

# Tidings

Vol 24, No 4 – Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2014

Loved the welcome,  
but where's  
the pear tree?

(See Page 7)

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# Tidings

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## EDITORIAL

David Flynn

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As I write this on November 17<sup>th</sup>, I see a world outside glowing with the winter's first real snowfall. In spite of the glowering overcast skies, I feel a sense of hope, an advent before our celebration of the birth of Jesus and the personification of the Greater Light.

Before I went into the hospital two weeks ago for prostate surgery, Bob Peel, drawing from his Quaker background, said to think of the Light within. To be honest, during the first few days after the operation, my own light felt pretty feeble. Then I thought of the Light around me: my wife Pat nearby, the gentle touch of the nurses, the emails and telephone calls from family and friends, and while I was not well at that point, I was inspired.

Much of this Light around me comes from FSA: the signed card brought by David McKane from the Brown Baggers, the prayer shawl from the Sewing Group, set me afire. As I read the articles in this issue of *Tidings*, I sensed a focus, an inspired light bringing us all together, like the Star in the coming Christmas pageant.

We have had inspiring preachers at FSA, from Angus McQueen to Kate, but I like to think that they, in turn, have received inspiration from us, that as they stand in that great old pulpit amidst the glow from the stained glass, they sense the immanence surrounding us. I think it significant that some former ministers choose to return to worship with us, and I hope Kate's Note implies that she might do the same.

So, this Advent and Christmas Season, may your Light within unite with the Light we celebrate. ✚



## FSA's *Tidings* publication is growing for 2015

FSA folk have an exclusive opportunity to advertise until the end of the year, after which time outside businesses will be contacted.

**Contact Bob Peel**

[info@peelvideo.com](mailto:info@peelvideo.com) or (519) 203-5000.

## Note from Kate



Dear friends, this will be my last word to you in *Tidings*, and my last month in the treasured role as your settled minister. As our church year brings us into the Awaiting time of Advent, I am aware that the FSA community is entering its own awaiting time, as you make yourselves ready to search for a new minister. My hope is that the conversations being held as part of this process are opportunities for each and for all to clarify what they long for, not only in a minister, but in the community as a whole. There is a deep welcome to be offered when all can speak and be heard.

There is no doubt in my mind that the community will continue to be shaped by a shared love of music, an inquiring approach to the scriptures, and a well-rooted commitment to justice and to outreach ministries. I hope you will be a beacon of discipleship in the city of London, and in the wider community of Middlesex Presbytery.

On December 21<sup>st</sup>, as part of our regular worship service, we will close the covenant relationship which has bound us together since the fall of 2010, (yes, I will be leading the services on Christmas Eve after that!). It is a sign to you and to me that our relationship must change. I can no longer be your pastor, but I can be your friend. The transition is important, but space must be made for your new minister to fill when she or he begins in ministry with you. This is the recommendation of the United Church of Canada. There will not be a “wall” between us, of course, but perhaps a “gate,” which will only be opened carefully, and with great respect for your new minister’s role.

Thank you now and always for the opportunity to serve Jesus Christ as I served as your minister these four years. Grace to you all, and peace. †

## View from the Pew



### JESUS OF NAZARETH

Steve Elson

Jesus of Nazareth—it’s not a common reference—but it’s the name used by religious scholar Reza Aslan in his recent book, *Zealot: the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth*. He has done this deliberately, because the main purpose of the book is to provide a picture of Jesus the man in the social, political and religious context of his time; it makes for fascinating and provocative reading.

It’s obvious from the in-depth research he has done that the facts are few and the opinions are many. Nevertheless, it’s clear that the Jesus we know through the Bible is markedly different from the one Aslan describes based on evidence from the time. Some of this comes from the fact that the books of the New Testament were written many years after Jesus lived. Some of it comes from the fact that stories were changed so they did not antagonize the Romans who ruled the country. Another reason was the authors wanted to ensure that Jesus, as described,

conformed to prophecies made in the Old Testament. Any historical truth was secondary to making these links because they served a “higher” purpose.

The most significant “higher” purpose was to transform Jesus the man—Jesus of Nazareth—into Jesus the Son of God, the Messiah. Deliberate steps were taken to transform a religious prophet into a quasi-mythical, an ideal, divine figure—the Son of God. Most of the credit for this rests at the feet of Paul, who never met Jesus, but whose conversion resulted in a fanatical commitment to creating and promoting Jesus as divine. This, in large measure, defines the Jesus we know today, because it is Paul’s books and letters which make up a significant part of the New Testament. The reason he did this was not only personal but was rooted in the social and religious dynamics of the time in which he lived—as is true of most actions. The consequences, as we all know, have been long-lasting and significant beyond compare. (*Cont’d. on p.18*)





**FRED PATTISON**

*Jim Silcox*

It was Sunday morning and we were sitting two rows behind Fred and Anne Pattison. David McKane had just finished the sermon and we were supposed to be contemplating the life-lesson he had presented, eyes cast downward, pious, quiet. I heard a little shuffle from the pew ahead, nothing much, a quiet little noise. I glanced up and there was Fred, slumped and unconscious between the pews with Ann kneeling beside him. Between the two of us, we got him horizontal, feet up, collar unbuttoned, and soon his eyes were fluttering open. As “medical emergencies”

in church go, it was pretty low-key. Fred did not want to go to hospital, insisting that “these little events” happened all the time and that the best thing for him was to go home and lie down for an hour. Anne concurred and soon we got him home, with Fred apologizing all the way for having caused a fuss and thanking me profusely, a shy smile on his face.

I cite this, not to highlight my own medical heroics, which were inconsequential, but because the whole scenario was so typically “Fred.” He was a man of many accomplishments but so humble and even shy that you would never know it to talk to him. He always turned the conversation around so that you were talking about yourself and he was praising and thanking you for something. That was the Pattison magic.

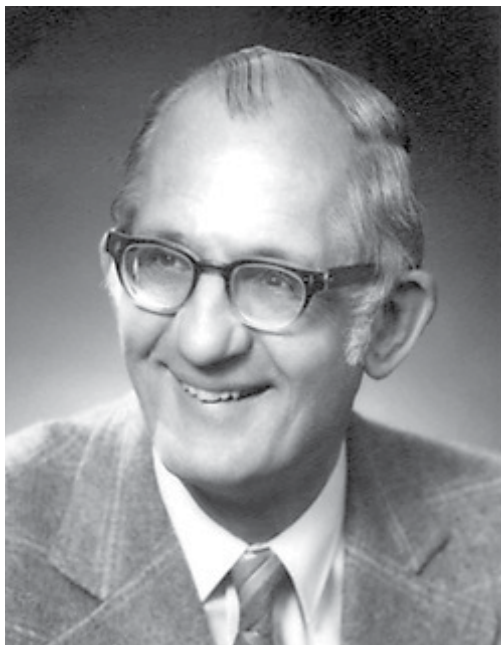
Born and raised in Scotland, Fred showed an interest in chemistry and demonstrated a gift in music, specifically, the piano. He graduated with a PhD in Chemistry, from Cambridge, no less, and soon emigrated to Canada to teach at Dalhousie. But, of course, the “other Fred”

came to Canada too and he soon found himself performing live piano recitals for the national radio network of the CBC. Ever self-effacing, Fred recalled simply that, “You sat at a studio piano; the red light went on, and you started to play.”

In 1948 he was appointed as assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry at Western. He quickly moved up the ranks to full professor and then became head of the department. Anyone who knows academe knows that this kind of meteoric advancement does not happen “automatically,” and we can be sure that Fred impressed his confreres in many scholarly ways. Moreover, his students adored him, and his colleagues would do anything for him. Along the way Cambridge awarded him an honorary doctorate in recognition of his accomplishments. He could certainly afford to rest on his laurels.

But now the story takes a turn. At age 42 Fred decided that he wanted to become a doctor. (One can only imagine Anne rolling her eyes when he came home with that idea.) He applied to Medicine and was accepted at Western. Soon he was brown-bagging it and burning the midnight oil. It was about this time when I got to know Fred. I was a resident and he was my junior, an intern in the medical training hierarchy. Frequently we were scheduled on clinical services together and my job was to make sure that Fred got to know “the clinical ropes.” Twenty-years older than I and obviously much more accomplished, he could have pulled rank. It was quite the opposite. Deferential and eager to learn, he was the best intern I ever had!

After graduation, Fred joined the International Grenfell Association and, with Anne at his side, went off to Newfoundland to provide medical care to the underserved areas of the province. What happened to the other Fred? He had Eaton’s deliver a piano to the little village of Roddickton, Newfoundland, and reclaimed his passion for the instrument! Soon his patients loved him and he and Anne made many life-long friends. Obviously the music scene of Roddickton picked up a fair bit too! (*Cont’d. on p.18*)





**MR. AND MRS.  
OUTREACH**  
*David McKane*

It took several 'phone calls to reach them, and when we did meet for an interview it was between volunteering gigs for Orchestra London. When it comes to volunteering, Jean and Bill Knowles set the bar higher than most. Over coffee (Fair Trade of course), they shared with me something of their amazing story. Coming to FSA during the Farquhar years they decided that the best way to meet people and make friends was to join a committee. That almost bears repeating, doesn't it?

Over the years Jean and Bill have made many wonderful friends and met hundreds of interesting people. Members of the Mission, Outreach and Environment Committee, the Knowles have been involved with advertising and canvassing for Grow-a-Row and the Corn Roast (Canadian Food Grains), in addition to selling Fair Trade coffee to support Los Quinchos, helping with fundraising for East London United Church Outreach, collecting athletic shoes for the London Inner City Health Clinic, performing as maid and butler at one of our Downton Abbey fundraising dinners, or assisting with the annual White Squirrel Golf Tournament. In addition to all of that they have been two of FSA's representatives on Middlesex Presbytery for the past eight years. It sort of takes your breath away, yet that is only the beginning.

Jean and Bill began volunteering for Orchestra London in the late seventies helping out with bingos, rummage sales, Christmas gift-wrapping, and the sale of cushions for concerts in St. Paul's Cathedral. Bill has been on the Board of St. Paul's Daily Bread for more than 17 years, and both he and Jean assist in the gathering and distribution of food to London's needy (those white bushel baskets in church), as well as collecting gifts for St. Paul's Christmas Share. For ten years Jean was on the Faith Relations Committee of Habitat for Humanity,

organizing lunches and snacks for the various build projects. In the same vein Bill is FSA's representative on the London Inner City Faith Team that seeks to address the question of affordable housing or lack thereof.

Socially conscious, Bill and Jean are people persons who have a passion for helping others. They love working to raise funds for great causes or make London a more caring and compassionate city. Over the years they have amassed some touching memories, such as befriending the young woman who was reduced to tears by her need to ask for help when she first came to Daily Bread. The Knowles provided not only food but a listening ear, a supportive shoulder and an encouraging



word. Several weeks later she returned to tell them that she had found a job, thank them for their kindness and promise to pay it forward. That kind of thing happens a lot to the Knowles. Sometimes, years later, people will come up to them and say, "Thank You!"

If you happen to meet them at an Orchestra London concert, teeing off at the Golf Tournament, selling coffee in Proudfoot Hall, or just sitting in the pew some Sunday, introduce yourself and say thanks to FSA's Mr. and Mrs. Outreach. ☛

## Getting to Know



**MEET BARB CUNNINGHAM**  
Jane Daichendt

In November of 2013, Barb made her way through the atrium doors of FSA, and instantly knew that this would be her new church home! She has a delightful story about what “drove” her here.

Barb was seeking more meaning to her faith and church experiences in her life. So, in the fall of 2012, she started her studies as a Licensed Lay Worship Leader, a course offered by the **Five Oaks Centre** in Paris, Ontario. Her

awareness.

Barb’s interests within FSA emerged during the time she was studying this course. Her travels to and from Paris were made possible by our own Kerry Stover. Kerry shared also the devotion of studying the Licensed Lay Worship Leader course. The course and the driving time brought forth their faith discussions.

London is Barb’s birthplace, and she continues to enjoy the city with her husband Clayton. They have been married for 31 years and have two adult children: a son Andrew and a daughter Jessica. Barb values that her parents and aunt live in London.

Barb has quite a repertoire of musical interests—for listening and playing. At FSA, she enjoys the choirs and takes part in a folk guitar group. Old-time gospel and bluegrass music styles are regular interests for her. In the summer, she takes much delight in playing her guitar when outdoor camping. Her song-writing talents, both lyrics and words, speak to her creativity.

At work, Barb takes delight in talking with clients in places such as Hawaii, Australia and North America. She offers a full-time commitment to her position at TLS (Tele Link Services).

Barb really knows how to use her crockpot! She is satisfied that she is providing her family with hot and nutritious meals, complimented with other fresh produce; this frees her to pursue her camping ambitions. She’s set up camp at local places such as Arkona, Thedford and Kee-Mo-Kee. And Barb wastes no time setting up her tent, having purchased that new style which quite literally pops open and it’s ready to use! This leaves her well on her way adoring nature’s beauty along hiking and biking trails.

FSA recognized Barb’s (and Kerry’s) Licensed Lay Worship Leader designation in a covenanting service on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Barb is proud of her new enthusiasm, and looks forward to meeting others as she resumes her indoor activities at FSA. ✚



sincerity with wanting to enhance and enrich her Christian faith was recognized, supported and sponsored by **Middlesex Presbytery**, London.

Barb’s dedication to her studies necessitated that she be on site for four weekends of the 18-month programme. Bible chapters and passages were studied with fresh perspectives. Stimulating books such as *Executing God: Rethinking Everything You’ve Been Taught about Salvation and the Cross*, by Sharon L. Baker, were assigned. Barb felt wholly engaged by these endeavours and has cultivated a more satisfying self-





## THE FSA CHUKAR

Winnie Wake

**B**ack in August, surprised members of FSA first noticed a handsome member of the partridge family strolling about the church grounds. Identified as a Chukar, the bird has such a striking pattern and bold colours that everyone who sees it stops for a second look. It spends much of its time around the FSA property but sometimes wanders further afield.

Audrey Coulthard has taken a special interest in the plump little bird and has been bringing it cracked corn. The Chukar has become quite tame and comes running when she calls. She reports it to be very sociable, often seen in the company of pigeons (which also like cracked corn), and unperturbed by noisy traffic nearby.

Although Chukars can fly, they rarely do so. Their swiftness as runners and their agility in hopping over obstacles makes them ideally suited to life on the ground. If startled from the safety of cover, Chukars burst into motion in an explosion of speed. They eat grasses, seeds and other plant materials, as well as insects that live on the ground or in low vegetation.

The Chukar is native to southern Eurasia—from India to Afghanistan—and is the national bird of Pakistan. Chukars were introduced into North America by hunters who prize them as game birds for the challenge they offer to sportsmen. In the western US, Chukars have become naturalized in arid, rocky terrain. In the London area, they are raised

on a commercial hunting farm west of Komoka and released for the pleasure of sports hunters and their dogs. Chukars are sometimes kept as pets.

Occasionally Chukars escape from game farms and turn up in unexpected places. How the FSA bird ended up in the heart of downtown London is

*Call of the  
Wild*



a mystery. Perhaps this Chukar had heard that churches are good places to seek sanctuary in times of need. However it managed to arrive in the FSA neighbourhood, the Chukar seems to be at home here and was seen almost daily until the first week of November. It may still be around—keep your eyes open. †



## RETURN TO ZAGRADOVKA

John Wiebe

**T**he last part of the trip took 15 hours, but the journey began a long time ago. It was Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. The hired driver arrived at the hotel about 8:30 and we departed the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhia on the Dnieper River and headed west, distancing ourselves from the neighbouring state

settled in 1871 to establish a cluster of small farming villages which came to be known as Zagradovka.

The first village we entered was Kochubeyevka (formerly Tiege), where my father spent his peaceful youth before Czarist Russia haemorrhaged into the USSR. I walked along the tree-lined road, observed the garden fences and simple homes, talked to residents, and recognized (from an old photo) the white-washed school building that father had attended a century ago, still in operation. Next came Rovnopolye (Neu-Halbstadt), where my mother and her 11 siblings were born, and from where (under Stalin) several of her brothers and preacher-father were terminally exiled or imprisoned for their faith. It was now 4:30pm and we tried to get to Ozerovka (Neu-Schoensee)—the main objective of my trip. Because of heavy downpours the day before, it was only after a third attempt over waterlogged roads that we finally made



Entering Kochubeyevka, Ukraine

of Donets'k, where armed pro-Russia sympathizers had taken control. The roads were riddled with potholes; the driver said there were fewer this year ... because many had “amalgamated.” We passed security check-points and I almost lost my camera. West of Nikopol, the roads became narrower and we passed scenes from another century—kerchiefed women stooking hay with pitchforks, or milking cows in a field by the roadside, a man with a scythe in a pasture, and horse-drawn wagons carting hay. After a “rest-stop” behind road-side bushes, and a packed-lunch break at a cemetery, the driver stopped by a sign that in translation read “Zagradovka,” and then the first view of the Ingulitz River. It was in this region (about 100 km north of Kherson) that my great-grandparents, along with other Mennonites of Dutch/Prussian descent,



Russian-speaking woman who settled in Ozerovka in 1943

it to my place of birth. Time and history merged as I touched the black earth, walked the village road, met residents and saw the school which I might have attended. I contemplated our departure October, 1943, fleeing in a covered horse-drawn wagon over rain-soaked dirt roads towards Romania, Poland, and far beyond as refugees in war-torn Europe, and eventually to Canada. I had returned to Zagradovka, and wondered, what if ...?







## SMOOTH WATER CRUISING: THE RIDEAU CANAL

Mary McKim

In June, 2013, we spent a delightful five days aboard *Kawartha Voyageur*, cruising the canal, the Rideau River and lakes, between Ottawa and Kingston. A small flat-bottomed ship, the prow was often drawn up in order to fit into the lock, of which there are forty-nine between the Ottawa River and Lake Ontario! The highest point is on Upper Rideau Lake at Westport. From there you descend until reaching Kingston.

Construction of the canal is 200-year-old Canadian history. During hostilities with the U.S. it was deemed essential to have a safe route via the Ottawa River to carry munitions from Montreal to the Fort at Kingston. Americans on the south bank of the St. Lawrence could fire on passing boats! Hewn from primeval bush, and cut through the Canadian Shield two hundred years ago, this amazing waterway was built under the direction of Colonel By, a British Army engineer. His settlement at the junction of the Rideau and Ottawa Rivers gave our capital its first name, Bytown.

Scottish stonemasons built the locks and a dam at Jones Falls. Irish immigrants laboured to cut huge stone blocks which form the lock walls and dam. It's hard to picture hundreds of men camping in tents in the bush, where malaria decimated their numbers. Colonel By completed this difficult and challenging assignment on time, approximately two years, but was disappointed to not receive honours upon his return to England, where he was chastised for overspending!

The scenery is beautiful, and interesting wildlife abounds. Accommodations are modest, but the meals excellent, and

the crew helpful and friendly. Tying up at a small community each afternoon we could go ashore to visit a museum, shop, or simply take a walk. It was a trip I had wanted to take since watching houseboats and the cruise ship go through the lock at Chaffey's, where my brother had a cottage for years.

We have just returned (Sept. 2014) from *Kawartha Voyageur's* cruise on the Trent/Severn system, from Big Chute on Georgian Bay to Peterborough, again passing through many locks, including the famous lift lock at Peterborough. An equally enjoyable experience! †





## THAT MYSTERIOUS BANNER COMMITTEE

Jim Silcox

Many folks may not know that we have a “banner room” which resembles an attic storehouse. It resides off to the left of the chancel. Cold in winter and warm in summer, this space also acts as a storehouse for Christmas decorations and houses the sound-recording equipment. Spooky it’s not; interesting it is. In the banner room hangs a sign (which precedes my time) which warns would-be “trespassers” not to touch the banners unless they have first received permission from the “Banner Committee.”

Now, that makes the Banner Committee sound pretty formidable. If you promise not to tell, I’ll reveal a little secret, right here on the pages of *Tidings*. There is no Banner Committee. I’m it. I act as a functionary of the Worship Committee and am responsible for putting up the banners in the sanctuary (and occasionally on portable stands elsewhere in the church) to mark the seasons of the liturgical calendar as well as other special occasions.

I cannot take credit for creating our beautiful banners, however; I’m just the “putter-up” guy. At one time we did have a Banner Committee of highly skilled and creative women who produced the banners we see. Today, Nancy Hutchinson continues to make new banners when the Worship Committee sees a need and she also ensures that older banners are repaired as necessary. We owe her and several anonymous women of the church a great debt of gratitude for their efforts both past and present.

The Banner Committee also puts up

the cross that floats over the pulpit during Lent and Easter. This little feat of magic involves climbing up into the steeple of the church, accessing the attic of the sanctuary, walking across a catwalk to the northern most light fixture and then using the light hole as a visual viewing port, winching the fibre-glass cross up into position. This is always a great adventure for the Banner Committee, calling for multiple winches up and down till we get the horizontal bars of the cross just right.

There, the mystery is solved. Confession is good for the soul! †

*Behind the  
Scene*







## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: RISE UP, SHEPHERD, AND FOLLOW!

Margaret Trethewey

"There's a star in the East" begins the carol, and the young people of FSA, from tots to teens, are already well along that road, preparing the pageant for our December 14<sup>th</sup> Youth Service.

*Follow that Star* is our dramatization of Canadian author Kenneth Oppel's book, illustrated by Kim Lafave.

One evening about a year and a half ago, I found both the book, which immediately suggested "pageant," and the first of a flock of suitable sheep, "stiffies," that would be essential for one scene. I sent off an email to Ken, asking whether anyone had already adapted his story or, if not, would he allow us to do this. I told him a bit about FSA and some of my ideas for a staged version, including using the

Zimbelstern on our wonderful Casavant organ. Luckily for us, Ken's reply was enthusiastically positive, that this hadn't yet been done and to go ahead!

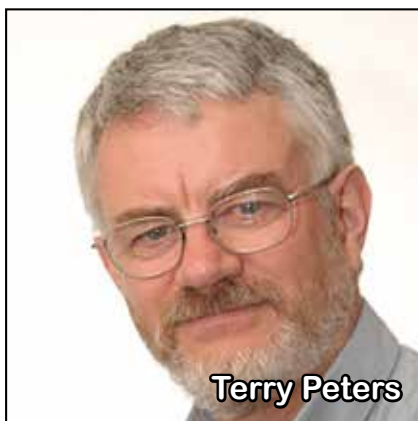
The story opens with the angels' announcement to a group of shepherds of an important event a few miles away in Bethlehem. They depart, leaving their flock and a note for one of their number who has missed the angels because he was on the other side of the hill rounding up strays. The note sparks scepticism but, seeing evidence of something unusual having happened, the young shepherd rounds up the flock and sets off for Bethlehem too. A series of adventures and encounters with mysterious strangers along the way bring the shepherd and "the silliest sheep in the world" to the outskirts of town just in time for Christmas morning.

"How far is it to Bethlehem?" asks Frances, wife of G.K. Chesterton, in her poem for their 1917 Christmas card. The answer is, "Not very far." Please join us on our journey—we are almost there! ✚

## NOTEWORTHY

Our own **Terry Peters** has been awarded the "Enduring Impact Award" from the MICCAI Society for "Pioneering contributions in CT imaging and in bringing computer-assisted intervention techniques into clinical practice, particularly for the heart, brain, spine and abdomen."

MICCAI stands for the Medical Image Computing and Computer-Assisted Intervention Society, and is dedicated to the promotion, preservation and facilitation of research, education and practice in the field of medical image computing and computer-assisted medical interventions, including biomedical imaging and robotics. Terry has been a fellow of the society since 2009. FSA offers its heartiest congratulations.

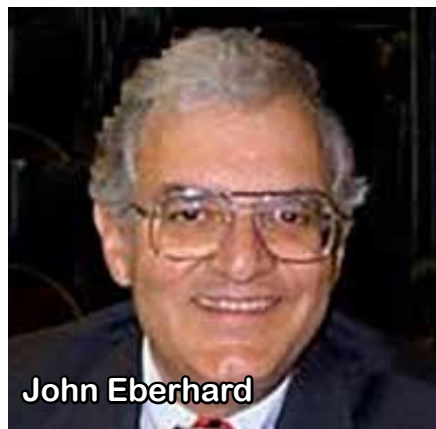


Terry Peters

**John Eberhard** has assumed the presidency of Western's Alumni Association Board of Directors. The

citation which recently appeared in *Western News* notes:

*"John's most notable volunteer efforts have been realized through his decades-long relationship with Rotary International, where he has served in various capacities*



John Eberhard

*including club president, district governor and international director. John was the driving force behind a variety of new initiatives for Rotary—he created Cyber Clubs to increase accessibility for members, and he founded*

*Rotarian Action Groups which undertake humanitarian programmes such as water management, AIDS and malaria programmes, micro-banks, and blood banks around the world. John has dedicated himself to each community he serves—Western, London, and international populations, through his service and passion for a better world for us all."* ✚

## DID YOU KNOW?

### DATEBOOK

#### from Music and "Music at FSA"

- Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>—Third Advent Noon Recital
- Jan. 23<sup>th</sup>—A Taste of Burns
- Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>—Amanda and Fiona
- Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and March 6<sup>th</sup>—Lenten Noon Recitals

#### from Worship

- Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>—"End of Covenanting" service for Kate
- Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>—Candlelight Communion

#### from Christian Development

- Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>—Advent Labyrinth Walk
- Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>—Christmas Pageant and Family Community Christmas Party

### CHANGES

#### Marriages

- June 7<sup>th</sup>—Norman Philibert & Maryse Simard
- Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>—Blayne Robson & Shanna Muloin
- Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>—Taylor Kingston & Colleen Gaspirc

#### Deaths

- June 25<sup>th</sup>—Prior, Robert Jacob (Bob)
- July 9<sup>th</sup>—Johnson, Christopher Andrew
- Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>—Brown, James
- Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>—Irwin, Geraldine Letta
- Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>—Conkey, Barb
- Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>—Galbraith, Mabel

#### New Member

- Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>—Jane Daichendt

# Committee Reports



### COUNCIL

#### God in the Gaps ...

*Jo Ann Silcox*

Some of the richest theological insights in Judeo-Christian tradition have been birthed *in the gaps*—those times of disorientation, displacement, and despair—when all that previously served as sure signposts of God's presence has been shaken out of its settled certitude.

Exodus and exile, destruction and dispersion, persecution and pogroms, holocaust and hedonism, 9/11, and the post-Christian era, to name but a few, disoriented, dismayed, and dismantled faith and faith seekers—for how could God be present in such horror? And yet, it has been out of those events that the richness of the Exodus tradition, the psalms, wisdom literature, the gospels, liberation theology, progressive Christianity, and a host of new theological understandings have been born.

Traditionally Advent has been seen in the Christian calendar as a conscious attempt to let go of previous orientations, to embrace and even encourage the disorientation of that loss, and to actively enquire after the brand-new orientation which God may be about to work in our midst.

Advent at First-St. Andrew's has taken on a particular poignancy this year as we grieve through the loss of Kate Crawford, work through a new Ministry and Mission Profile, and await in hope the gift of a new addition to the ministry team in 2015, who will walk with us into the future in faith that the God of the gaps is already there ahead of us.

Three score years and ten has its stressors, but one of its gifts is that of collective memory—the awareness that the richest times of gifting in terms of fresh understandings of the height, depth, breadth, and width of the grace that is God's, and of the strength, solace, and sanctuary which Christian community provides, have come in the gap times. Unable to return to the past, uncertain as to how the future will unfold, uneasy with the uncertainties of the present—one is forced to one's knees before God and into the embrace of those who together wait in trust for the God of the gaps whose Advent is always new.

#### *I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS ...*

Scripture in its narrative, prophetic and wisdom traditions, knows that occasionally we need a reminder that the God of the gaps never truly abandons us—appearances to the contrary.

*(cont'd. on p. 18)*





## **WORSHIP**

### **We Are Changed**

*Kerry Stover*

It's that time of year again, that season when lights glow a little brighter and songs seem to be filled with a little more cheer and hope. 'Tis the season to rejoice! During Advent we anticipate the coming of the holy child, at Christmas-time we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, and during Epiphany the blessed babe is revealed to us and we are changed. Many babies had become kings but no King had ever become a baby. The good news truly had begun to change the world.

We join with the whole world to stop and celebrate the miracle of His birth and the incredible mystery of God becoming flesh to dwell with us. But, it wasn't just for the miracle that He came. He came because we needed hope. We needed redemption. We needed a Saviour.

Light pierced the darkness and the peace that all creation had longed for had finally come to Earth. Hope became new and God's Promise was realized for all

humankind.

Bethlehem seems so far away, doesn't it? The nativity seems so long ago. And yet, all around us, here and now, there are lessons to be learned from the Christmas story. In fact, if we are not careful, the story of Jesus' birth and all that occurred can become just that—a story; one that has lost its full meaning and importance in our lives.

Let us allow ourselves during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany to become more than shepherds, wise people, cattle stalls and familiar carols, but rather choose to make this time new for ourselves; the night that the Child in the manger became more than a familiar story, picture, crèche or a beautiful greeting card. Let us rejoice in knowing that Emmanuel, our God, has come to change the world. Every broken heart now healing, every hopeless life made right, to change hearts, to bring Light into the dark, to bring us peace, to show His grace; indeed, to change the world.

May we experience changed hearts and reach out to all in peace, joy, hope, and the love that God sent to us in Jesus. ✚



## **PROPERTY**

### *George Jolink*

As you might expect, a large property downtown, with an historic building and aging infrastructure presents ongoing challenges for the Property Committee. Our mandate is to address issues as they arise, and to plan for future sustainability to ensure the long-term viability of First-St Andrew's for generations to come. Three areas of need determine our work:

- Ongoing/regular maintenance both expected and unexpected.
- Avis Report deficiencies.
- Building improvements.

Based on these priorities and professional recommendations, projects are undertaken in a timely manner and with available funds. Indeed it is a balancing act between what can we afford and what has to be done.

Currently the Property Committee is engaged in three major projects, which met the priorities listed above:

- Exterior lighting conversion to LED for environmental payback and operational savings.
- New flooring to replace worn, stained and damaged carpets in the St. Andrew's Hall portion of the building to address health and safety issues and provide operational savings.
- Beginning the conversion from steam heating to

an HVAC system which provides an efficient heat source and operational savings.

As these projects move forward you may expect to see temporary disruptions to some areas. We ask for your understanding and indulgence as we seek to improve the quality of life in our building.

In 2015 other projects to be addressed are:

- Repairs to interior plaster/painted surfaces where paint is flaking away.
- Exterior painting/repairs.

All of these projects represent expected maintenance issues and can be planned in sequence. However, the unexpected occasionally happens which needs immediate attention, as demonstrated by our 46-year-old pipe organ in the last few weeks. Please be assured that steps are underway to address this issue.

As you can see, much work is being done and there is still much to do. The costs will be significant over the next couple of years, and although we are grateful for support from the Trustees we will need to count on additional capital support from the congregation at large.

The Property Committee consists of George Jolink, Heather Vouvalidis (co-Chairs), Kerry Stover (treasurer), Bill Guthrie (secretary), Peter Ross, Donna Travis, Tim Meidema (Facilities Manager). Please feel free to speak to any one of us regarding your concerns or questions. Together we are the current caretakers for a legacy which was handed to us by our past and which we will preserve for our future. ✚



## STEWARDSHIP

### Counting Our Blessings

Tara Gonder

As we've seen during our First-St. Andrew's Stewardship Campaign, stewardship takes many forms. When people step forward to assume a role of responsibility for the congregational family, it's an act of faith which demonstrates a belief in God, prompted by gratitude for all He has provided.

Since agreeing to serve on the Stewardship Campaign, it has been my privilege to watch FSA volunteerism in action. We are fortunate to have so many people who donate their time, talent, and treasure to serve our congregational family and provide support to those in need. When we volunteer on others' behalf, we do so cognizant of the fact that we seek not to meet our own needs, but to serve those whom we represent.

Because we represent others and not ourselves

when we volunteer, feedback is an important aspect of any endeavour. When we volunteer, it's important to know if our desire to help is indeed meeting congregational needs; if it's not, it's time to reset the devotional compass. Oddly enough, the *manner* in which we express feedback also constitutes a form of stewardship. When we package our feedback inside an expression of appreciation, we accomplish two things: we redefine our congregational needs, and we express our gratitude for the gifts our volunteers have shared. As a result, we foster a culture of appreciation which strengthens the bonds within our FSA community.

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who did so much to support this year's Stewardship campaign. On behalf of FSA's Finance Committee, I thank you, our congregation, for your generous donations as we move into a new financial year. We are blessed. ✚



## U.C.W.

### Jay Snyder

**Holly Bazaar 2014:** The Holly Bazaar on November 8<sup>th</sup> attracted hundreds of people who were treated to items ranging from baked goods, preserves, jams and jellies, to handmade cards, pet items, jewellery, the wonders of needlecraft work, and turkey pot pies. The Café Noël served light lunches and tantalizing scones and muffins to hungry visitors. New this year was a special children's gift-making and wrapping centre. Also new was a vendor section in the chapel with nine vendors, including four from outside our church. A percentage of their sales comes back to FSA. A puppet show in Proudfoot Hall kept children entertained while adults shopped. Also, many visitors enjoyed guided tours of the sanctuary. The event, now well over 60

years in existence, was well-attended and organized. All monies collected at this event go to local charities and to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. Our U.C.W. is the second-highest donor to M&S in Canada.

The U.C.W. sends a heartfelt thank you to the 130 volunteers, including members of FSA's TNT and God Squad, and to the many FSA members who volunteered by donating and purchasing items. The preliminary total in sales for this year's Bazaar, not including pot pies, coffee, future sales, or expenses was \$10,848.45.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> the U.C.W. held its annual Christmas Gathering, General Meeting, and Pot Luck Supper in Proudfoot Hall. We welcomed the U.C.W. from Dundas Street Centre and Metropolitan United Church. The Junior Joyfuls and Joyful Singers provided music. ✚



## WELCOMING

### Heather Locking-Cusolito

The FSA Welcoming Committee members (Anne Cummings, Heather Locking-Cusolito, Jay Snyder and Pam Turner-Langley) want to thank all who participated in our recent survey. The survey's purpose was to help us establish priorities for welcoming well and to identify those willing to help develop action plans for these groups. Of the eleven groups identified from the FSA Vision Statement, welcoming young adults and people of varying family compositions topped the list. There was also a cluster of commitment to welcoming singles,

older people, and those facing economic or physical challenges. Perhaps the most important finding was the number of respondents who wrote comments stressing the importance of welcoming **everyone** equally. The Welcoming Committee couldn't agree more.

After presenting our findings to Council on November 18<sup>th</sup>, our next step will be to develop an action plan that acknowledges all the wonderful current commitments to create a welcoming environment at FSA, while considering ways to enhance them.

Stay tuned for future developments and please feel free to contact any member of the committee with your feedback. ✚





## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

*Pat Tripp*

The small but mighty Communications and Marketing Committee has been busy.

Jim Silcox, KOW (Kindly Old Webmaster), has worked hard to revamp the FSA website ([www.fsaunited.com](http://www.fsaunited.com)) so that it can be readily accessed by mobile devices. Its new look is sleek, colourful and user-friendly.

The Holly Boutique Bazaar on November 8<sup>th</sup> was marketed with posters, bookmarks and electronic invitations, as well as public service announcement to

media outlets.

Ongoing work and discussions include signage, both inside the church (how do members and newcomers find their way around the building) and outside the church to encourage community members to come inside. An electronic sign to replace the existing board on the church lawn is being explored.

New committee members are always welcome. Particular skills we are looking for are writing, for media releases and articles, and enthusiasm and interest in marketing and communication. For further information talk to any committee member: Doug Gonder (Chair), Bob Swartman, Bob Slater, Jim Silcox, or Pat Tripp. ✚



## MISSION, OUTREACH, ENVIRONMENT

*Barb Dalrymple*

Our year began with a very successful Corn Roast supporting Grow-a-Row. \$5,114 was raised for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Peter and Kathryn Mayberry of the CFGB

were our guests. Linda Badke, Kate Crawford, Martha Galea, Nancy Howard and Bill and Jean Knowles participated in the ELUCO Walkathon which raised \$7,461. Fourteen FSA members attended the Mission Services of London Banquet in November. Nearly 900 pairs of socks collected during Lent were given to Mission Services for distribution in their Warm Hands—Warm

Hearts Outreach programme operating in elementary schools during the cold months. Presbytery Division of World Outreach held a workshop at FSA in November attended by Linda Badke, Marilyn Beach, Barb Dalrymple, Laurel Kenney and Jo Ann Silcox.

The **Mitten Tree** is now in the atrium to be decorated with hats, mitts, and scarves to be distributed by St. Paul's and ELUCO. Recycle any surplus calendars by placing them in the shopping cart.

### Make your Gifts Meaningful!

The **Just Christmas—Alternative Gift Market** will burst into Proudfoot Hall at Coffee and Conversation on Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> and continue on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

This year, purchase gifts that show your family and friends how much you care, gifts that make them feel

great, gifts that help change the world. If you are seeking inspiring new gift ideas or perhaps would rather not give family and friends the same old clothes/toys/chocolates, our Just Christmas—Alternative Gift Market presents a different way to celebrate. Give a gift that can help change people's lives! Everyone will find something worth sharing with the special people in their lives. Gifts and donation cards are available in a range of dollar

amounts under \$20.00, as well as for many areas of need (hunger, shelter, education, health, safety, the environment and more). The Just Christmas—Alternative Gift Market is about giving a gift that truly matters, a unique gift that brings with it hope and change to the lives of families and entire communities, both here and across the world.



Sept 7<sup>th</sup>, Corn Roast Helpers

In February 2015, Linda Badke, Jim and Janice Elliott and possibly two youth will be travelling again to Managua with Companeros to volunteer at Los Quinchos School.

### Hospitality Meal Then and Now

*Joanne Girvan*

**Before:** hospitality meal meant feeding anyone who came to the church on Monday night.

**Now:** we are providing meals to individuals and families in the Bridges Out of Poverty programme. People in the Bridges programme, with the help of facilitators, design a path for themselves leading out of poverty. Mentors from the community help make that path work. The Bridges programme works, people do move out of poverty to a place of financial stability. For us this is a new way of caring for those in need in our community. ✚



## FINANCE

### **"Down the Road of Financial Stewardship 2014"**

Harold Jackson

*"Cowardice asks the question—is it safe? Expediency asks the question—is it politic? Vanity asks the question—is it popular? But conscience asks the question—is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular; but one must take it*

**BECAUSE it is right."**

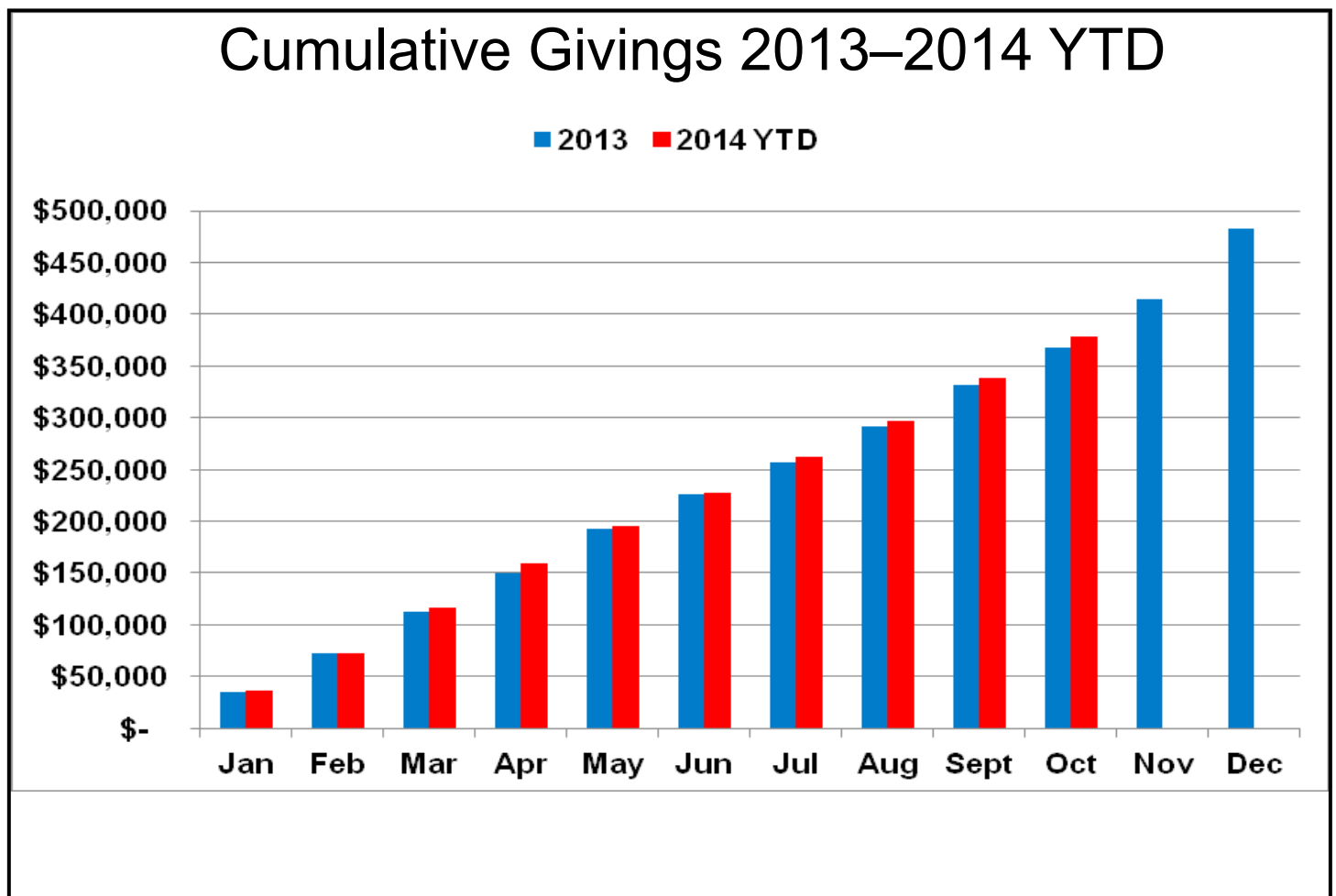
*—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

Operational financial stewardship has continued to be a challenge in 2014. Although the 2014 budget forecast approved by the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation approved a deficit of almost \$9,000, results to October 31<sup>st</sup> report a deficit of \$22,100. This will be funded from reserves in the operating fund of the Statement of Financial Position, bringing this source essentially to zero by year end.

Planning for the 2015 budget forecast is in progress. The objective of preparing a balanced budget remains an operational priority. Revenue is forecast from local sources (givings, rentals, gift card net profit and other miscellaneous funding initiatives), in addition to the availability of specified Trust Fund income. Ensuring a financial picture that allows for stewardship revenue to meet expense projection plans will be essential to realizing congregational operational growth objectives.

We continue to be thankful for the generosity of this great congregation. To date stewardship givings are ahead of the prior year by about \$10,600. Can we still count on each of you to be among those good and faithful stewards? The need is real.

The accompanying graph presents congregational giving results to date (October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014) by comparison to results from the prior year. This is the underlying challenge to remaining **"At the Heart."** ✝







## TRUSTEES

### Bob Bass Remembers FSA in his Will

Bob Slater

If you have kept past issues of *Tidings*, please look up [Vol. 23, No. 4—Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2013](#)—page 5, where you will find David McKane's article, "Remembering Bob

Bass."

David has captured in words the life of this "remarkable Canadian." The Trustees now want you to know that there is another chapter to his life's story. Bob had chosen to leave a legacy to FSA in his will.

This money has been received and will be invested wisely so that over the years ahead the interest will

support the mission of our church—"encouraging spiritual growth through worship, friendship, learning and action"—activities in which Bob Bass expressed his faith. We are grateful for his foresight and generosity.

Immediately following the service in the sanctuary on Memorial Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, we will celebrate gifts received by placing leaves on the Proudfoot Legacy Tree in the atrium. The leaves have been created from copper cladding, removed then recycled from our steeple.

June McKay has been working diligently on our Memorials Book which is available for you to enjoy and remember. June's late husband, the Rev. Jack McKay, crafted the oak lectern on which the book rests next to the doors from the atrium to the sanctuary. ✚



## CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT

Allyson Watson

As we head into the busy Christmas season, we would like not only to reflect back but look forward to upcoming events. We will start by looking back. There have been many things ... youth group started, movie nights,

Walter Brueggemann series, Veterans' breakfast with the youth, Sing for your Supper, church school, Good

Neighbours lecture, Family Love and Share, to name just a few.

As we look forward we highlight the Just Christmas—Alternative Gift Market, Family Community Christmas Party, Christmas Pageant, Labyrinth Walk. In the New Year we will be looking forward to all of this and more! Please let us know if you have any suggestions for new programming or something new. We love suggestions! Have a blessed Christmas season. ✚



## MEMBERSHIP & NURTURE

Audrey Coulthard

We welcome Jane Daichendt, FSA's newest member, who joined us officially on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>. The committee held a reception after the service, including a treat of Jay Snyder's home-baked cake. Jane has been involved in many activities, and it is our pleasure to welcome her.

Willis Buckingham has been sending collages of FSA events via computer to many involved people. He has indicated a willingness to make them available in print form to share with members who cannot get

out to church. More details around this project will be announced later.

There is a need for two to three new members on the M&N Committee. We meet several times a year; please check the Programme Guide for details, or call Audrey Coulthard (519-686-5996) or any other committee member for more information.

Help is required to prepare and serve coffee after Sunday service in the New Year. Please give consideration to lending your support for a couple of Sundays during the year. Supplies are provided. ✚



## MUSIC

Paul Cooper

As fall draws to a close, our thoughts turn to the approach of Christmas and the wonderful music programming with which we are blessed at First-St. Andrew's, and that helps us celebrate this festive season. Paul

Merritt works extremely hard to plan and produce a series of musical events throughout the year, and he has a fantastic winter programme on offer for us again this year.

Please mark the following dates in your calendars and consider asking friends and neighbours to come to the performances with you:

### 1. MONDAY, DECEMBER 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm:

- The annual collaboration between the Salvation Army Band and our choir at Centennial Hall. This year's special musical guest will be Denise Pelley.

### 2. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon:

- Our third and final, for the season, Advent Noon Recital featuring THE LAUDAMUS BELLS under the direction of Paul Merritt.

- If you plan to stay for lunch after the recitals, make sure to arrive early to purchase a lunch ticket (\$6.00).

### 3. FRIDAY, JANUARY 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30pm:

- Our annual A TASTE OF BURNS will be held in Proudfoot Hall. This dinner features pipes, songs, dancing and entertainment by “Haggis Stew” under the direction of Sharon Jones. Bruce Richardson is featured on the bagpipes and our minister emeritus, David McKane, will be appearing as Robbie Burns. If you missed St. Andrew’s day in November, you can make up for it by attending this quintessential

Scottish event in January.

### 4. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:30pm:

- Two of London’s finest young musicians will be performing in the sanctuary—Amanda Perera, soprano, and Fiona Robson, cello. This is a not-to-be-missed event and an opportunity for you to support our young people in the development of their musical performance talents. Admission will be by freewill offering.

Come and experience these unique aspects of our congregational life at FSA. ✚

## THE LAST WORD



### SUPPER CLUB

Jean Wuensch

The Supper Club has had one meeting so far. It was very successful with a big turnout, including many visitors. David McKane was the speaker and he talked about “L’Arche” (The Ark). He showed us three short videos, which portrayed how developmentally-challenged adults live in community, in homes with caregivers.

L’Arche was founded in August, 1964, by Jean Vanier, a Jesuit priest, who was teaching college in Toronto at the time. He wanted developmentally-challenged adults

to have a better life than living in institutions. He quit his job and lived with two men. This concept has now spread to forty countries.

David became interested in Jean Vanier’s work while he was a student in Toronto. He is Chair of the organization here in London, where there are three homes. Now money is being raised for a new large building for day-care programmes.

If you would like to join the Supper Club, please get in touch with June McKay (519-471-5668) or Jean Wuensch (519-439-3073). ✚

### >>View from the Pew (cont’d. from p. 3)

All of this allows us to see Jesus in a new and different light. It takes nothing away from the significance of his life as it was lived and of those around him, and the lessons we draw from it today. The lessons and principles we draw from the life of Jesus are divine. They reflect the ideals we aspire to emulate and live by.

At least that’s the way I see it from the pew. ✚

(A copy of *Zealot: the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth* is available in the FSA library.)

### >>Remembering (cont’d. from p. 4)

In 1973 the couple returned to London and Fred became head of Western’s Student Health Unit, a position he held until his retirement in 1988. The other Fred came back as well. He became part of regular gatherings of medical friends who played chamber music together. Many stories of that association still circulate.

Of course, Fred became part of and supported the music programme here at FSA. What a privilege we have had to count this Renaissance man and his family as part of our congregational history. ✚

### >>Council Report (cont’d. from p. 13)

The tribe of Joseph fleeing Egypt had Miriam to teach them to sing a new song. Judah in exile in Babylon heard the promise-filled lilting poetry of Second Isaiah. Psalmists of the wisdom tradition taught Israel songs to sing in sorrow as well as in certitude. The early church was gifted with the electrifying speech of the Holy Spirit. Those in captivity to the Pharaohs of more recent times have learned to sing spirituals and to pray the poetry of liberation protest.

And we at First-St. Andrew’s will both sing songs of gratitude for Kate’s ministry, and offer our profound gratitude to those who have already volunteered to shepherd us into a new song during this time of waiting.

To that end we give anticipatory thanksgiving for the leadership and preaching and pastoral care gifts of the Rev. Tom Hiscock, and the liturgical and preaching gifts of the Rev. Dr. David McKane and of Mr. Kerry Stover as we journey beyond Christmas into 2015. Bolstered by the commitment of the ministry of the whole people of God alive in this place, we need not be afraid—for the God of the gaps is always the God who never, ever, abandons us. ✚



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Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, H.M.S. Pinafore



Downton Abbey "staff" at work  
in the kitchen



## Windows on First-St. Andrew's

Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, Love and Share Sale



Nov 8<sup>th</sup>, Holly Boutique Bazaar



Oct 18<sup>th</sup>, New Folk Group at  
"FSA's Got Talent"



### CHURCH STAFF

#### Minister of Worship and Administration

*The Rev. Dr. Kate Crawford*

#### Minister of Visitation

*The Rev. Tom Hiscock*

#### Minister Emeritus

*The Rev. Dr. David McKane*

#### Designated Visitor

*Jo Ann Silcox*

#### Director of Music

*Paul Merritt*

#### Church Administrator

*Brenda McManus*

#### Youth & Young Family Coordinator

*Jane Dockrill*

#### Administrative Assistant/Receptionist

*Katrina Stolk*

#### Facilities Manager

*Tim Miedema*

#### Custodian

*George Jolink*

#### Atrium Steward

*Barry Tiffin*

#### Nursery Supervisors

*Amanda Ingrey and Becky Bromall*