

December 24, 2007

SJWT

Merry Christmas!



Dear Friends,  
Christmas is upon us - join us tonight!

**Worship with us this evening, December 24:** Family Christmas Eve: December 24, at 5:30 p.m. The Traditional Christmas Eve service starts at 10:30 p.m. with a time for singing carols beginning at 10:00 p.m. Note: We will not have a service on Christmas Day.



Choir singing during the Pageant

**Announcements & Events**

**Great Upcoming Music**

Sundays at 10:30 sharp - December 24: 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Barry Short, organ, December 30: Allison Lynn, guitar.

**Midweek Worship Services**

Thursday December 27, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments.

**Epiphany Potluck Lunch**

Sunday, January 6, following the 10:30 am service. We will end our Christmas celebrations and welcome Gary back from his sabbatical. Sign up sheets at the action desk for main courses, salads, desserts, and other appetizers like bread and butter and cheese.

**Leadership Team Meetings**

Next meeting: Monday January 7, 7:30—9:30 p.m. All meetings at the church.

**Income Tax Deductions**

The tax year 2007 ends on a Sunday – yes, that's next Sunday December 30, 2007. Take advantage of this great tax deduction by donating to St. John's! Note: monies need to be deposited Monday, December 31, 2007.

**Planning Day**

Saturday, January 12, from 9.00 a.m. to noon. Come and be a part of planning for the year 2008. Coffee and muffins provided followed by an outing to the pub.

**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!



Graham Ritchie-Newbigin, Alie Ruddy, Daniel Christakos  
(the Pageant: THE THREE WISE DUDES)

**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.

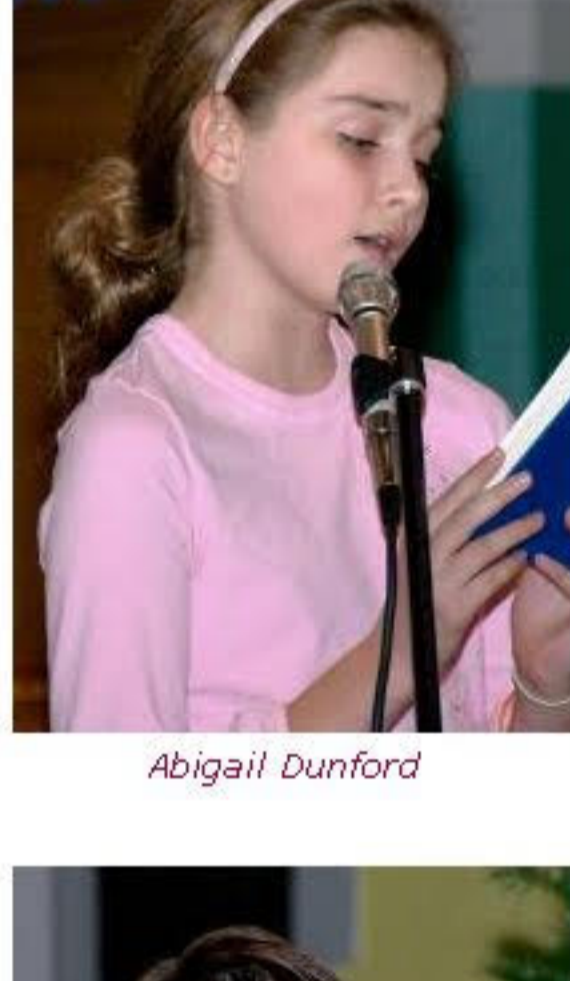
The evening starts with reception at 6:15PM, followed by the Marching in of the Haggis at 7PM.

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 and make a great Christmas present! For more information and tickets call Bill Dunford or Evelyn Butler 416 604-8692.**



Heather Heal



Abigail Dunford



Caelen Mitchell-Shipman



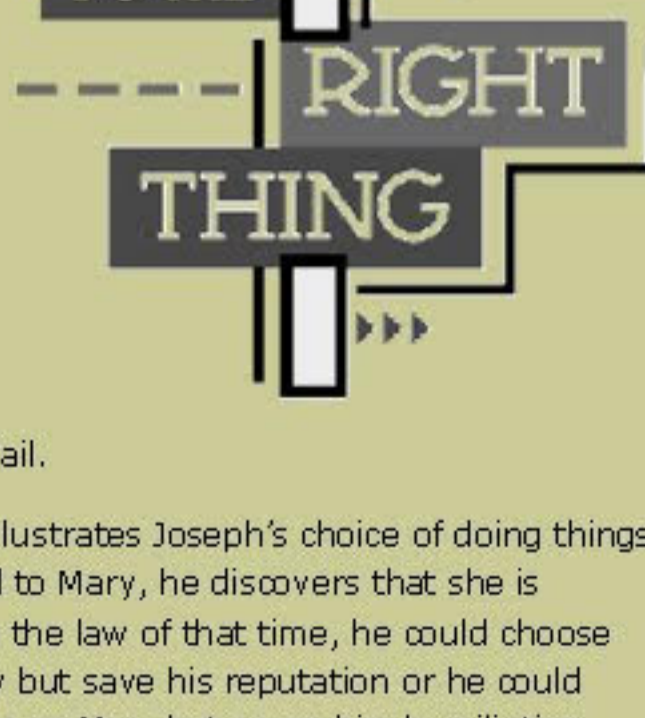
Catherine Laird

**Thanks:**

Thanks to Catherine Laird and all other volunteers for organizing the Pageant! Thanks to Frans Altena for his pictures from last Sunday.

**Doing things right or Doing the right thing?**

We have all been in situations when we've realized that doing things right or correctly is not doing the right thing. Maybe in those times we have chosen to not follow the "correct" procedure or to ignore or break a law so that justice is done. In some situations we may have shunned social standards or cultural norms. The consequences or outcomes may not be pleasant for us when we choose to take radical action and do the right thing. Friends or colleagues may be lost, we could lose our jobs, or we could end up in jail.



Matthew's account of the Christmas story illustrates Joseph's choice of doing things correctly or doing the right thing. Engaged to Mary, he discovers that she is pregnant with a child not his. According to the law of that time, he could choose public divorce which would embarrass Mary but save his reputation or he could choose private divorce which would be easier on Mary but cause him humiliation. Stoning was also a possible punishment for Mary. What if Joseph had chosen actions that were right according to the law? Our experience today would be quite different. Joseph didn't follow the law. He listened to God's instruction to take Mary as his wife. By doing so he also had the assurance that God was with him. Matthew 1:23: *Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel which means God is with us.* This message is not a message of protection from harm, but a message of divine presence; God's presence in Joseph's life, working through him. God's presence gave Joseph courage to do the right thing. Let us remember Joseph's actions as we gather around the Manger to hear the Christmas story.

We remember, as well, that we have God's presence, not just at Christmas time, but throughout the whole year. Trusting in God's presence, no matter what happens, we respond by living out God's message of peace, love, and hope, including those times when we have to choose to do the right thing.

**Be with us God creator of all, to strengthen us on our journey, to guide us, in all our doings, that we may share in the love and care for your world. Amen.**

Evelyn C. Butler

For meditation and reflection in the coming week, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, December 30, 2007: Isaiah 63;7-9, Psalm 148, Hebrews 2:10-18, and Matthew 2:13-23.

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 know someone who would appreciate receiving this, please contact me. 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.

