



ACW Newsletter Advent 2024

Anglican Church Women

Diocese of Toronto

135 Adelaide Street East Toronto

■ ON ■ M5C 1L8

PRAYER LINKS

January

Deaneries of Durham-Northumberland,
Eglinton

ACW sisters in Diocese of Huron, the
Territory of the People
Council of the North, LOFT

February

Deaneries of Etobicoke-Humber, Holland
ACW sisters in the Dioceses of Montreal,
Moosonee
Evangelical Lutheran sisters in Diocese of
New York

March

Deanery of Huronia
ACW sisters in the Dioceses of Niagara,
Nova Scotia & PEI
Canadian Mothers' Union

NATIONAL PRAYER PARTNERS

The ACW's in the Diocese of Toronto are
praying for the ACW's in the Diocese of
Calgary.

The ACW's in the Diocese of Calgary are
praying for the ACW's in the Diocese of
Toronto.

Please send us your photos and
news of your women's activities.

Deadline for next issue February 12, 2025

COMMUNICATIONS

Website: www.toronto.anglican.ca
(under About Us / Departments)

ADVENT

The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word
adventus, which means "coming".

Advent did not always exist in the Christian Church. It
first emerged in the 4th century as a season where
Christians observed 40 days of fasting, penance, and
prayer in readiness for celebrating Christ's birth and the
baptism of new Christians at Epiphany in January. It
was called "St. Martin's Lent", for the 40 days that
started on November 11, feast of St. Martin of Tours. In
the 6th century, the period of fasting was shortened
and called "Advent". At this time, Roman Christians
began to associate Advent with the coming of Christ,
but his second coming, not his birth in Bethlehem. It
wasn't until the Middle Ages that Advent became
associated with Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Advent in the 1800's involved the development of
several traditions: including the advent wreath, and
advent calendars.

The concept of the Advent wreath originated among
German Lutherans in the 16th century. Then in 1839,
Pastor Johann Hinrich Wichern of Hamburg, Germany
created the modern advent wreath to help children in
his orphan asylum anticipate Christmas. He placed
candles on a wooden wheel hub, with red candles for
weekdays and white candles for Sundays. Tradition
eventually evolved into wreaths made from evergreens,
the circle representing God's love and the candles
representing themes of hope, peace, joy, and love.

The concept of advent calendars originated in the 19th
century with German Protestants who marked walls or
doors with chalk lines and lit candles each day. The
first printed advent calendar was created by Gerhard
Lang, who was inspired by his mother's tradition of
attaching 24 treats to cardboard squares.

Ecclesiastical Needleworkers

The Needleworkers continue to meet weekly. The photos show Joy Horswill lining up the orphrey bands on a chasuble and Heather Kaufman hemming a purificator.

As well as creating new articles, the needleworkers have several gently used fittings, vestments and fair linens looking for good homes. If you are interested in seeing their work, a visit can be arranged. Please call the ACW office (416-363-0018) and leave a message for the Needle-workers.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

With the end of Ordinary Time in the church fast approaching, I look forward with anticipation and hope for Advent and Christmas. It's a busy time of year what with buying gifts, making menus for Christmas potlucks, and attending holiday and Christmas parties.

Many of our churches have been planning Christmas bazaars and sales. In the Holland Deanery, we began these sales on November 2nd and they continue until December 22nd.

My thoughts also turn to those less fortunate than ourselves. At St. James, Sharon, I ask the congregation to support our Second Chance Clothing Depot and Food Closet with gifts for our Jessie Tree. Items needed are toiletries, tea, coffee, special items which individuals/families cannot afford but are needed and too expensive; as well as a few small treats. Our Special Projects recipients are another way to give at this time of year. We are supporting the Angus Foodbank; Elmvale Foodbank; the Barrie Friendship Centre; Youth Without Shelter; Feed the Need, Durham; York Region Food Network; Feed Scarborough; the Teresa Group and their Infant Formula Program. I know of friends donating to Fill-a-Purse and 360 Kids. The need is great. More and more foodbanks, pantries and food closets find it hard to keep up with the demand.

At Christmas I give thanks for my family and friends. I am happy that we live in our great country of Canada where we enjoy freedom many in this world lack. Let's enjoy our families and remember those in need.

Wishing you a happy Advent and a very Merry Christmas and all the best in 2025.

Sincerely,

Janice

SAVE THE DATE

***TORONTO DIOCESAN ANGLICAN CHURCH
WOMEN
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SATURDAY, April 26, 2025***



Chaplain's Reflection

Merry Christmas to All



Advent is a period of preparation and anticipation leading up to Christmas, marking the four Sundays before Christmas, December 25th. The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival."

Advent is an important part of celebrating the birth of Christ on Christmas Day. During Advent, Christians engage in reflection, prayer, and spiritual preparation, often observing traditions such as the lighting of the Advent wreath. As Christmas draws nearer, each candle brings more light into the darkness.

There are five candles in the Advent wreath, three blue, or purple and one pink. At the center of the wreath, is a white candle, often called the Christ candle, lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas day, and reminds us of the birth of the Christ child and that we are not alone.

Each week in Advent, a candle is lit, emphasizing the four themes of Advent, hope, peace, joy, and love. The circle of evergreen boughs reminds us of God's unending love for us and of our everlasting life in Christ. The candles tell us of the light that came into the world with the birth of the Christ child. The unlit candles represent the world in darkness, a world where hatred and evil abound. As the candles are lit, the light of Christ's presence eliminates the darkness. as we remember the blessings the Christ child brings to the world.

There are variations of the Advent wreath in different traditions.

Cont'd

Chaplain's message cont'd

The first candle lit represents hope. Hope is warming and comforting like a flame, and without hope there is only emptiness. Hope can carry us through the pain and ordeals of life, to a place of joy, and help us to remember the hope we have in the birth of the Christ child.

As we light candle of peace, we remember that true peace grows out of our willingness to repent, and follow Christ, the Prince of Peace. We are thankful that through the grace of God, we are able to teach and model the hope and peace of Christ that "passeth all understanding," in our lives, communities and the world.

As we light the candle of joy, we remember that angels told the shepherds not to be afraid because they brought tidings of "good news of great joy." The good news of Jesus' birth is indeed a great joy for us today. We are called to share God's everlasting joy with others that they too will be filled with God's Spirit.

As we light the candle of love we are reminded of God's gift of love, salvation and eternal life. God is the epitome of love, as shown in sending his son for our salvation.

As we light the Christ candle, at Christmas, we rejoice that the Christ was born and gave us new life.

Blessings to All

Rev. Canon Joan Cavanaugh-Clark

ACW Chaplain Diocese of Toronto

ADVENT PRAYER

Gracious God, you have done so much for us
And we so little in return
You ask for humility
And we are often a proud people
You ask for willingness
And we are often a stubborn people
You ask for repentance
And we are often a deaf people
You ask for service
And we are often a busy people
Gracious God, you want the best for us
Teach us obedience, Grant us forgiveness
That we, like Mary
Might be your willing servants. Amen

NATIONAL ACW CONFERENCE 2024

The theme of the ACW President's Conference held in Stratford, Ontario from September 26 – 29 was "Let Your Light Shine" and was hosted by The Diocese of Huron. We can all be a light to others—those in need, those who are lonely, and those who have no voice.

We began our weekend with a delicious meal provided by the ACW of St. James, Stratford. At our meals, a prayer or poem focusing on light was placed at our seats. There were many excellent poems/prayers but the one I found the most interesting and inspirational was: ***Light of the World*** (see page 5)

On Thursday night, our meal was followed by The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist led by The Venerable Dr. Stephen McClatchie and The Reverend Canon Robert Lemon (preaching).

Friday was a full day beginning with breakfast, morning worship, with special guests Lilian Ketch from the Mothers Union; Michelle Hauser, Anglican Foundation Representative; and Janice Biehn, PWRDF Representative. Our Chaplain for the weekend was the Reverend Patrica Allison. Michelle Hauser of the Anglican Foundation spoke about Enabling Connections; Fostering Innovation; and Connecting Donors.

I found the presentation by Janice Biehn, PWRDF especially interesting. She outlined the following areas of focus:

- Indigenous Response where PWRDF are providing one-year grants between \$5,000 - \$15,000 to respond to needs identified by Indigenous communities.

- Emergency Response (In Canada) Education Focus—Creation Care: Climate Action. A three-year education focus—climate action and food insecurity; climate action and women; and climate action and health.

- In Gaza on October 7, 2023 PWRDF provided \$30,000 in emergency funding to the Al-Ahli Hospital who is a long-standing partner of PWRDF.

- PWRDF partners with 3 Indigenous organizations overseas including the Ancestral Hampik Warmikuna Health Council in Ecuador. They work "to preserve traditional knowledge and empower communities in Mexico, Peru and Ecuador" (PWRDF website) with regard to maternal health care.

- Partnering with the Anglican Development Services Eastern (ADSE) of the Anglican Church of Kenya to improve "water accessibility through environmentally sustainable practices to enhance community climate change adaptation and resilience" (PWRDF website).

- 5-year Strategic Plan (2024 – 2029) focusing "On Place" where partners and their priorities are at the centre of their work; Strengthening their relationships with Indigenous communities by supporting Indigenous rights, voices and programs; Amplifying the voices of young people and affirming their role as leaders in social justice initiatives; Committing to a culture of respect and learning about staff, partners and volunteers; Inspiring generosity through effective donor stewardship; Contributing to the vitality of ecumenical groups and other networks; and Supporting sustainable programs and humanitarian assistance grounded in human rights and Creation care.

Janice's presentation ended with an announcement that on October 15th, the name PWRDF will be changed. Note the new name is Alongside Hope—Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world (email received from Will Postma on October 15th).

The afternoon session focused on the business of the National ACW. Highlights included the Treasurer's Report—2023-2024 Financial Statements and the 2024-2025 budget.

Cont'd on page 5

Nat'l Conference cont'd

There was a motion to amend the Term of Office of the Treasurer (Article VIII) from the current 5 years to ensure that the transfer of authority of the Treasurer takes place during an in-person Annual Conference. As no one stepped forward to assume the position for this year 2024-2025, the next time a transfer could take place is in 2026-2027. There are no changes to the Executive.

A host is being sought for the 2025 Virtual Conference. In 2026 (in person) the conference will be hosted by the Diocese of Athabasca in Grand Prairie, Alberta.

We were invited to help prepare a video for the Coventry Cathedral Litany of Reconciliation which included seven petitions:

- (1) The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, faith from faith, class from class;
- (2) The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own;
- (3) The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth;
- (4) Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others;
- (5) Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the one who does not look like us, the one who is mentally ill, the refugee;
- (6) The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children; and
- (7) The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God.

Friday night we enjoyed another great meal provided by the St. James Stratford ACW. After dinner we were entertained by a Fun Fashion Show by the St. James ACW followed by Compline.

The Diocese of Toronto's 2024 – 2025 Prayer Partner is Calgary.

Saturday was spent exploring Stratford's Downtown including a Swan Boat Ride; walking tours (Brewery Trail/Chocolate Trail); a Tour of the Stratford Festival Warehouse Treasures; and a show at the Festival Theatre (Romeo and Juliet) which I thoroughly enjoyed!

We returned to St. James to another delicious meal provided by the St. James ACW. The conference ended with church services (Compline and a Sunday morning service).

Janice Hodgson, ODT

Toronto Diocesan ACW President

Light of the World ***by Bettina Van Vaerenberg***

Jesus is the Light of the world;
The light that will never grow dim.
They shall never walk in darkness;
All who believe and follow Him.

The words the Lord has spoken;
They teach us how to live.
Jesus has shown us by example;
How to serve, and how to give.

His Spirit imparts the holy desire.
To live a life of genuine love;
A desire to forgive, to be gentle –
To be as innocent as a dove.

Jesus gives believers the power;
To become the children of God,
So come to Jesus and receive Him;
Entrust the Saviour with your lot.

You will have the Light of life;
The light that will never grow dim.
You'll never walk in darkness –
And never alone if you follow Him!



2024 Special Project,

FEED THE NEED in DURHAM

For fifteen years, Feed the Need in Durham, a registered charity, working with over 65 hunger relief programs, volunteers and supporters, has provided emergency food distribution services to those in need in Durham Region. Over 2.5 million meals are distributed annually to those facing food insecurity and hunger. FTND continues to serve as a beacon of hope in the community.

Purpose: To nourish our community

Values: People and Community first; Inclusion; Accountability; Leadership and Continuous learning.

In the last published annual report it was noted that: there was a 51% increase in visits to a food bank (35,779 visits); overall 285,687 visits. 1 in 4 were first time visitors. The programs include 36 Food Banks, 7 shelters, 12 Meal Programs and 7 snack programs.

The need continues to grow within the Region and FTND is working to respond to community requests.

2024 Fall Women's Gathering, Christ Church, Stouffville

More than 50 women gathered at Christ Church Stouffville in the Great Hall, some coming from as far as Orillia, Bowmanville, Shanty Bay and Sharon. They were welcomed with coffee, muffins, pumpkin goodies and lovely fall decorated tables. Meet and Greet sheets helped women connect with others that they did not know previously.

Following a brief introduction to the day, some history of this event, and an opening prayer, more time was given for conversations before we all moved to the sanctuary to hear and see a presentation by lawyer, Ida Morrow-Caruso, who spoke about empowering women in the workplace, home and in relationships to know what the law says and does not say. Some questions from the floor were addressed.

Following lunch which included a treat of baked whole apples with ice cream, there was a rousing sing-song of great old hymns led by Linda Hadaway and Cathy Tubb.

Wilma Scorar then invited us to "get our hands dirty" planting some tiny succulent plants to take home. She also provided the opportunity for a paint-blotting exercise in which we then had to decide what our art work was depicting. Lots of fun and laughs!

Glenda Kerr had prepared the alphabetical suggestions that had helped to guide American musician, Usher, in his life. As these were read out by individuals around the room, they all seemed to speak to each of us! (google Usher: A-to-Z Advice to Live By).

Rev. Lisa Newland closed the day with a benediction. Many thanks go to Glenda, Wilma and Linda for organizing of the event and to the many others who helped in so many other ways

