



The Church
of St Andrew
and St Paul

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Inside•Out

Spring 2021



COVID-19 Blessings

We have been living with the pandemic for one year now, adapting to restrictions and navigating an unprecedented sense of grief, isolation, and uncertainty. Recognizing blessings during these times is not always easy, and yet, when we consider the life of this congregation, so many blessings become apparent. Creative ways to gather virtually, new music, and extraordinary generosity have been cultivated in these trying times. We are blessed to live our faith in so many ways - nourishing our communities and sharing God's love widely - and these blessings continue to multiply.

What's inside Inside•Out

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Worship

April – May

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

Second Sunday of Easter
The Rev. Dr. Glenn Chestnutt

SUNDAY, APRIL 18

Third Sunday of Easter
The Rev. Ian Fraser

SUNDAY, APRIL 25

Fourth Sunday of Easter
The Rev. Dr. Glenn Chestnutt

SUNDAY, MAY 2

Black Watch Regimental Service

SUNDAY, MAY 9

Sixth Sunday of Easter
The Rev. Ian Fraser

SUNDAY, MAY 16

Ascension of the Lord
The Rev. Dr. Glenn Chestnutt

SUNDAY, MAY 23

Day of Pentecost
The Rev. Dr. Glenn Chestnutt

SUNDAY, MAY 30

Trinity Sunday
The Rev. Ian Fraser

From the Church Registrar

In Memoriam



Walter S. Cottingham

Died on April 1, 2020

Mary Lou De Silva

Died on
January 17, 2021

Olive de Groot

Died on
December 21, 2020

Madeleine Soliman

Died on
February 12, 2021

Barbara Swain

Died in December 2020

Greetings from the Minister

COVID-19 Blessings



At time of writing, it is nearly one year since we left our building. I know that for many of you, one of your deepest desires is to return and resume life as it was at The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. This is an ominous anniversary and one which spurs me, before I speak to the theme of this edition of InsideOut, to recognize that these past long months have been difficult for all of us. There are many reasons for this, not least a pandemic which has isolated us from each other and thrown our way of life into

chaos. It is no secret that many in our society of any and every age are suffering financially, physically, psychologically, and spiritually from the effects of long-term isolation. While some people within our community have succumbed to this dreadful disease, others have been able to survive it.

But for many of us, the blessings we count are often the things we took for granted before this crisis, such as family, friends, homes, location, and even food. At a recent Coffee and Conversation after church one participant mentioned that he was thankful simply for his bed, whilst another gave thanks for the beautiful neighbourhood she lived in. Some of us are closer to family and friends than we have ever been, connecting with our loved ones in ways we did not do so a year ago. Many people in our community are thankful for the outreach of others to them, whilst others are thankful for the worship services that we have been able to deliver online. We now reach more people through our online worship services than we have ever been able to do historically. Some of us have found renewal in our spiritual lives as life has slowed down and we have had time to reflect upon our lives and what really matters to us. For others, we have found renewal in making new connections and finding new ways to serve our community. It has certainly been a time where the creative synergy of our community has been exhibited- everything from a virtual Fall Fair, to a recipe cookbook, to a virtual tour of a European Cathedral has been offered. Of course, we are looking forward to that time when all will be vaccinated.

The Christian life is one where we can find joy and thankfulness even during trauma, crises, and tragedy. Scripture is replete with characters who cope with tragedy in life whilst still having the ability to praise God and be thankful for what blessings God has given them. King David, the author of the psalms and Mary, Jesus' mother, are examples of this. They were able to praise God despite the situations they found themselves in. May we too have the spirituality and the wherewithal to thank God and count our blessings, even amid this global pandemic.

Like many people, I have favourite Scripture passages I turn to when I need inspiration. One such text comes from the book of First Thessalonians: 1 Thessalonians 5: verse 11 and then verses 16-18. It reads: *And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing. ... Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus.* These are powerful, encouraging, and challenging words that have often sustained me in my life of professional Christian ministry. These words were written a long time ago to provide hope, comfort, and challenge to the ancient community of believers in Thessalonica, Greece. May they be as relevant to us today in the twenty-first century, as we sit on the cusp of our second year of wrestling with COVID-19. May they give us the strength to continue to count the many blessings that God has given us, even despite our situation.

Your minister and friend, Glenn

Honouring Violet Drummond, A Long-time Member of A&P

Scaled-back Remembrance Day ceremony honors our veterans



96-year-old veteran Violet Drummond walks past the Cenotaph prior to scaled-down Remembrance Day ceremony in Montreal's Place du Canada in 2020.

Photo by John Mahoney /Montreal Gazette

Violet Drummond said she's proud of having served in the Navy during the Second World War.

Drummond, 96, was one of the 38 people who came out to the Remembrance Day ceremony at Place du Canada on Wednesday morning. Drummond worked in Halifax Harbour during the war. Naval ships from the harbour were used to escort merchant ships across the Atlantic to bring much-needed supplies to the Allies in Europe. "What we didn't like about serving in Halifax is that sometimes ships would go out and escort merchant ships, but they wouldn't come back," Drummond said. "That was the saddest thing. When that happened, nobody said a word all day."

Drummond said Remembrance Day ceremonies are important to recognize the sacrifice made by thousands in the military over the years.

"We can't forget that we put ourselves out there," she said. "We're taking from the country. We have to give something back, too, and let our country know how

we feel about it. It's not just take, take, take. It's what we give."

"I loved serving my country. It was a fabulous time. Everyone felt they were sharing and helping their country. It's something special."

The pandemic forced a different kind of ceremony this year. There were no bugle or bagpipes; the usual military parade was cancelled; the cannon did not sound. The national anthem, Last Post, Rouse and God Save the Queen were all played from a wireless speaker. Several delegations were on hand to lay wreaths at the Cenotaph. A small crowd gathered for the ceremony, which had not been advertised.

Still, it was important to hold the ceremony, said Paulette Cook, executive director of provincial command for the Royal Canadian Legion in Quebec.

"We can't forget our veterans," said Cook, who held the wireless speaker for the ceremony. "We couldn't let Nov. 11 go by without doing something. We have to remember why we're here. We need to

remember those who sacrificed so we can enjoy the liberties that we have today."

Cook said the day is usually one of reunions among longtime military companions, so not being able to hold an official ceremony was difficult for many of the members.

"They're sad, because they can't come," she said. "It's an emotional time for all of us. This day is very precious."

She said it's important for Canadians to take stock of the sacrifices made.

"I think people should take two minutes of silence, whether it be at 11:00 today, tonight or 3:00 in the afternoon. Take those two minutes and say, 'Thank you. I'm grateful for what you've done. Those veterans in Heaven I'm sure are looking down and saying 'You're welcome.'"

Jason Magder

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We Did It!

The impact of the immense success of the 2020 Fall Fair

Once again, the Guild Executive would like to thank the members of the congregation for their overwhelming support of the Fundraising, Online Sales and Plum Pudding project for the 2020 Fall Fair. We also want to express our appreciation to all the workers and staff who helped us accomplish so much for those in need in our community during difficult times. We thought you might like to read some of the enthusiastic responses from our Charitable Partners that we have received:

L'Abri en Ville, from K. Star Gale, Executive Director

I write on behalf of all L'Abri residents, volunteers and staff to express our profound gratitude for your loyal support during this extraordinarily challenging year. Your support provided us with resources to heighten our adaptivity and responsiveness to residents' needs, and for this, we simply cannot thank you enough.

The mission of L'Abri en Ville is to provide affordable housing and stable, fulfilling environments for persons living with mental illness... The support from the Guild of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul provides us with the means to continue supporting our residents and provides timely, person-centred interventions. We would like to express our appreciation for your generosity in making L'Abri a satisfying home for residents and a model sought out by others...2021 will mark L'Abri's 30th anniversary!

Maison Flora Tristan, from Chloe Deraiche, General Manager

Once again, we thank The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul for its unconditional support to the Maison Flora Tristan. We understand all the constraints linked to the pandemic and so, we are even more appreciative of all the creative ways you found to help charities like ours. Your generous donation will have a significant



The staff at L'Abri en Ville have worked hard to help residents stay connected to friends and family during the pandemic.



Though they couldn't gather in person for Thanksgiving this year, all L'Abri en Ville residents received a special hot turkey meal.



Maison Flora Tristan provides a safe shelter for victims of domestic violence.



The playroom at Maison Flora Tristan



A community feast at Elizabeth House

effect on all the women and children who are victims of domestic violence who come to our house.

...Your donation makes a big difference in the lives of these families. We deeply value and cherish all that you have done to give us this outstanding, this generous present just before Christmas. Please express our gratitude to all your volunteers and members of your congregation and let them know that their hard work helps us pursue our mission especially in these difficult times.

The Montreal Children's Library, from Bailey Levine, President

Thank you so much for your recent contribution of \$2500 to the Montreal Children's Library. This generous support truly makes all the difference to the scores of children who come to us for homework help, reading clubs, and so much more... Thank you for allowing us to provide free and fun learning and literacy opportunities to some of Montreal's most at-risk youth.

Elizabeth House, from Christine Jagiello, Executive Director

...The Church School, with its gift of \$1650 and the Guild, with its donation of \$2500 have made such a difference to our young moms, their little ones and our young families, in their often fragile circumstances... Donations this year will go towards presents for the families and baskets with food items and gifts for those we service in the community... You can imagine what your generous kindness means to us, confined as we all are under a very strict lockdown!

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Homes Foundation, from Tracy Petzke, Executive Director

...We are most grateful for your generous gesture and support. The Foundation uses your contribution to support and grow our **Senior Support Program**. As you know, this initiative provides assistance for Presbyterian seniors in accessing the health care system and making the most of local community services, especially those seniors who continue living in their own homes.

...Your donation allows us to continue to provide the residents in **St. Andrew's Residential Centre** with those extras which the province does not fund. In addition to many improvements to the home and financial support of the recreation department, the Foundation also covers the cost of the dance therapy, music therapy and massage therapy offered to residents.

This past year we have also shown additional support to staff, residents and seniors in the community with our COVID-19 response plan.

Betty-Jo Christiani, Guild President



Elizabeth House celebrates Christmas



The support that they receive from Elizabeth House makes a tremendous difference in the lives of young mothers and their children.

Finding Positivity and Hope

An opportunity for reflection for St. Andrew's Presbyterian Homes Foundation

I don't think any of us imagined what the COVID-19 pandemic would amount to when it was in its infancy in the spring of 2020. Even when we first found ourselves dealing with its arrival in Montreal, we were all adapting with a sense of urgency, making sure we had access to groceries, medication and toilet paper of all things! As time passed and the pandemic evolved however, we shifted from a "fight or flight" response to having to accept a new way of life for an undetermined amount of time.

The isolation and ever-changing public health directives coupled with not knowing when this would end has without a doubt had an enormous impact on mental health. Couple that with a Montreal winter and it's easy to feel tired, hopeless and, simply put, fed up.

A multitude of aphorisms exist to express how going through difficult times results in us emerging stronger and wiser. This is because there is a truth to them which many people have experienced first-hand, either from personal hardships

or other historical acts affecting communities at large. Knowing that indeed, "this too shall pass," the importance of looking for positivity, hope and taking the opportunity for reflection are paramount.

The pandemic has provided a much-needed spotlight on seniors' issues within the general population. The community support we have witnessed has been inspirational, as is the enduring spirit of our senior friends. The pandemic has underlined the importance of our programs and brought an opportunity for reflection. As we look past the pandemic, what we have witnessed and learned over the past 11 months will help us better support our elderly population moving forwards.

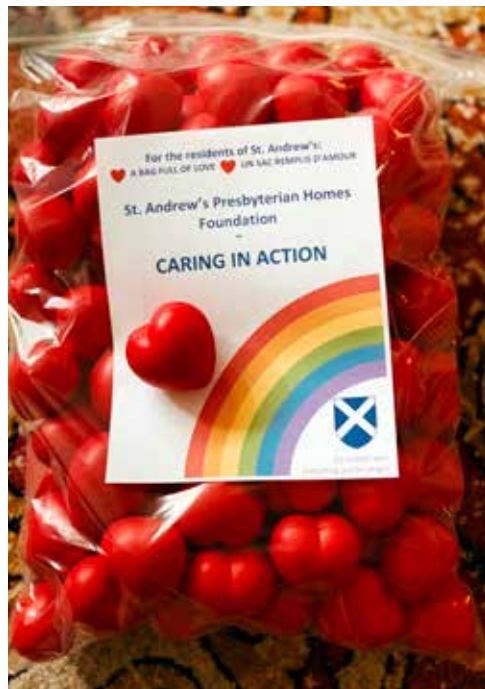
Throughout the pandemic, the Foundation has had to continuously adapt both of its programs. We were presented with the challenge of supporting our seniors with pre-existing needs as well as new ones brought on by COVID-19 - all the while having to conform to provincial health guidelines.

In the Senior Support Program (SSP), these efforts have been possible with constant communication with our seniors, their ministers, and the dedicated hard work of Patricia and Marie from our SSP team. Together we have passed through difficult times, but also experienced simple moments of joy, gratitude and belonging to a larger community. While we aimed to bring some relief to the doldrum of everyday with our Thanksgiving care packages and Christmas deliveries, please know that your many words of thanks equally brightened our days.

The St. Andrew's Residential Centre had a very difficult first wave with the majority of residents as well as many staff members infected. We offered support to residents and staff alike and came up with creative solutions to stay connected during lockdown, such as printable activities, greeting cards and phone calls. The soldiers of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada and attached medics from CFB Petawawa came to the rescue. They made a lasting impression on residents and staff
(continued on p. 8)



Staff with The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada



Stress balls for residents



Tracy Petzke delivering holiday gifts



Staff member Claudette Surpris received a certificate of appreciation from The Black Watch.



Items for residents



Activities for care packages

while gaining a newfound admiration for our healthcare workers themselves. We also collaborated in the CIUSSS-wide Project Feel the Love in order to show our support to frontline staff. As residents recovered from COVID-19 and restrictions were eased over the summer, we were able to resume our funded therapies, which we in fact doubled! These therapies remain crucial in the support provided to the residents while visits from volunteers and outside performers are not yet permitted. Holiday cheer was safely delivered to the residence and Foundation support continues. We are also extremely happy to report that no residents have tested positive for COVID-19 in the second wave and they have already received their first dose of the vaccine.

We are including some highlights of the support we have offered since the start of the pandemic and would like to thank all of our donors who make this work possible. Together we have been able to make an important impact on the lives of our elderly.

Although we have said it before in our InsideOut articles, it bears repeating: physical distancing should not mean social isolation. We invite you all to join us in keeping our community strong. Please take



Homebaked apple crumble for Thanksgiving

time to call or send a handwritten note to a family member, friend or neighbour. Stay safe, healthy, wear a mask, wash your hands frequently and know that you are thought of often. We are a phone call or email away and invite you to reach out to us.

Lastly, I would like to leave you with a quote from Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. I personally found it to be a beautiful



Staff support

analogy and even more fitting given the beauty of the windows at The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul.

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

Since the start of the pandemic....

Senior Support Program

- over 1600 calls to seniors (ongoing)
- ensured access to groceries and medication
- in-person interventions for urgent care
- 70 care packages delivered
- over 570 hours logged by SSP team (ongoing)
- over 350 hours additional private care funded (ongoing)
- over 25 hours of functional fitness sessions to safeguard strength and mobility (ongoing)
- coordination of flu-vaccination appointments (COVID-19 vaccination schedule to follow)
- accompaniment to essential medical appointments

- 72 Christmas gifts delivered
- 22 Christmas meals delivered
- Reminders of public health directives (ongoing)

St. Andrew's Residential Centre

- calls to residents and families at beginning of lockdown
- printable activities, greeting cards during lockdown
- stress balls for tactile stimulation
- ice cream during the summer

- resumed and doubled hours of dance-movement, massage & aromacare and music therapies provided at no cost to residents
- portable speakers and Spotify account for easy access to music
- holiday gifts and personal care products
- hair accessories and additional personal care items for residents
- a series of staff support deliveries

Caring in Action



Contact:

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Homes Foundation

Tracy Petzke, Executive Director

514-916-7626

standrewspresbyterianhomes@gmail.com

standrewspresbyterianhomes.org

Zooming to Saskatchewan

A first face-to-face conversation

A long friendship hit a new and happy note on a mid-February Thursday evening in a virtual meeting of our Twinning sub-committee of Mission & Outreach with the leaders of Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry. A brief retelling of our history together included a continuing commitment by Clerk of Session Michael Cristofaro to the covenant signed in 2006 by his predecessor, Dr. Lawrence Hutchison.

Limited until now to e-mail exchanges, we met new leaders in Saskatoon - Board Treasurer Sharon Nixon and new Director Dylan Nippi. And we were delighted that Rev. Stewart Folster joined us for the evening, especially with his recounting of the Ministry's growth since he was granted leadership of it as a house ministry in 1992.

News of activities, limited by COVID-19, included the ongoing food program in Saskatoon's winter, offering hot soup, sandwiches and friendship at the door. A highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the discussion of how we might continue to serve each other and deepen our relationship. This produced an impressive list of "action items" we intend to develop as we look forward to our next virtual meeting which, we agreed, should become quarterly highlights on our calendar.

Keith Randall

Ruling Elder and Interim Chair of the Twinning sub-committee of Mission & Outreach



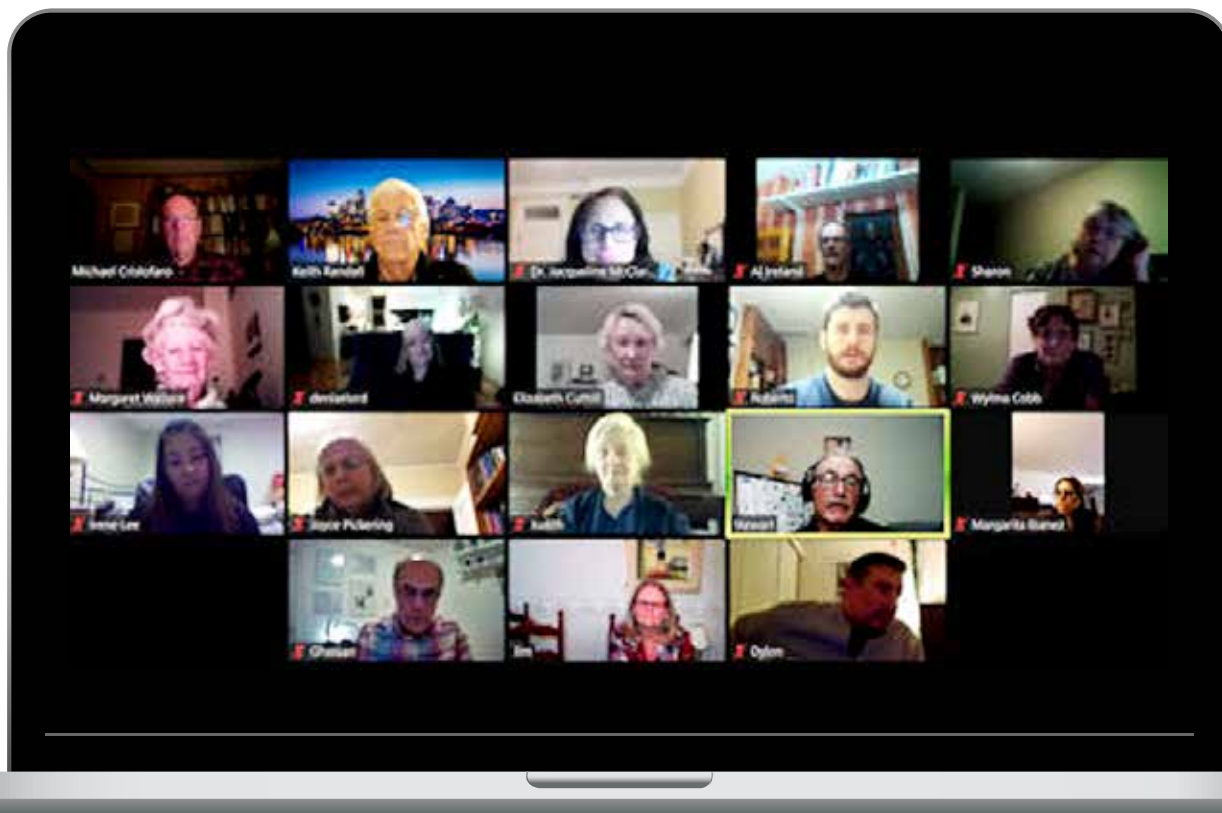
"As God is our witness, the people of the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul and the people of Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry, make this covenant. The essence of our twinning is our relationship in Christ as brothers and sisters. We promise to pray for one another and to share our joys and sorrows. We promise to correspond in various ways to enrich our friendship. We promise to find ways to share how God has spoken to us. We promise, as God leads us, to follow other paths that lead to areas of common concern. We promise to listen and learn from each other. Above all, we will share our commitment to Christ. We are the Body of Christ, in mission together, doing the work that God calls us to do."

Dr. Lawrence Hutchison
Dr. Lawrence Hutchison
Clerk of Session

Merle McGowan
Merle McGowan
Chair of the Board

Sunday, September 24, 2006

The covenant between A&P and the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry



Unexpected Innovation

How the Music Department rejigged for COVID-19



One year ago, few of us imagined that we would still be living our lives in such a radically different way in

2021. The pandemic has been devastating for us whose careers are in the arts: with churches, concert halls, and theatres closed until further notice these have been extremely difficult times, with no end in sight in the near term.

However, as the music department at St. Andrew and St. Paul, we count ourselves blessed in many ways:

- First, we are surrounded by a church community whose generous support and encouragement have made it possible for the worship and music of the church to continue, against all odds, up to the present time;
- Second, we have a technical team in place who are second to none in their commitment, competence and

adaptability (special mentions go to our audio and video guru Stratsimir Dimitrov, and Church Officer Peter Sabourin);

- Third, our music support staff (William Duffy, Choir Manager; Adam Wills Begley, Assistant Conductor; Stephanie Manias, Head Chorister; Matthew Johnson, Organ Scholar) have gone the extra mile to make it happen under challenging conditions;
- Fourth, our choristers, who have kept courage and have found the energy and drive to keep themselves vocally and artistically fit, even as much of their professional world (and income and career opportunities) have melted away;
- Fifth, our beautiful church and its well-appointed facilities, which allow us to create recordings and videos that look and sound beautiful, week after week;
- Sixth, that we live in an age of technology that gives us the tools to reach out around the world, despite our being confined by necessary public health restrictions;

- Seventh, that to date we have been spared any outbreaks of COVID-19 among the choir or church staff. Since the beginning of the pandemic we have adhered to strict and detailed health and safety protocols that have met or exceeded the requirements of the public health authorities, but there is of course always some element of risk present--and for continuing good health, we give thanks.

However, the greatest gift of the pandemic for us has been the gift of innovation. Initially, this was an involuntary gift: when the world as we knew it stopped in March 2020, we had to adapt or fold. Since that time, we have sought constantly to find new ways of tailoring the core of what we have always done (i.e. presenting great sacred music in the context of Christian worship) to the possibilities of the new platforms available to us. We also seek to be sensitive to the various movements affecting our larger society, such as Black Lives Matter, Me Too, etc., since our ministry has to engage





with society on a meaningful level if our witness is to be effective. While challenging, we have been able to harness these factors as opportunities for growth and development.

The most obvious public face of this is in the quality of the services and concerts we present online. The music team, together with Stratsi and Peter, are always looking for ways to improve the sound recording quality through better mic placement, better equipment and a better mix (made especially challenging

given the COVID-mandated minimum 2-metre distance between musicians). We are also very conscious of lighting and camera angles, which again are tricky to navigate since the ensemble is spread out widely, and the church's lighting system was not designed with video production in mind! We have added some supplemental portable lights, and plan to bring some more light sources online in the near future. Having our services in exclusively online format has also allowed us to include many still photos of the

interior of the church, highlighting details of the building and its furnishings that the regular Sunday worshipper would not see, either due to distance or accessibility—not everyone can climb into the ceiling in order to fully appreciate the beauty of the chancel floor's mosaic! And who takes the time to read all of the plaques in the Memorial Tower?

The content of what we do has also been influenced by the pandemic, in several ways. During the most acute lockdown phase in 2020, we recorded all musical content from our respective homes. As of late summer, we were able to record from the church, initially with a soloist and organ only, and since September, with a choir of 24 paid singers. However, safely placing a large orchestra and choir in the space available to us in the church remains logistically problematic; thus, for the Maison du Parc benefit concert, innovation was required. Our Conductor Jean-Sébastien Vallée discovered a new chamber ensemble arrangement of Johannes Brahms' Requiem, a work that traditionally calls for an orchestra of 40+ players: Joachim Linckelmann has created a reduced version for five strings, five woodwinds, timpani and organ. We recorded this back in October for broadcast on December 1st (World AIDS Day), and the result can be viewed [here](#). We are taking a similar approach for Good Friday 2021, which will feature a chamber version of Verdi's Requiem, scored for choir, soloists, French horn, double bass, timpani, marimba, gran cassa and organ.

In response to two of the major movements that have rocked our society over the past few years, we are also taking steps to actively and thoughtfully consider equity, diversity and inclusion in all of our programming and activities. While maintaining the standards of excellence and the core sacred repertoire which are central to A&P's musical ministry, we are committed to reflecting the increasingly global and diverse community in which we live, through the music and texts we choose. This includes throughout the year featuring works composed by members of historically under-represented groups; or, without compromising their poetic quality, carefully reviewing the texts we
(continued on p. 12)

sing to avoid excluding people; and other initiatives still under consideration.

At A&P we have a long history of collaborations with outside organizations, and this has continued despite COVID-19. As stated above, for World AIDS Day 2020 we continued our collaboration with OSM Players' Association, Maison du Parc, and a truly outstanding technical production team for a memorable performance of Brahms' *Requiem*. For the Bach Odyssey series (launched February 15, 2021, and running until June 24) we have collaborated with Elinor Frey, who is a rising star on the international baroque cello scene; with St. Matthias Anglican Church, Westmount; with violinist Emmanuel Vukovich; with Earth World Collective, one of the most innovative groups in the Montreal avant-garde music scene; and sound and video producer Jean-Paul Desjardins. N.B. also that Emmanuel's videos prominently feature our church's landmark Lawrence

Lee stained glass windows; his first video of the series can be seen [here](#).

Another level of innovation includes a CD recording project entitled *Distance*, which we recorded back in October 2020; the release is scheduled for March-April 2021. In programming *Distance*, we have tried to capture the essence of life during this pandemic. We were of course physically distanced while making the recording, but have translated this into a wider metaphor. In the past year, we have all experienced distance as a loss: as separation from our loved ones, as hiatus from our favourite activities, as a halt to travel, as a loss of employment; etc. On the positive side, we have sometimes experienced distance as an opportunity to step back from our regular hectic pace; as a chance to reflect on the deeper things of life; as impetus to deepen relationships through channels other than face-to-face meetings. The concept of the recording was enthusiastically received by ATMA Classique, the

label with whom we've released our last two choral CDs; Naxos, the major multinational label who own ATMA, have been similarly enthused, and it looks as though we are in line to be promoted quite heavily by them in the next while. This larger platform will allow us to greatly increase the reach of our church's music ministry, and the witness of A&P to the world.

From unforeseen circumstances have come unforeseen opportunities, and we are working hard to maintain an effective and relevant musical ministry through these strange days. Our greatest hope, though, is for the day when we can all gather in person with the full A&P community and lift our voices together in worship. Until that time, we pray for the health and well-being of one and all.

Jonathan Oldengarm
Director of Music

Events Listing for February – June

All concerts and services are available online exclusively, at [youtube.com/standrewstpaul](https://www.youtube.com/standrewstpaul)



Ein deutsches Requiem, op. 45 - Johannes Brahms

Brahms' timeless masterpiece, performed by the A&P Choir,

members of the OSM Players' Association; Karina Gauvin, soprano; Russell Braun, baritone; Jean-Sébastien Vallée, direction.

[Watch here.](#)

2021 Bach Odyssey February 16 to June 24

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Elinor Frey presents J.S. Bach's complete 'cello suites, two movements per episode. All performances from memory,

and unedited. The first video in the series can be heard [here](#).

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Jonathan Oldengarm presents Bach's complete Leipzig Chorales, one per episode, the great composer's last testament in this genre. Recorded on the lovely 1973 Karl Wilhelm organ of St. Matthias' Anglican Church, Westmount, QC, each chorale setting is preceded by baritone Nathaniel Watson singing the chorale. The first video in the series can be heard [here](#).

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Emmanuel Vukovich performs Bach's complete sonatas and partitas for solo violin, a summit of the repertoire for the instrument. Each video features two Bach movements, as well as the church's

Lawrence Lee stained glass windows. The first episode can be seen [here](#).

Good Friday Choral Service: Requiem - Giuseppe Verdi

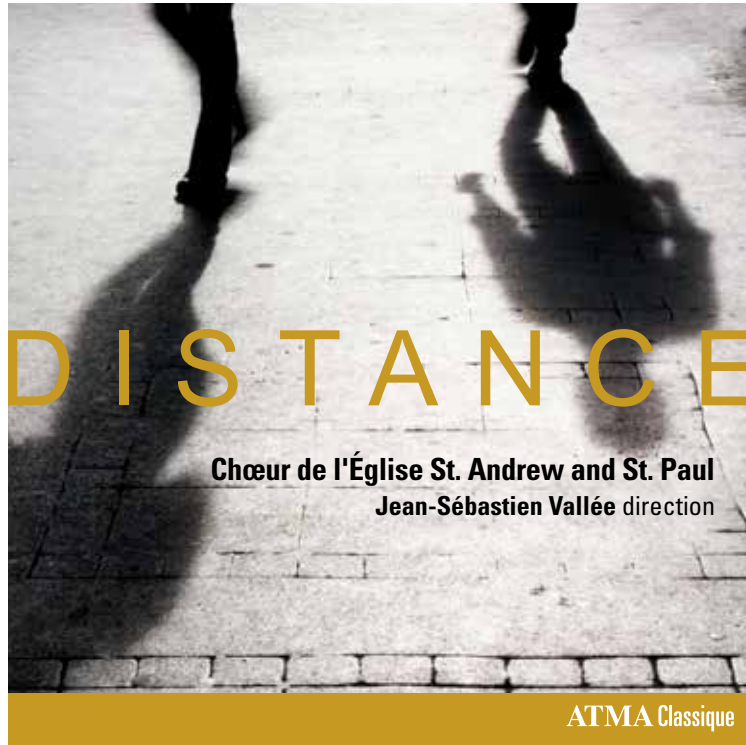
Premieres Good Friday, April 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at www.youtube.com/standrewstpaul

Often described as Verdi's best opera, the Requiem is here presented in an intimate and daring arrangement for choir, soloists, French horn, percussion, double bass and organ.

Jean-Sébastien Vallée
Conductor

Discovering Our Distanced Musical Universe

A Q&A with Jean-Sébastien Vallée on the A&P Choir's new album, *Distance*



Where did the idea of creating a program on the theme of “distance” come from?

I started thinking about this program shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic began. I was deeply affected by the situation when in March 2020 the world came to a standstill, and the voices of millions of singers worldwide were abruptly silenced. The consequences of the pandemic were disastrous, and I started feeling an oppressive sense of isolation. Creativity and music, although nearly impossible at the time, appeared to be the only releases from this unprecedented situation. The inspiration for this recording was born out of pandemic-induced hurdles. Precisely at the moment when music seemed to be at a full stop, the need to create and express seemed most acute. The idea was not to return to singing and create a recording despite the situation, but rather fully engage with the situation. I knew it would be logistically, musically, and emotionally difficult to record an album of choral music amid the pandemic, but it felt necessary to document and create a musical memento of this situation. And while the human voice was the riskiest medium, it seemed to be the most appropriate to describe the vulnerability and the complex human experiences shared all around the world. After an initial repertoire brainstorm, it became evident that the situation wasn't just negative and dramatic. We were all certainly experiencing the concept of distance through the lens of absence, separation, and physical and spiritual distance, but the themes of hope, resilience, the appreciation of simple pleasures, and the development of our sense of community and common purpose were also truly relevant to the situation and are expressed in the recording.

The recording was made after many months of musical separation and silent concert halls. Describe the emotions that you experienced at your first in-person rehearsal as the sound of live singing filled the church.

It was truly magical. We had been working on several small projects leading to the recording, but the first read-through with the full group was truly emotional. One of the first pieces we rehearsed was *Lux Aeterna*, a choral adaption of Elgar's Nimrod, and when we reached the climax of the piece, we could barely hold back our tears. Even with the physical distancing, we could sense the power of the music linking us all together. Although mostly joyful, the first rehearsals for this project were also stressful. Even though we were working under a really strict sanitary protocol, we knew there were some risks in singing together. I think the interpretation of the music recorded on the album certainly shows the mixed feelings, ranging from joy to fear, that were experienced by the ensemble.

What makes choral singing such a powerful, uplifting, and sustaining force?

The human voice is the simplest and yet one of the most complex musical instruments. I always describe a choir as a micro representation of an ideal society, that is, many individuals with different and unique voices working together diligently to create harmony and unison of intent. Being both vulnerable and powerful, the human voice, especially in a *cappella* music, speaks directly to the soul of the listener, and this is why choral singing is so moving. There is also no choral music without a strong sense of community within the ensemble, and this is what makes choral ensembles so unique and resilient.

The recording sessions took place at the height of the second wave of the pandemic with strict distancing and health and safety protocols in place. What was that experience like for you and the musicians?

Distancing was obviously a challenge. Singers are used to be able to easily hear each other, but this was almost impossible since the choir was spread out in the nave to follow our strict distancing protocol. However, this situation proved to be a great exercise of trust – each singer had to be confident and independent in their performance while trusting their colleagues without clearly hearing them. After a few challenging first rehearsals, I noticed that the choir was singing even more together than before – there was a clear sense of musical leadership that was emerging from within the ensemble and making it more cohesive than ever. We even joked that we should keep singing following the distancing protocol even when it is not a requirement anymore! The other main challenge was to sing with a mask on. Singers only took off their masks when a take was being recorded. In all other instances (rehearsals, notes, etc.), the ensemble remained masked. Obviously, singing with a mask affected breathing, tone, and enunciation, which made the rehearsal process more challenging but also formative for the ensemble.

(continued on p. 14)

The program for *Distance* juxtaposes choral music selections from the 17th century with 20th and 21st-century works. What was the rationale behind this juxtaposition?

We wanted to evoke the concept of distance in all possible ways. Having musical selections ranging several centuries was one way of illustrating temporal distance. This concept is also demonstrated in 21st-century compositions bringing together new and old compositional techniques – this is the case in the last piece of the album, *Laudibus in sanctis* by Latvian composer Uģis Prauliņš, where rock influences are superimposed with medieval sonorities. In addition to time, the repertoire also explores physical distance with the use of several works for double choirs. One of them by Sulpitia Cesis, a 16th-century cloistered nun from Modena, who composed an important collection of motets. Cesis's music, which was influenced by her secluded lifestyle, seemed to be the perfect fit to evoke our 21st-century pandemic situation.

Tell us about how you selected the more contemporary compositions, including *Ni de l'Est ni de l'Ouest*, dedicated to the memory of the victims of the 2017 Québec City Mosque shooting.

The purpose of this recording was to create a memento of the situation experienced by the members of the ensemble. It was, therefore, important to feature works by composers from historically underrepresented communities and to address societal issues related to distance and division. This is why I decided to include *Ni de l'Est ni de l'Ouest*, a piece commissioned from Montreal composer and choir member, William Kraushaar. This piece merges poems by two Islamic scholars, Saadi and Rumi, with the text of Psalm 133 and the final line of the *Agnus Dei* (grant us peace). This work was composed in remembrance of the victims of the 2017 Québec City Mosque shooting and calls for the building of bridges, for the distance to be removed, that is, "we are all members of one another and created from the same matter. If a member is suffering, others will not know happiness."

How has your relationship to your work as a conductor changed as a result of the pandemic?

Like most musicians, the pandemic made me realize how important music was to me. My work as a conductor is more than what I do for a living. It is in fact who I am and how I express myself – it's truly in my DNA. The past year has taught me that I too often take my musical activities for granted. Being silenced for months allowed me to realize how important creation of music is to me and our society. When we resumed our choral activities in the fall, I discovered a renewed sense of gratefulness for what I do and especially for the people I work with. Singing creates community, and it is a powerful motor of change that I find more relevant now than ever. In these difficult times, this recording project has brought us together, despite our enforced physical distance, and I'm thrilled to now welcome the listeners to our distanced musical universe.

An In-House Musical Blessing

Making music to pay tribute to victims of the Québec City Mosque Shooting

*Ni de l'Est, ni de l'Ouest,
Ni croyance, ni culture
Ni issus de l'Océan, ni issus de la Terre,
Les Hommes sont membres les uns des autres,
Et créés de la même matière,
Si un membre est affligé,
Les autres n'auront pas de repos.*

**Ecce quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!
Dona nobis pacem.*

(Translation: How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in harmony!
Give us peace)

When I first heard this piece and the mention of it being 'a tribute to the victims of the Québec City mosque shooting' in the program for the Distance Vespers service last November 2020, I had to find out more.

Who wrote it and how did our music department come to include it in the service?



Composer and A&P Choir Member
William Kraushaar

So I googled the composer, William Kraushaar, and he turns out to be a member of the A&P choir, singing bass, and a composer for both choral and film music.

In 2018, our choral director, Jean-Sébastien Vallée, received a carte blanche commission for a piece for the Canadian Youth Choir tour in 2020. Vallée, who was to be guest conductor of the choir at its first concert planned for Quebec City, suggested Kraushaar as the composer.

A year had passed since the 2017 shooting; the two musicians decided to dedicate the piece to those families and to call it “Ni de l’Est, ni de l’Ouest.”

“The whole shooting and aftermath was about everyone being at peace. I had this idea about text in a few languages, taken from various religious and secular sources,” says Kraushaar.

He says he wanted to make something that was universal. So he looked for poems of contemporaries of the people responsible for the Bible. The French lyrics are from works by Sufi poets Rumi and Saadi, “Sufi poets and mystic poets from the very early period of Islam,” he tells me. The blessing at the end is taken from Psalm 133 of the Bible (Good News Bible translation).

Kraushaar says the lyrics talk about “how we’re not from the east from the west, if one member is oppressed then all the others will not know rest. It is good to see all brothers and sisters meeting as one.” He hopes the lyrics feel “like a hug between the religions and cultures of the East and the West.”

Kraushaar describes the tone of the music. “It suits what is said. I wanted it to sound peaceful, nostalgic. It’s about a sad event. And then it ends in something restful, peaceful. Like all music I write, it just comes from what I’ve been working on lately; I love Baroque music and wrote a fugue in the piece set on the Latin words.”

He says the first time he heard the piece was when he sang it at its premiere at our Vespers service.

“The hard thing about writing music in general is that you never know what it really sounds like until you hear it with real people.” In a way, he says, “I would have preferred not to sing it; just to stand back and listen, part of me just wants to hear what it’s like.”

He’s looking forward to hearing what it sounds like on the new recording that the choir will be releasing this spring. “It’s strange but a great feeling, a privilege to hear the music not just in your head or on paper. It’s quite a thrill. I can’t wait to hear the recording.”

Kraushaar says he never studied voice. “I took a bit of piano as a kid, just because I was told to.” But as a teen, he says, he wanted to learn about pop music, to play Beatles songs, so he started playing guitar and bass in bands. “Doing so many things, there was no way I was going to be a classical musician.” But he says he has a deep voice; “and that is useful. I climbed the corporate singing ladder quite quickly.” Writing for choir, he says, happened because he was singing a lot and now the human voice is the instrument he understands the best. “I was not a virtuoso violin player. There was no way before my teens you could have guessed I was going to be a classical singer.” But he now sings with the A&P choir, as well as SMAM, the OSM and others.

I spoke to William Kraushaar about his tribute to the victims of the Quebec City mosque shooting on January 29, 2021, the fourth anniversary of the horrific shooting.

Pour le Choeur National des Jeunes du Canada 2020, sous la direction de Jean-Sébastien Vallée.
For the National Youth Choir of Canada 2020, conducted by Jean-Sébastien Vallée.

NI DE L'EST, NI DE L'OUEST

William KRAUSHAAAR (1989)
novembre 2019

très lent, libre $\text{♩} = 68$

à peine moins lent, a tempo $\text{♩} = 72$

Ni de l'Est, ni de l'Ouest, ni cro-yance, ni cul-tu-re,

Copyright © William Kraushaar 2019

The lyrics for “Ni de l’Est Ni de l’Ouest”, taken from the writings of Sufi poets, Rumi and Saadi, as well as the Latin title of Psalm 133, Ecce Quam Bonum. “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

“Sadly in the last few years we’re getting used to such events, getting numb with this news. But we wouldn’t expect that would happen here in Quebec. You’re flabbergasted that your people are also capable of such things. Even in our nice country, our nice province, there could be someone angry enough, it’s obviously shocking. Music can’t change things but having any form or trace of memory or way to underline that we remember this and we think about it is a good thing, to remember these people and these events.”

“Ni de l’Est, ni de l’Ouest” has been recorded for the CD, *Distance*, featuring the A&P Choir conducted by Jean-Sébastien Vallée. The CD will be released April 2nd on the Atma label. The album was inspired by the theme of isolation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jeanette Kelly
Co-Chair, Communications Committee

An Avalanche of Pain

A testimony to teaching the troubled



Most members of our church community might know me as a member of the church choir and as the present Chair of Worship and Music, but my day job is a bit different. I am a Special Education Teacher (Math, Music and Visual Arts) at Mountainview H.S. in Prévost. The students in our school are there by order of youth court, either for their protection or for criminal charges. They are in the “system.” They live in several houses or units, three for the boys and one for the girls, which are staffed 24/7. Some are allowed weekend passes. There are also two locked units where students stay for weeks, months, and sometimes a year or more. Our total population can be up to 40 kids, aged 12 to 17. At 18 they leave or are transferred.

We teach in a Trauma Informed environment. This means that we are teaching kids who have all been subject to some sort of abuse, be it mental, physical, sexual, drugs, food insecurity, unsafe housing, lack of parental role models, etc. ... Think of all the ills of our society, these kids have experienced them. They often have severe trust issues and difficulty in regulating their emotions. Their self-confidence is cratered. Normal personal relations aren't part of their experience, never mind the learning disabilities and drug dependency issues. They are volatile, angry, scared, depressed, suspicious, withdrawn, unpredictable.

So, what do we do as educators faced with this avalanche of pain? I often describe it as applying a band-

aid to open heart surgery. Each day is a different world from the day before. Small moments when we can move things forward can bring a sense of accomplishment to their day, and these successes can reap outsized gains. When it is a “spicy” situation, we are cool, helping them move to a calmer place and protecting them by using our team (Social Technician, Security, Unit Staff, Nurse) and getting them to a safe space. Stern words, raised voices, anger, remonstrations, none of that works. It's what they are used to. We then engage them after each incident, working to restore understanding and communication. Subject matter often takes a back seat. I suppose it applies to any teaching circumstance. It is not about the “stuff” we teach (it's never about

the stuff), it's about helping them figure themselves out, how they learn. For these vulnerable kids, especially so.

Although our secular society doesn't allow me to talk about my Faith and God's message of Hope and Love in school, it infuses my every action. These kids expect to be abandoned, castigated, dismissed, neglected. Most often, their days are dreary, so encouragement and engagement make all the difference. Sometimes, when the reality of their situation becomes difficult to handle, I lean on Him. Without my core Christian belief, I could not persevere. Recently, one of our kids out on a weekend pass was found dead, frozen to death in a car due to a drug overdose. He was 17 years old. There can be a lot of leaning.

But there is also joy and appreciation. A shy girl from the Far North, after months of not trusting me, let me read her poetry. Such moments remind me that the Holy Spirit can cradle even the most wounded in his arms and give gifts. It was such an honour.

It's not often a normal student-teacher experience, but it is important to be there. These kids have few people in their corner, so it's satisfying to help.

As an aside to all this, I sorely miss, as I am sure you all do, not having our weekly moment of collective prayer and music-making on Sundays. I miss the renewal, the fellowship and connection. Please stay safe. We will be together again soon. Blessings to all.

*Desmond Byrne
A&P Chorister and Chair of the Worship and Music Committee*



Desmond Byrne



Patience – We're Almost There

An encouraging message from the Ministry Committee

The Ministry Committee of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul continues to seek ways to reach out to our congregation. We remain committed to staying connected and supportive during these times of COVID-19.

We continue with our very successful "Reconnecting with Each Other" Zoom series and the thoughtful B.L.E.S.S. initiative. Church School continues to welcome the young and young-at-heart, from near and far, in ever-greater numbers every week. The Youth Group remains active in its

plans to meet and to fundraise for worthy causes and the Young Adults' Group holds "Dinner and Discussion" evenings to keep in touch and to keep learning.

As we wait for better days, we must remember that every day, we get closer to the end of this pandemic and further away from its beginning. We are almost there. With this thought in mind, let us exercise gratitude for the resiliency of the human spirit and some of life's blessings that have come to us in disguise.

To begin with, we have learned more

about - and mastered - technology we once thought beyond us, permitting us to work from home, be entertained, learn, and feel less alone. We have found safe ways to "see" loved ones and to help where we are needed despite lockdowns and restrictions. We have recognized how hectic our pace of life was before and how we can slow it down now, giving ourselves time for meaningful thought and reflection, for trying out new hobbies, reading new books, taking longer walks. We have recognized the treasure that is our family.

We will soon be out of the snowy season and back in the warm embrace of spring; enjoying its first mild winds and gentle rains, new buds and the warming sun. Patience - we are almost there. Let us count our blessings. We are in this together, in Christ.

Keep an eye on our website and the e-blasts from the church to stay informed on all the ways you can join in!

Our church continues to thrive, by the Grace of God.

*Bobbie Variantzas Cristofaro
Chair, Ministry*

A Blessing from Bulgaria

Stratsi's amazing audio-visual magic

We are truly blessed in this pandemic to have such excellent production values for our online services. Thanks to the work of Stratsimir Dimitrov, every Sunday at 11 a.m. we can go to our YouTube channel and expect to listen to and watch a technically beautiful service complete with carefully crafted recordings and well-chosen images that make A&P's services a pleasure to watch and a comfort to people across Canada and indeed around the world.

We are very thankful for the dedication and seemingly endless work that Stratsi does to put together not only the recordings but all the visuals for the services. As a

way to say a heartfelt thank you to Stratsi, we designed this short questionnaire. Get to know him and how he works and say Hi and thanks so much to our in-church recording and video producer, affectionately known as 'Stratsi.'

Q&A with our resident videographer and recording producer Stratsimir Dimitrov

When did you first come to A&P?

I believe that was in the summer of 2012. My wife told me A&P has one of the best music programs in Montreal, so we came to a service.

How did you start getting involved with recording the Sunday services?

The answer is a bit long. First I joined the A&P choir as a volunteer chorister. I was singing there for about 4 years. Then, there was a need for a Sound and Light technician and I applied and got the position. Actually, the sound and light job is more than just recording the Sunday services. You have to follow and execute a long sequence of sound and light cues, ringing the bell, making two different mixes - one for the PA system in the sanctuary, and the second one for the live streaming. Also, maintaining and preparing all the equipment needed



Stratsi recording a service from the gallery control booth

for the services. The recording before the pandemic was only done in order to archive our services.

How has your work changed with the pandemic?

My work changed drastically overnight. I received a Zoom call from Jonathan Oldengarm and Jean-Sébastien Vallée asking me to do something like a virtual service, where all the parts will be pre-recorded and we'll just upload it on our YouTube channel. I said - yes, let's try. I had to learn new software and video editing very quickly. The first few months everything was virtual and I had to put it

together in a video format for our services. That meant editing together voices from the virtual choir and piecing together all the prayers, sermon recordings and Bible readings. A few months later, when we went back to the sanctuary for recordings of our music content, we had to transform the sanctuary into a video studio. We had some parts of the infrastructure already, because of our live stream, but there was a lot to be done.

What do you enjoy the most about working with the people in the music program?

The people from the music department are something special. Even before the pandemic, I have always been amazed with their willingness for excellence. When the restrictions kicked in, I saw the music department in a new light. They are the perfect example of taking advantage of restrictions and transferring them into a strength, using it like a tool for better results. Amazing people with a great set of problem-solving skills.

What inspires you for the images you use during the service recordings?

During these strange times and with this new format of our services, I just saw the opportunity to show parts of our sanctuary which we didn't pay attention to, or we were taking for granted during normal times. I know our congregation is very proud of the church building and puts a lot of effort into maintaining it in this great condition. So I try to find a good spot in the service and especially in the music part to insert images from the sanctuary. This way we can stay connected with the church and enjoy the magnificent architecture!

What do you hope your work gives people?

Both my grandfathers were ministers in Bulgaria and I understand very well the need of the congregation to worship together. In this new reality, I hope that my work is keeping them connected via online services and also extending the

number of people worshipping with the A&P congregation.

What do you dream of being able to do for the church?

Maybe the next logical step, when we go back to normal, will be to think of improving our live streams every Sunday.

How does your personal background in music help with this work?

I think it's fundamental. Simply, I wouldn't be able to do my job without my musical education background. I studied bassoon at a music school in Bulgaria. Then I went to the Bulgarian National Music Academia to study Jazz drums. I also conducted the "Soli Deo Gloria" choir at the Holy Trinity Church in Plovdiv - Bulgaria for 11 or 12 years. When I came to Canada in 2011, I completed a degree at Concordia, again in Jazz Studies with drums.

I'm able to read music and I try to learn the music during the recording session so afterwards, when I start editing it, I'm already quite familiar with the choral music. It would be very difficult to familiarize myself with the music as quickly, without my music background.

When do you take a rest?

Good question. Maybe the simplest answer is - whenever it is possible. I'm looking forward to the time we'll go back to normal, or to the new normal, when things will be a bit more settled for me.

*Q&A by Jeanette Kelly
Co-Chair, Communications Committee*



A Tasting Community

How Ellian Seto inspired Taste of the Nations

Sharing a traditional dish is common to all cultures. It unites local ingredients, season, tradition, country, family, friends, and inspiration.

Some 16 years ago, Ellian Seto, a well-loved member of our church, had the idea of sharing the culinary traditions of the congregation when reading her *Presbyterian Daily Devotional*, "Bread Breakers," and she suggested what became "A Taste of the Nations Buffet" to the Mission and Outreach Committee.

The message is about offering hospitality to one another without grumbling, a message from *1 Peter 4:9* "Open your homes to each other without complaining."

"This event is a great blessing of love to the church, the hosts make calls to guests, asking them to bring appetizers, salads, side dishes and sweets," says Ellian Seto.

Since then, "Taste of the Nations" buffet has been held once a year on the last Sunday of February following the "Heritage Sunday" Service. The service includes prayers of unity, love and recognition of the creation in five different languages and a parade of more than 30 flags representing the countries of origin of members of our congregation.

The potluck lunch is a time for fellowship with other members and visitors; the atmosphere is cozy and relaxed. The People go away feeling connected to one another, much like the fellowship meals of the first Christians.

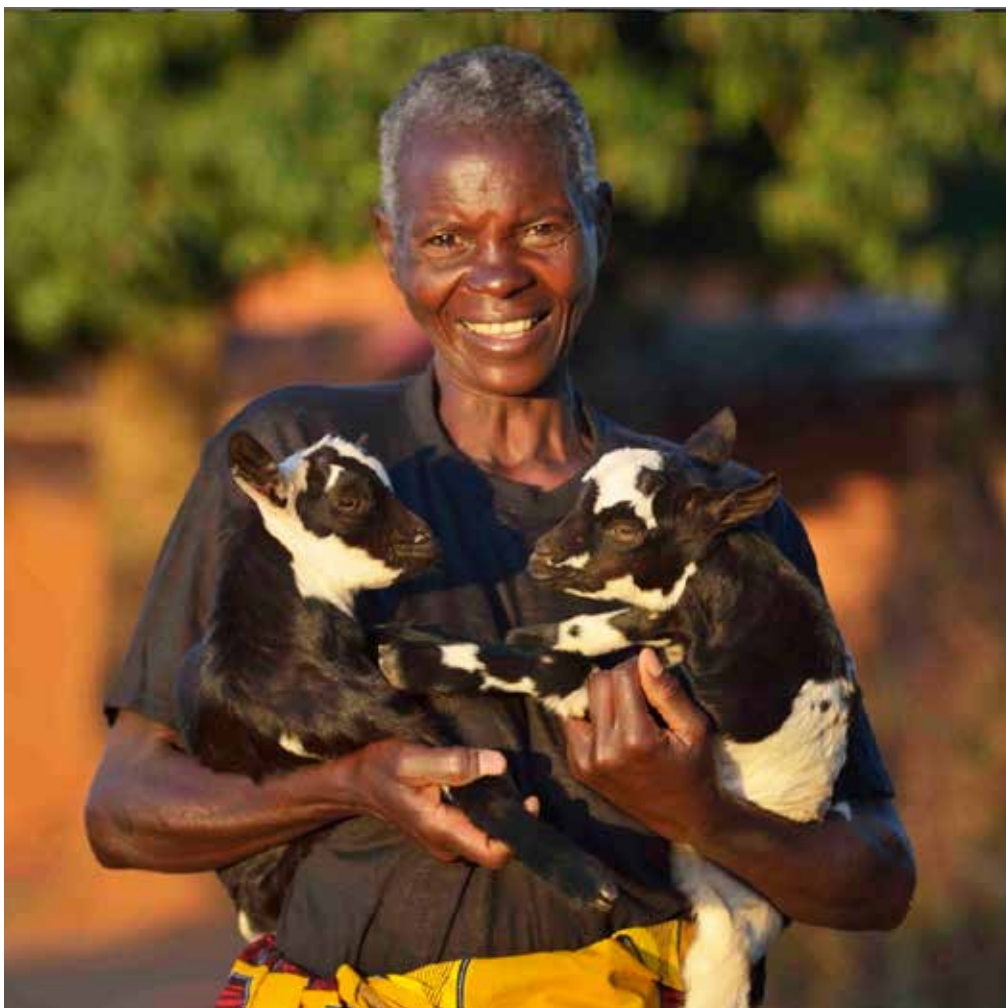
Since we cannot meet in person for our feast this year, we want to celebrate the

tradition by creating a Taste of Nations cookbook to share the rich heritage of our members at The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal.

In gratitude for these good memories, for the trip around the world with international delicacies, we would like to extend these

blessings and support *Presbyterian World Service and Development* through donations and our gift of the cookbook.

Margarita Medina-Ibanez
Mission and Outreach, Chair



PWS&D supports people in need across the globe



2020 Heritage Sunday celebration



Photo by Bianca Ackerman



Photo by Jesse Orico



Photo by Shawn Pang

What Can I Do?

Climate Change and the Presbyterian Church

The Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is staging a virtual and interactive conference, *Climate Change: What Can I Do?*, October 15 and 16, 2021. Delegates to this event will come from all the Presbyterian churches between Quebec City, including Montreal, Ottawa, the Seaway-Glengarry region, and Lanark and Renfrew, Ontario. An invited panel will participate as part of the proceedings in a Friday-evening Climate Change Town Hall discussion.

Climate change has been an ongoing concern in the 21st century global consciousness. As such, we are aware of the scientific and political ramifications for the future. The conference will seek to find out what a Christian perspective can add to the fight to avoid global disaster. It is our

objective to challenge our members to ask themselves what they can do. How might their belief in Jesus Christ be mobilized to help save the planet God created for our enjoyment?

Our Guest Speaker is the Reverend Dr. Norman Wirzba of Duke University. Dr. Wirzba will present three plenary sessions: *What Kind of World Are We In?* introduces the idea that the world is God's creation and what difference it makes to think this way; *What Is The Point of the World?* says, even if the world is God's creation, we must still wonder about its point, meaning, and purpose and *Eating Our Way To Heaven* uses food systems and eating practices to bring the two previous plenaries into clear focus. In the Climate Change Town Hall, a panel of a politician, a clergyman, a farmer, and a scientist will discuss the theme in a Q & A moderated by Dr. Wirzba. Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions to Dr. Wirzba in advance and engage in breakout room discussions.

Norman Wirzba is a Professor of Theology and Ecology at Duke Divinity

School in Durham, North Carolina. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Making Peace with the Land* and *Living the Sabbath*. Dr. Wirzba has based the conference presentation on his books: *From Nature to Creation – A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving Our World* and *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*.

More details to follow. Mark your calendar now!

There will also be a special preview session for this conference via Zoom on Friday, May 14th at 7:00 PM. This session will be part of the Young Adult Group's discussion series, and all members of the congregation who wish to attend will be welcome. Stay tuned for more details in the weeks leading up to this event.

Information : 450-466-1457,
davidchristiani403@gmail.com

Source : Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario
1711 County Road 2, Johnston ON K0E 1T1
613-657-3803 davidchristiani403@gmail.com

When Stairs are Obstacles

Marking the 25th anniversary of the installation of the elevator



It is hard to believe that 25 years have passed since the installation of the elevator in Kildonan Hall. But this was one of our objectives - it had to fit in, so much so that it can be hard to find.

For many years, great concern had been expressed about the steep stairs in Church House. Not only were those in wheelchairs prevented from attending events in Kildonan Hall, but mothers with strollers - to say nothing of those of us long in years and short of breath! Typical of the times, the stairs were steeper and higher than we are accustomed to today.

Something had to be done about these treacherous and congested steps. At the Annual Congregational Meeting, held on February 27, 1996 a special presentation was made by Ian Moodie and Bruce Bolton regarding an elevator for Church House. The proposal was approved in principle, with questions asked about its location and size.

An elevator committee was appointed consisting of Victor Goldthorp, Richard Hobart, Gordon McGilton, Ian Moodie, Dorothy Thomas-Edding and James Wilson, with Bruce Bolton as its chair. A feasibility study was undertaken and on the strength of its findings, Rubin & Rotman Architects, were engaged to draw up

plans. The project was put out to tender in late June. Three bids were received and the firm of Mydel Construction selected. The contract was signed on July 16, with work commencing July 29. The target date for completion was November 1st and this deadline was met with a week to spare.

The challenge facing the architect was to insert an elevator into an existing historic building without disrupting the aesthetic, functional and structural characteristics of the original church.

Stephen Rotman found an elegant and functional solution to the problem. His design included a new accessible washroom, as well as a renovated men's locker room and washroom (although the men in the choir were distressed by the loss of their shower). The Kindergarten room, though smaller, was made more attractive and useful. The actual construction was also quite challenging for Paul Maislin and Glen Kertland, the contractors. The building of the elevator



Upstairs lobby pre-elevator

shaft required inventive techniques as well as good old-fashioned hard labour excavation. The hydraulic mechanism was firmly fixed onto the Mount Royal bedrock. The finishes were chosen by Carelyn Moodie, Interior Designer, a member of the congregation. The granite floors, bronze detailing and improved lighting added a bright small lobby at the base of the stairs with access to the new accessible toilet, and a water fountain.

Over the years Peter Sabourin has taken great care of the elevator's finishing, using a padded matt to protect its walls when moving heavy and awkward items. Our maintenance contract with Thyssenkrupp is quite reasonable and covers all eventualities.

Inauguration day for the elevator was joyous and a celebration with balloons, short speeches and prayers. The success of the project was eloquently approved by Jim Wilson, one of a number of our members who use a wheelchair, who arrived at Kildonan Hall in the elevator and said, "I have always wanted to see Kildonan Hall."

May the elevator be used by all to enhance our Christian experience at The Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul.

PS - The same team responsible for our elevator converted the single washroom at the Porte Cochère entrance into two modern washrooms in keeping with the location, one of them being accessible.

Bruce Bolton

THE ELEVATOR IS IN BUSINESS



The balloons were at the ready ...

The balloons were in place — with special thanks to choristers who risked their voices with the helium! The noise-makers were being blown by children and adults alike. We waited at the entrance to Kildonan Hall for the ceremony that would open the elevator!

Members of the choir downstairs sang a Swedish hymn of thanksgiving. The minister said a prayer and a blessing. James Wilson cut the ribbons at the lower door of the elevator as he entered, and the upper one as he arrived, to be greeted by cheers and clapping!!

This official opening and blessing of the elevator is the final step in a series of improvements that have been added to Church House this summer. Last issue, we made special mention of those who were battling the dust, the noise, and the general chaos. We thank them again. We also thank the members of the elevator committee who carefully planned the exercise and brought it to its wonderful conclusion. Committee members are Bruce Bolton, chairman, Victor Goldthorp, Richard Hobart, Gordon McGilton, Ian Moodie, Dorothy Thomas-Edding, and James Wilson.

A special word of appreciation must go to the chairman of the Elevator Committee, and of the Board of Trustees Bruce Bolton. His energy, imagination and leadership made sure that these projects actually happened. This positive action signals to our community that we are here to stay! Thank you Bruce, and a sincere "thank you" too to your family who gave you the support to get the job done!



They're pleased with the result of their work! L to R: Victor Goldthorp, architect Stephen Rotman, Carelyn Moodie, Dick Hobart, and Bruce Bolton.



The choir sang ...



James Wilson arrived amid balloons!



Ted and Betty Savage arrive with Dr. Armour.

The celebration of the new elevator was featured in InsideOut.



Upstairs lobby today



The elevator - still going strong after 25 years!

Thanks for Listening

Creating community through communications

The Communications Committee is always looking for ways to bring our congregation together and create community. Through the eblasts announcing various events and activities at the church, we hope to inspire you to connect with others and to be loving Christians in the wider world.

One of our eblasts before Christmas, 500 for Christmas, is an example of how you pay attention and get involved. The invitation was to prepare Christmas baskets for Innovation Youth's project to bring food and winter clothing to people in need in the downtown area. And so many of you took up the invitation. Here's what the organizer of the event, Jenna Smith, wrote to Keith Randall in an email:

"First of all, and I lament that I have not written this sooner, but I wanted to say THANK-YOU to the entire church of St. Andrew and St. Paul's for their INCREDIBLE generosity for the 500 for Christmas campaign. I worked on the floor that week at the food bank and was so touched by the dozens and dozens of people coming in to drop off their Christmas baskets. Time and time I would ask, "and where are you from?" And get the familiar answer, "From A&P!" Someone at your church (or maybe several people) did a phenomenal job on communicating the needs, and your wonderful congregants certainly stepped up to the challenge!"

Last fall, at one of our first communications meetings, Glenn and Ian suggested we think about organizing small groups to get together. They thought this might meet a need for companionship during the COVID-19 confinement. Gwen Tracy had an idea inspired by one of her flock, Sylvia Schmutz, to create a travel group. Caroline Leamon took over the organization of the travel group, taking registrations and organizing breakout room facilitators and a series of questions to prompt the discussion. DK Fynn was an invaluable aid for all the computer-related connections and helped everyone get comfortable with the Zoom technology. The group had their first meeting February 14 and it was a tremendous success. Fifty people asked to join the group. The topic was a visit to St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. And the invitation suggested, since we were also celebrating Valentine's Day, participants were invited to bring a sweet snack to the Zoom meeting. "Planning team member Sylvia recommends Lindt chocolates from Switzerland and a glass of your favourite dessert wine!"

Travel fans watched a video visit of the cathedral and the participants were invited to take part in breakout groups, led by fellow A&P travellers. All in all, it was an enormous success and there are now several destinations for future travel group get-togethers via Zoom.

We are also excited to report on the progress of our YouTube services. We reached over 1,000 subscribers by the end of 2020 and the numbers keep growing by about 10 per week. Our numbers are now 1,106 and that's up from around 300 subscribers in February 2020. Our analytics show we have viewers from across Canada, the US, and some as far away as South Africa and Poland.

We are also aware of the need to translate at least some parts of our website into French and are hoping to add more French to all our communications as part of our efforts to open our church to the broader Montreal community.

Finally, you should know that the signs in front of the church are being updated regularly. They now publicize our Lenten and Easter services with a simple recommendation of the YouTube and website addresses.

And at the time of writing, we are working on this very magazine!

The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul is very much alive in the pandemic and we are grateful, at the Communications Committee, to be able to support the spirit of community so typical of our congregation.

The Communications Committee



**Over 1,000 people
have subscribed to
A&P's YouTube channel**

The first meeting of A&P's Virtual Travel Group

Making Connections

Young Adults Group zooms with minister and missions



The Church
of St Andrew and St Paul

Please join us
for worship this
Sunday at 11 a.m.

Find out more >>

The A&P Young Adults Group Invites all CEGEP
& University Students to Join Us!



The Young Adults Group of The Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul invite you to join us virtually for their upcoming lineup of speakers.

Thursday, December 3 at 6:30 p.m., The Rev. Dr. Glenn Chestnutt will be leading "A Conversation with the Minister". Attendees are invited to send along faith questions they may have, in advance of the meeting, that Glenn will help you with.

Saturday, December 19 at 7:00 p.m., Keith Randall, a long time member of the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul and former radio personality, will lead the discussion on "Mission and Outreach"

Publicity for December 2020 Virtual Discussion Groups

As we are still unable to meet in person, we have continued with our Virtual Discussion Groups, which has helped the Young Adults to stay connected and also reunite with friends who have returned home to many different cities and countries.

The Young Adults enjoyed an "Ask the Minister" workshop led by Glenn, where they were given the opportunity to ask faith questions. There was a very lively discussion and many in the group were interested in Glenn's faith journey. Glenn shared how his life experiences ultimately led him to the A&P.

Keith Randall, with the help of Brian Merrett, led another discussion group on "Mission and Outreach" with the discussion centred not only on the work currently being done by the A&P, but also the extensive needs of local and global communities. What we discovered is that numerous members of the group are very interested in becoming involved in our mission work – an opportunity for us to enlist these young people in helping with existing as well as new initiatives.

Keith Randall has been working very hard, contacting numerous social agencies to ask them if and how our young people can be of help. He has received quite a wonderful response thus far – unfortunately in many cases, the restrictions due to COVID-19

protocols makes bringing in volunteers difficult at the moment. However, this is an avenue that we will continue to pursue.

We are continuing the Virtual Discussion Groups, until such time as we can finally meet in person!!

We are looking for speakers from the congregation with a variety of backgrounds to lead discussions on how faith has impacted them in their chosen careers. If you are interested in joining our discussion series, please contact me at youngadults@standrewstpaul.com

Our first 2021 Virtual Discussion Group is planned for February 26th – an extension of the December "Mission and Outreach" discussion that was led by Keith and Brian. We are very excited about a number of mission initiatives being considered for the future!

The Young Adults Group continues to participate in the church services and help with the needs of our church community and beyond. Most recently, a number of our group members helped with the "50 Bags for Christmas" initiative, collecting and delivering food and essentials for those in need. If there are any requests that our group can help with, please do not hesitate to contact me.

McGill's MORSL Multifaith Network, as well as the Concordia Multifaith Group, are working hard to keep students connected, with virtual events and regular zoom meetings and discussions. I have participated in a number of Zoom "brainstorming" meetings focused on the needs and concerns of students enduring isolation. The universal agreement – "connecting with others is vital".

I also participated in Concordia's Virtual Multifaith Fair, which was a wonderful opportunity to meet with students of various backgrounds and religions and to share with them what our church has to offer. We discovered throughout the week together that, although we may not worship in the same manner, we have a great deal in common in terms of life values.

Upcoming Events:

- Faith Series continues:
February 26: Keith Randall & Brian Merrett
- "Ask the Pastor" Discussion – date to be determined
- Virtual Movie Night – March
- "Catching Up With Friends Zoom – March

Sharon Dworzak

Director of Church School, Youth & Young Adults Programs

Church School Embraces Zoom Too

Children and families explore virtual alternatives

It seems almost impossible to fathom that we have not been able to gather in our Church School classes or the Sanctuary for almost a full year. Who could have imagined in March 2020 how long the pandemic would last and the tragic human cost?

It is truly a blessing and a miracle that through God's grace and the wonder of technology, we have managed to continue to support each other and carry on with our Church School programs, activities and traditions.

We held our first Virtual Pumpkin Ball in October, which was great fun for the children who attended. The Youth Group put together a very imaginative program of games, challenges, crafts and even a baking segment.

As we drew closer to Advent and Christmas, we realized we were not going to be able to continue on in our usual manner, with all the much loved and time-honoured traditions that generations have enjoyed. However, cancelling events and special services was out of the question, so we put our heads together to look at different options and possibilities available to us to make the best of a very challenging situation!

Beginning with Advent, we invited Church School families to help with the traditional Advent Candle Lighting over the four Sundays of Advent. Each family

recorded themselves at home and they all did a wonderful job! A huge thank you to the Dimitrov / Marinova family, the Walonoski / Chen family, the Convié / Clarke family, and the Leighton family from England.

Sadly, the anticipated and much-loved Pageant Weekend, culminating in the Annual Christmas Pageant and Family Dinner, was the event we couldn't possibly recreate, so decided to offer the Pageant recorded last year, with an introduction by me, that included a special tribute to Ruling Elder Christine McIlreavy who had devoted decades to this special production. She was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by us all.

The Church School, with the help of the Youth Group and our minister Glenn, put together a Virtual Family Christmas Eve Service, following the same program that we would normally have held in the Sanctuary. Our young people recorded Scripture readings and readings explaining the significance of Christmas decorations in relation to the Christmas story. Led by Alex, the children and some of our teachers recorded two Christmas songs, one of which was composed by Church School Teacher Sheila Jacob.

What was missing, of course, was gathering all the visiting children around the Christmas tree to help decorate the tree with the special symbols. We also missed singing

"Happy Birthday to Jesus" and being led by our piper Luca to the birthday cupcakes!

Donations received for the Pageant and Family Christmas Eve Service totalled \$1,600, which was given to Elizabeth House in support of young women in need and their children.

Church School has continued online every Sunday morning since September 13th and is becoming more and more popular each week. We welcome children from Nursery age through to Grade 11, beginning with a 'Chat Time' to see how everyone is doing, followed by Opening Prayer led by our minister, Glenn. The older students then join their teachers in a breakout room for their lesson while the younger students stay on for a lesson geared to their age group. It has been a wonderful experience as we learn and grow together into this new format of Sunday School, with teachers, parents and students sharing in the readings, stories and prayers.

We follow the Spark Lectionary Series which includes material that is shared with families, such as a Weekly Family Page with activities and ideas for families to enjoy during the week, all related to lessons presented each Sunday.

The children are now preparing for Palm Sunday and Lent. They will be presenting a song for the Palm Sunday Service, as well as a song, composed by Church School Teacher Sheila Jacob, for the Virtual "Son" Rise Service which I am certain you will enjoy.

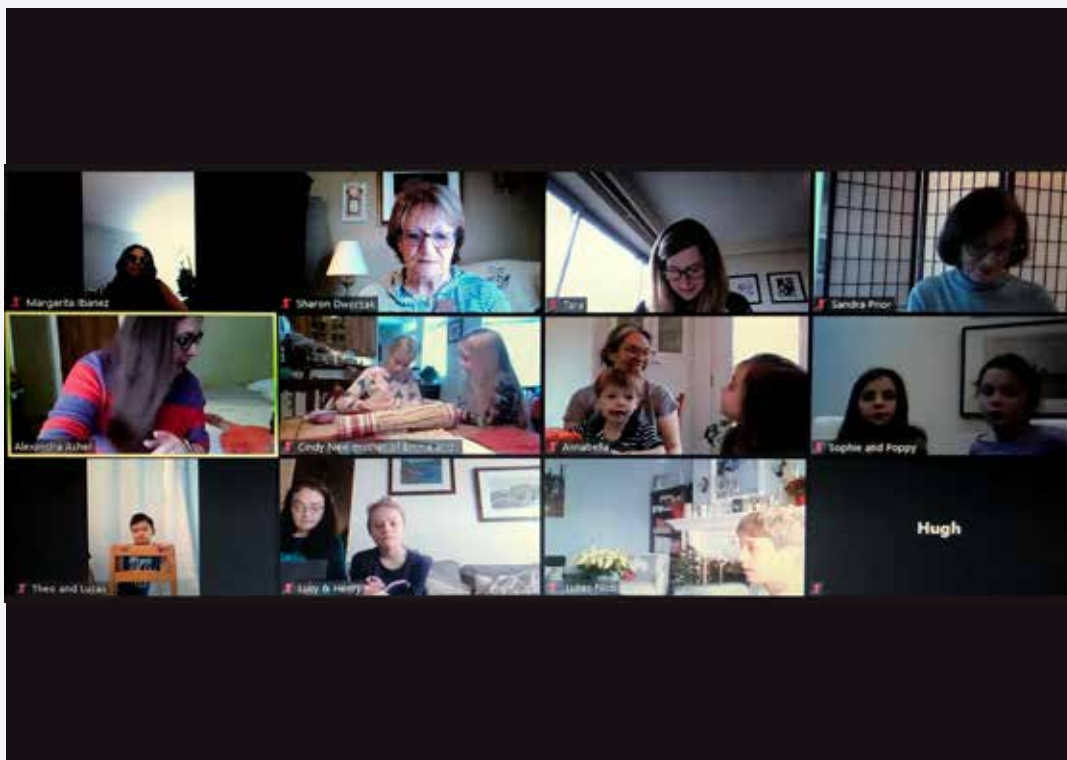
Activities ahead that the Church School will be participating in:

- Palm Sunday Service: March 28
- "Son" Rise Service – April 4
- Mothers Day Service: May 9
- Church School Celebration: June 13
- Fathers Day: June 20
- VBS: Mid July (if, we are still unable to gather in person, we will offer another Virtual VBS Program)

(continued on p. 28)



Remembering Christine Hermione McIlreavy at the virtual Christmas Pageant



**Virtual
Pumpkin
Ball**



**The Dimitrov/Marinova family lights the First
Advent Candle**



**The Leighton family lights the Second
Advent Candle**



**The Walonoski/Chen family lights the Third
Advent Candle**



**The Convié/Clarke family lights the Fourth
Advent Candle**



Families continue to participate in Church School online

Although, there has been much hardship, loss, anxiety and worry over these many months of COVID-19, we have also been blessed with time to enjoy and appreciate the beauty around us – all gifts from our heavenly Father. There is so much to be thankful for: the love, care and concern from others, the time afforded us to take stock of our lives and reassess our priorities – time to reflect – time to breathe.

We can be assured of the love of our Father and find great comfort in knowing that he will never leave us.

On a personal note, I am thankful for the technology that has made it possible for us to continue on with our faith work, and to remain connected to the children and families of the Church School; as well as our wonderful teaching team – their support and the enthusiasm of the children truly inspire me.

Sharon Dworzak
Director of Church School, Youth & Young Adults Programs



Virtual Church School

Lending a Hand

The Youth Group steps up



Alex Oegema read the First Lesson at the Christmas Eve Family Service

As we enter a second year of the pandemic, our Youth Group remains active and ready to lend a helping hand. They are often called upon to help with scripture readings in the Sunday morning services, as well as in Church School.

The Youth Group did a great job preparing their first Virtual Pumpkin Ball and provided a wonderful evening of fun and laughter for the younger children. For many of the children, this was their only Halloween event, since many parents opted to have their children forego Trick or Treating this year.

Many of the Youth Group members participated in the Family Christmas Eve Service, recording Scripture readings and singing with younger members of the Church School.

In addition to helping our church community, our youth have helped with a number of community service initiatives, including pickup and delivery of goods for the "500 for Christmas" program, which provided families in need in the Montreal area with food and essentials.

The Youth Group is currently preparing for the annual "Coldest Night of the Year Walk" in support of the St. James Drop-In Centre. This year, as is the case with most events, it will be held virtually. Although disappointed, this has not deterred them from doing their best to raise funds and make this a successful event. This year they have invited the congregation to join the A&P Youth Group Team or make a donation.

One week before their walk, Alain Spitzer, Director of the St. James Drop-In Centre will be joining us for a Zoom pre-walk meeting, when he will share with them how the centre has had to make changes and adjustments to continue their much-needed service to the homeless community during COVID-19.

The plan this year is for our team to do as we did for the Canadian Cancer Relay – we will all walk in our own neighbourhoods, staying connected with each other via texting / phoning and sharing photos. At the end of the walk, we will all meet for a Zoom pizza supper and share our experiences. They are a creative and resilient group!!

It is a tough time for our young people. Normally very social, they are missing the personal contact with the congregation and

their Youth Group friends. They were very disappointed when the Annual Youth Retreat had to be cancelled.

To attempt to maintain contact with their A&P family, we have organized numerous Zoom get-togethers as well as a Virtual Escape Room event, which the participants thoroughly enjoyed. So much so that another Virtual Escape Room is scheduled.

The Youth Group will begin preparations for a Virtual "Son" Rise Service shortly and will include the younger students from the Church School this year.

Upcoming Events:

- February 20: Virtual Escape Room
- February 21: Pre-Walk Meeting with Alain Spitzer, Director of St. James Drop-In Centre
- February 27: Coldest Night of the Year Walk
- April 4: "Son" Rise Service
- May: VBS Counsellors begin preparations for VBS

Please keep our young people in your prayers as they navigate these most unusual times – pray for them as they attempt to keep up with their studies. They yearn as do we all, for the return of normal activities when they can resume contact with friends and family.

Sharon Dworzak

Director of Church School, Youth & Young Adults Programs



Katie Oegema read the Second Lesson on the Third Sunday after the Epiphany



Vivianne and Clara Choquette read the First Lesson on the Second Sunday of Advent



Kayla Green describes the symbolism of Christmas tree decorations at the Christmas Eve Family Service



Nico Cristofaro read the Second Lesson on the Second Sunday of Advent



Youth Group at last year's "Coldest Night of the Year Walk"



Youth Group at last year's "Coldest Night of the Year Walk"