

Tidings

First-St. Andrew's United Church



VOLUME 15 ● NUMBER 4

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPHIPHANY 2005-2006

WHAT A WONDROUS SEASON !

*Sleighbells ring, are you listening?
In the lane, snow is glistening,
a beautiful sight, we're happy
tonight,
walking in a winter wonderland.*

That old song of a bygone era still captures some of the excitement of Christmas and the beauty of dark December evenings, softened by snowfalls, transformed by Christmas lights, as family and friends gather around a fireplace. Wonder. Astonishment. Adoration.

Most of us at one time or another have been taken aback by the beauty of creation, of dancing northern lights, of a stunning summer sunset, of birthing, human or otherwise, of a winter scene, of earth floating in space. At such times we stand in wonder and astonishment and adoration and quietly, or not so quietly, say, "Thank you, God; that we are alive, that we can comprehend such beauty, that we belong here". So we give thanks but not just thanks or thank *it* but thank *you*. Most of the people with whom we share this planet earth have identified this "you" with God. Such a thank you is not just a matter of manners or a matter of learning. It is the cultivation of wonder, astonishment and adoration, of the overwhelming giftedness of life.



Wonder, astonishment and adoration are the basis for welcoming the birth of a child or for developing a spirituality of creation or for celebrating the mystery of the incarnation. As Madeleine L'Engle's poem, "After Annunciation," says,

*This is the season
When love blooms bright
and wild.
Had Mary been filled
with reason,
There'd have been no
room for the child.*

Every birthing, every new beginning—if we let it—can return us to the wonder of Jesus' birth and the miracle of life; to the revelation of life as gift, of God as Emmanuel, God-with-us, and introduce us to wonder, astonishment, and adoration. May it be so for each of us in this season of Christmas.

David McKane

INSIDE

ARNPRIOR ASSEMBLY

by Ted Kostecki, Community Development Coordinator



Tidings

TIDINGS ON LINE

In this issue we are inspired by stories and pictures of past events and announcements of events to come during this Christmas celebration season. For an even more vivid view of Tidings, go to our Website and click on the Tidings icon to see past issues in stunning full colour. Our Webmaster, Paul Pergau, expects to have this current issue on the Website within the week. Here is the FSA Website:

www.fsaunited.london.on.ca

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Submissions of 350 words maximum are accepted only from members of the First-St. Andrew's Family. The Tidings Team reserves the right to select and edit submissions. Obtain information from Group and Committee Secretaries or members of the Tidings Team. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, not necessarily those of First-St. Andrew's Church.

Info-Line

CONGRATULATIONS

to Ron Logan who received an honorary doctorate from UWO for a lifetime of leadership to this community.

AND CONGRATULATIONS

to Fran Eberhard, who entered London's Sports Hall of Fame in the builder/founder category.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

will hold a letter-writing campaign Sun. Jan 15th sponsored by our Stewardship Mission Outreach Committee. The aim of the campaign is to stop torture.

GIFTS OF GRACE... GIFTS OF HOPE

Is an "Alternative Gift Catalogue" that is sponsored by London Conference of the United Church of Canada. This year's version is available on the tables outside the sanctuary or from the office. The gifts are practical and will make a difference to people overseas where the United Church is working with local partners.

CELEBRATION SUNDAY



MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILIES

One characteristic of First St. Andrews is the way we value tradition and continuity, along with our community outreach. This is especially evident when we observe the number of families who have been in the congregation for several generations. We like to think that newcomers are joining a family at FSA, and, indeed, we are made up of many families, immediate and extended

One of the best examples of a multigenerational family is the Bells, represented by four generations who have been coming to our Church for more than forty years. In fact, on most Sundays, all four generations are in the congregation. Here is Charlotte Ann Bell's report of her interviews with members of her family. We hope to do a series of articles on multigenerational families at FSA. Please give us names.



Four Generations: The Bells
by Charlotte Ann Bell

My family, the Bells, has been represented at FSA since 1962 and I'm proud to say that each Sunday morning I (CA) can still visit with my mother, **Mary Grace Bell (MG)**, my daughter, **Heather Eaman (H)**, and her children (my grandchildren), **Jacob, Robin and Fraser Feeney (J, R, F)**. Here are a few answers to questions I posed to each generation.

What has FSA meant to you in the past; what does it mean to you now?

MG: *I've always gone to church since I was a little kid with my parents. It's what you do on Sunday morning.*

CA: *Continuity in a life of changes. My social, spiritual and creative 'centre'.*

H: *A touchstone of sorts. Fun to see the next generation; neat to think that was me in the past. My first and best choral education.*

J: *A place where I can have fun; where I can learn about God.*

R: *I think about God more than if I didn't go.*

F: *A place to be together and learn about prayers.*

What are some special memories you have, or programs you have particularly enjoyed?

MG: *bifocals, UCW, choir, banner committee. Lots to learn.*

CA: *music, music, music; bible study; programs for my daughters.*

H: *eating cookies in Sunday school, raiding the costume cupboards for pageants, Gone Fishing (cheese dreams for dessert), musicals, Teen Group and 40 kids for breakfast, Teen Group weekends at Pearce Williams, teen delegate at church conferences.*

J: *Sunday School summer camp—it was fun to be with the other kids—I liked the nature walk a few months ago.*

R: *I'm the oldest in the Junior Joyful choir now, so I can help teach.*

F: *At Thanksgiving the gourd decorations were really beautiful. We were allowed to bring them home.*

What activities are you involved in now?

MG: *Sometimes I greet at the door. I like to talk to people I wouldn't see otherwise.*

CA: *Choir; Christian Development and Worship Committees, Bible Study.*

H: *Choir; eventually handbells and committee work.*

J,R,F: *Church school, choir.*

DECORATING THE SANCTUARY



(Left) Some of The Circle of Friends, and their family members, have taken on the responsibility of erecting the giant Christmas tree in the Sanctuary and putting up the garlands. Those shown are (left to right) the Sutherlands, the Beaches, the Galbraiths (that's Alan on the high ladder), Linda Badke, xxxxxx

(Right) And to add the finishing touches, Doreen Gartley placed the wreaths and bows on the windows.



Changes...

**First-St. Andrew's United Church:
a Christian Family encouraging spiritual
growth through worship, friendship,
learning and action**

MARRIAGES

*"Love is always supportive, loyal, helpful and trusting.
Love never fails!"*

Carrie Lynn Scott and Todd Edgar	September 4, 2005
Shannon McGuffin and Darryl Hilton	September 10, 2005
Alexandra Katzer and Jason Mailloux	September 17, 2005
Amanda Van Herten and Scott Wilson	October 1, 2005
Laurie Affeldt and Richard Bigg	October 8, 2005
Lesley Lithgow and Adrian Tost	October 22, 2005
Megan Phillips and Bruce Dust	October 29, 2005

DEATHS

"Well done good and faithful servant."

Maartje Stephens	August 31, 2005
Michael Walker	September 1, 2005
Dennis Hall	September 11, 2005
Gibson Cole	November 2, 2005
William Pace	November 10, 2005

NEW MEMBERS

*"We pray for God's Power to help you do all the good things that
you hope to do and that your faith makes you want to do."*

ANNUAL FALL CLEANUP

The annual cleanup is organized by the Property Committee, but draws other people from the congregation. It's an efficient and quick way to beautify the property and it saves money.



*(Clockwise from top left) Michael Roberts, Ray Egan, Barry Tiffin,
Chuck St. Pierre, Karen Hall, Mamie Marti and Jay Cott*

A PLACE TO HANG YOUR HAT (AND COAT)

When Russ Gonder offered to make new clothes racks for the atrium and other parts of the church, we knew they would look good. Russ used the racks in the House of Commons as his inspiration and, with the help of some people he knew, had the side panels and metal parts manufactured. He then assembled the



pieces and
voila....
t h r e e
beautiful
coat racks
to replace
our old
metal racks.

LIFT MAY PURCHASE HOME FOR NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Bill Knowles, LIFT Representative,, with additional information from *The London Free Press*



In August, the London Interfaith Team (LIFT) Council purchased 446 King Street East to provide 24 new apartments of affordable housing. LIFT already has two other houses, one near FSA, at 440 Queens Avenue, started in 1992; another at 749 Little Simcoe Street, opened in 1995.

Ever since, LIFT, supported by eleven downtown churches including FSA, one of the founding members, has sought a way to add additional affordable housing in London. When the Federal housing agency, CMHC, asked for proposals last spring, LIFT was one of 428 applications across Canada, only 204 of which were approved. So far LIFT has received only seed money—a \$10,000 grant and a \$9,600 interest free forgivable loan—and now must raise some additional money for the project. Operating costs, as in the two earlier projects, will be covered by rents and already legislated government funding.

The house at 446 King is now demolished. It was a heritage home, designed in the 1870s by William Robinson, city engineer, and occupied by J.B. Boyle, the principal of the first multi-grade school in London. It was the last unaltered Italianate house in London but was in poor condition. The City agreed to its demolition, in part, because Julia Beck, former president of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, now a member of LIFT, argued that sometimes social needs such as homelessness must supersede architectural preservation.

Most of the required funds will come from governments—Federal, Provincial and the City—but , as in the past with so many other downtown social care projects, we are sure that members of FSA will help in any way we can.

HARPUR SPEAKS OUT

Controversial broadcaster and spiritual author Tom Harpur lived up to his reputation in front of more than 400 people at FSA November 16th. He spoke primarily about his most recent book, *The Pagan Christ*, and dealt with the Literal versus the Metaphorical approach to understanding the Bible and religion.



UCW

By Jean Comfort



The women of FSA became the *United Church Women* in 1962. How are we fulfilling our purpose?

1) *“To unite women of the congregation for the total mission of the church.”*

We now have 3 units:

1st Thursday of month at 1:30 pm

2nd Wednesday of month at 9:30 am

3rd Tuesday of month at 7:00 pm

2) *“To provide a medium through which we may express our loyalty to Jesus Christ in. . .”*

a) *Christian Witness*: through living, sharing and giving as Jesus taught us.

b) *Study*: through invited speakers, films and discussion.

c) *Fellowship*: through meetings and projects we enjoy and share friendship.

d) *Service*: we learn of needs within and outside the Church where we can serve others.

UCW members initiated many services which now function as teams or committees on their own. For example, the Congregational Visiting Team was a UCW function in the past. The Flower Committee now involves more than the UCW in order to provide sanctuary and chapel flowers on Sundays, which are then distributed by the UCW to people unable to attend. There is a special decorating team for occasions such as Christmas, Easter, or Thanksgiving. Funeral receptions remain a UCW responsibility. Regular monthly programs for Extencicare residents by the Wednesday unit, and the table setting for the blind by the Thursday unit are special services outside the church.

Through our money-raising projects we help support the Church financially. In addition to our regular “Green” envelopes offering, we have three “big” projects—two Rummage Sales, spring and autumn, organized by the Thursday unit, and the Holly Bazaar organized by the UCW executive. Through these and other efforts we help support 14 organizations—United Church and other—which serve people’s needs. Of course, we could not carry out these events on our own. Thanks to the many willing workers and supporters, these are now events for the entire church family. A special thank you to Rusty Robertson for his help.

OVERSEAS RELIEF

Thank you for your generosity FSA. The following is a list of Overseas and Disaster Relief offerings for the months of September and October.

October Communion Overseas Relief Offering \$736

Hurricane Katrina (Southern U.S.A.) \$6375

Pakistan Earthquake \$360

Hurricane Stan (Central America) \$25

Our December Communion Overseas Relief offering will be directed to Central America where the United Church is assisting its church partners in Guatemala and El Salvador in the aftermath of horrific floods and mudslides caused by the heavy rains of Hurricane Stan.

THE ANNUAL HOLLY BAZAAR

This year's bazaar was another success. More than \$10,000 was raised by the Bazaar Committee on behalf of the UCW. This year's effort was a success thanks to help from both the women of the UCW and the men of the congregation. When the doors opened at 9, it was all Bazaar coordinator Ivana Klouda (left) could do to stay out of the way of the shoppers.



THE RUMMAGE SALE

One of the highlights of the fall season for people looking for a bargain is the Rummage Sale. This year, the UCW earned more than \$1600 through the event.



BELLS A-RINGING!



The Bell choirs of three churches gathered in the sanctuary of First-St. Andrew's on November 27 to ring in the Advent Season. Along with the Laudamus Bells from FSA, the choirs included handbell choirs from Colborne Street United and Oakridge Presbyterian.

The three choirs presented quite a picture at the front of the sanctuary.

David McKane was Master of Ceremonies and (left) also performed as a solosi, accompanied by Music Director Paul Merritt.

FSA YOUTH COUNCIL TAKES A BREAK

The members of FSA's Youth Council took a day in September to have some fun at a picnic in Springbank Park.

(below) Martha Eliot, Erin Linforth, Will Joles and Carolyn Joles.



(above) Group leader Erin Linforth, Will Joles, Carolyn Joles and Marth Elliot.

(right) Back at the church, Paul Galbraith and Jordan Baldwin pack a school kit for Church World Service (an M&S Fund partner).



OUR 173RD ANNIVERSARY

the second coming

come to me, my opic;
do not be vexed by the buzz and whirl of garden tools
for I am within the din very near,

in the soundtrack of your sleep
and the geography of breath.

while hands and spires point upward
in Asanas and cathedrals
visit sometimes my ground:

sick insects and battling toads
the centipede found on the floor
dents in the parapet and brambles in the wood
even these

nor are those weeks in your garden
but roses larger than eyes can tell;

believe or not, as you wish.
I shall await your coming.

Monika Lee



We celebrated our anniversary this year with a guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton (top left in picture). Karen is General Secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches and a United Church Minister. In her sermon, she mentioned that she had baptized some youngsters while they were members of another congregation. It turns out they were the Sutherland children, Ross and Miriam. They all met after the service and talked about their memories and posed for a family photo..



(Left) No anniversary would be complete without a lunch. Just before everyone came to the Lower Hall, Worship Committee chair Jo Ann Silcox, who arranged the lunch, and Shirley and Tom Wynne, who prepared it, are poised to welcome FSA members.



WE REMEMBER

Each year at Remembrance Day, FSA remembers the brave people who joined in the battle to defend our country in WW1, WW2 and Korea.

FSA Program Guide

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2005-2006

WORSHIP

- Dec 11** **3rd of Advent**
10:30am
Children's Pageant
- Dec 18** **4th of Advent**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Dec 21** **Service of Christmas Hope**
7:30pm
Rev. Dr. David McKane
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- Dec 24** **Christmas Eve**
7pm
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
10pm Candlelight and Communion
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Dec 25** **Christmas Day**
10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan 1, 2006** **New Year's Day**
10:30am
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- Jan 8** **Epiphany**
Communion, UCW Installation
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan 15** **2nd after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Baptism
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan 22** **3rd after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Jan 29** **4th after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Feb 5** **5th after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- Feb 12** **6th after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
Annual Meeting to follow

- Feb 19** **7th after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Feb 26** **Last Sunday after Epiphany**
9am and 10:30am
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad
- March 1** **Ash Wednesday**
7:45 Labyrinth Service, Lower Hall
- March 5** **1st in Lent**
9am and 10:30am
Communion
Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad

MUSIC

Again this year, our Advent and Christmas services will be filled with joyful sounds of the season as sung and played by our various music groups. In addition, there are a number of special concerts featuring FSA performers and others you won't want to miss.

FRIDAY ADVENT NOON RECITALS

12 NOON - 12:30 p.m.

Following the recitals, enjoy lunch for \$5.00

Catered by Thames Valley Secondary Culinary School

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

The Laudamus Bells

Barbara Plante, *Director*

HANDEL'S MESSIAH PARTS I & III WITH SYMPHONY HAMILTON AND THE SOLOISTS AND CHOIR OF FIRST-ST. ANDREW'S

On Friday Dec. 2nd at FSA, the choir sang parts I and III of MESSIAH with symphony Hamilton conducted by James McKay. The choir and orchestra return to Hamilton on Sunday for a performance there.

THE LONDON CITADEL BAND'S "FESTIVAL OF CAROLS" CONCERT

Our Senior Choir has been invited again this year to participate in the Salvation Army Band's Festival of Carols on Monday, December 12 at 7:30 pm. The choir will sing alone and also will help lead the massed singing at this free concert.



The London Citadel Band made their traditional annual appearance at FSA's 173 Anniversary service November 20th

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CRADLE ROLL

A kit called *Growing in God's Love* is sent to families with a new baby to help celebrate important events to age 3.

Coordinator: Martha Bere (641-6947)

NURSERY

Our nursery is available at both services for infants to two years. The nursery room is next door to the Chapel on the main floor.

Coordinator: Joeli Robertson

CHURCH SCHOOL

The children will be leading worship on Sunday, December 11th at 10:30 a.m. with the Christmas Pageant, "The Story of Jesus' Birth."

Family Christmas Eve service, December 24th at 7 p.m.

Check out the Children's Library off the Fireside Room!

Church School Coordinators: Chris and Monique Silcox (293-3960)

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

THE DUKE TRIO

Sunday, January 8th at 3:00 pm

Mark Fewer, *Violin* Thomas Wiebe, *Cello* Peter Longworth, *Piano*

with Anita Krause, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Admission: \$15 and \$10

OUR ANNUAL "A TASTE OF BURNS"

Hearthred Songs and Scottish Fare

Saturday, January 21st

Seating at 5:30 pm
with Dinner at 6:00 pm

Pipes, haggis, supper
and entertainment by
"Haggis Stew".

Catered by The
Grosvenor Club.

"Immortal Memory"
David McKane as
Robbie Burns

Limited Seating at \$30



David McKane as "Robbie Burns" at the annual Burns night last year.

CHOIR RECORDINGS

Looking for an inexpensive but unique Christmas gift? Why not consider one (or more!) of our CD's; *Favourite Hymns* (\$10) and *Christmas is Love* (\$15). The price is right and we know the recipient will have many hours of enjoyable listening. We even have special pricing for multiple purchases! Look for our display at Coffee and Conversation in the weeks ahead.

Don't forget that all revenues from sales go directly to the church!

TEENS IN TRANSIT (TNT)

For young people in grades 7 and 8. This group meets on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am in the Upper Room during the regular church school year.

Leader: Nancy Howard (289-0540)

TEEN CONFIRMATION CLASS

A class of nine young people is meeting monthly in preparation for confirmation in the spring.

YOUTH COUNCIL

Keep an eye on the Sunday church bulletin for meetings and special events.

Advisors: Erin Linforth & Jordan Berard (657-0515)

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Meets weekly from 9-10 a.m. in the Music Room (upstairs).

Facilitator: Dr. Jo Ann Silcox (642-2152).

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

10 am in the Parlour. Why not join us?

Facilitator: Susan Shelstad (679-8182)



PASTORAL CARE

In addition to the pastoral care provided by David McKane and Susan Shelstad, members of our congregation reach out to others in a variety of ways.

PRAYER CHAIN

Do you need prayers for yourself or others? Call Maureen at the office (679-8182) and the name or concern will be passed through the prayer chain. First names only will be used unless permission is granted to use the full name. Confidentiality will be respected.

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

This group is for those who find themselves in the role of caregiver, and who are feeling a bit overwhelmed. Please contact JoAnn Silcox (642-2152) for further details.

CONGREGATIONAL VISITING TEAM

Our Congregational Visiting Team comprises members of our congregation who offer ongoing support to our shut-ins. We have a visiting team of 30 who maintain contact with the members of our congregation on a regular basis, and especially at birthdays and holiday times. If you are interested in becoming involved in this very rewarding experience, please call David McKane (679-8182)

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Every Sunday, following our 9 am and 10:30 am worship services, the congregation is invited to remain for refreshment and the deepening of friendship. This is an opportunity for each person to make contact and share his/her journey as a valued individual within our community of faith. Volunteers are needed to make and serve coffee and to clean up.



Coffee and Conversation volunteers make the Fair Trade Coffee and serve it: On this occasion, it was Bill Knowles, Sheila Alton, Ruth Adams, Terry Peters and Liz Mignotte

DO YOU HAVE A COFFEE DRINKER ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST?

If you do, you might consider buying "Fair Trade Coffee". For the past few months members of FSA have been providing "Fair Trade Coffee" at Coffee & Conversation. This coffee comes from co-operatives of small coffee farmers who receive a fair price for their produce. It may be purchased from Colombia, Bolivia and Peru at Ten Thousand Villages which is operated by the Mennonite Central Committee, 630 Richmond St. or from Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Ethiopia at Quarter Masters Natural Food Store, 176 Wortley Rd.

DREAM GROUP

Come and discover the amazing world of your dreams. We meet usually on the last Friday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Parlour. No meeting in December.

For more information, contact Anne Cunningham (433-9663) or Susan Shelstad (679-8182).

SPIRITUALITY ON TAP

An informal evening of a movie followed by a discussion about it from a spiritual perspective. Watch the announcement insert for dates, movies and times.

COMING THIS WINTER...

"Living the Questions" – a 12 week DVD and web-based study discovering the relevance of Christianity in the 21st Century and what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world.

Lenten Labyrinth Walk - on Ash Wednesday, March 2. This will be a Labyrinth Service similar to the one last year which was so successful.



OTHER

LIBRARY

Our church library contains many wonderful things — good books for all ages, videos, and periodicals — all for your use. Come in and check us out! New material arriving all the time.

CD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Donations to this fund are used to help children, young people and adults attend programs and events such as youth retreats, camp, and Conference events. The fund is currently low after sending several children to camps last summer. Your help is appreciated.

COUNSELLING TEAM

There is a counselling service available to FSA members staffed voluntarily by Jo Ann Silcox, a psychiatrist, who provides initial assessment and follow-through counselling for individuals, couples, families or groups facing personal transitional crises. Referrals may be made through Jo Ann at 642-2152.

RIDES FOR SENIORS

If you need a ride to and from church and/or church events, please call Helen and Bill Cockshutt (858-9454).

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION

A Baptismal preparation session is held prior to every Baptism (usually the Thursday evening) to prepare the parents who are bringing their children for Baptism. We explore the meaning of Baptism, and prepare for the Sunday service. Our next baptism is on January 15, 2006. Call the church office if interested (679-8182).

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Stewardship Mission Outreach is involved in the Hospitality Meals, preparing baby layettes, organizing food collection for the Youth Action Centre and St. Paul's Daily Bread, actively supporting the ELUCOC in special projects, working with St. Marys United Church in support of the Canadian Food Grains Bank and occupying a chair on their board, sending two members to the LIFT Council meetings, and much more.

HOSPITALITY MEALS

This program runs year round on Mondays, 5:30 p.m. providing hospitality meals for more than 100 persons. One hundred or more volunteers have been involved, many of them from other churches. For information, contact Tom and Shirley Wynne at 474-4768, or the church office, 679-8182.



For the past five years, Donald Harrison (right) has been handing out toques to those who attend our Hospitality Meals. Jim Hendry (middle) models one of the caps, while wife Jan looks on. Mr. Harrison is a member of St. Aiden's Anglican church but comes once a month to help with the meals. His daughter Anne Rule makes the toques and wife Shirley sews up the seams. This year, Mr. Harrison gave away 87 toques.

FOOD BANK CONTRIBUTIONS

Please keep in mind the Committee's food collection for St. Paul's DAILY BREAD. Baby food is also a special need and may be left at any time. Baskets are placed at the entrance of the Chapel, and Narthex and Atrium entrances of the Sanctuary where you may leave your donations. Financial contributions are also welcome. Thank you for helping others!

GROW-A-ROW PROJECT

Over the past five years, money has been provided for the Canadian Food Grains Program through the efforts of St. Marys United Church and FSA. Donations are matched 4:1 by CIDA. This summer, the project used a farm outside London owned by Tom McLarty. The amount raised by members of FSA and St. Marys was \$10,000. During the past several years, the money raised locally and matched by the government 4:1 means \$500,000 worth of food was shipped to countries where the need is high.

Once again, this year, we celebrated the effort with a September corn roast at First-St. Andrew's organized by the Stewardship Mission Outreach Committee..



(above) Linda Badke and Patti Tyre prepare the apples for the corn roast.



(left) Patti, Susan Wark and David Gray help serve refreshments.

(bottom) Some of the members of FSA who celebrated the Grow-A-Row Campaign Corn Roast.



FRIENDSHIP & LEARNING GROUPS

FSA SUPPER CLUB (FORMERLY BIFOCALS)

This has been an exciting fall for the club with record attendance and good response from members. The guests in October were Wilf and Leuarie Noordeemeer, world travelers and photographers. Their dynamic presentation took us on an armchair tour of Ecuador, including the Central Highlands, the Indian markets, the Amazon Jungle and Galapagos Island. The photography and accompanying dialogue were most amazing. We are hoping for a repeat visit.



Wilf and Leuarie Noordeemeer

In November, FSA's own Dr. Terry Peters presented "Virtual Reality in the Operating Room", explaining his work in Modern Imaging Technology such as MRI and CAT scanning. Dr. Peters is a scientist at the Robarts Research Institute and a Professor of Radiology, Medical Biophysics and Biomedical Engineering at UWO.

Our 2006 lineup looks equally exciting with programs yet to be confirmed, but mark these dates on your calendar: January 24, March 28, April 25 and May 30. Guests and new members are always welcome. If you want to know more about us, call June McKay, 471-5668 or Shirley Wynne, 474-4768.



What would a supper club be without supper. The delicious pot-luck suppers are one of the highlights of the event.

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

The purpose of the UCW is to unite women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and to provide a medium through which we may express our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. First-St. Andrew's has three units meeting monthly as follows:

The first Thursday at 1:30 p.m. in the church parlour

The second Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. at 1 Grosvenor Gate

The third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the church parlour

The UCW held its annual meeting on November 30th. Members, and guests, enjoyed a program that included a Pot Luck meal, music by the Joyful Singers and Junior Joyfuls, and a message from Jordan Thompson whom we supported on his trip to Northern Kenya where he learned about the Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The UCW welcomes and encourages all women at FSA to become a member of the U.C.W. and to help keep up the good work in the years ahead.

The U.C.W. Induction service is January 8th at 10:30 am.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

All persons twenty and over who enjoy fun are invited to join with the Circle of Friends. Look for information in the weekly bulletin.



Ron Chatterson helps Ann MacPail and Grace and Liz Galbraith promote the Circle of Friends at Coffee and Conversation

BRIDGE GROUP

The Marathon Bridge Group has started its season under the coordination of Jim and Jean Young. For information contact the Youngs at 681-8119.

ISABEL GETLIFFE SEWING GROUP

Meets Wednesday from 9:30am - 2pm. Everyone interested in hand and machine sewing, cutting and stuff is welcome. Coffee is provided. Bring a lunch. The group prepares items for sale at the annual Bazaar in the fall. The sewing group is on hiatus until Easter at which time it will start up again for the next Bazaar.

THE KNIT WITS

A group of experienced and beginner knitters get together on the first Tuesday of each month from 1pm-2:30pm. They produce items for children and adults who are cold and in need in our community. For information, call Carol Leenders, 432-1233.



A FINAL WORD

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2005-2006

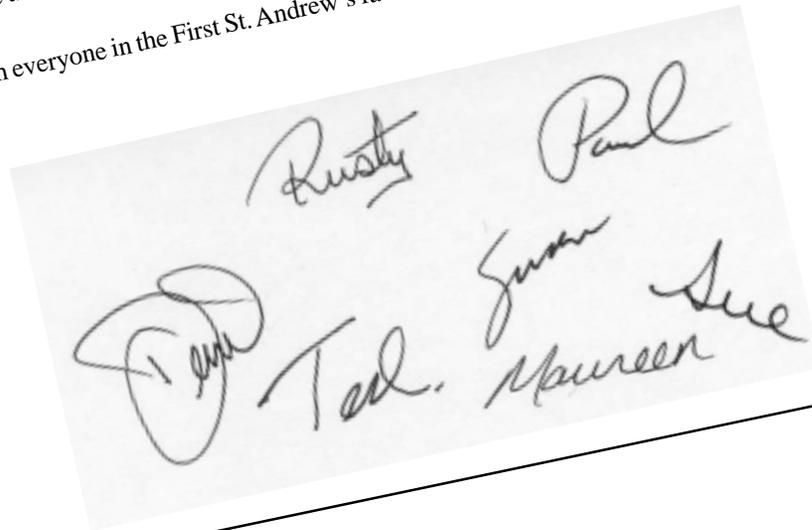
Welcome to a remarkable season!

What is more amazing during the Christmas season than walking into the sanctuary on Christmas Eve, seeing that big tree all lit up in the corner, and the lights and decorations in the chancel and the windows. There's a feeling that something special is happening.

The Christmas Eve family service is special because our children are there... wide-eyed and wide-awake in anticipation of Christmas Day.
And the traditional candlelight communion service with its special music always fills us with the deep joy of Christmas.

It is in gathering around Jesus at the moment of his birth that we enter the realm of true joy and sing the song of the ages that the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" (Luke 2:14)

We wish everyone in the First St. Andrew's family a Truly Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



First-St. Andrew's Ministry

Rev. Dr. David McKane: Minister of Worship and Administration

Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad: Minister of Christian Development

Paul Merritt: Director of Music

Ted Kostecki: Community Development Coordinator

Sue Scorgie: Church Administrator

Maureen Scarborough: Administrative Assistant/Receptionist

Rusty Robertson: Custodian

