



ADVENT 2012

Thurible

A NEWSLETTER for ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH
383 Huron St. Toronto ON M5S 2G5 • WWW.STTHOMAS.ON.CA



Go We Hence to Bethlehem's Bower

A Nativity Play at St. Thomas's

 Julia Armstrong  Birgitte Nielsen

Toronto's renowned medieval and Renaissance theatre company, Poculi Ludique Societas (PLS), is once again partnering with St. Thomas's to celebrate "A Medieval Christmas." Entitled *Go We Hence to Bethlehem's Bower*, this year's production will feature three plays from the *N-Town* Nativity sequence. They represent a solemn celebration of the birth of Christ, but as director Kimberley Radmacher says, "there are still plenty of the shenanigans that lovers of medieval drama enjoy."

I had an opportunity to interview the key people involved in the production, as well as an expert on the *N-Town Plays*: Dr. Alexandra F. Johnston is a professor emerita of Victoria University, University of Toronto, and the founder and senior consultant of Records of Early English Drama (U of T). Linda Phillips, artistic director of the PLS, is the play's producer, production manager, and costume designer; Kimberley Radmacher is the director. St. Thomas's choir lead Bryan Martin is the show's music director.

What are the N-Town Plays and why do they have this name?

DR. ALEXANDRA JOHNSTON: The plays in the *N-Town* manuscript provide a wide variety of biblical drama. One of the "pieces" that make up the collection is a set of "banns." Like wedding banns, this was a public announcement of something that was to happen in the future. The verses announce that a group of plays is to be played at "N-Town" – literally *Nomen*, or "Name," Town – i.e., fill in the blank. It was the

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(from the cover)

custom in England in the late Middle Ages to put on these plays as part of fundraising efforts by parishes or towns, who would send out “criers” with fife and drum to go around to the neighbouring villages and advertise. The last stanza of the banns says: “On Sunday next, if that we may / At 6 of the bell we begin our play / In N-Town.” So you could say, “...we begin our play at St Thomas’s.”

What in particular strikes you and the actors as you work on the lines?

KIMBERLEY RADMACHER: The texts are full of alliteration. All of the characters use it, and audience members should certainly listen for it. Herod’s lines become almost tongue twisters. They are great fun. Also of note are the constant pastoral references. Indeed, we took this year’s title, *Go We Hence to Bethlehem’s Bower*, from a line in the Shepherds’ play. If audience members listen closely, they will certainly note that all the plays make reference to floral themes.

Who took part in the plays in the Middle Ages, and how is the PLS/St. Thomas’s collaboration similar or different?

KIMBERLEY: What has struck me during previous co-productions was how our practice of casting some experienced, trained actors along with St Thomas’s parishioners in many ways echoes medieval performance practices. It was common practice to engage local people to take on the smaller roles. Of course, St. Thomas’s has some very good amateur actors who are taking on lead roles this year!

How did you go about choosing the choral and instrumental music?

BRYAN MARTIN: I like to start by placing the production in a specific historical and cultural context. Since St. Thomas’s has close ties with the university community, I decided that our 15th-century audience and performers would be an educated group, so there will be a lot of Latin sung. The vocal music is taken from two mid-15th-century manuscripts, one with liturgical music, and one with liturgical music and carols. Since the plays are being performed indoors rather than outdoors on carts, the instruments will be mostly *bas*, or soft: recorders, flutes, fiddles, lutes, etc. We decided that the music will be tightly integrated into the action, especially in the Kings’ play. A lot of this will be done with instrumental music, but there are also moments when vocal music will be used, especially in scenes centred on the Nativity.

The other important aspect is costuming. Please describe your work on preparing the garments.

LINDA PHILLIPS: This show is the latest in a long line of medieval Christmas pageants that I have costumed, and I have a large stock of appropriate garments for the main characters. There are many iconic images of the Nativity that have shaped our expectations of how they should look: Mary almost always wears a specific shade of blue, Joseph is an old man, Herod wears rich, exotic robes, and so on. I approached this play the same way I do all shows: first, I read the script carefully, looking for any clues about costuming details. For example, Herod mentions that he is wearing a “girdle of cammaka,” which means a sash or belt made of silk damask.

(The complete text of this interview can be found on the St. Thomas's website)

A Medieval Christmas: Go We Hence to Bethlehem’s Bower

Friday, December 14 at 7 pm / Saturday, December 15 at 2 pm and 7 pm

Tickets: \$20 adult, \$15 senior, \$10 student / Reservations: 416-978-5096; info@plspls.ca

Cover Photo caption: Director Kimberley Radmacher advises the midwives on how to express their trepidation at the miraculous light pouring out of the stable. From left to right: Danielle Adkins (Angel), Alice Degan (Mary), Peter McArthur (Joseph), Jennifer-Beth Hanchar (Salome the midwife), Kimberley Radmacher (Director), and Connie Wang (Zelomye the midwife).

Cover Thurible Drawing: Willem Hart *Chi-ro graph:* Wikipedia Commons

St. Thomas's Church

www.stthomas.on.ca



The Diocese of Toronto

www.toronto.anglican.ca

The Anglican Church of Canada

www.anglican.ca

The Anglican Communion

www.anglicancommunion.org



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Associate Priest

The Rev'd Robert Mitchell

Rector Emeritus

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Assistant Priest

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Pastoral Care Contact Phyllis Garden

Outreach Contact Alice Degan

Co-Coordinator of Sidespeople

Teri Dunn, Wendy Woodworth

Friars' Guild Coordinator

Jennifer McCallum

Webmaster Evolving Web

Web Editor J. Armstrong

Church and Hall bookings

saintthomas@rogers.com

Advent, Christmas & Epiphany Services

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23 | ADVENT IV

7:00 p.m. | Annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Based on the tradition begun at *King's College*, Cambridge

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24 | CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00 p.m. | Evensong | 5:30 p.m. Said Eucharist

10:30 p.m. | Organ Recital by John Tuttle

Music of Bach, Langlais, Milford, Dupré

11:00 p.m. | Solemn Midnight Mass of Christmas

Choral music by Malcolm and Poulenc; organ postlude by Widor

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25 | CHRISTMAS DAY

8:00 a.m. Said Eucharist | 9:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

11:00 a.m. Solemn Eucharist [no evensong]

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30 | CHRISTMAS II

9:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist | 11:00 a.m. Solemn Eucharist

[no evensong]

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6 | FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

8:00 a.m. Said Eucharist | 9:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

11:00 a.m. Solemn Eucharist

7:00 p.m. Solemn Evensong, Carols, Procession and Devotions.

Canticles by Shephard; short recital of carols by English and Canadian composers; organ music by Messiaen and Bach.



2013 St. Thomas's Desk Calendar

Church Feasts and Parish Events

The calendar notes all the feasts of the liturgical year as observed in our parish church, as well as most of the community parish events, from December 2012 to January 2014. Also, it features photographs taken by members of our church community.



Calendars sell 1 for \$15, 2 for \$25 and 3 for \$35. Buy 2 or more and receive a complimentary copy of our choirs' CD "Flower of Jesse: Music for Advent and Christmas."

The sale is a fundraiser for the Out of the Cold ministry and the 2013 UK Choir Tour. It would be a great Christmas gift! ■

From the Treasurer

Parish Stewardship News

Tim Wright

How are we doing versus last year?

The first chart summarizes the parish's financials for the period ending November 17th compared with the previous year, focusing on the Operating Fund, which deals with the day-to-day finances. Total regular income, consisting of givings and bequests, donations, and rental income, increased slightly from \$295,649 to \$297,863, or 1% year over year. A 7% increase in parishioners' givings was partly offset by the expiration this year of an insurance policy naming the parish as beneficiary.

As in previous years, the parish's regular income has been supplemented through transfers from the Trust and Endowment Fund (otherwise known as the Larkin Fund) and from the Heritage Fund. In 2012, the Church-wardens have transferred a total of \$100,000, of which \$60,000 was transferred from Trust and Endowment and \$40,000 from Heritage. This level of transfers represents a 28% reduction from those required last year.

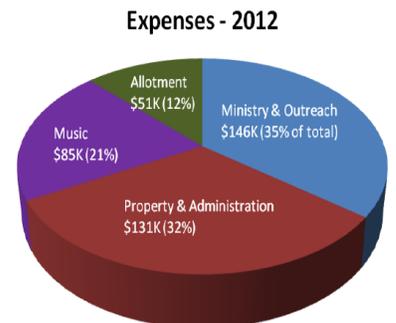
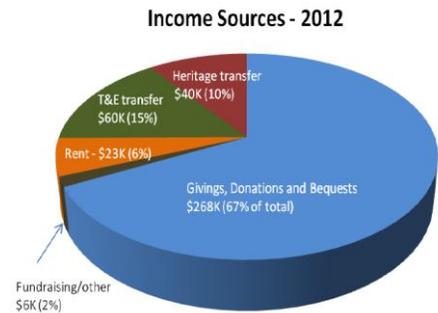
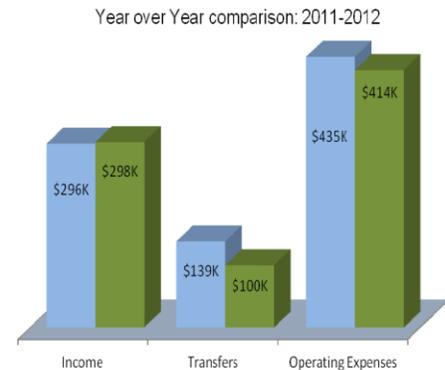
Turning to expenses, the Parish saw a decrease, year over year, from \$435,443 to \$413,906 in 2012. Largely, these are timing differences, although there were some savings from lower utilities due to the warmer weather this past winter (\$6,700). For the full year, unfortunately, we expect that the savings will be offset by the increased Diocesan allotment as well as other expenses related to property repairs and maintenance.

Sources of Income

The first pie chart illustrates the breakdown of sources of income for the Operating Fund. This year to date, the total income for the fund has been \$417,887. Givings, donations and bequests provide the largest portion of the income, totalling \$268,163. As well, the Parish earns rental income from the Huron Playschool and the Sexton's cottage, as well as from other groups such as outside choirs, totalling \$23,454. The Parish has also generated additional income through events, such as sales and plays, totalling \$6,245 this year. Lastly, as noted above, the Parish transferred funds from the Trust and Endowment fund (\$60,000 allowed annually) and from the Heritage Fund.

Parish Expenses

Operating expenses, shown in the second pie chart, are directed towards the various ministries of the parish and the property and administrative support to enable the ministries. This year, ministry and outreach expenses represented \$146,349 (not including the Diocesan allotment), consistent with last year. In addition, the Parish has spent \$131,371 on property and administration, down 9% from the same period last year. The other major expenses are music, \$85,045, an important ministry of the church, and the Diocesan allotment, \$51,142, which supports the Diocese and Anglican outreach. ■



Birgitte Nielsen



The Rose Set

The rose vestments set (tunic, chasuble, dalmatic and cope) is used during Advent and the fourth Sunday in Lent. It was purchased for \$600.00 by Fr. Bull in the 1960s from St. Gregory's Benedictine Abbey (Anglican), Three Rivers, Michigan, when the Abbot, Dom Gregory Dix, was simplifying their collection. It was made by an oblate of the order for the monks to use at High Mass. (From the 1992 *Inventory of Vestments*)

Youngest Anglicans

Michael Wood

The church school is off to an enthusiastic start since September. We meet every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and start with a craft, such as making pin pictures, angel pictures or colouring, that is related to the lesson. In 2012-2013, the lesson follows a curriculum consisting of the catechism, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments.

At 11:00 a.m. we begin the lesson with prayers: children are encouraged to share things for which they feel thankful and things that they would like to request from God. The lesson is interactive and allows the children to talk about how it relates to them. Around 11:20 a.m. we move to the parish hall where a member of the choir or the church school co-ordinator leads the children and the members of the youth group in singing a hymn. Often we sing in the various voice parts. We enter the church and process up the main aisle at the singing of the offertory hymn. We remain in the church during Communion. Children who are not confirmed receive a blessing at the altar rail. We return to the downstairs classroom following Communion.

The church school also encourages children to participate in related activities in the church such as helping with coffee hour and attending the annual week-long summer music camp that has taken place since 2009. A maximum of eight children presently attend church school. What we lack in numbers we make up for in enthusiasm! We are grateful to all teachers and volunteers who give of their time and talents to make the church school enjoyable and instructive. New teachers are always welcome; you will get a chance to see the world through the eyes of children and be surprised what an interesting perspective it will give you. ■





From the Wardens

Advent 2012

We are pleased to provide a financial update to you and to all members of the St. Thomas's family. In a companion article in this issue of *Thurible*, our new Treasurer, Tim Wright, has provided an overview of our current situation. In this article we will comment on positive changes in St. Thomas's finances and the continuing challenges that we face.

First of all, a big thank-you to everyone for your ongoing support. Our June appeal described our financial challenges in some detail, and in response 30% of parish members have increased their givings, some by a substantial amount. This is most encouraging.

As stewards of the church's finances, we continually strive to look for cost efficiencies, opportunities for saving money, and possible outside sources of revenue such as grants, rentals, etc. We are pleased to report that we have largely held the line on our routine operating expenses over previous years. However, St. Thomas's continues in a deficit position. Part of this deficit is offset by annual income from the Larkin Fund, which the fund was designed to provide. However, we must make up the shortfall from other sources, usually the Heritage Fund.

As you know, a large share of the parish's expenses in the past few years has been associated with the addition of a full-time Associate Priest. This has been a necessary initiative, given the dwindling numbers of our honorary clergy and the increasing difficulty of finding replacements. It became clear in recent years that a second full-time priest was absolutely vital for the ongoing health of our parish. Fr. Mitchell has proved to be experienced, effective, and dedicated, and he gives greatly of his time and energy. The enhancement of parish activities and life bears ample witness to his contribution.

Another area of gradually increasing expenses has been our music program. But here again, we feel we cannot justify cutting costs. Maintaining excellent choral and organ music as part of our worship is central to who we are at St. Thomas's, and our choirs are recognized as some of the finest in Canada. Under the dedicated leadership of John Tuttle, assisted by Elizabeth Anderson, St. Thomas's maintains consistently high standards. There are only a handful of churches in the country that offer three sung services every Sunday and few that present as broad a range of repertoire spanning six centuries. Congregations who heard the choir during its 2010 tour to St. Paul's in London and Salisbury Cathedral, as well as visitors to St. Thomas's, have remarked that our choir could take its place in any cathedral in England. We are committed to nurturing and supporting this outstanding music ministry.

Nevertheless, we must face the fact that we cannot continue to draw upon the uncommitted monies in the Heritage Fund indefinitely. With this in mind, Corporation has been exploring other avenues for raising money. We have some ideas in place already for reaching out beyond the parish, which we will be presenting to you in the coming months. However, it will take some time for these efforts to produce results, and in the meantime we still face our current deficit.

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We realize that many of you have made generous pledges to the diocesan “Our Faith—Our Hope” campaign. Our parish share from this has begun to flow, and is allowing us to fund a part-time coordinator for the Out of the Cold/Heat programme, renew our water supply to the church and parish hall, and begin examining seriously our options for improving accessibility to the church.

However, we ask you to remember the regular ongoing needs of the parish. We warmly thank those of you who have increased your level of donations, and we hope we can continue to count on your augmented support. As you can see from the Treasurer’s report, your contributions have already enabled us to decrease the amount that we have drawn from the Heritage Fund this year. And we ask those who have not yet done so to consider prayerfully what more you might contribute. A previous Treasurer commented that if every parishioner increased his or her givings by just \$5 a week (less than what some of us spend on coffee or other small luxuries in a single day!) our deficit would be wiped out. Of course we realize that some of our members are on fixed incomes, and are already doing all that they can. But whatever you can do will be most welcome. Together we will continue to strive to expand and enrich the life and work of St. Thomas’s.

We wish you every blessing for Advent and Christmas.

*Phil Spencer, Rector’s Warden
Diana Versegby, Peoples’ Warden*

Poetry Reading

Between 50 and 60 people attended the poetry reading on November 14th and enjoyed very different presentations by Carleton Wilson, John Reibetanz, and Don Martin. As a demonstration of its enthusiasm, the audience generated over \$500 in book sales at the reception which followed the reading in the parish hall.

Reibetanz, who teaches English at Victoria College, read excerpts from *Common Prayer*, a 16-page pamphlet of poems by English poet Jeremy Clarke. It has been co-published by The St. Thomas Poetry Series and Rufus Books. Clarke is affiliated with Old St. Pancras Church in London and wanted a similar association with a church in Canada. Knowing of our poetry series and being somewhat acquainted with St. Thomas’s Church, his publisher in Canada initiated contact with our series. Half the print run of the pamphlet will be sold in England with proceeds going to Old St. Pancras. The other half will be sold here, with proceeds going to the Tract Fund at St. Thomas’s Church. The pamphlet was produced at Coach House Printing and sells for \$3.

The next poetry readings are scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, and will again feature John Reibetanz as well as two Hamilton poets, Bernadette Rule and John Terpstra.

All of them have published books in The St. Thomas Poetry Series over the past sixteen years and will be familiar to those who have attended earlier readings and launches.

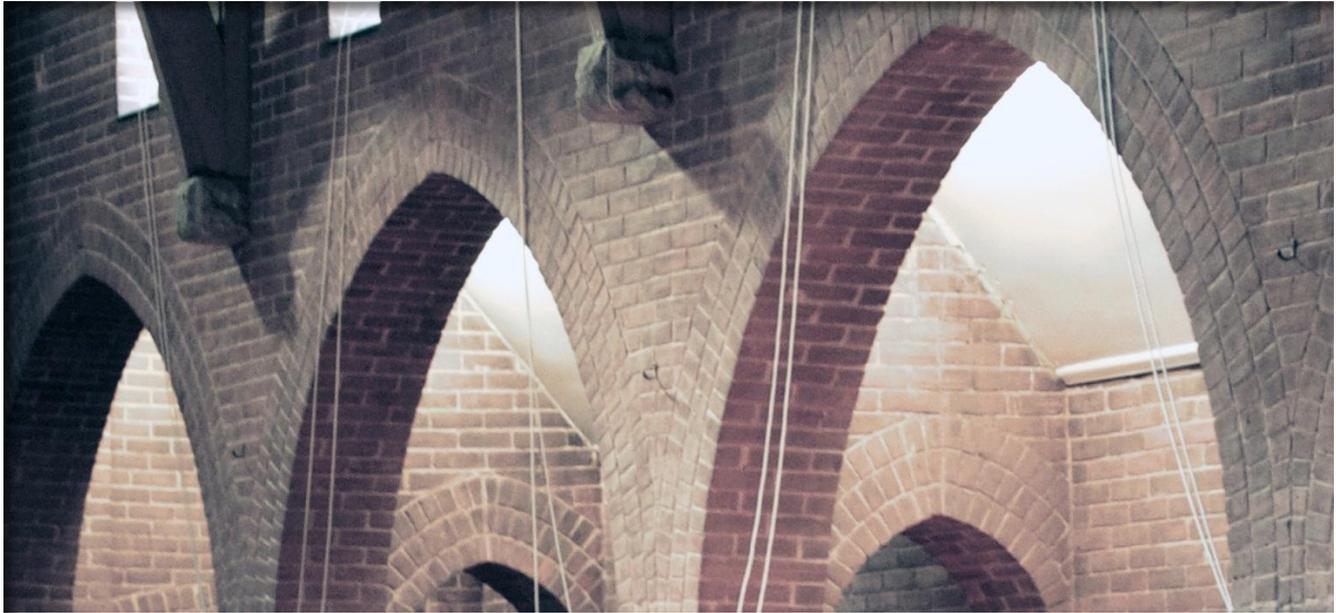
David Kent



▲ John Reibetanz reading. 📷 *David Kent*

▼ Left to right: Carleton Wilson, David Kent, Don Martin, and Richard Greene. 📷 *Tom Crothers.*





Evensong Preludes

 Julia Armstrong

The first three recitals in the monthly Evensong Prelude series were well received and were attended by between 20 and 40 people, with additional parishioners arriving by 7 p.m. for Evensong, bringing numbers for those services to between 30 and 70.

The first prelude was on Holy Cross Day, featuring the six-voice women's ensemble *Schola Magdalena*, which is associated with the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. They sang a program of chant, including music by Hildegard of Bingen (in honour of her feast day September 17), and three-part medieval and modern polyphony. The second prelude, on October 14, was presented by Andrea Budgey and Randall Rosenfeld, whose baroque recorder duets sounded delightful in the acoustics of the baptistery. On Remembrance Day, Janice Kerkkamp played a flute recital, featuring a solo piece by Telemann (1681–1767) followed by a charming work by Swiss-born American composer Ernest Bloch (1880–1959), for which she was accompanied by John Tuttle on the organ.

The goal of Evensong Preludes is to showcase the many talented musicians in our parish and extended parish family while offering a time of quiet reflection before the service. Thank you to all the artists for their musical offerings.

Upcoming Preludes

Sunday, January 13 at 6:30 | Ariel Harwood-Jones, soprano, accompanied by John Tuttle. Music by Boulanger, Wolf, Saint-Saëns and Gounod. Followed by Evensong and Devotions at 7 p.m., featuring music by Howells and Elgar

Sunday, February 3 at 6:30 | Sine Nomine Ensemble for Medieval Music
Followed by Evensong and Devotions at 7 p.m., featuring music by Byrd and Bach

Sunday, March 17 at 6:30 | Jennifer McCallum, soprano, singing early music with lute accompaniment
Followed by Evensong and Devotions at 7 p.m., music by Andreas, Mendelssohn, Leighton and Brahms ■

