebuilding after the turmoil of the pandemic. It's about positioning our congregation to connect in new ways with God's work in the world.

I hope you have received your copy of the campaign brochure and you have all you need to think through how you want to be involved. By all means, please contact me if you have questions about anything related to the stewardship campaign.

The campaign is built around three goals:

- 1 If you are able, please donate to our fundraising goal of \$265,000 over and above regular giving, so we can operate debt free in 2024 and 2025. If you can make a financial gift, please return your pledge form to me by November 6th.
- 2 Please pray for our shared mission as a congregation, that we will have the resources we need to connect to God's work in the world.

- 3 Please invite people to join you at parish events, programs and services.

Thank you. Your generosity and your commitment to our congregation are what makes St. Christopher's a place of community, compassion and hope.

I have important news to tell you about a member of our staff. Christina Mulder has made the difficult decision to leave her role as Director of Programs and Partnerships at Open Doors. I will miss working with Christina. I value Christina's leadership in our outreach ministries, and the energy and care she has devoted to our guests, our volunteers and people in our community. Christina goes with all my good wishes to a senior role at the Burlington Food Bank.

Please look for Christina's column in this Messenger. And please plan to attend the reception on November 5 at 10:30 where we will celebrate Christina's ministry with us and express our gratitude for the compassion Christina has shared with St. Christopher's and our many guests over the last 7 years.

I hope you will plan to participate in two events coming up at St. Christopher's in November. The first is our All Souls service on Thursday November 2 at 7:30pm. This is the gathering each year where we pray for our loved ones who have died. We all have people we carry in our hearts – you are invited to remember, to pray, and to draw strength from others who have experienced loss. The second is a very different kind of event. The Christmas Market is coming up on the morning November 18. (There are lots of ways you can volunteer on the day – please say the word if you can help!) Please invite friends and neighbours and bring them with you to do a bit of Christmas shopping. And please plan to enjoy a bit of breakfast or lunch while you're at it. I hope to see you there!

Penny



REV. CANON DR.
PENNY ANDERSON
RECTOR

PASTORAL CARE



SUPPORTING THOSE WHO GRIEVE

St. Christopher's hosted a well-attended pastoral care workshop on October 23 where the topic was how to support people who are grieving the death of a loved one. For those who may have been interested in attending but were unable, here is an extremely brief overview of the issues that were addressed.

First, there is no right or wrong way to grieve, and there is no time limit on how long a person grieves. Some experts say that as long as there is love, there will be grief. There is a wide variety of natural and normal grief responses. They include: difficulty concentrating; difficulty with sleeping; crying at unexpected times; feeling anger and guilt; mood changes; forgetfulness; sensing the presence of the one who died, such as hearing their voice or seeing their face; feeling overwhelmed with decisions that need to be made; and many, many more.

We also discussed the various stages of grief, including denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. These stages do not necessarily happen in a predictable order, and can re-appear just when you think you were done with them. We all experience the stages differently.

Many people want to "fix" a person's sadness when they are grieving and try to cheer up the person who is grieving. The problem is, the situation cannot be fixed, the pain itself cannot be made better. Grief expert Megan Devine says it is best to stay present with your friend, even when the present is full of pain. When supporting someone who is grieving, your role is to be there and to listen, over and over again if necessary. Sometimes, it's best to simply acknowledge the pain they are in, tell them you love them, and assure them that you are there for them. Accept the griever in the denial of their loss and

any expressions of guilt, and encourage them to talk about the experience. Offer assurance that the pain of grief is not unusual, and that in time the pain will lessen. You should also feel free to share your memories of the one who has died.

There are also a host of things that we should avoid saying, such as: they're in a better place (interpretation: therefore, don't be sad); just keep busy; people have gone through worse; at least they made it to (insert age here); when my (dad, daughter, aunt, friend, dog, goldfish) died, I ... ; I know how you feel (no, you don't); are you still grieving?; call if you need anything. Regarding that last example, it is always best to anticipate and offer something tangible that you are going to do for them and they can always decline if they feel it's not going to be helpful.

My favourite quotation about grief is from that grief guru, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross:

"The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one, you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but, you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same, nor would you want to."

Feedback from the workshop included many comments about how useful the materials were that were circulated. If you would like a copy of these materials, please contact me.

Just a reminder that our grief support group, "You Are Not Alone," typically meets on the third Wednesday of the month from 7 pm to 9 pm. These gatherings are always as a hybrid, so you have the choice of attending in person or via Zoom. The Zoom meeting ID is always

420 850 3446. Lastly, one does not have to be a member of St. Christopher's to participate. Therefore, if you know of someone who may be grieving the death of a loved one, whether they are within or outside the parish, please feel free to gently let them know that this support is available to them. I am also available to meet with anyone one-on-one.

With blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David".

(905) 818-9976
davidmontgomery@stcb.ca

DAVID MONTGOMERY
ASSISTANT CURATE



WARDENS' REPORT



I can hardly believe it's November – however the nip in the air and the frost on the ground in the mornings is a reminder that Winter is on its way!

We have had a busy Fall at St. Christopher's, starting with a successful congregational meeting on Oct. 1st for "MAP Part 2". It was a great opportunity to reflect on the achievements of last year's Mission Action Plan and to spend some time thinking about, and discussing this upcoming year's plan. We had a big turnout and it was good to hear your voices! Thank you to all those who helped make our Fall Rummage Sale a success, and a big

thank you to Andy Elmhirst for an amazing piano concert "The Seasons". In October we also launched our Stewardship Campaign. I have enjoyed hearing from our parishioners on Sunday mornings about what St. Christopher's means to them and how our lives have been so enriched and blessed by being a part of this community. Our campaign goal is set for \$265,000 in order to sustain our programs and ministry in the years ahead. We hope to receive all pledges before Nov. 6th.

We recently heard that Christina Mulder accepted a new position with the Burlington Food Bank.

We will be sad to see you go Christina but we also wish you much success in your new role. We will be celebrating Christina's ministry with us on Sunday Nov. 5th – please join us at 10:30 AM. The Corporation invites you to donate to a purse for Christina. You are welcome to pass your donation along to any of the four Wardens, or to Penny, or to put it in an envelope clearly marked with Christina's name and place it in the regular offertory on Sunday Oct. 29th.

Our annual Christmas Market is fast approaching on Nov. 18th. A big thank you to Trudy Johnson for spearheading the planning

for this big event. The Market is in need of many volunteers – bakers, crafters, greeters, manning the selling tables, café workers, set up and take down crew. Please consider offering the gift of time to this year's market –

and really, how many other times will you get to wear your ugly Christmas sweater before Christmas?!

Wishing you a blessed November,
Carolyn

Carolyn Henderson is one of the four wardens (Carolyn Henderson, Al Nicolls, Paul Shelton & Shannon Mac,) who, along with our Rector, Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson, make up St. Christopher's Corporation
CAROLYN HENDERSON
WARDEN



MUSIC & THE PERFORMING ARTS



My previous Messenger submission was an appetizer for the performance of Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons*, which took place on Friday, October 20th. The evening was a major success. There were about 125 people in attendance with a significant number of those being from outside of the parish. On average, attendees gave very generously. From 'ticket' sales alone, there was nearly \$2,000 given to St. Christopher's. I want to thank everyone who helped make the evening memorable. Al Nicolls for hosting, Joy, Clair and Anne from the alto section for tending the welcome table and Ken Beeby for his graphic design. A performance is not a one-way interaction. The audience contributes a tangible energy which affects the music and others in the room creating a type of ethereal feedback loop.

For me, this performance represents the culmination

of over a year's worth of practicing which progressed to an average of at least two hours a day for the past couple of months. Put another way, there has been a lot of missed bike rides, a lack of progress in other musical ventures and little downtime. I've enjoyed the undertaking but I'm ready for a break from Tchaikovsky. At the time of writing, I still have a little practicing left as I prepare for a second performance of the program at the Westben Centre for Connection and Creativity through Music. Though weary, I'm excited to be presenting this concert on a 9' Steinway in another personally significant venue.

Meanwhile, the music programs at St. Christopher's are marching on. Here are a few good news stories that are worth sharing:

- The choir is sounding better than it has in the past couple of years. Voice is a physical instrument and the lack of training it received

through nearly three years of COVID restrictions has, like any other physical conditioning, required some time to come back. I believe it is back and am very pleased with the how the group has sounded lately. Our anthem choices have also been strong with a number of new and highly appropriate selections learned and presented in recent weeks.

- Peggy Cardwell, our 8:00 am cantor and I have been presenting vocal solos every Sunday during communion. These are impressive selections and Peggy's voice is top notch. In the last three weeks we've done sacred vocal selections from Handel, Franck and Bach.
- Thursday, November 2nd, the choir skips rehearsal and sings the **Service of All Souls** at 7:30 pm. This is the closest we get to Evensong, at least in terms of hymn selection. I get deep satisfaction

from playing and singing traditional evening hymns like *The Day Thou Gavest* and *Abide with Me*. If you're not like me, there are plenty of more contemporary selections as well.

- This coming Sunday, November 5th, is **Remembrance Sunday**. St. Christopher's has used the same music on this occasion for many consecutive years but our selections are unique, interesting and reverential. There is the powerful traditional fare like *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* but the Vera Lynn songs like *White Cliffs of Dover* and *We'll Meet Again* are equally profound. The 11:30 band plays a couple of songs by Canadian singer-songwriters, *After the War* (Sarah Slean) and *Highway of Heroes* (The

Trews), that I'm willing to bet are not found in very many other churches.

- Preparations are well underway for the service of **Lesson and Carols** on December 17th at 4pm. Music is chosen and purchased, the dancers and choir are rehearsing and arrangements are made for guest musicians including the St. Matthew's-on-the-Plains handbell choir and two local composers whose works will be performed during the service. More on that in next month's Messenger article. For now, save the date!



ANDY ELMHIRST
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES



I never fail to be amazed by the uniqueness of children. Even in my own children, who are fed the same food, look at the same four walls, and are largely influenced by the same things, the differences between their personalities are striking. Sure, there are familial similarities, but everyone is so uniquely individual. We see this in families, teachers see it in classrooms, coaches see it on sports teams. And yet, from an early age, our children see certain characteristics being celebrated over others – the ‘easy’ baby, the ‘smartest’ student, the ‘strongest’ athlete. But this isn’t what God had in mind at all!

Over the last two months, our GIFT program has been exploring all the ways that we are ‘Wonderfully Made,’ and how God loves to surprise us and challenge our expectations. When God could have given the most powerful role on earth to a King or a Queen, God chose a baby, and a very

poor one at that. When the giant Goliath should have easily won the fight, the shepherd’s tiny son, David, triumphed. Even that greedy Zacchaeus caught Jesus’ attention and found favour with God. We have talked about what the world tells us to believe will make us special, and what we know makes us special to God.

My greatest hope for every child who walks through the doors of St. Christopher’s is that they will find themselves in a place where nobody gets any bonus points. That every child can feel celebrated for being exactly who (and whose) they are. Some might memorize all the books of the Bible. Some might jump off the altar steps with a flourish after communion – their light-up sneakers landing with a satisfying thud in the echoey silence. Some might spend extra time meticulously perfecting their crafts and colouring. Some might sneak up into

the pulpit and test the microphone to see if it’s on. But if all of them can look to this place and know that they are valued, respected, and don’t have to change one single thing about themselves to belong here, then we, as a congregation, have done our job. This is God’s work, my friends. That’s it. In God’s House, they are safe and they are loved. I am grateful to you all for being part of this important work.

I am excited for you to follow along with our activities as we come to the end of the year. Our GIFT Program and Youth Group have been off to a successful start this fall, with an especially fun field trip to Laser Tag for the tweens and teens! We have events planned for children and youth of all ages and I invite you to join us if you have young ones who would like to participate, and if you do not – please keep cheering them on! Your support makes all the difference!



Casting call!

All children and youth welcome to participate in our Christmas Pageant "A Christmas Carol: Scrooge in Bethlehem". The Pageant will be held Sunday, December 24 at 4pm. Please contact carrie@stcb.ca.



CARRIE FORD-JONES
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRY



Coming Up ...

Movie Night Saturday December 2nd 6:00 – 8:00pm

Parents and caregivers drop the kids off for a fun movie night and enjoy a couple of hours to get your Christmas shopping done!



Youth Group

All youth welcome – 11 years +

Gathering the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Our November/December meetings include:

Nov 12 - Bible Study and Board Games

Nov 26 - In the Kitchen

Dec 10 - Christmas Party



Wonderfully Made

Join us for the wrap up of our Wonderfully Made series. We will recap the Bible stories we learned this season, choose our favourites and build them out of Lego!

Sunday Nov 19 9:30am



Grannie's Place

Our passionate and dedicated volunteers are ready to welcome you to Grannie's Place on Sunday mornings during the 9.30am worship service.

They offer childcare for infants and toddlers ages 0-3 years.

Contact Carrie Ford-Jones, our Children's and Youth Ministry Coordinator at carrie@stcb.ca with questions or if you would like to volunteer.



Nothing like staring at a blank page for days, finding every procrastination project possible, and being left with this as an intro. I have searched for the clever, sentimental and comical prose and have landed on, "just start typing already!"

By now you might have heard that I have taken a new position outside the walls of St. Christopher's. This move is truly bittersweet. I am excited for the new adventure ahead, and believe this is the right time in my life to move onward. Change is never easy, and we are no stranger to transitional times around the church. Shannon Shuell will be supporting volunteer coordination for programs. We look forward to those who will come to cover some of the gaps. Now more

than ever St. Christopher's volunteers will need to take leadership roles in the Open Doors spaces to ensure community members are cared for in ways with which they are familiar.

Leaving St. Christopher's was not an easy decision and during these weeks of packing up and sharing information I am continually reminded of all the things I love and will miss here.

St. Christopher's is more than a place of employment for me. It has been a place of learning and growth with some very special mentors along the way. There are those who have schooled me in the finer art of budgeting, fostered my strategic nature, and encouraged me to stand on my convictions. You know who you are.

It has been a soft place to land during difficult times in

my life. Through grief, illness and personal struggles, I have had a multitude of shoulders to cry on, ears ready to listen, hearts filled with compassion and good old fashioned hugs. Whether you cried alongside me or held me through it, I am filled with gratitude for all of it. You know who you are.

Those who shared in regular story times and belly laughs that filled the office and other working spaces, alleviating some of the more difficult parts of the job, have been forever etched in my memory. You know who you are.

Being part of St. Christopher's Open Doors ministry has gifted me the privilege of making meaningful connections in the community, being an advocate for change, and of building upon the

foundations of outreach already established. I have been fortunate to do this alongside some phenomenal staff and volunteers. And I have been blessed to be able to call them friends. There is a lot to be said about a workplace that can foster these sorts of relationships. There is so much to be said about St. Christopher's and the people who hold up these walls, their faith in God and all things good in people, that I couldn't possibly achieve in one last Messenger article. You have made a lasting impact on my life. Know you are so special.

This is truly "see you later," and not "good-bye". It couldn't possibly end here. As one of my favourite people says, "I will see you in all the right places."



CHRISTINA MULDER
OPEN DOORS
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS



**Help support children in the community
have a joyous Christmas by participating
in the**

CHRISTMAS FAMILIES GIFT DRIVE

**Pick from the list of gifts we plan to
share and drop off at
St Christopher's Church
662 Guelph Line, Burlington**

**November 20th to December 4th
Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm**

- PJ's size 3T to Adult L
- Hygiene and beauty gift packs
- \$25 gift cards for Teen appropriate stores (no fast food please)

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**


***families looking for support can follow
our social media and website for a link to
register their children beginning
November 6th, 2023.**



Instructed Eucharist


Sunday | 26 November | 9.30am

Please spread the word with the people
you know who travel with Children!



NOV 20

Trans Day of Remembrance



**Monday
November 20th
@ 7:00pm**

Church of the Apostles
86 Glasgow St N, Guelph
Parking lot entrance off of
Paisley St.



Remembrance Sunday | November 5

All Souls

Upheld by beautiful choral music, we will draw strength from
one another as we remember our loved ones who have died.

2 November | 2023 | 7.30pm



Mental Health Care Partners' Support Group



Hybrid meetings, in person and on Zoom,
Monday | 27 Nov. | 7pm
Meeting ID: 420 850 3446

You Are Not Alone



In the Family Room with Rev. David Montgomery
hybrid meetings, in person and on Zoom,
Wednesday | 15 November | 7pm
Meeting ID: 420 850 3446)



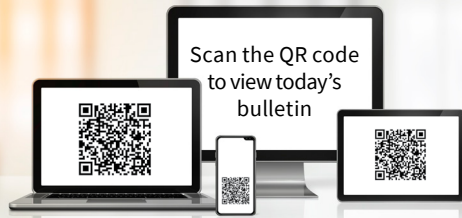
Only at 8 O'Clock

This fall we are offering worship experiences that happen only at the early service.

Here are the special features for this month:

Meditative Eucharist | Sunday, November 26

Bring your tablet to church save paper!



Did you know our bulletins are online? You can always scan the QR code on the way into church and view the bulletin on your smart phone or tablet!



After more than 10 years living as unwanted refugees in Turkey, half of the Masri family has come to Canada. Their effort, persistence and devotion has allowed them to begin their lives again in safety.

Their focus right now is to help their remaining family members join them in Canada. Thirteen immediate family members are still in Turkey, living in tents with little local or international support after their home was destroyed by the earthquakes in Turkey last February.

With support from St. Christopher's and the Diocese of Niagara, members of the Masri family have submitted applications to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada to bring their remaining family to Canada. We are optimistic the next group of Masris may be able to travel to their new home in Canada in 2024.

Thank you for the generous ways you are sharing your good life with them.

Bob Loree
(Helping this refugee family since 2016)

Details at <https://syrianfamily.ca/donate>



Seniors' Social

Tricia Clarke and this warm and spicy group of seniors meets every Tuesday afternoon in the Family Room from 2-4pm. Enjoy a time of refreshment and some games and conversation. Bring your special energy to make some new relationships. You will be enriched to plug in here.



Fall Garden cleanup

Saturday, December 2 | 8.30 to 11.30am



Parish Celebration – Christina Mulder

Please join us as we bid farewell to Christina Mulder.

Sunday | 5 November | 10:30am



Ginger Group

Calling everyone 55+ or retired! Our next gathering will be Monday, November 13 from 11.30am-1.30pm. This midday event features Pam Calvert, a retired Canadian history teacher who is also a volunteer with the Juno Beach Centre Association. She has a passion for remembrance and commemoration of Canadian soldiers in WWI and WWII. It is a wonderful way to meet friends and make new ones at St. Christopher's and beyond. Contact Winston and John at staff@stcb.ca for details.



JAZZ VESPERS | COME SUNDAY



Jim Sandilands
Bass



Colleen Allen
Sax



Tim Shia
Drums



Jake Wilkinson
Trumpet



Stacie McGregor
Piano

**Sunday
26 Nov.
2023**

**St. Christopher's
662 Guelph Line
Burlington**

**4.00pm
Free Will
Offering**



Bridge Group

Welcome to those wishing to join us for a game of bridge. Our St. Christopher's Bridge Group will meet on November 13 and 27 from 2-4pm in the Narthex. Do you wish to learn? Experienced bridge players will be available to teach. Light refreshments will be provided. You don't need to be a part of St. Christopher's to join this group. Please contact Pat and Liz at staff@stcb.ca for more information.



Men's Cooking Groups

Men's Cooking #2 will meet on Monday, November 27 at 10.30am. Come and learn how to be a proficient cook. Share your skills and knowledge if you are already experienced in the kitchen. Please contact Gerry or Bob at staff@stcb.ca if you are interested.

DID YOU KNOW?



- Andy Elmhirst, our esteemed organist, choir director, and unbelievably accomplished pianist, had his audience transfixed as he plied his trade on October 18th. That piano had a workout with Andy at the keyboard, and the audience had a wonderful evening watching and listening in awe and with joy.
- Our coffee machine, after years of faithful service, has decided to throw in the towel and retire from active service. Therefore, we need to replace this extremely necessary machine. There is a large plastic container residing in various “coffee” places, begging for your contribution towards a new one. Many toonies, loonies, and bills (large and small) would help towards the fairly hefty cost of a new one.
- The Christmas Market, our annual fundraiser, is coming up on November 18th. If we all watch for notices as to how we can contribute, we can raise money and share some camaraderie into the bargain.
- Congratulations go to Jan Pearce who will receive the Order of Niagara from our bishop, Susan Bell, on October 29th. We know Jan! She is the one who sees need and responds. She is that faithful person in whom you can put your trust. She is the one who smiles and welcomes and serves in every capacity. She is the one who will receive this well-deserved honour!
- Looking around our congregation on Sundays, at all three services, we see many who have returned after this pandemic, and many newcomers, and we realize that St. Christopher’s is alive and well. So many people make this happen! When you think about what efforts have to be made to bring this about, we are left to give thanks! The liturgy, the music, the altar, the welcomers, the hospitality group, the servers, the readers, the church school leaders, and a ton of people behind the scenes!
- What about that Open Doors? This hardworking team of dedicated staff make things happen! The passionate and dedicated team of volunteers round out this community giant! We chop, wash, braise, boil, rinse to produce SO many meals! The set-ups and take-downs of furniture happen constantly. Did you know that our dishwasher has done 52,493 cycles since its original installation? Wow!
- Witness the laughter and buzz of voices at coffee hour after services, and after Jazz Vespers. We do make a joyful sound!
- Our Narthex is such a lovely, welcoming space with lots of room to mingle and chat, chairs to move into cozy conversation clusters, and our ever-faithful pews to rest a while.



JUDY JUPP

RENEWING OUR PARISH MISSION ACTION PLAN

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Congregational Meeting on October 1st, and the subsequent Zoom meetings to finalize plans for each area of our renewed MAP. If anything in this summary spurs your interest, please reach out to the church office and we will connect you with one of the working groups.

RESHAPING PARISH CULTURE

CURRENT WORK

As soon as possible, host events to rejuvenate our feeling of community

Monitor our front door; create new ways to welcome newcomers and integrate them into the congregation

NEW INITIATIVES

More intentional partnerships with like-minded community groups e.g. PFLAG

Monitor our back door; follow up with people we haven't seen at church for a while

Make best use of online tools to connect with people

Be a presence at a limited number of community events that align with our values e.g. Halton Pride Parade, diversity event at Burlington Performing Arts Centre, climate change event

Participate as a congregation in community events that align with our values; limit to three/year

Back porch; a number of people who've been around for a while have yet to find their place and are hence more likely to leave... need to help them find their place and feel seen and heard

Noting a culture of long time members/cradle Anglicans who don't perhaps know they function as activators but also as gatekeepers for new people/new ideas

Explore restarting the LGBTQIA+ group

NEXT STEPS

- Repeat successful events from 2022-2023
- Reconnect with Santa Claus Parade to offer hot chocolate
- Add one more event/something people already doing but new venue
- Engage youth and their families as greeters
- Encourage wearing name tags, introduce yourself to people you don't know and invite them to coffee/blank name tags available for visitors
- Intentionally invite newcomers and the less-engaged to be part of one-time event planning teams to develop relationships and help them find their place at St. Christopher's
- Partnership with youth – one multigenerational or family event; maybe movie night or chili and pumpkin carving
- Reimagine cooking groups; partnership with Smith's to engage widowers in Men's group; offer basic cooking class for anyone who can't cook (intergenerational); offer multicultural cooking nights where participants cook a meal with people willing to share their culture's cooking...pursue New Horizon & other grants to support these

NEXT STEPS

- Create a vision for what these partnerships might offer to each party
- Create a list of potential partners and invite them into a dialogue

- Another "we've missed you" event with repeat invites

- Continue with current social media plan
- Develop other connecting points such as interactive online church

- Need fully branded tent with volunteers in St. C's t-shirts; recruit volunteers who have high engagement skills and missional listening skills to engage attendees
- Brand on-point for particular audience
- Goal is both to be present where God is at work in the community but also to be present where the unchurched find meaning
- Do this in conjunction with Fullness of Life team

- Get list of upcoming community events
- Do this in conjunction with Fullness of Life team

- Intentionally notice and invite to participate in one-time event planning/execution
- Invite to participate in ongoing ministries
- Invite to "get to know you" coffee dates to do missional listening and uncover people's skills and desires...brainstorm names of who they might be

- Explore ways to help people understand how others see them and empower them to open gates so that we experience the fullness of people's gifts and the fullness of God in our midst...something to explore with parish council perhaps?

- –

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

CURRENT WORK

Highlight a phrase of the week (or month) people can reflect on

NEXT STEPS

- Survey themes for upcoming liturgies, inspirational and thought provoking quotes to offer monthly entries on social media and in bulletins and the Messenger

Offer opportunities for people to engage spiritually with making art or reflect together on the artwork of others

- Continue Water Colours & Wine
- explore other art-related workshop ideas (e.g. Spiritual Spa; batikting, candle making, prayer beads, faith-oriented planting)

Gather groups to hike in nature or go together on prayer walks

- Continue labyrinth experiences
- Explore a spring hike somewhere like Crawford Lake Conservation Area
- Explore reinvigorating the Good Friday hike/include families/partner with another church

NEW INITIATIVES

More courses for adults

NEXT STEPS

- Possibilities:
- The Difference course; explores following Jesus in a complex and divided world, seeing transformation through everyday encounters, equipping one to cross divides, navigate disagreement and pursue a just and flourishing world
- The Pilgrim course – discipleship course helping churches create a place where people can explore the Christian faith together using group participation in a pattern of contemplation and discussion to explore the big issues of faith

Adult “Sunday School” between services

- Twenty minutes with other parishioners to explore topics; might include a monthly debrief of the sermon with the preacher (more often if clergy felt able to step away from social time) Could be stay after for the 9:30 parishioners and come early for the 11:30.
- Another possibility; a monthly soup or salad and discussion after the 11:30 with a come back invite to 8 and 9:30 folks.

FULLNESS OF LIFE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

CONTINUING WORK

Train volunteers to speak with people when they come into our building; listen to visitors’ stories and notice where God is at work in their lives

NEXT STEPS

- More missional listening training workshops; include more about how to put into action
- Emphasize using this skill in the community to get to know neighbours and hear where God is at work - not just inside our church building

Environmental scan of our building and property to look for ways we can reflect our core values to people passing by and through the building

- Explore having hosts on site when users are in building to welcome and engage our neighbours

Search for information about who lives near us; share patterns with congregation to help us connect with neighbours’ stories

- Use demographic analysis in ways that will support congregation’s mission

NEW INITIATIVES

Intentional community engagement where our presence supports other organizations that align with our values

NEXT STEPS

- Consult others about like-minded potential partners/coalitions/movements
- e.g. ask Community Development Halton about other organizations, consult City of Burlington Public Engagement calendar and Get Involved portal
- e.g. Indigenous events, Pride parade, Burlington Town Hall or Council meetings, Burlington Green Environmental Association
- Do this in conjunction with Reshaping Parish Culture team

Be a visible, welcoming, and inclusive presence out in the community

- Drop-ins at a local coffee shop... one idea - “Ask Me Anything” invite/gathering
- Host group gatherings in a public setting and invite others present to join in
- Do this in conjunction with Reshaping Parish Culture team

Play a role in welcoming and integrating secondary immigrants to Burlington coming from other cities and other provinces

- Explore what’s currently happening in Burlington and determine if we can work alongside

More visible (to the community) sharing of our values and invitation to join us in particular activities or around particular issues

- Use the lawn fence for posters, banners and symbols (e.g. orange ribbons for TRC Day) that share our values and welcome engagement with the community
- Use social media more to highlight the issues we’re responding to that align with neighbours concerns...and highlight the work of our partners noting the partnership so people connect us with issues around which they have a passion or need



St. Christopher's Christmas Market

18 November | 8am to 1pm

