

St. Mark's Chronicles

DECEMBER 2023



Next Steps for St. Mark's

By the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray & Liam Croft

In the spring, parish leadership asked St. Mark's congregation to complete the 2023 Parish Engagement Survey, an anonymous feedback form designed to help plan how we can all carry out the vision of St. Mark's together in the future. Over the summer, the results were tabulated and shared with leadership. On November 5, the parish met for a lunch 'n learn in White Hall to discuss the results, and to hear suggestions on how we might make our parish a better place.

A wide range of ideas were discussed, pertaining to several topics. We talked about the **property** and how an electronic sign could inform parishioners of upcoming events. Or how using a screen during the service instead of books might help folks who are getting lost in the Book of Alternative Services. We spoke about **outreach** and the possibility of organizing new groups (men's group, mom's group, newcomer's group). The topics of **inreach** and **engagement** were a particular focus. **Music, communications, and accessibility** were also in the spotlight, and a new **welcome sub-committee** was discussed. The full breakdown of suggested strategies from the discussion is available on page 8.

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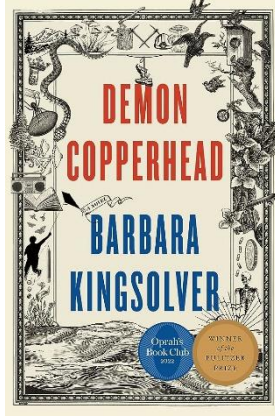
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Book Review

By the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray

***Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver**

I have long been a fan of Barbara Kingsolver and this book is no exception. Oprah chose it for her book club in 2022 and it won the Pulitzer Prize in 2023. Harper describes this book as "A masterful recasting of "David Copperfield," narrated by an Appalachian boy whose wise, unwavering voice relates his encounters with poverty, addiction, institutional failures and moral collapse—and his efforts to conquer them."



Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival. Relayed in his own unsparing voice, *Demon* braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses.

Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities.

Christmas Services

Dec. 24 - 4:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Family Service
(in-person and online on YouTube)

Dec. 24 - 8:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
(in-person and online on YouTube)

Dec. 24 - 10:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Dec. 25 - 10:00 a.m. - Christmas Day Eucharist

Poems for the Journey

A Christmas Poem

The story stretches through the years -
How God had made a plan
To call his Fallen children back,
To make them close again.

Through psalmists and through patriarchs,
Through prophets, priests and kings,
Through happy herald messages,
From angels on their wings,

God fought to let all people know
The day was close at hand
When God would send his own dear Son
To live within our land.

And so the days were soon fulfilled
When all this came to be -
A Babe was born in Bethlehem,
And angels sang with glee.

To shepherds waiting in the fields,
And in the East, a
star
Was guiding men called Magi
From their foreign lands, afar.

So come and join the gathered host
Who waited for this birth -
And wait with us till Christmas Day
When Jesus came to earth.



The Advent Calendar

By the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray



The Advent Calendar has become a tradition in many homes in the 24 days leading up to Christmas. There are religious ones but mostly the kids like the ones that reward them each day with chocolate or some kind of candy. That being said, here are five interesting facts about Advent calendars:

1. They first appeared in Germany in the 1850s. According to the German Christmas Museum in Rottenburg ob der Tauber, some children would count the days of Advent by wiping away chalk marks on a door.
2. The oldest printed Advent calendar was actually a clock. It was printed in 1902 with a brass hand and a dial beginning at 13. Its panels were mainly filled with verses from Christmas carols.
3. German lithographer Gerhard Lang is credited with inventing printed Advent calendars in the early 1900s. He based the idea on a present his mother made for him as a child: 24 cookies sewn into the lid of a box. He was allowed to eat one each day. The first printed calendar with chocolates appeared around 1926.
4. A dark twist occurred during the Second World War. The Nazi party banned most illustrated calendars and created its own version called a "Pre-Christmas Calendar". It incorporated ideological propaganda.
5. The tradition eventually hit North America. A 1954 newspaper photograph of the grandchildren of then – US. president Dwight D. Eisenhower - with an Advent calendar, aimed at raising money for the National Epilepsy League popularized the tradition.

Arthur, Ontario

By the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray

Canada's Most Patriotic Village

In November 1942, the Toronto Star ran a front-page headline that read "Arthur Village Gives Sons and Money to Aid the War" and recognized Arthur as the Most Patriotic Village in Canada, as one out of every seven Arthur residents fought in the Second World War. At that time, 126 residents had enlisted from the population of 890. It was the highest ratio in comparison to villages of comparable sizes in Canada. By the end of the war, 338 Arthur had enlisted, and 25 were killed in action.

During the first war bond campaign of World War 11, the village of Arthur was the first community in Ontario to reach its quota, which it did within a few minutes. Arthur also led the communities in Wellington for every other war and victory bond campaign and surpassed all objectives that had been set.

Some of the men who enlisted from the Arthur area were British Home Children who were sent there from orphanages in the UK. Between 1869 and 1948, over 118,000 orphaned and abandoned children up to the age of 16 were sent to Canada to work as farm hands and domestic servants.



December Trivia Quiz

Thanks to the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray



Test your knowledge of December and the Christmas season with the questions below.

1. Which popular Christmas beverage is also called "milk punch?"
2. How many ghosts show up in A Christmas Carol?
3. The movie Miracle on 34th Street is based on a real-life department store. What is it?
4. In the classic Christmas movie, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, the Grinch was described with three words. What are they?
5. What did Frosty The Snowman do when a magic hat was placed on his head?
6. According to the song, what did my true love give to me on the eighth day of Christmas?
7. How many gifts in total were given in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song?
8. How do you say "Merry Christmas" in Spanish?
9. Visions of which food danced in children's heads as they slept in the poem "'Twas The Night Before Christmas?"
10. What gift did the Little Drummer Boy give to the newborn Christ?

Answers on page 10.

Parish Profile: Tracey Croft

An Orangeville native, Tracey Croft's family has lived in the area since the 1840's, with branches of her family attending St. Mark's back nearly that far. Growing up, Tracey attended East Garafraxa Public School, attending Westminster United Church, visiting her Morrow grandparent's gift and china shop, and enjoying all the doings of what was then a small town. She could also be found in Amaranth, with the horses, at her Brown grandparent's farm on Morrow Hill, overlooking west Orangeville.

She participated in the then-fledgling Girl's Minor Hockey, 4-H, and while at Orangeville District Secondary, was a Lorne Scots Army Cadet. That organization gave her fantastic challenges and opportunities, with adventures in Petawawa, Banff, and Germany.

She graduated from Western University with an Honours BA in Political Science, where a highlight was a trip with members of the Russian Studies Department to the then Soviet Union. She obtained a Master's Degree in International Relations with a specialization in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Reading in the United Kingdom, living with students from all over the globe while cramming in studies, travel, and many hours socializing in the Junior Common Room.

She returned to Canada, and after a stint of guest lecturing, fell into the private sector, and met Lindsey Croft, who was on a two-year secondment to the Brampton-area branch of the global corporation he worked for in his hometown of Perth, Western Australia. Their 30th wedding anniversary is coming up next year.

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Parish Profile: Tracey Croft

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Proud mom of two sons, Liam and Rowan, the family was fortunate to make many trips Down Under over the years, although Tracey still cannot stand Vegemite.

Deciding that public sector work was more in her line of interest, Tracey spent 16 years working in Emergency Management, both at the County of Dufferin, and with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. She was fortunate to work with a wide array of first responders, social service agencies and others as part of the response to a number of situations; from the infamous Y2K to the airlift evacuation of First Nations communities, organizing medical clinics for 300 Syrian refugees, to various severe weather events, and other incidents.

Her curiosity led her next to primary care, where she works in rural Wellington with Family Health Teams, focused on integrating multiagency teams who care for complex patients, as well as other projects. She loves to travel, enjoys reading, time with friends and family, and cheering for the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Her time at St. Mark's began unofficially as a student at Mrs. Malouk's primary school, held in the church hall, and officially in 2008, when the Croft family transferred from St. John's Mono to this parish.

Tracey has now taught Sunday School for twenty years and has been very fortunate to work with and learn from the many students, families, and volunteers at St. Mark's over the years since becoming the Children's Ministry Coordinator. She believes it is a privilege to help shape a young person's character and spiritual outlook, and hopes people recognize it really is a parish-wide responsibility. She and her team have worked to create opportunities for kids of all ages to help them find their way, even if it's just a few steps of their journey, and she thanks everyone, especially her family, for their ongoing support.



Tracey was recently awarded the Order of Niagara in recognition of the work she has done at St. Mark's over the years. She was presented with her medal by the Bishop when she visited St. Mark's on December 3rd – the first day of Advent. From left to right: The Venerable Peter Scott, Liam Croft, Tracey Croft, Rowan Croft, Lindsey Croft.

Recipes of the Month

Thanks to June Moir (Tattersall) & Shirley White

Tomato Soup Cake

- 2 Tablespoons shortening
- 1 Cup white sugar
- 2 Cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Teaspoon Baking Soda
- ½ Teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 Teaspoon Cinnamon
- ½ Teaspoon Nutmeg
- ½ Teaspoon Salt
- 1 Can Tomato Soup 284 ml
- 1 Cup Raisins

Mix shortening and sugar. Add soup and mix. Add flour, baking soda, spices and salt. Mix well. Then add raisins. Bake in a square 9" x 9" cake pan. Oven temperature 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Enjoy! - June Moir

Coconut Oatmeal Cookie

- 1 Cup Butter
- 1 ¼ Cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Egg (beat each as added)
- 1 Cup Coconut
- 1 ¼ Cup Flour
- ½ Teaspoon Baking Soda
- ½ Teaspoon Baking Power (add these 2 at very end when oven is ready)
- ½ Teaspoon Salt
- 1 Teaspoon Vanilla or ¼ Teaspoon Almond Extract

Mix as drop cookies. Put on lightly greased pan and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Makes 6 dozen. Can be frozen but will thaw quickly when unexpected company arrives.

Enjoy! - Shirley White



All About Diwali – The Festival of Lights

By The Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray

Diwali is so widely celebrated—it's an important religious festival for Hindus, but is also observed among Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists. The dates of the festival are based on the Hindu lunar calendar, typically falling in late October or early November - on the 15th day of Kartik month - the darkest night of the year. This year, Diwali began Nov. 10 and lasted 5 days.



What Do People Do?

Many Canadians celebrate Diwali, which is a joyous festival that attracts plenty of media and public attention in Canada. Various community groups, businesses, schools and associations celebrate Diwali each year. Some companies have corporate Diwali dinners and some communities organize carnivals or gatherings that feature firework displays. Many Diwali festivals feature dances, street lighting, and plays. Many women wear fine jewelry and silk outfits to celebrate Diwali. Some women and girls use mehendi, which is a temporary henna decoration, on their palms. Many homes that celebrate Diwali have assorted sweets, savorys and Diwali herbs. Various lights, candles and sparklers are lit inside and outside homes, particularly in courtyards, on Diwali. Diwali is not a nationwide public holiday in Canada but it is a large festival celebrated in many towns and cities. There may be traffic congestion and parking places may be full in areas where events are held to celebrate Diwali. Some Indian businesses may close early on Diwali.

Background

Diwali is celebrated to honor Rama-chandra, the seventh avatar (incarnation of the god Vishnu). It is believed that on this day Rama returned to his people after 14 years of exile during which he fought and won a battle against the demons and the demon king, Ravana. People lit their houses to celebrate his victory over evil (light over darkness). The goddess of happiness and good fortune, Lakshmi, also figures into the celebration. It is believed that she roams the Earth on this day and enters the house that is pure, clean, and bright. Diwali celebrations may vary in different communities but its significance and spiritual meaning is generally "the awareness of the inner light".

Symbols

Lamps, fireworks and bonfires illuminate this holiday, as the word "Deepawali" means "a row or cluster of lights" or "rows of diyas (clay lamps)". The festival symbolizes the victory of righteousness and the lifting of spiritual darkness. The goddess Lakshmi, who symbolizes wealth, happiness and prosperity, is also worshipped during Diwali.

Next Steps for St. Mark's

By the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray & Liam Croft

Continued from page 1.

The following breakdown of suggested strategies is from the document "Suggested Strategies from Survey Results Discussion", available on St. Mark's website and from the office.

Property

- New electronic sign with message display capability
- Screen displaying bulletin/service in church
- Audio system requires improvement

Outreach

- Ensure messages and updates are posted regularly on social media accounts
- New group ideas: Men's Group, Mom's Group, Family Friday; Newcomers event for new members
- Women's group – revise to be more structured, ACW (Anglican Church Women)-type format
- Event outside of business hours aimed at those working

Inreach & Engagement

- Name tags for all attendees to use each week
- Create a visual directory of programs/events, their contacts with photos, what the event or program is all about, and an impact story of why the event matters – ensure clear expectations of volunteer roles are included
- Host a 'Ministry Fair' with all events, programs etc on display in White Hall on a given date
- Establish a "Welcome Desk" in the Narthex as a focal point for newcomers with resources and help

Music

- 'Boomer Band' reboot
- Informal jam sessions for all ages
- Hymn sing event
- Music options for intergenerational "Everybody" services

Welcome Sub-Committee

- Establish sub-committee with rotating welcome role each Sunday to work with Greeters to connect with newcomers, show them where everything is, and pair up with at coffee hour to facilitate introductions
- If newcomer is interested, pair with someone from their local neighbourhood as appropriate to help establish personal connection
- Organize 'Welcome Back Sunday' each September and use the event to promote groups/events/ministries

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Next Steps for St. Mark's

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Communications

- Advertise more frequently to a variety of channels (social media/newspaper/community radio event listings)
- Ensure specific groups are invited to participate (not just generic "All Welcome" message – what will the target group expect to get out of attending?)
- Postcard custom designed/printed so members can use to invite others to a service
- Connect with the wider community about the work we are doing and its impact; tell our stories to the community and ourselves – don't assume everyone knows what's happening.

Accessibility

- Ensure groups include use of the accessible entrance/elevator to improve disabled access to on-site events throughout the week.
- Create a laminated instruction sheet on using/troubleshooting the lift for groups to use
- Ensure language, acronyms and terms included in church communications are clearly spelled out for those unfamiliar (e.g. "Narthex/lobby", etc.)

Discussion Group: Issues and Questions

The Venerable Peter Scott

Come one, come all to our newly formed Discussion Group where we will discuss the issues of the day and how we respond as Christians. At our first session on Monday, October 16 via Zoom a lively discussion ensued about the war between Israel and Hamas.

There is no need to sign up or even attend every session; come to ones that interest you. We will send out an email to the parish before each session with the Zoom link and reminder of the date and time and the topic we are discussing. Other topics in the future will cover homelessness, 2SLGBTQIA+, climate change, MAID (Medical Assistance in Dying, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and mental health among others. If you have any questions or would like to suggest a topic, please contact Archdeacon Peter Scott (rector@saintmark.ca or, (519) 941-0640).



The Quiet Corner

Thanks to the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray

Hope for The World

In quietness and darkness
In peace and confusion,
Jesus Christ wants to make his home
And meet his friends.
He is the light of life.

In him there is neither Jew nor Gentile
Neither roman Catholic nor Protestant
In him there is neither black nor white
Neither north nor south
He is the light of life.

In him there is neither male nor female
Neither master nor servant
In him there is neither rich nor poor
Neither working class nor middle class
He is the light of life

All are one in Jesus Christ
He is the hope for the world.

December Trivia Answers

Thanks to the Rev'd Canon Lynne Thackwray

Questions found on page 4.

1. Eggnog
2. Four
3. Macy's
4. Stink, Stank, Stunk
5. He began to dance around
6. Eight maids a milking
7. 364
8. Feliz Navidad
9. Sugar plums
10. He played a song for him on his drums

Church Information

Connect With Us

Website: www.saintmark.ca
YouTube: [saintmarkorangeville](https://www.youtube.com/saintmarkorangeville)
Facebook: [saintmarkorangeville](https://www.facebook.com/saintmarkorangeville)

Phone: 519-941-0640
Email: office@saintmark.ca

Services

Sunday Eucharist – 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Choral Eucharist – 10:00 a.m.
Thursday Eucharist – 10:00 a.m.

Office Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Food Cupboard Hours

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

The Beacon Drop-In Centre

Monday & Friday
12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Address

5 First Avenue
Orangeville, ON
P.O. Box 22
L9W 2Z5