



# The Bells of St. Helen's

Advent/Christmas Volume 2 No. 5 – November 2020



## This Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup> is the beginning of Advent

There will be 2 services to celebrate Advent Sunday. Due to the current restrictions both services will be livestreamed only.

**Morning Prayer begins at 10am.** The Advent wreath will be blessed and the first candle of Advent, the candle for hope will be lit

**At 5pm a Service of Light and Prayers for the Evening will take place.** This service will be by candlelight with readings, hymns, songs, and prayers to turn our minds and hearts toward the journey ahead. Please do join us for either or both services.

**To participate in our Livestream services, go to our Facebook Page:**

[www.facebook.com/sainthelensurrey](http://www.facebook.com/sainthelensurrey)

## Activities & Opportunities for Reflection at Advent



**The Advent Wreath** – If you would like to make an advent wreath for your family to use during the days of Advent you can visit our parish website at [www.sthelensurrey.ca](http://www.sthelensurrey.ca) There you will be able to click on

'Latest News' for Advent Resources find out how to put together a wreath. Included will be prayers that can be used each week or each day when the family is gathered for a meal or family time.

## Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) – Advent reflection videos



Also on the same parish website news page, you will find a link to subscribe to PWRDF's Advent offering of short video clips done by a staffer or a volunteer which will have a reading from

scripture and a short reflection on the work of PWRDF. You will get this as an email each day of Advent and connect yourself to the work of the church and how we partner with outreach arms of the Anglican Church around the world. through PWRDF

## Morning Prayer on St. Helen's Facebook



**Livestream** – We are livestreaming Morning Prayer weekdays Tuesday to Friday every week. This is an opportunity to start

the day in prayer (or pause if you started the day early) and hear scripture read, pray for the needs of the world, our communities as well as ourselves as we think about the day, what we are called to do and asking God to walk with us on our daily journey. Please do join us on our Facebook page.

**The Wednesday Conversation** – This conversation takes place online in a Zoom meeting style. We are



all missing seeing one another each week so this gives a change to spend an hour together. It starts shortly after the morning prayer livestream so begins around 10:15am and

lasts about an hour. Everyone gets a chance to get in on the conversation. We begin with a prayer and a short look at the Gospel reading for the next Sunday then we see where the conversation takes us. It gives us all an opportunity to see how we are, how we can encourage and support one another, catch up on news and what is happening around the

parish and in our lives. Please do join us. The parish email blast comes out late on Saturday afternoon or in the early evening. There you will find the link for the zoom meeting. All you would need to do on the Wednesday morning is click on that link and it should set you up in zoom. When our Rector, Steve, sees you in the virtual waiting room, he will let you in. We have had several great conversations so far and would be happy to welcome anyone who wants to join.



### **Sunday Services during Advent**

It looks more and more like we will be having Online Livestream services for the duration of Advent and into Christmas. Each Sunday during Advent there will be two Livestream services; one at our usual 10am and the second service,

one of a Service of Light and Evening Prayer at 5pm. Please join us for either or both.

### **Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services**



We won't know until much closer to the date whether we will be able to have any in-person service for Christmas. As soon as we know we will let everyone else know by our email blast, our Facebook page

and through the parish website. If the service is to be livestreamed only, we will let you know that too.

### **House Blessing Resource for Children and Families on Feast of the Epiphany (Jan 6)**



You will also be able to link to this resource on our website which has been put together by the Diocese Youth and Children's Unit. It is a lot of fun and an opportunity to be reminded just how important a blessing a home

is to each and every one of us.

## **Words of Thanks**

**The Textile Drive** – Thank you to everyone who contributed to the mountain of textiles brought to the church offices in the lower hall between November 15 and 18. We do not have any figures

for the weight or the dollar sum as of yet, but we were pleased that so many people took the time to drop unwanted clothing and other textiles. Thank you to Lynn Turner, Fil Sotana, and Jacquie Stinson in particular, for the organizing and being onsite.

**The Bizarre Bazaar-less Bazaar** – Thank you to those who made financial contributions to a very different event to our yearly round this season. So much of the last year has had to go by the wayside, and the Bazaar was one of these. Although the bazaar is a lot of hard work for us all, there has always been wonderful fellowship experienced and a great sense of accomplishment when everything was finally done and everything away. Contributions that came in this year amounted to just over \$1000. Thank you. We hope we will be able to return to our regularly scheduled programming next year!



## **PWRDF**

The Primate's World Relief  
and Development Fund

### **From Our PWRDF Parish Coordinator, Paulette Smith**

Please remember PWRDF this Christmas and consider it both financially and in prayer. As you know, each Christmas we invite people to make their donations and collect it after the Sunday services each Sunday of Advent. We can't do that this year. You can google PWRDF to get to their website to check out All 29 gift options Or, you can send your donation to me by mail to 1392 128A St Surrey V4A 3X4. I have collected over \$400 so far and hoping to reach \$1000. A group donation is always a good thing. You will receive a tax receipt. Thanks. Stay well and blessings for the Christmas Season. *Paulette Smith*

## **A New Student Intern**

Recently, the executive Archdeacon, Douglas Fenton, asked our Rector, Steve, if he, and the parish of St. Helen would be willing to take on another student intern. The answer was yes and this Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, Advent 1, Mr. Neil Seedhouse will join us. A short introductory

biography follows below. Neil hails from the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Vancouver. Some of you may be saying where is St. Mary Magdalene? Well, St Mary's became the new parish when the former parishes of St. Mark's and St. George's amalgamated. It had a new start with a new name. You will only get to meet Neil virtually for the next while, but we do hope that we will all get to meet him in person in the near future. We can expect Neil to be with us for the next 12 months as he continues his discernment to be a vocational Deacon. Welcome Neil! We look forward to working with you.



## Neil Seedhouse – Our Student Intern

Hello, my name is Neil Seedhouse.

I am from the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Vancouver. I have been discerning and working towards ordination as a Vocational Deacon for several years. I have just finished a 9-month internship at St. Mary's Kerrisdale starting in January 2020. The next phase of my 'Pilgrim's Progress' is an internship here at St. Helen's. My thirty-year involvement with the church, first at St. Mark's Kitsilano and then at St. Mary Magdalene, has provided an opportunity to experience many varied roles; from overnight support at an Extreme Weather Shelter to serving on Parish Council; from organizing church school to cooking community meals. Most recently I have been the Sacristan, People's Warden and Tech Support at St. Mary Magdalene.

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in an opportunity for me to participate in the leadership team at St. Mary's Kerrisdale as they worked out how to offer services and pastoral support to their members and others, and most recently through the see-saw effect of on-again/off-again in-person and/or zoom services.

My work is also varied. It includes being the property manager at Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Westminster, custodian at St. George's Place, Vancouver, a Journeyman Landscaper, and IT Tech Support.

I also keep myself busy as a Scout leader along with cooking, reading (history and mysteries), old house maintenance and repair, single malt scotch, craft beer and good coffee.

I used to be a red head and as I look into a mirror and see my white beard, I realize that the next phase of my spiritual journey is to embody elder spirituality.

The Martin Seedhouse clan lives in South-East Burnaby, re-united in this pandemic as 7 adults in what used to feel like a big, old house.

## Advent - Wait, Watch, Hope

*A Word from our Rector the Rev. Stephen Laskey*



Over our life there are probably many things that we will wait for, watch for, and hope for. Advent is such a time as we prepare for Christmas while, those of Christian faith, also reflect on how we wait for the return of the Lord and how we live our lives as we wait, watch and hope.

I want to share a story of waiting, watching, and hoping with you. The image below is one of a snowmobile zipping over the frozen harbour of St. Lewis, Labrador. (Thank you, Calvin Poole for the photo) The sensation it conveys is one of speed. The spinning track throws plumes of snow up from the back as it drives the machine over the snow and ice. In a matter of moments, the rider can be at his or her destination.

In this area of St. Lewis Bay, before there was a road between the communities, (around 20 years now), there was a lot of travelling across the bay



between St. Lewis and Mary's Harbour. Although there are many competitions between the two small communities, over these years, many found a life partner in each other's community. Rather than straight across the bay in summer, travel between the two communities in the winter took a much more circuitous route; going up the bay to a safe crossing place and, once over the ice and back on the land again, turning to head out of the bay to the other community. Depending on the ice, it could be a very long route. Everyone, (mostly the young people) would wait, watch, and hope that the bay would freeze over 'on the outside' so to make the crossing shorter and faster. For that time to come, the air had to turn exceptionally frosty. The young people waited with eager anticipation. The older people waited with worry, dread and fear.

There were signs that that time of freezing over was nearing. One could watch sea-smoke rise from the water. The evaporating water, warmer than the air, quickly lost its heat, but the cold air could not hold the water which then condensed as a misty sea smoke. It was a sign that winter was beginning to settle in for the long haul. The screaming winds that had accompanied the autumn had mostly blown themselves out. There was a stillness that allowed the top of the salt water to gel, get slushy, and then freeze. As long as the winds stayed away and the frosty cold continued, the freezing continued to make its way further into the depths; strong enough to walk on, strong enough to take a skidoo on, strong enough to drive all kinds of vehicles on. The first ice would form around the edge of the harbour, then further out on the bay and finally, perhaps, even the sea would freeze over. If, and when the sea ice froze, it was likely that it was safe to take a skidoo straight across the bay.

But it could be a dangerous venture, particularly at night. In each community there are 'watchers', who keep their watch for the light of a skidoo leaving the harbour. That watcher would phone a watcher across the bay to let them know someone is out on the ice. The watcher across the bay would wait by their window with their eyes out on the bay. They kept watch for that light to make sure the person arrived safely. That kind of travelling back and forth could go on all night. Upon arrival, the

watcher would phone back to let the other know there had been a safe arrival.

Why is there a need to watch? It is because too many young lives are lost in that crossing. The wind can come up in an instant, a strong sea could come on, and in a few seconds, what was miles of solid, thick, 6 feet or more, sheet of ice is broken up. The snowmobiler drives at 80 or 90 kph to their death in the frigid waters. There is no chance. The older people get, the more they hope the bay would never freeze up. If it does freeze up, they begin to hope it will break up again during the daylight. They would say to the young 'Don't cross that ice at night. You don't know but you're driving straight into the water.' Too many young people were lost crossing that ice.

This Advent, we wait for Christmas. The signs are around us that it will come. At the moment we are not sure what to expect but we have a pretty good idea that our usual travelling, gatherings, and celebrations will be anything but usual. We will be restricted and confined for the safety of each other.

**So, we are waiting**, and in our waiting, we will make the best of our preparations and use our imaginations about how we will celebrate.

**We are watching**, and in our watching, we will look out for, and watch out for, one another. We will remind one another to be safe and hopefully take the advice of those who know to keep our distance. We are worried for those we love. We are worried for our communities. We want to make sure we are all safe.

**We are living in hope.** Our hope is for a resolution to defeat this virus that has the whole world in its grasp.

What comes to mind this Advent is just how much we really need each other, to work with one another and look out for one another. Jesus came for the whole of us that we realize this and healed, restored and reconciled in all our relationships. Our hope is that Jesus will return for the completion of that restoration. In the meantime, we watch for the signs of his return and we live in love and compassion for others as he taught us. May we wait patiently, this Advent and help others to learn patience. May we be watchful of our steps and watch out for one another this Advent. May we

personify hope in all that we do, in our conversations, and in our outlook for the future. May we find ourselves ready to welcome the Lord when he comes by preparing our hearts to welcome him at Christmas.

Blessings to you and all whom you love,

*Father Steve*

## The Parish Finances Would love some help from Everyone

As you can imagine, this has been a hard year for our finances as we meet our obligations for heat, light, payroll, groundskeeping, building upkeep and repairs, ministries, diocesan apportionment and everything it takes to keep us going. Our budget is in the area of \$225,000 for 2020 and although we have had some help from the diocese picking up the tab on some of the payroll and forgiving some parish apportionment, by a resolution of Diocesan Council for all the parishes, we are still left wondering how we will end this year of 2020 and open the books for 2021.

Some people do give through the Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) system. Some people have sent their envelopes through the post on a regular basis. Some have done so periodically. There are also a few people who have taken advantage of the opportunity to give electronically by using the Interac E-Transfer which we set up a couple of months ago with an account with Vancity Credit Union.

The fact is that we need your support over this next month, the last month of 2020. We have not been able to have our usual events and fundraisers this year and with very few in-person services, those who give when they come to church have not had the opportunity to bring their offerings.

In light of all this, the wardens and treasurer encourage everyone to respond to this request to make your offering now.

You can mail your offering in an envelope to the church office. You can drop it off through the letter box in the lower hall. Perhaps one of the easiest ways to make an offering is through an electronic Interac e-transfer. If you can also contact the office to make arrangements for someone to pick up your offering. There are many ways to make your financial gift to St. Helen's.

Please make out a cheque to: **Parish of St. Helen**

The Email address to make an electronic transfer is: [giving2sthelen@gmail.com](mailto:giving2sthelen@gmail.com)

If you would like to discuss getting onto the pre-authorized giving system or would like more information about making an offering, please speak with one of the wardens, Roy Francis or Lynn Turner.

### Parish Contacts

Street Address: 10787 - 128th Street, Surrey, BC V3T 3A2

Parish Office phone: 604-581-4800  
(please leave a message)

Rector: The Rev. Stephen Laskey  
Rector's Email: [stevelaskey@outlook.com](mailto:stevelaskey@outlook.com)  
Rector's Mobile: 604-219-2731

Wardens: Lynn Turner, Roy Francis  
(contact through the office phone or email  
Parish Office email: [churchoffice@shawbiz.ca](mailto:churchoffice@shawbiz.ca)

Please remember there is more information and updates on our parish website:

[www.sthelensurrey.ca](http://www.sthelensurrey.ca)

and our parish Facebook Page:

[www.facebook.com/sainthelensurrey](https://www.facebook.com/sainthelensurrey)

**\*Watch for the Christmas Bells coming out after December 15<sup>th</sup> and a Christmas letter in the post\***



*Blessings to you and your family as you prepare for the Christmas Season*