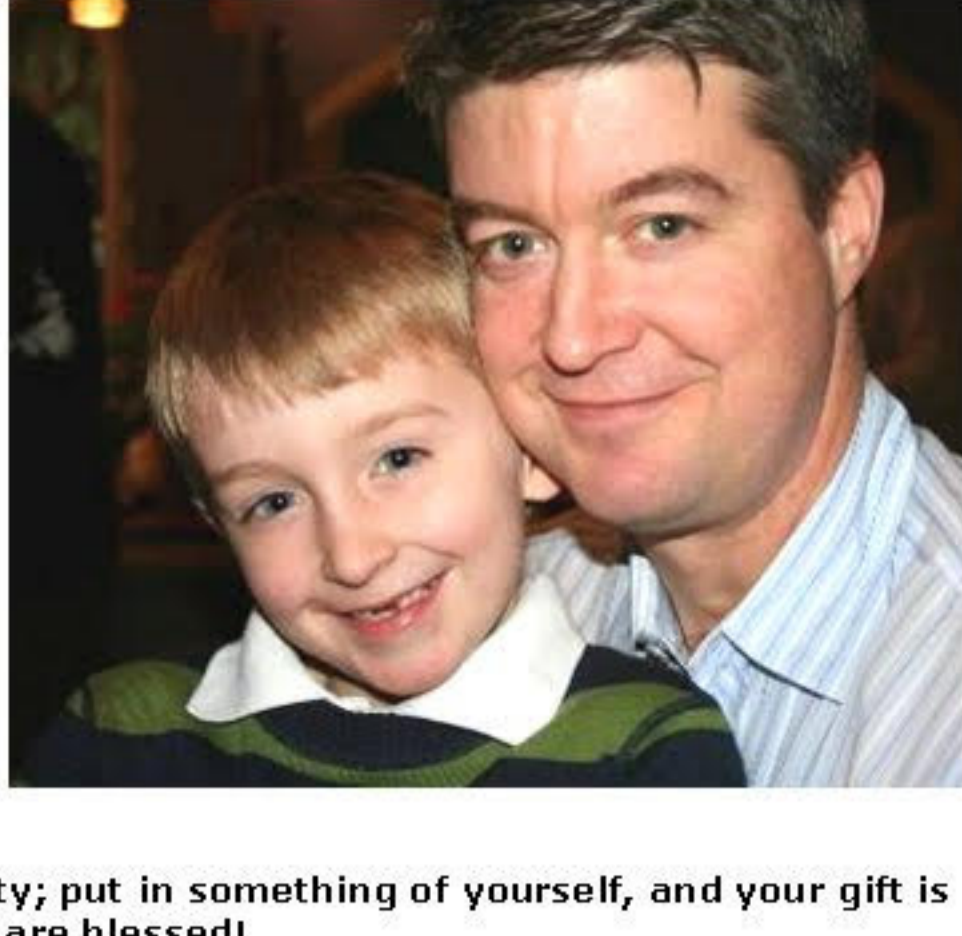


January 16, 2008

SJWT



Dear Friends,

**A secret of community; put in something of yourself, and your gift is multiplied... and you are blessed!**

**Worship with us this Sunday, January 20, Epiphany 3:** 8:30 Early Eucharist; 10:30 Eucharist; Sermon: Leadership Team; Celebrant: Gary van der Meer; Musician: Dorothy De Val and Susanna McLeary. Refreshments following.

### Planning Day

Come and join us this **Saturday, January 19, from 9.00 a.m. to noon.** After a successful 2007, where the St. John's congregation stepped up to the plate during father Gary's sabbatical, we are now ready to work on our vision for 2008 and beyond.

The entire church community is encouraged to attend so we can decide what is important to all of us and plan the future of St. John's together!

Coffee and refreshments will be served, all we need from you is your enthusiasm and great ideas! Afterwards there will be a social at a pub.



### Announcements & Events

#### Screening Workshop

Thursday, January 24, from 7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. For those who do any kind of volunteer activity in the church especially if helping with the children, the diocese requires that everyone attend a screening workshop. Workshop includes a video presentation along with discussion and it's FREE!

#### Commitment Sunday

As St. John's continues to grow towards a true programme church, your participation in the form of time, talent and treasure will become increasingly important. During the every member visits in January and February, each Parish member will be given their commitment cards to fill out. On Commitment Sunday, February 24, church members will hand these in at church. Think about what you can do for our community as we all have something special to give. We encourage you to give generously of your time, talent and treasure!

#### Skating Outing

February 24 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Polish up your skates and enjoy life at Rennie Rink (at the bottom of Runnymede)! Bring sandwiches, hot drinks and snacks and enjoy a winter outing with your friends from St. John's!

#### Great Upcoming Music

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. sharp - January 20: Dorothy De Val and Susanna McLeary, organ and violin. January 27: Tim Elliot, jazz pianist.

#### Midweek Worship Services

Thursday January 17, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; Tuesday, January 22, 7:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with Anglican Rosary and silent meditation.

#### Leadership Team Meetings

Next meeting: Monday January 28, 7:30 p.m. All meetings at the church.

### Sixth Annual Robbie Burns Supper

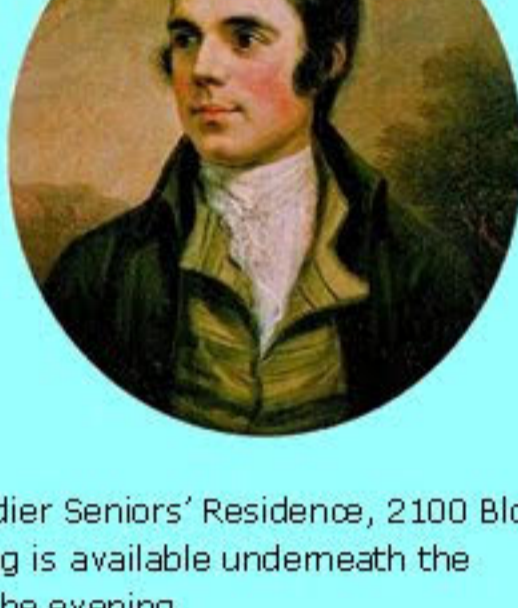
St John's hosts our 6th annual Burns Night Supper on January 26, 2008 in honour of 18th-century Scottish poet Robert Burns, a rowdy, boisterous man of the people who composed beautiful poetry and songs.

Our traditional Burns supper includes haggis enhanced with a dram of whisky, cock-a-leekie soup, roast beef, neeps (turnips), tatties (potatoes) and a whisky-laden dessert and non alcoholic desserts as well. This evening steeped in ritual, includes a tribute to the immortal memory of Burns, poetry, singing and lots of fun.

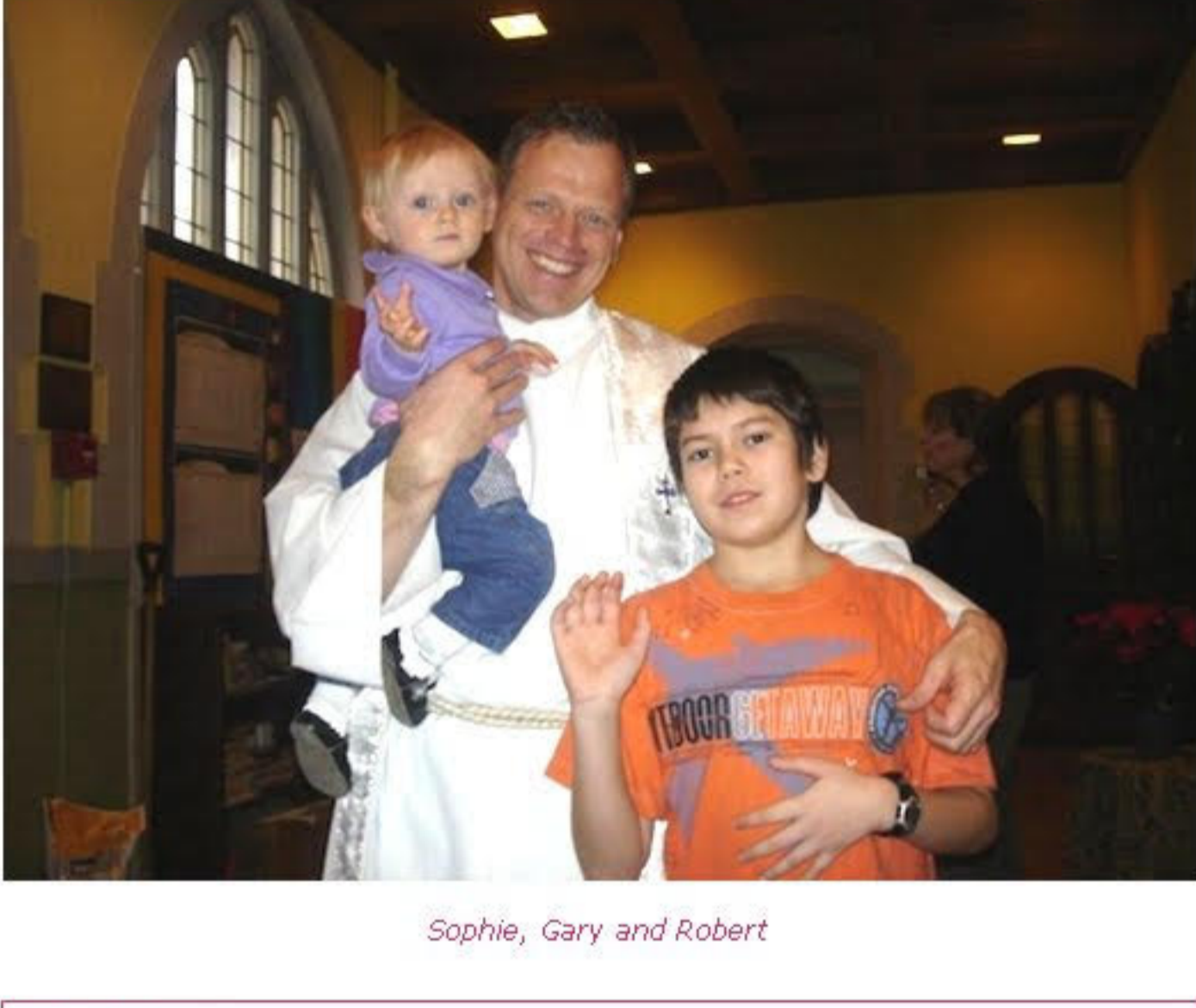
The evening starts with reception at 6:15PM, followed by the Marching in of the Haggis at 7PM.

This year the Burns Supper will be held at Grenadier Seniors' Residence, 2100 Bloor Street West at Clendenan Avenue. Indoor parking is available underneath the residence (entrance off Clendenan) at \$2.75 for the evening.

**Tickets are \$30 each. For more information and tickets call Bill Dunford or Evelyn Butler 416 604-8692. We welcome donations for raffle prizes.**



*A church where we're all part of the community!*



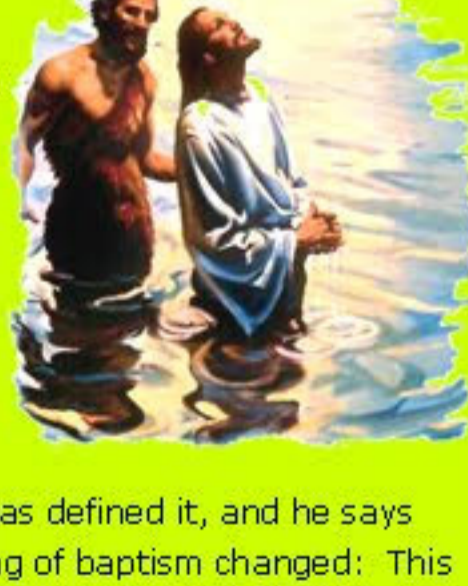
*Sophie, Gary and Robert*

#### Thanks:

Thanks to Noelle Carbonne and Zachery Cardwell for their beautiful pictures!

### Doing the Right Thing

I enjoy the little quiet conversation between Jesus and John the Baptist while they are in the water together. (See Matthew 3:13-17.) It isn't some public speech - just an intimate exchange between friends. Private enough that we wouldn't even know about it unless at least one of them talked about it afterwards. John says he should not baptize Jesus: After all, Jesus is the one! And John's baptism is a sign of forgiveness of sins, and in John's opinion, being "the one" means you don't have any. So no need for baptism as John has defined it, and he says so. But Jesus disagrees and in the process the meaning of baptism changed: This is the transition from Jesus as a private person to a public figure, so it is an initiation. And God "endorses" what Jesus is to be about as a public figure. As Isaiah describes it, "Here is my servant...my chosen in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him and he will bring forth justice..."



While this certainly adds to our understanding of who Jesus is, it also offers a prompt about "Doing the Right Thing." We can apply it to ourselves, finding the parallels where we may. Let's add this thought to our community conversation in the present moment. We are in a time of change and discovery at St. John's. And we have just lost one of our own, our friend Bruce Alton. Over many years, Bruce has given himself to us. What can we give him in return?

We did give in return along the way. We gave him ourselves, just as we continue to do with each other. We have shared meals and friendship, listened to his sermons, and engaged his ideas. What we have to give now might seem quite ordinary: prayers, tears, conversations about mutual memories, and a funeral. They are the right thing to give - they are proper and good - and they are what we have. As the church community, we might want to invent extra special things to fit new occasions. (Yes, we have lots of new ideas...) But what we really give is what we always have to give: attention to God, bread and wine in the Eucharist, and ourselves as real, vulnerable, caring people.

John's ordinary gift, baptism, as he always gave it, was the right thing to give. With God's love it was made into much more. At this time when Bruce leaves us, we do the right things, and let God's love do what it always does. Rest eternal, grant to him O God, and let light perpetual shine upon him. Amen.

*Gary van der Meer*

P.S. I hope you find it helpful to get an update like this from St. John's Church, West Toronto. If you would like something listed in the announcements, or if you would prefer not to receive news from St. John's in this way, please also let me know.

Best wishes, Gary+

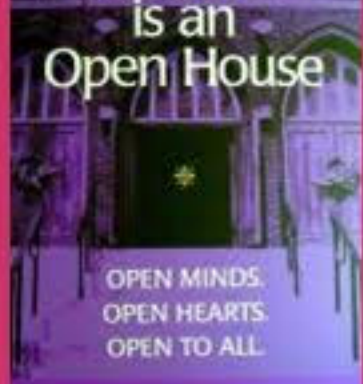
Check our website. [www.sjwt.ca](http://www.sjwt.ca)

And remember this!

### We are not a Building!

We are an accessible, accepting, diverse community. We are young and old, able-bodied, and disabled, employed and unemployed. We are married, single, divorced, straight and gay. We are from all over the world, yet we could live next door. You will find open minds and open hearts at St. John's.

The mission of St. John's Church is to build a community of caring believers committed to Christ, to work for justice and service to all in need. We gather to praise God, and to give and receive support to meet the challenge of our daily ministries. We call on all who will to come and join us.



Welcome to Church!