



Church of St. John the Evangelist

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Advent Parish Letter

Feast of St Andrew

November 30, 2021

Grace and peace in Jesus Christ.

On Sunday evening we launched into the Advent season with an inspiring service of Advent Lessons and Carols. It was our first opportunity to hear twelve singers in-person for twenty months, and what a moving experience it was.

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are filled with longing, expectation, and promise. These themes have particular resonance for us this year as we are now able to gather in-person, with limited capacity, to celebrate Christmas with loved ones at our homes and churches.

Thanks be to God for the opportunity to gather together, within our diocesan guidelines, to sing carols and to offer our prayers. While we have learned that our ministry is not confined to a building, there is no replacement to being in the company of other people, hearing the Parish Choir, and offering our prayers to God in the same sacred and beautiful space of St. John's.

This has been an eventful year at St. John's, and the Wardens join me in thanking you for your commitment to support the ministry of St. John's. **You have played an important role to help us accomplish a lot together.**

Here are three things at St. John's that I hope you find as inspiring as I do.

The St. John's Poppy Project, with over 7,000 poppies, was featured on local and national news media. It engaged members of the broader community and welcomed hundreds of people inside St. John's who had never been here before. As someone said to me, *"This Poppy Project and joining the Knitters and Quilters group has changed my life!"* This is inspiring.

Dr. Patrick Murray began as our new Director of Music last month. In that short period of time Patrick has introduced new repertoire, connected with the Wellington County Museum to feature our Parish Choir at the Christmas Market, planned the choral program for our Advent and Christmas seasons within guidelines, and throughout all of this, Patrick maintains a balance of thoughtful composure and creative initiative while being a contagious pleasure to work with. This is inspiring.

Garry Cantlon began last month as our new Sexton. In the past two weeks Garry helped disassemble poppy installations, instal Christmas flood lights, and set up the church for safe in-person gatherings at all of our services and events. Garry offers a warm and helpful presence. This is inspiring.

We have much to be grateful for.

The shepherds were inspired to go with haste to Bethlehem to see what the angels were singing about. I invite you to St. John's to hear the Parish Choir, to encounter the light of the Christ child in word and sacrament, and to be inspired in your journey of Christian faith. Come

with haste to St. John's so that when you get here you might encounter the living God, your heart might be filled with joy, and like the Magi, you are inspired to generous acts of service and love.

You are invited to offer a gift to support the ST. JOHN'S OPERATING FUND and the PARISH CHOIR FUND in any of the following ways:

Pre-Authorized Giving - the form is available HERE on our website or at the back of the church.

E-transfer to treasurer.stjohnselora@gmail.com

Offering Envelopes - boxes of the 2022 Offering Envelopes are available at the back of the church. If you do not see your box of envelopes, or would like a box, please contact Steve Hornett at givings.stjohnselora@gmail.com or 519-846-5911.

A gift of shares.

Identifying St. John's in your will and estate planning.

Getting involved in something in the parish.

Financial gifts received before December 31st can be included in your charitable donations for income tax purposes in 2021. Unless identified as PARISH CHOIR FUND, your gift will support our general OPERATING FUND.

Offer your sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving at St. John's to the glory of God this Christmas. **You can find the full slate of Christmas services available HERE on our website.**

As always, Judy and I are available to support you and your family with pastoral care, and please know that our prayers are with you.

I trust that you can make more room in your heart this Advent season to receive the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Thank you for your commitment to the mission of God at St. John's Elora. We are always blessed, and I trust that through your engagement at St. John's you are inspired to deeper faith and further opportunities to love.

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Canon Paul Walker
Rector

St. John's Elora Statement of Intent and Purpose

St. John's Elora is a Christian community within the Anglican tradition with a strong history of liturgical worship and choral music. In a spirit of service, self-giving, and thanksgiving, we offer to the glory of God, ourselves, our souls and bodies, endeavouring to foster a faith in Jesus Christ and facilitate human flourishing.

We strive to be a thriving, spiritually nourishing, healthy, welcoming and missional community. Reaching out and reaching in, community engagement, and partnerships are all critical as we build on our past and present strengths.

Our ministry together depends on factors such as spiritual authenticity, intellectual integrity, respectful behaviour, the ability to listen attentively, and community hospitality. We move towards the 2030s in a spirit of love with thanksgiving for what we have been given.

- approved by Special Vestry, June 15, 2021

Canadian Church Calendars and Anglican Church Calendars for 2022
are available at the Parish Centre
and at the back of the church while supplies last.

Follow St. John's Elora on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.