

Official Newsletter of
St. Chad's Anglican Church
472 Kirkfield Street
Winnipeg, MB R3K 1E6

CHIMES

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Welcome Home

Home is a place, and a state of being. Home is where the heart is. For some, home may also be a difficult place, with challenges and reminders of loss and pain. Our true home is of course, with God. God who loves, God who knows, God who wants a connection, a relationship with us. This time of year, we often make efforts to create a different feeling in our home, with decorations, and warm smells. We do this as tradition, greenery to remember nature in the bleakness of winter, warm smells to comfort, and to cleanse the air. Home is something I've been reflecting on as my own little house has been under renovation these past months. We have decided that unless God reveals otherwise, Winnipeg is now home. This is the seventh place that I will have called home in my life, and I am no longer surprised when I meet people who have been born here and either remained here in Winnipeg or moved back after being in another part of Canada. This city is wonderful, with rich history and natural beauty. It is also a city with pain and hurt, calling out for God's healing touch.

For some of who we serve in our community, there is no home – no permanent one at least. For others, home is lost and a new home looms in hopes and dreams. St Chad community works with West Broadway to help those who do not have a permanent home, those who live in shelters and walk our streets, those who may have limited and substandard housing and must access food banks in order to eat. We work to help provide showers, and laundry facilities, a change of underwear and socks, mitts and scarves to stay warm. We partner with West Broadway area ministries. Home for others is lost; the result of war, and we are working in partnership with other communities to support those who make their way to this wonderful city we call home in order to help it feel like home for them. We are raising funds and organizing volunteers to support Syrian Refugees.

Jesus calls us to welcome all, to love all as Christ. This is our daily challenge – and it is a challenge. To love to this depth is to let go, and to give in to the love that is for us, and then share it with another. When we hurt and our world hurts, we might feel that we do not have enough love even for ourselves – yet the funny thing about love is that it is transformational – and there is more than enough. For us to truly love calls us to change – to be transformed – to let go of comfortable ideas, and embrace new and different ideas. For us to truly love means to make a home in our hearts for God and for others.

O come Emmanuel and ransom us, set us free from the things of this world. Emmanuel God with us, is our true comfort and our true home. God with us in Christ, gives us strength, hope and peace. God with us,

May you all have a blessed and wonderful Christmas season. Susan+



Picture by Gil Frederick

At our church service on December 6, we had as a guest speaker, Meghan Silencieux, who has spent the last 10 years helping with a program called “Beyond Borders,” a program for helping people build movements for liberation in **Haiti**, including helping parents keep their children safe and in school.

She gave a very descriptive view of what her job entails, and it is quite extensive, something we were not aware of before her talk.

You can become a partner at www.SchoolsNotSlavery.org, or email or call Jean Souffrant, Beyond Borders Assistant Director of Donor Relations: j.souffrant@beyondborders.net or telephone her at (305) 587-7692.

Jean-Venel Despazin, a community member has stated, “Nonviolence, democracy, equality. These are the values we want to teach our children.”

The following is a short article sent to all Parishes from Rev. Geoff Woodcoft, who is the Archdeacon for Stewardship—he didn't write the article however, he assures us that we can reprint it in the Chimes, with proper sourcing. For those wishing to read the article from the website, go to <http://stewardship-news.org/P3Z-3T2B0-12J52JEB8D/cr.aspx>

ADVENT WONDER: the Magi—a holy pilgrimage

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” Matthew 2:1-2 (NIV)

Pilgrimage is a spiritual tradition that defines the principles of journey. The purpose of such a journey is self-knowledge, but the Magi's journey has a very different purpose and is based on a very different principle. Their quest is a truly generous one. They are not in search of inner self. No. They are on a holy pilgrimage and their purpose is clear: to worship the Messiah.

We do not know exactly where they began their journey or exactly how long they travelled. We do not know their names or their number. They are known to us by their generosity, by their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and their worship. This generous journey will leave them changed, renewed and reborn. They are being made into a holy community of worshippers.

The Magi journeyed from the east to Bethlehem, guided by a star to worship. Their pilgrimage would have been a long one, probably from a place we call Iran today. The fifth-century Greek historian Herodotus tells us that the Magi were in fact a Median tribe who lived within the Persian Empire and were renowned as soothsayers and astrologers.

But these men were different, marked out by their status and learning but more importantly because of their desire. Desperate to encounter something outside their own experience—bigger than themselves—they desired to see the Messiah, the King. Their desire was to experience God. This desire for a deep experience is a typical feature of all types of pilgrimage; the other element is of course the actual practical journey. The Magi were intentional; they had a plan. They had maps of the stars and the earth; they had animals and provisions; they had a variety of routes; and of course they had a star.

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Advent Wonder—Holy Pilgrimage continued

And they would have been the best of the best—carefully selected envoys sent from their community as those with the best hope of success for the perilous journey—and they would offer the best they had to this new king.

They were entrusted with precious gifts. And they would find him. Then they would return to their tribe and describe what they had felt and seen: mission accomplished. Their multiple faiths would grow into one saving faith. And this Magi community would tell others. They speak to use today about a holy pilgrimage. A generous journey: giving their time, service and love to the new-born Messiah. They show us how to worship. Not just as individuals but as a holy people, as a community.

How will YOU see this Advent? What will you look at? Where will your eyes and ears follow?

How *have* you used and how *will* you use the gifts God has given you—your time and skills, your monies and life—in worship this season, this year?

Journey intentionally, thoughtfully, prayerfully. Journey generously.

STEWARDSHIP AND THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

Let me begin by quoting from “The Transforming Power of Gratitude” by Bruce Epperly.

Meister Eckhardt once asserted that “if the only prayer you say in your whole life is to say “thank you,” that will suffice. I believe that transformative ministerial leadership is grounded in gratitude. Spiritual leadership involves pausing to notice what is going on in our congregation and the world and the responding with words and actions of affirmation and healing.

To me, this ties in strongly to our need to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. The Crossed Hands Refugee Committee, with which we have connected, has received a family of refugees from Syria and are now expecting the extended family to arrive in February. Crossed Hands is currently supported by several churches including a few Anglican churches, and is part of the Diocesan Refugee Initiative, with Gail Schnabl as our main contact.

If you recall, our Pancake Breakfast was dedicated for net proceeds to be directed to this organization.

We raised a total of \$760.00. We have made an appeal to raise this amount to \$1000.00 prior to the end of this year. Although our monetary contribution is very much appreciated, there is also a need for household items and for drivers to appointments when the refugees arrive.

We will let you all know what these families will need, however, if you have household items that you have been thinking about getting rid of, please set them aside and we'll let you know when we will be collecting them. Together, with the other parishes in the Crossed Hands Refugee Committee, we are able to do so much.

Thank you for your support of this most important ministry.

Elsie Kent

Chair of the Syrian Refugee Committee

Now friends, the work of Christmas – the incarnation has begun again – we are the body of Christ – the hands, feet arms and legs that continue the reconciling, loving caring work that began when God who loves us came – Emmanuel – God with us.