



# St. Matthew's News

St. Matthew Anglican Church, 2161 Winnipeg Street, Regina, SK S4P 1G9  
**Sunday Worship: 9:30 pm** Tel: 306 522-5383 e-mail: st.matthews@sasktel.net  
website: <https://stmatthewanglican.org> *December, 2019*

## Christmas Blessings

**A Message from Father Michael Bruce**

### Christmas is Wonderful

Christmas Day is a wonderful day. The excitement of the season – being surrounded in tinsel, opening gifts, and candy canes – is bound to put the joy and excitement of a six-year old in the heart of even the most hardened Grinch among us. It is a season of happiness and excitement and a time where we can relax and hear the familiar story of God's great gift to us by sending his Son. There are countless traditions and rituals that develop around that special day: When are Christmas stockings opened? Do we go to church on Christmas morning? What are the Christmas movies that we watch? For me after church on Christmas morning I have a movie that must be watched before anything else happens, the greatest Christmas movie ever made... Die Hard.

I've watched Die Hard countless times. I can probably repeat the movie line for line. It's a comfortable tradition and I am never surprised by the nuance in the movie, there is none. There is no deeper meaning to Die Hard than what it appears at face value.

The scriptures – Thank God – are not at all like a Bruce Willis movie. I constantly make new connections and find new details in the Christmas story. The one that has stood out to me over the last few years is that Jesus rests in a manger immediately after he is born.

Now we all know what the manger is. It's the nice straw bed in the middle of the nativity set that has a perfect indent for a little plastic baby Jesus. Usually it's got some tape in there so that we don't lose baby when the family cat inevitably knocks over the shepherds in revenge for being domesticated. I for one usually don't pay much more attention to it than that. It's part of the story that I tell over and over. But it's interesting to pause and wonder why the first place that Jesus rested was in a manger; a place where animals feed. This really foreshadows the words of Jesus teaching us that he is the bread of heaven.

There is something that absolutely connects food and Divinity in the Christian story. Bread, Lamb, Water, Wine, all of these common food items are overlaid with deep theological meaning. It is amazing to me that while some of our traditions are simply what they are at face value, the religious traditions that we observe this day continually draw us in more and more to the mystery of God.

In all of its aspects, food builds community. From growing a garden and raising livestock, to preparation and cooking, to eating together, food causes people to work together. Through working together and building connections with others, we are actually learning more and more about the One that created our food.

So this Christmas when you go about your traditions, I invite you to look deeper. Examine your Christmas traditions which bring you closer to others and therefore closer to God, and which are just comfortable old habits, I bet you will be surprised where you will find God in the midst of it all! Michael+

### Christmas Worship at St. Matthew's

Advent Worship will be held every Sunday at 9:30 am.

December 24: Christmas Eve Carols 6:30 and Worship 7 pm. Father Michael Bruce presiding.

December 29: Sunday, 9:30 am. Carols and Readings led by Reverend JoAnne Knobbe.

*Everyone is Welcome.*

## **From the Desk of your Lay Incumbent . . Mae Boa**

On Saturday, November 16th we held our annual Gala Dinner and Silent Auction fundraiser to support our heritage church restoration program. After much planning and preparation by our dedicated team of men and women, we can say it was another resounding success; and yes the Gala was sold out again!

The dinner was Catered by Charlotte's with the main course of tasty roast beef (that I cut with my fork) and real mashed potatoes! The seven salads were hard to chose between and so I tried every single one. Following dinner we moved into the main church and were entertained by The Mandolin Orchestra. Their performance was a combination of contemporary, spiritual with some carols so we were able to sing along. The music rang through the church with our incredible acoustics! With our newly repaired bell tower, we brought the evening to a close with the ringing of our church bell, t'was a blessing to hear the bell after so many years of silence.

Our thanks and appreciation goes out to all of the silent auction sponsors who contributed a wide array of items again this year! We had a couple of bidding 'rivalries' going back and forth which were fun to watch. By the end of the evening there was about \$2,000 generated through the silent auction and donations. Thanks to everyone who participated.

We are pleased to report that the City of Regina approved our request for a matching grant to continue our building restoration work. The grant is for \$30,000 (to be matched by us 50/50). The proceeds from our Gala Dinner will go towards the following work:

- The bell tower support frame being treated to protect the wood, the east framing secured and the pulleys replaced. As you know, from a heritage perspective, the bell tower is the most distinctive exterior element of the property, extending 70 feet.
- Reconstruction of a masonry archway on the north side of the building, re-pointing some of the interior brick which has moved and cracked with aging, and the brick 'washed' to remove the white coating. A crack in the exterior brick wall to be repaired.
- The lower roof is being replaced to ensure adequate protection from water and moisture penetration. We expect to have all of the repairs completed for you prior to our Christmas Eve worship.

On behalf of your Vestry may you be blessed with peace, serenity and good health during this Holy

season and 2020. May the wonder of Christmas fill your heart with hope, peace and love.

In closing, I leave you with a message from our Bishop Rob. A message he shared with us at his recent visit on Remembrance Day. "There are no coincidence in life but rather each is a small miracle and we need to watch for them each day".

## **To Our Gala Dinner Silent Auction Sponsors Our Thanks and Appreciation**

J.C Kenyon Engineering Inc.  
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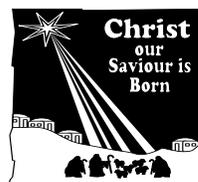
Charm Diamond Centre

Anonymous Donors

## **St. Matthew's Supporting a Family**

We have two parents with two children, boys age 11 and 12. I am so glad that St. Matthew's is working with the Salvations Army to sponsor this family.

I look forward to shopping for them. *Barb Cameron*



## **Advent and Christmas Music**

A small choir has been assembled at St. Matthew Anglican Church. They will sing an Advent anthem on each of the four Sundays of Advent. On Christmas Eve, at 6:30 pm, we will have Carol singing for everyone and will also include a musical treat for the children. The choir will sing several carols at the 7 pm Christmas Eve Service. A big thank you to each singer in the choir!

*Jennifer Klippenstein (music director)*