



Christ Church
Connexion

Issue No. 3 / Winter 2017

"..an umbrella over issues
that arise..."

Read about *SJAT* on page 8

Rector's Note

Dear Friends,

Greetings in Christ and Happy New Year! I hope this year is off to a good start for each of you and that you know the love of God in your lives and the lives of those you love!

As you peruse this latest edition of the Christ Church Connexion you will catch a glimpse of some of the worship, ministry, and community events happening in and around the church. You will also have an opportunity to relive the wonderful celebrations of this past Advent and Christmas.

Over the next month members of the various ministries of the parish will take time to prepare their reports for the AGM. As we do this we are privileged to see the work of the Holy Spirit in so many different ways. What a joyous and inspiring task it is to reflect on all God has done over the past year and will do in the year to come. I hope you will mark February 26 in your calendar.

Steve, the kids, and I were away in Toronto for a couple of weeks after Christmas. Having survived the plane trip with a lively two year old, our visit with family and friends was refreshing and restoring. Thank you for the opportunity to get away and for your prayers, love, and support. Although our time away was refreshing and restoring, we were so delighted to be back with our church family on our return. Even Simon was all smiles and waves to people as he came into worship, and Amelia bounded up the aisle delighted to see 'all her people'. Steve and I too were glad to be back in worship and fellowship!

This newsletter will tell you about upcoming events in our parish, from a Lenten study series entitled "An Invitation to Journey," to the pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday; from a giant Easter Egg Hunt, to a walk on the Coldest Night of the Year.

My hope and prayer is that we will indeed continue to journey together in service and worship to Almighty God who is indeed the source of our being and the One who stands among us in all we do.

Yours,
Rev. Sue



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Interested in contributing to the
next *Connexion*?

Contact Anna at a_schroeder@live.ca



Youth Group

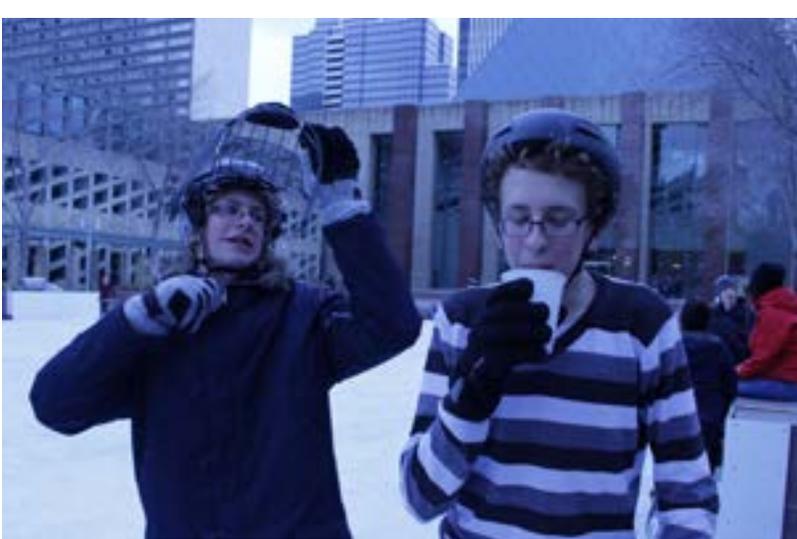
2016 Highlights & 2017 Intentions

EVER WONDER WHAT THE YOUTH are up to while everyone else is listening to the sermon? Despite popular belief, we don't just hang out in the youth room and occasionally eat TimBits. Led by this year's new leaders—Dusten, Mathew, Miranda, and myself,—the youth have been actively discussing “Echo the Story,” a new curriculum which challenges the youth to dig deeper into well-known biblical passages. When we haven't been deep-rooted in a debate of some kind, doing drama led by Dusten, or been preparing for Sunday morning readings, 2016 found us navigating our way through the sheets of ice at Churchill Square (not to mention indulging in some pizza and hot chocolate).Dusten, Mathew, Miranda and myself have been busy collecting the interests of our youth and brainstorming what 2017 should bring. We have discussed Ice Castles and laser tag, and a Full Moon Weekend Adventure with the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton! We are thankful for the wonderful group of youth we have who

are always ready to meet on Sunday mornings and are willing to join us on their Sunday mornings. The youth of Christ Church encourage us leaders to plan events for them and we value their input. These past few months have been life giving and we hope we can continue to mentor the youth as they explore and grow in faith. I would like to extend my thanks to the many parents who not only help us spread the word about upcoming youth activities, but also continue to support this growing ministry. We plan to proceed where we left off in December and hope to have devised a schedule for 2017. See you in church!

P.S If you are under the age of 18 and are reading this, it's not too late to join Christ Church Youth Group!

— Anna Schroeder





Happy Birthday Jesus!

Advent and Christmas Reflections

THROUGH THE SEASON OF ADVENT and Christmas we celebrated the coming of Immanuel, God with us. Through worship, story, and fellowship, in outreach and giving, and by visiting neighbors and friends, we marked Jesus' birth in our lives and in our community.

Our Advent season began with the Messy Church Christmas Party on December 3rd. Close to 150 parishioners gathered in the parish hall (and the lounge) to share a wonderful meal together. While we were eating a special package arrived and the kids enjoyed opening the presents inside. Each present provided a symbol of the story of Jesus' birth, giving us lots of food for thought as we began our journey to Bethlehem. Thanks to everyone who came out to the dinner, and special thanks to those who gave of their time, talent, and treasure to make the evening possible.

A week later our parish hall was filled with raucous laughter, delicious food, and surprising presents – once again – as we hosted our Christmas Community Dinner. The Christ Church elves cooked and served a delicious meal and it was a pleasure to be able to hand out the many pairs of socks and hats, which had been donated by our parish. Grateful smiles and echoes of thanks abounded over the course of the evening.

The next morning we welcomed a special guest to Christ Church, an Advent angel who had lost her joy and needed our

help to find it again. The kids and Rev. Sue had a lively time helping her find her joy (which also happened to be her name) and discovering that, despite her losses and worry, the Source of her joy--and ours--was with her all along. Thanks to Joy for being with us!

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, the church echoed with the sound of beautiful music and inspiring words telling the story of our salvation leading up to the birth of the Messiah. The choir presented a magnificent service of Lessons and Carols to a delighted and grateful congregation of friends and strangers. Thank you to Karen Epp and all members of the choir (and special guests) who worked so hard to prepare the service.

Finally, Christmas Eve arrived at Christ Church. Thanks especially to the Altar Guild, the church looked resplendent, ready for worship to welcome the Christ child. At 4:30 children, parents, and grandparents filled the church with squeals of excitement and joy. Children donned sheep ears, angel wings, and wise crowns. After acting out the Christmas story they gathered around the altar with Rev. Sue for the Eucharist. At the conclusion of our service we all sang 'Happy Birthday' to our King, celebrating with birthday cake.

At 7pm the shepherds arrived to help us hear the story of what happened on that night so long ago. The sleepy shepherds



proclaimed with great enthusiasm that Jesus had arrived and we were all beckoned to come and see.

Our church filled up for the third time with parishioners, strangers and friends who came to worship the Lord in all the mystery and splendor of the night at 9.30pm. With candlelight and song, Scripture and Eucharist, we welcomed God among us, the Babe in the manger.

The next morning was Christmas Day. Our community gathered once again to celebrate with quiet carols and communion. After the busyness and rush of Christmas Eve, the gentle pace of Christmas morning allowed a chance for a quiet and joyful reflection.

Advent and Christmas was truly a time of celebration as we sought ways to worship and serve our Lord in body, mind and spirit. Thanks be to God for the One who came into the darkness shining forth and bringing light to our world at Christmas and throughout the year.

—Rev. Sue



Living out our Faith:



Lent

ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1ST marks the beginning of 40 days of Lent. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word lencten, which means “spring.” The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting, and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others. Some individuals use the season of Lent to read a theological or spiritual book. Some engage in a new spiritual practice of prayer or almsgiving, Sabbath or hospitality.

Here at Christ Church we use this time for community study and special times of worship. This year we will have a study series entitled ‘An Invitation to Journey.’ The series will engage with themes of reading the Bible, the life of Christ, creation, thinking theologically, and challenges facing us today. Each study will be based on a short DVD clip with a discussion of the themes following. We hope the discussion will provide a space to share our faith and learn from those around the circle.

I pray that this 2017 Lenten journey might be for all of us a time of spiritual growth, refreshment, and journey.

Christ Church Refugee Update

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, our parish commenced the process to sponsor a refugee family, and late last spring held a fund raiser to help with expenses. We have raised a significant portion of what we estimate we will need to support our family for the first year of their time in Edmonton. The family we are sponsoring includes a mom and a dad as well as five children who range in age from a newborn to a 15 year old. They are currently residing in Turkey as they await news. We are praying things will happen quickly for this family as they are eager to be here and to get settled. Please pray with us for them.

Our refugee committee includes Bev Browne, Sheila Moorey, Anne Smith, Lynda Phillips, Tom Snyder, Emily King, Shannon Kerr, Alison Hurlburt, Rev. Sue, Chris Uren, Mary Ann Shantz and Elizabeth Fair. We have broken the work of the committee up into sub categories which include: initial welcome, medical supports, budget and finance, housing and furnishing, translation, education supports, child care and schooling needs.

When we have more information regarding their arrival in Edmonton, the committee will inform the parish and we will seek further support for this work as needs arise.

—Sheila Moorey

let's get ready to walk.

feb. 25, 2017

circle that date!

#cnoy17

cnoy.org
it's cold out there

A walk for Homelessness

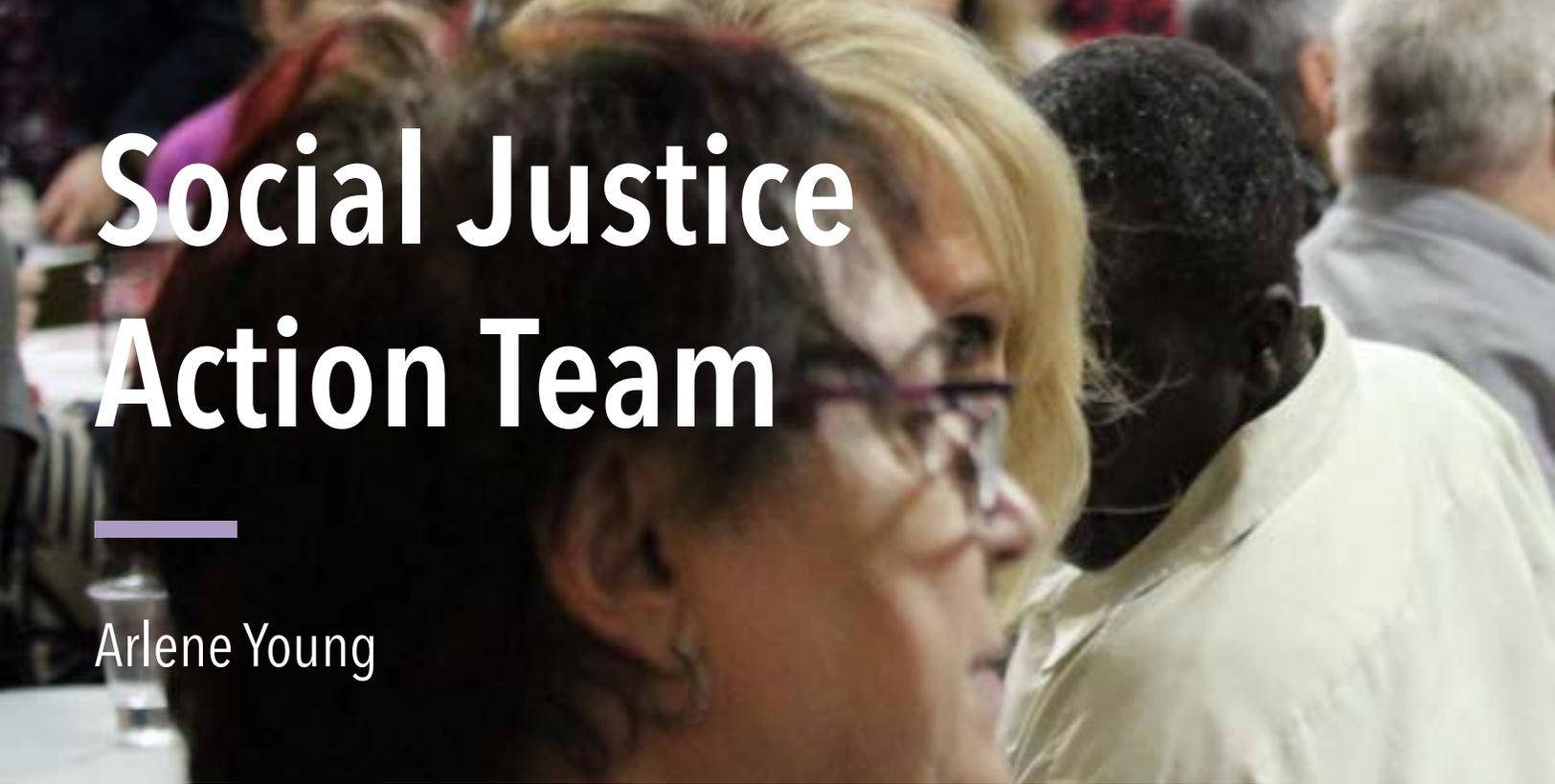
JOIN US on February 25th, 2017 for the "Coldest Night of the Year"!

The Coldest Night of the Year is a super-fun, family-friendly walking fundraiser that raises money for the hungry, homeless and hurting in 100+ communities across Canada. (<https://canada.cnoy.org/about>) You can walk 2, 5, or 10km in support of homelessness.

This year, Christ Church is inviting the parish (everyone!) to a participate with us for the evening and prepare to fundraise for the event. Each individual can set their own fundraising goals and spread the word to their friends and family.

You can join the team by clicking this link: <https://secure.e2rm.com/registant/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?team-ID=733698&langPref=en-CA>

for more information, be sure to speak to Anna Schroeder or Miranda Peters!



Social Justice Action Team

Arlene Young

Values & Mission

SHALOM! THAT'S THE HEBREW GREETING that promises a world where nothing is missing, nothing is broken, all is at peace and in balance with creation. That world vision of shalom and the compassionate love of our Lord, Jesus Christ, are what inspires and energizes the Christ Church Social Justice Action Team (SJAT). SJAT works to alleviate immediate suffering, and in the long term to bring about social justice. The team responds to problems and coordinates parish responses to address them, supports and recruits workers for continuing activities, and plans new initiatives. Consider SJAT as an umbrella over issues that arise in the parish's neighbourhood, in the city, province, country, and the world.

City & Province

SJAT addresses hunger, clothing needs, and homelessness by providing a monthly nutritious meal through our community dinners and by providing food once each year at a Sunday lunch following Eucharist at Emanuel Community, part of the Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM). Our parish also contributes workers at least yearly to a Habitat for Humanity build, and provides a nutritious lunch at least once yearly for workers at a build. Knitters spend all year knitting Christmas gifts of warm clothing for guests at our Christmas community dinner.



Canada & the World

Christ Church has a history of sponsoring refugees that goes back at least as far as the “boat people” who fled Vietnam in 1978/79. More recently, SJAT co-sponsored two Somali brothers, and two Eritrean brothers. We are also co-sponsoring five Syrian families, two of those five families arrived in Edmonton during the week of the 20th of November. Christ Church has also become a full sponsor of a Syrian family. SJAT recognizes that a full sponsorship is big job that needs a special Refugee Committee to raise money, find accommodation, and plan to provide all the necessary goods and services. The Refugee Committee anticipates welcoming our family of seven--including a newborn baby—sometime early in 2017.

SJAT takes direct action on many issues and advocates for change through the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) and in collaboration with other organizations

How Can You Help?

SJAT needs the minds, hearts, voices, and skills of those who like to plan, organize, visualize possibilities, and work to ensure Christ Church is working towards social justice. All it takes is a monthly meeting on Saturday mornings to do that work. The meetings run for no more than 1.5 hrs; a commitment that allows people from various busy backgrounds to maintain. However, how you can help is not limited to Saturday morning meetings (when you may otherwise be hitting the snooze button), as SJAT appreciates how you can lend a hand based on your interests, skills, and time you can offer.

SJAT invites your questions and enquiries about how you can help. The Rev Arlene, Lynda Phillips, Diane Morgan, Sheila Moorey, Martha King, or Emily King will be pleased to hear from you and discuss programs of interest. To stay updated with what SJAT is up to, refer to the cork bulletin board in the lower hall at Christ Church.

At a Glance

February

- 10th **Messy Church**
5.00 PM
- 18th **Community Dinner**
5.00 PM
- 25th **Coldest Night of the Year**
4.00 PM - 8.00PM
- 28th **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**
5.00 PM

April

- 9th **Passion Sunday**
8.00 & 10.00 AM
- 13th **Maundy Thursday**
7.00 PM
- 14th **Good Friday**
10.00 AM Family Service
1.00 PM A Solemn Service

March

- 1st **Ash Wednesday Service**
7.00 PM
- 8th, 15th 22nd
& 29th **Lenten Study Series:**
An Invitation to Journey
7.00 PM
- 18th **Community Dinner**
5.00 PM
- 24th **Living the Question Young**
Adults Group
7.00 PM
- 15th **Oliver Easter Egg Hunt**
10.00 AM
- Community Dinner**
5.00 PM
- Easter Vigil**
8.00 PM
- 16th **Easter Sunday**
8.00 AM & 10.00 AM