

Tidings

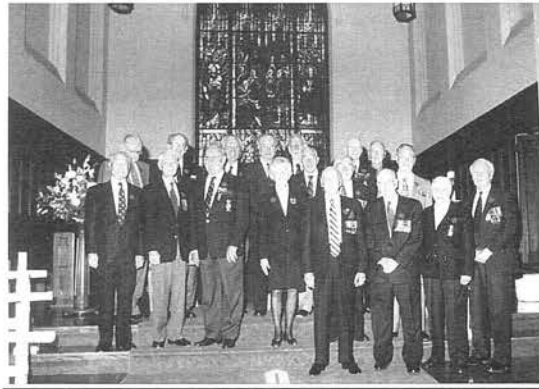
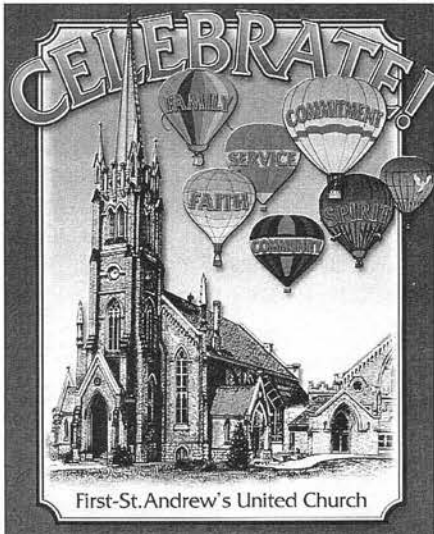


First-St. Andrew's United Church

VOLUME 13 ● NUMBER 4

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY 2003-2004

LET'S CELEBRATE



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*Too much of a
GOOD THING
is simply
Wonderful!*

by Joni Pypka

At the Auction this past May, Barb Bain and I bought a "Bed and Breakfast" at Mary and John Scott's home in Grand Bend. We looked forward to spending a night in their lovely home sometime during the summer. We did in July and it was wonderful.

Barb and I arrived on a Friday evening; played bridge, slept well, enjoyed a sumptuous breakfast, investigated several garage sales, enjoyed lunch with our hosts, played Bridge, delighted in a delicious gourmet barbecued salmon dinner prepared by both Mary and John, walked on the beach, played bridge, slept well for a second night. Our time ended with a lovely Sunday morning gourmet breakfast. The Scotts certainly outdid their offer. It was a weekend we won't soon forget.

We decided to reciprocate. On October 4th Mary, John, Barb and I attended church together followed by a delicious and delightful Brunch at the Horse and Hound.

Too much of a Good Thing is simply Wonderful!

Thank you, Mary and John and FSA from Joni and Barb.



Tidings

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SNAPSHOTS



Above: Barb Plante (middle) receives the original score for two compositions written for the Laudamus Bells by Barry Cabena. The Bells surprised Barb by playing the music during the Cabena Tribute Concert



Above: Paul Merritt presents Barry Cabena with a Richard Bain picture of the FS organ as part of the Tribute Concert for Mr. Cabena

Right: Some of the volunteer guides that helped during Doors Open 2003 in October: Jim Hutchinson, Erin McKane, Marg Leonard and Don Jones. The Open House attracted nearly 150 people from the community



Left: Ina Cavers cuts cake in celebration of her 95th birthday during a Thursday morning Bible Study.



Below: Donna Travis and Sue Scorgie examine the new dishwasher in the Lower Hall



JOHN WIEBE

by Bill Watson



"I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree"
(W.B. Yeats)

John's early life is a saga of 'arising and going...', virtually all over the world. He is just back from Padua, Italy, where he was the North American representative at a European Union Conference on New Discoveries in Cancer and Cancer Therapy, by virtue of his investigative work, over a long period, on Mammary Gland Disease and Cancer, about which he is a world authority.

The road to this honor is a long and fascinating one.

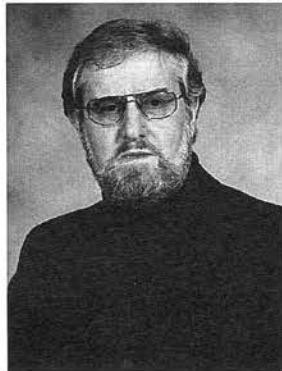
He was born in the Ukraine, to which his Mennonite ancestors had been invited from Holland, in the 1790's, by Catherine the Great. He was the youngest of a family of three brothers and one half-sister. They lived in the Ukraine during the period of the German occupation. His father, who was a carpenter, built a wagon, and that is how they left Russia, on a four month journey during a harsh winter, ultimately arriving in Hamburg in time for the RAF raids.

In 1949 the family arrived in Canada, without their father, who had been sent to Siberia, many years earlier. Their first home was a farm 20 miles south of Winnipeg. John, who was now eleven, had a two mile daily walk to and from school. He remembers the incredible floods of that year, when the surrounding land was like an ocean. Then the family moved in to Winnipeg, where he attended grades 5 and 7 (there was no grade 6!) at high school. He reflects, wistfully, that the only book they had, and could afford, was the Bible.

He became involved with the Mennonite Brethren and discovered he had an insatiable curiosity about nearly everything, but especially the sciences. While working in an office he studied chemistry, physics and mathematics, and sat the local exams which, he whimsically observes, he 'creamed.' Just at that time he saw an ad which grabbed his attention. It was for a "Meteorologist in the Arctic." He pursued this opportunity with vigour, having two principal motives in mind - adventure and the need to earn some money.

After training in both Winnipeg and Toronto, he was posted to Sacks Harbour on Banks Island, which had a population of 27, not counting the dogs, and was visited by three planes a year! He was the commanding officer of this enterprise at the ripe old age of 19. Life in the Arctic was a fundamental experience which had a profound effect on him.

The next steps were to UWO, here in London, then to UBC, where he earned an Honors B.Sc. in Physiology, and later a Ph.D. Then to Leeds, England, for two years, supported by a National Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellowship. Then to Texas, where they had learned about him through his many publications on "Hormones".



John Wiebe

In 1972 he was back at Western as Assistant Professor discovering FSA and its Music, and Alec Farquhar, with whom he struck an immediate chord by virtue of what he refers to as Alec's 'dignity', which he describes as a touch of the 'formal in a friendly way.' His discovery of FSA was, in his own words, "sheer serendipity." Just as his membership on the Mission and Service Committee was both appropriate and inevitable.

On reflection, John's whole life and career has been one of serendipity - of his own making. He observed at one point that "Things just happened. I never felt I was planning anything." Somewhat like the day he had an encounter with a Polar bear while he was just sitting on a rock!

His very favorite quotation is from a poem entitled "The Salutation of the Dawn":

For Yesterday is but a Dream, and Tomorrow is only a Vision.

But Today well lived makes every Yesterday a Dream of Happiness,

And every Tomorrow a Vision of Hope.

THE FSA STRINGS

By Bruce Richardson

The First-St. Andrew's Strings had its conception about 10 years ago as a gathering for younger string students in the church and met with variable success, occasionally performing before a service. From time to time Paul asked for more advanced string accompaniment for choir works and some organ sonatas and gradually the idea for a regular adult string orchestra caught hold. It was revealed that there was a significant number of accomplished string players within the congregation and soon the orchestra was attracting others from the community for the simple pleasure of playing good repertoire, not only in accompaniment roles, but also as a 'stand-alone' ensemble at the front of the church. The 'Strings' has grown into a viable group of around 16 members and now performs about once a month in the church and at other church functions. There is a warm camaraderie and a growing interest within the ensemble to take ourselves more seriously and to consider preparing our own concert.

Our membership enjoys an age span from high school to comfortably retired and any congregational orchestral string player of reasonable accomplishment is invited to consider the Strings. From time to time we can also consider a more symphonic experience, so wind and brass players should also become known to us.

Interested musicians are invited to call Bruce Richardson at 473-1023.



The FSA strings perform at Wonderland Gardens on Celebration Sunday

CHURCH SOUND

by Allan Stinson



Since the recent renovations of the sanctuary, the Property Committee has been on a learning curve regarding church sound design.

At the initial stage, a sound expert was retained. He explained that to enhance instrumental (organ) sound, hard surfaces are desirable. For the spoken word, soft surfaces are preferred. He ran a series of tests and was pleasantly surprised to find that our sanctuary was very good for organ sound, but observed that it could be improved by installing a hardwood floor. However, the floor under the pews has little effect on sound as it is normally covered by humans. Using hardwood on the aisles was rejected because of the possibility of falls on the wet floor during rainy weather.

A compromise was reached based on replacing the soft carpet on the rough pine floor with a layer of dense plywood and a special carpet designed to reflect sound. The result is that our sanctuary has excellent sound quality for instrumental music.

The remaining concern was the sound of the spoken word. The pew back speakers are supposed to deliver this milliseconds after the minister speaks, the degree of delay depending on where you are sitting. For this to be consistent throughout the Sanctuary, speaker groups must be adjusted correctly. Outside contractors and equipment suppliers tried to correct the problem, without much success.

Our own Wes Sole and Bill Cockshutt undertook to try and resolve the problem. They determined that there were two main factors – firstly, that the basic control module was long past the need for replacement, and secondly, that the wiring to some pews was incorrect, resulting in certain speakers cancelling each other out. Consequently, Wes has replaced the control module with a modern, higher performance unit. Although this tuning is still ongoing, the improvements so far are remarkable.

Funerals, a Sunday service, or a musical presentation can have very different sound requirements. These are easily adjusted using the new system. Wes is currently studying remote control systems that will permit adjustments from a portable control unit. The funding for such a control has been authorised, but Wes is holding off pending new designs that will be available soon.

Finally, a hint to the users of the hearing assist devices. The wires to the ear piece are very fine and easily broken. If you find a device that does not work, please tell an usher, and it will be repaired.

In conclusion, the Property Committee is unanimous in its appreciation of the hundreds of hours that Wes has spent developing better solutions than the contractors and suppliers were either providing or proposing.



Wes Sole tracks the sound coming from speakers through a computer

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

by Doug Jones, Chair



Greetings to the FSA family. We have had a great start to this Fall season with marvelous musical and theological contributions. The Remembrance Day Service provided some moving vignettes on the lives of several members of our congregation. The research for this was done by some of our teens several years ago under the direction of Don Dalrymple. Glenda Pennington and George Jolink organized and directed the presentation.

Sunday Nov. 16 was the occasion of the "Celebration" service and luncheon at Wonderland Gardens. We hope it will continue to be available for some years to come. The Garden's staff had done a great job of decorating for the Christmas season and this added to the atmosphere. About 350 FSA members were present. A special prize, won by Ross Strickland, was the gift of an hour's flight over London. Bruce Richardson will be the pilot.

Heartfelt thanks to Bob and Ron and their team, and the FSA Staff team, for their combined efforts. And to the Baldwin family, and the FSA Strings, under the leadership of Bruce Richardson, for the musical contributions.

Council has been busy with the ongoing functioning of the Church. We were delighted to get a new dishwasher in the kitchen, but quickly became aware of problems requiring new parts from beyond London, which rendered it temporarily inoperable. Hopefully it will soon be fully functional.

Following the report of the ad-hoc Committee on the Physical Plant, two directions are being followed. An independent ad-hoc committee of Council has been directed to make specific recommendations on a business plan for more optimum parking around the Church. Members of the committee include Russ Gonder (chair); Jack Hillier; Doug Jones (ex officio); Ted Kostecki; Bill Peel and Bob Schram (with power to add).

The Property Committee was asked to address the potential costs of renovating the main addition to the church, and the ongoing difficulties with church heating. This will likely be done early in the New Year.

We are looking forward with renewed commitment to this year, and seeking members to fill vacancies and replace retirees at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 8th, 2004.

Council meets at 7:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month from September to June. Meetings are open, and every member of the congregation is welcome to attend.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Karen Blatchford, whose rink won the first Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championship and will represent Canada at the worlds in Switzerland in January, 2004.



Ron Logan, Celebration Sunday co-chair congratulates Ross Strickland

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

by Jan Hendry, Doreen Gartley

Doreen Gartley was wondering how she was going to manage the Christmas decorations in the Sanctuary without Barbara Lloyd's direction, when David McKane came up with an answer. "I would like to see a 30' Christmas tree soaring high above, almost to the rafters," David said. At first it seemed like an impossibility since live trees are not allowed in the church due to fire regulations, and artificial trees don't come that tall.

We went tree shopping and found a 9' tree within the price range, but were awed by the beautiful 15' tree you now see in the sanctuary. As we talked with the UCW members, offers of financial assistance poured in, and we were encouraged to buy the large tree which suits the space so much better and brings back memories of the wonderful trees that came from the Comfort's farm for so many years. Then, of course, came delivery of the tree, the 25 strings of lights, and the 12' ladder which had to be purchased and brought to the church.

Finally, the last two hurdles were crossed when Jim Amsden and Jessie from White Rose Home and Garden Centre, Wonderland Rd. S., offered to come and show us how to deal with the tree, and the Circle of Friends agreed to take on the future erecting and dismantling of the tree on an ongoing basis.

Many thanks to all those who were involved in this undertaking, the UCW women who made it financially possible, the flower committee members, the Circle of Friends, the amazing staff at White Rose, the church staff, Fran Eberhard for the ladder, and last, but not least, Rusty, who is always there for all of us. Amazing people cause amazing things to happen.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

by Stan Hill



We are all capable of leading a more physically active life-style than we have let ourselves become accustomed to. We have become so conditioned by the automobile, power-mower and the golf cart, that our fitness level, whatever our age, is significantly lower than it could or should be.

Children are physically active with soccer, baseball, hopscotch and cycling, just to have fun. Athletes exercise to train for their particular sport. Some adults are active in order to prevent coronary artery disease or to control high blood pressure. Both young and old can benefit from exercise, and older adults certainly have much to gain from a planned activity program.

When the UWO Centre for Activity and Aging interviewed older adults, the majority remarked that exercise helped them to continue living independently, whereas only a few cited exercise as a means of disease prevention.

Many of the components of general fitness, such as strength, flexibility, agility and aerobic capacity, tend to diminish with each decade. Simple tasks, such as housework and gardening, become fatiguing, fitness levels are further reduced, and the individual is less likely to be independent.

Two components are of particular importance - 1) Aerobic fitness, and 2) Strength.

Aerobic fitness: Men and women of all ages have different fitness levels. Therefore, the choice of activity must be appropriate for the individual, and the following are some of the factors that should be considered:

- a) Frequency. Five days a week is ideal, but a minimum of three days a week is useful.
- b) Intensity. Appropriate if you can hear your breathing, or conversation becomes laboured.
- c) Duration. Start off with 10-15 minute sessions and increase to 30-40 minutes.
- d) Type. Brisk walking, jogging, swimming and cross country skiing all bring benefits.

Strength training: This has benefits such as increases in bone density, muscle size, basal metabolic rate, and a decrease in body fat. Research indicates that previously sedentary adults can gain strength even in relatively short periods of time. But do not start a strength program without professional advice. Look for training programs at community and recreation centres, YM-YWCA's and Fitness Clubs, etc.

The greatest benefits manifest themselves when the activities, the environment and the company are all enjoyable.

Remember: **PHITNESS CAN BE PHUN!**

Changes...

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

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."



Joining in November (left to right): Ann Marie Schenk, Cynthia Hudson, Paul Grigg, Jim Connor, Elma Connor, Adam Gedies, Jennifer Neron and Michael Cooney. Young Hannah Claire Neron was baptized this fall

BAPTISMS

"I will be with you always, even until the end of the world"

Kathleen McKenzie Bere
Hannah Claire Neron
Cynthia Dawn Hudson
Adam Gedies

MARRIAGES

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

Sept. 13 - Lynda Cousins and Darren Bridgewater
Sept. 20 - Diane Silva and Brian MacDonald
Oct. 4 - Laura LaRose and Jordan Jones
Oct. 10 - Heather Dickson and Brady Blain

DEATHS

"Well done good and faithful servant."

Nov. 5 - Nancy Elizabeth Stewart
Nov. 23 - Mary Burns Rossie Brown

GOODBYE & GODSPEED

"May kindness and peace be yours from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness."

Kathryn Warren
Joan & Henry Kaluza

PLANNED GIFTS – ANNUITIES

By Ted Kostecki, Community Development Coordinator



A planned gift can help keep the ministry of First-St. Andrew's vital and ensure we'll be here for future generations. This article is one of a series in Tidings which will explore the various ways in which gift planning can serve your current needs, and your estate planning wishes.

One wonderful way for church people to receive a guaranteed lifetime income and also make a gift to the church is through a GIFT ANNUITY.

A gift annuity within the United Church is an agreement in which an individual or couple give an initial irrevocable gift to the church. In return, they receive a guaranteed annual income, some or all of which is tax exempt, for as long as they live.

The individual must be at least 65 and the minimum amount for the annuity is \$5,000.

The income payments are guaranteed by the United Church of Canada. Upon death, whatever is left from the initial gift amount of the annuity is sent to whoever you choose. Most folks choose their congregation to be the recipient of the residue of the annuity gift.

Here are two examples of Gift Annuities:

A 75 year old female creates a \$10,000 United Church annuity. She would receive \$712 each year, which would be 85% tax exempt, along with an immediate charitable donation receipt for \$2,532. She would be guaranteed a lifetime 7.12% on the annuity. 15% of the annual payment would be taxable.

An 80 year old male creates a \$25,000 United Church annuity. He would receive \$2437 each year, which would be 92% tax exempt, along with an immediate charitable donation receipt for \$1791. He would be guaranteed a lifetime 9.75% on the annuity. 8% of the annual payment would be taxable.

A 71 year old male creates an \$8,000 United Church annuity. He would receive \$592 each year, which would be 80% tax exempt, along with an immediate charitable donation receipt for \$1791. He would be guaranteed a lifetime 7.4% on the annuity. 20% of the annual payment would be taxable.

The best people to speak with are your professional advisor and lawyer. If you have any questions, I will be glad to assist. Next issue, I will talk about Life Insurance as a planned gift.

ARE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS \$11,600 MUDDLE

That's how much money was raised in the two annual fall events sponsored by the UCW. Proceeds will go toward the work of the church.

THE HOLLYBAZAAR...



THE RUMMAGE SALE...



SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

by Margaret Wonfor



The 2003 General Council of the United Church of Canada approved a new name - Women's Ministries Network - to cover the wide variety of women's groups within the church and the work they do. Under this umbrella, the First-St. Andrew's UCW operates. What a positive step to consider the work of women's groups as part of the Church's overall ministry!

The UCW has a number of committees to look after different facets of its mandate. The Flower Committee is a group which has exercised a valued ministry over the years. Each Sunday they arrange for flowers to enhance the beauty of the sanctuary for worship. Sometimes families provide flowers in memory of a loved one or to mark a special occasion. The committee has a flower calendar available so that donors can reserve the Sunday of their preference. When no special flowers are available, a member of the committee will purchase some and make an arrangement for the chancel. The cost of these is borne by the UCW Flower Fund to which members make a contribution from time to time. During the summer months, when members' gardens are in full bloom, they will offer an arrangement, a gift of their labour for the enjoyment of all. The outdoor urns at the front of the church are dressed for each season by members of the committee.

After the worship service, the chancel flowers are taken to the sick or shut ins as an expression of the concern and good wishes of the congregation. Members of the UCW units volunteer to do the delivery and this personal contact is a gift to both receiver and visitor.

At Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, the committee meets to plan the decorations for the sanctuary, and then has a work party to create the artistic display which awes those who gather for worship. At Christmas and Easter, members make contributions in memory of loved ones, for the poinsettias and Easter lilies used in the displays.

For the sick and shut-ins who cannot be at church, the flower committee provides a poinsettia at Christmas and an Easter floral gift delivered to them by members of the Congregational Visiting Team during Advent and Lent - once again a reminder that they are an important part of the church family.

On Christmas Eve, when you see the flickering candles secure in their sparkling glass globes, you might offer a silent thank you to the member of the committee who has cleaned the globes. Also during the past year, the UCW has had the candelabra, a bit unsteady from years of use, reinforced by an artisan so that clamps which support the globes will be firm and secure for years to come. The candelabra are used by many First-St. Andrew's brides as part of their wedding decor.

The women of the Flower Committee who are committed to this ministry are Barbara Lloyd, Doreen Gartley, Lori Harper, Thelma Pleiter, Bev Fowler, Dawne Mahabir, Wilma Evans, and Margot Linton. If you feel called to this type of ministry, speak to any one of them. When words fail, flowers send the message of love and caring concern powerfully. Thanks to those who use this medium to carry out their ministry.

FSA Program Guide

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2003-2004

WORSHIP

Dec. 7 **White Gift Sunday**

9 am and 10:30 am

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Dec. 10 **Christmas Hope Service**

7:45 pm

Dec. 14 **Third Sunday of Advent**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Dec. 21 **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Dec 24 **7 pm Christmas Eve Family Service**

Children's Christmas Play

10 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Dec 28 **First Sunday after Christmas**

10:30 am - one service only

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Jan. 4 **Second Sunday after Christmas**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad

Jan. 11 **Epiphany Communion**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Jan. 18 **Second Sunday after Epiphany**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Jan 25 **Third Sunday after Epiphany**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Feb. 1 **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Feb. 8 **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Annual Meeting

Feb. 15 **Sixth Sunday after Epiphany**

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad

Feb. 22 Transfiguration Sunday

9 am and 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. David McKane

Feb. 25 Ash Wednesday 7:45 service

Feb. 29 First Sunday in Lent

MUSIC

As always, our Advent and Christmas services will be filled with the joyful sounds of the season as sung and played by our various music groups. This year, however, you can take these sounds and memories home with you when you purchase a copy (copies) of our new C.D. "Christmas Is Love" For \$20.00 you will receive a double C.D.! One features our Senior Choir, The Laudamus Bells, The Joyful Singers, piano and flute, while the other consists of Christmas pieces played by Paul Merritt on our magnificent Casavant pipe organ. All proceeds above costs will go to the Church.

What better Christmas gift could you give this year than *Christmas Is Love*. Pick up your copy (copies) at Coffee and Conversation any Sunday in December or from Pat in the Church office during the week.

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* concert on **MONDAY, DECEMBER 8 at 7:30 pm**. The choir will sing some carols alone and will help to lead the massed singing at this free concert.

Music
AT FIRST-ST. ANDREW'S

FRIDAY ADVENT NOON RECITALS

12:00-12:30 - luncheon (\$5.00) served following

NOVEMBER 28

Organ Recital

Paul Merritt, *Organ*

DECEMBER 5

The Laudamus Bells

Barbara Plante, *Conductor*

DECEMBER 12

The Joyful Singers

Paul & Enid Merritt, *Conductors*

A CELEBRATION OF ROBBIE BURNS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2004 at 6:00 pm

With pipes, haggis, supper and entertainment

Four course supper catered by The Grosvenor Club

"Immortal Memory" - David McKane as Robbie Burns

Limited seating at \$30.00 per person.

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: Nancy Stanlick (451-9491)

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: Judy Cull

CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School classes are now offered only at the 10:30a.m. service. The children go to their classes following the children's story time in church. Again this year we are using the curriculum called Seasons of the Spirit, which is lectionary based so that the scriptures we are reading in church are the scriptures the children are studying in their classes. **The children are preparing a play for the Family Service on Christmas Eve, "A Christmas Wish," written by Liz Galbraith.**

Church School Coordinators: Chris and Monique Silcox (438-3404)

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

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

Six young people are enrolled in this year's confirmation class. Confirmation will take place in the spring.

Youth Council

The Youth Council is run by the young people of the congregation under the supervision of Debbie Maund and Erin Linforth, and supported by the Christian Development Committee. They decide on programs, activities, and worship that is relevant to them.

They are going caroling on Dec. 7 with the Circle of Friends from 1:30 – 3 p.m., followed by a pot-luck supper at the Guthrie's (972 Waterloo St.) at 5 p.m. They are also wrapping gifts at the Daily Bread Food Bank from 7-9 p.m. on Dec. 9.

Advisors: Debbie Maund (679-0716) & Erin Linforth

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

THE BETA PROGRAM – FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER...

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

This lively group meets on Sunday mornings from 9 to 10:15am upstairs in the Music Room.

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

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

10 am in the Parlour. This popular lectionary Bible Study group is guaranteed to make you laugh and help you grow in your Christian faith. Why not join us?

Leader: Susan Shelstad (679-8182)

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

LABYRINTH WALK

Our next labyrinth walk will take place at the beginning of the Lenten season. Check for information in the weekly bulletin.

NEW OFFERING FROM THE CD COMMITTEE:

Spirituality on Tap – An informal evening of a movie and discussion about faith in a pub setting. The movie is part of the Art Series at Rainbow Cinemas at 7pm. The pub is the Elephant & Castle at 9pm. Both are at Galleria Mall. First Monday of each month.

RETURNING THIS YEAR:

Contemplative Worship - on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Chapel. Meditation training will be part of the experience along with stretching, drumming, scripture, silence and prayer. Come and restore your soul!

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. Your help is appreciated.

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.

COUNSELLING TEAM

There is a counselling service available to FSA members staffed voluntarily by the following: Kerry Hill, a management consultant and career counsellor, provides personal counselling and detailed vocational assessment by appointment when mutually convenient; Ardath Finnbogason-Hill, a nurse-educator with considerable experience in personal counselling, and Jo Ann Silcox, a psychiatrist, work as a team to provide initial assessment and follow-through counselling for individuals, couples, families or groups facing personal transitional crises. Referrals may be made through Ardath Hill at 657-3000.

PRAYER CHAIN

Do you need prayers for yourself or others? Call Pat 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.

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).

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 Heather Bedford (685-1714) or JoAnn Silcox (642-2152) for further details.

RIDES FOR SENIORS

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

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Every Sunday, following our 9:15 am and 11:00 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.

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. The Sacrament of Baptism will be administered again on January 11. Call the church office if interested. (679-8182).

STEWARDSHIP MISSION 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 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 Donna Travis, 672-6116, or the church office, 679-8182

COORDINATOR NEEDED

Donna Travis is retiring from the job in the New Year and is looking for someone to replace her. If you'd like to learn more about this challenging position, please see Donna or Ted Kostecki.

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. The donations are matched 4:1 by CIDA. Next summer, the group will use a farm near St. Marys. Over the last four years, the congregations of FSA and St. Marys United have donated about \$84,000 to the Grow-A-Row project and when matched by the government, that means \$420,000 worth of food was shipped to countries where the need is high.

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!



Left: Jean and Bill Knowles arranged for food donated by FSA members to be served at the Habitat for Humanity build in South East London

Right: Gerry Meacham may now be known as the Bird Lady of London. She discovered a Band-Tailed Pigeon in her back yard. Birders from the area and all over Ontario flocked to the Meacham home to see this rare sighting. The Band-Tailed pigeon is rarely seen away from the West Coast. Gerry has provided a feeder and helped build a blind from which visitors can view the bird. Gerry spotted the bird during a quiet moment of contemplation in her study. Gerry is a birder and recognized she was seeing something unique.



Left: Wendy Ewert, Laurel Kenney and Anson Wever pick crab-apples for Holly Bazaar Jelly.

FRIENDSHIP & LEARNING GROUPS

BIFOCALS

Bifocals resumes in the New Year with a meeting on January 27. The meeting will feature "The Arts". The next meeting after that is February 24, the popular Cards and Games Night. Come and enjoy good food, warm fellowship, a sing song and varied programs. New members and guests are always welcome. Call Shirley Wynne, 474-4788 or June McKay, 471-5668 for information.



Bifocals group meeting in November listening to speaker from Habitat for Humanity

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.

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 7:00 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

New members are always welcome.

BRIDGE GROUP

Another season is well underway under the direction of Donna Travis.



Left: Wendy Ewert, Laurel Kenney and Anson Wever pick crab-apples for Holly Bazaar Jelly.



A FINAL WORD

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2003-2004

Dear friends of First-St. Andrew's

Liturgically the season of Christmas has three "movements." Like a great symphony it plays itself out before us even as it plays itself out within us. The movements are Advent, the time of waiting, Christmas, the time of birthing and Epiphany, the time of journeying. In many ways the Advent season can be as wondrous as the actual Christmas celebration as we wait impatiently and expectantly and hopefully for Christmas to arrive with all its attendant delights and surprises just as Epiphany is filled with new insights and new understandings in the afterglow of Christmas.

Christmas at First-St. Andrew's is always a rich and vibrant season with poinsettias in the chancel, noon hour recitals, the music from the balcony and festive candlelight services, the excitement of children of all ages, Christmas pageants and mulled cider in the Atrium. It is a time to rejoice and celebrate the birth of Jesus into our world and into our lives.

But some of us, for a variety of reasons, find it difficult to face this season with joy and delight. The smooth has become rough and the valleys are deepened rather than exalted and we reside in shadowed places or search the night skies in vain. If this resonates with you then you may wish to join us in our service of Christmas Hope on December 10th in the Chapel. Acknowledgement of our losses will be gathered up in readings, prayers and candle lighting. We hope that you can join us.

"The oxen knelt before him, the donkey and the lamb,
In prayerful adoration before the great I AM,

While Joseph stood rejoicing beside the manger there,
As Jesus wove his fingers within sweet Mary's hair."

As we turn the calendar to a new year we slip into the third "movement," the season of Epiphany, the season of journeys. Much is planned for 2004. It promises to be an eventful year. We hope that you can join us throughout this Christmas season and find in each of the "movements" something to nurture your soul and feed your spirit.

Paul *Rusty* *Ted* *Pat* *Sue*



First-St. Andrew's Staff

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

The Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad: Minister of Christian Development

Paul Merritt: Director of Music

Ted Kostecki: Community Development Coordinator

Sue Scorgie: Church Administrator

Pat Sole: Secretary/Receptionist

Rusty Robertson: Custodian