

January 23, 2008

SJWT



"The Muffin Queens" – Joan & Ethel

Dear Friends,

Find attached the great ideas from last Saturday's Planning Day!

Worship with us this Sunday, January 27: 8:30 Early Eucharist; 10:30 Eucharist; Sermon: Gary van der Meer; Celebrant: Gary van der Meer; Musician: Tim Elliot, base violin. Refreshments following.

An interesting art project

Stuart Reid, who designed the colour scheme when we repainted the church in 2002, has been chosen to do a huge installation of glass at Union Station. He also designed the war memorial window at the southwest corner of St. James' Cathedral. Stuart has just been awarded the commission for a major work of public art/design for the union station subway platform in downtown Toronto. The piece is about 8' high and an entire city block long - 500' and is episodic or filmic or immersive due to the strangeness of its scale. It employs text, poetry, drawings and bands of colour, to make a translucent and transparent glass barrier wall/window between the Yonge and University subway platforms/trains.



Announcements & Events

Planning Day

We spent the morning inviting many good ideas as we make our plans for 2008; and while we won't be able to do all of them, we welcome input as we decide which ones are the priority - in time for the Every Member Visit and the Annual Meeting. Please have a look at the attached file with the results so far.

Would be Kings

Would Be Kings is the first "real" thing Noelle Carbonne worked on when she graduated from film school. It's a two-part mini-series which means that it will be on tv Sunday night and Monday night at 9 (EST) on CTV. The acting is great and the story is intense!

So, of course we're all very proud of Noelle and let's all tune in this Sunday!

And if you tape the show and watch the credits back in slow motion on a 60 foot high definition tv...you can probably even catch her name in the credits at the end! (The crew credits are very tiny and they whip by at about 90 km/h.)

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 27: Tim Elliot, jazz pianist.

Midweek Worship Services

Thursday January 24, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; Tuesday, January 29, 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.

Pancake Supper

Join us for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 5, 6:15 to 8:00 pm at The Stop, 1824 Davenport Avenue at Symington. \$5 per person; \$12 per family, plus a food donation to The Stop.\* We are very pleased to share this event with the congregation of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Remember to bring your Palms on Palm Sunday for the Fire. (The Fire produces the Ashes we use for Ash Wednesday.) Ash Wednesday service will be held at 7:30 pm, February 6th at the Church.

Lenten Program

St. John's will host a shared Lenten program with Redeemer Lutheran Church, Wednesday evenings, February 13, 20, 27, March 5, 12, 19, 7:30 - 8:45 pm. Bob Shantz will present his new book, "Windows on the Soul" along with artist Sarah Hall and art historian Peter Larisey. Learn about art, the early Christian catacombs, stained glass, and theology (Bob's writings!). The evening will include reflections, music and prayers.

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.

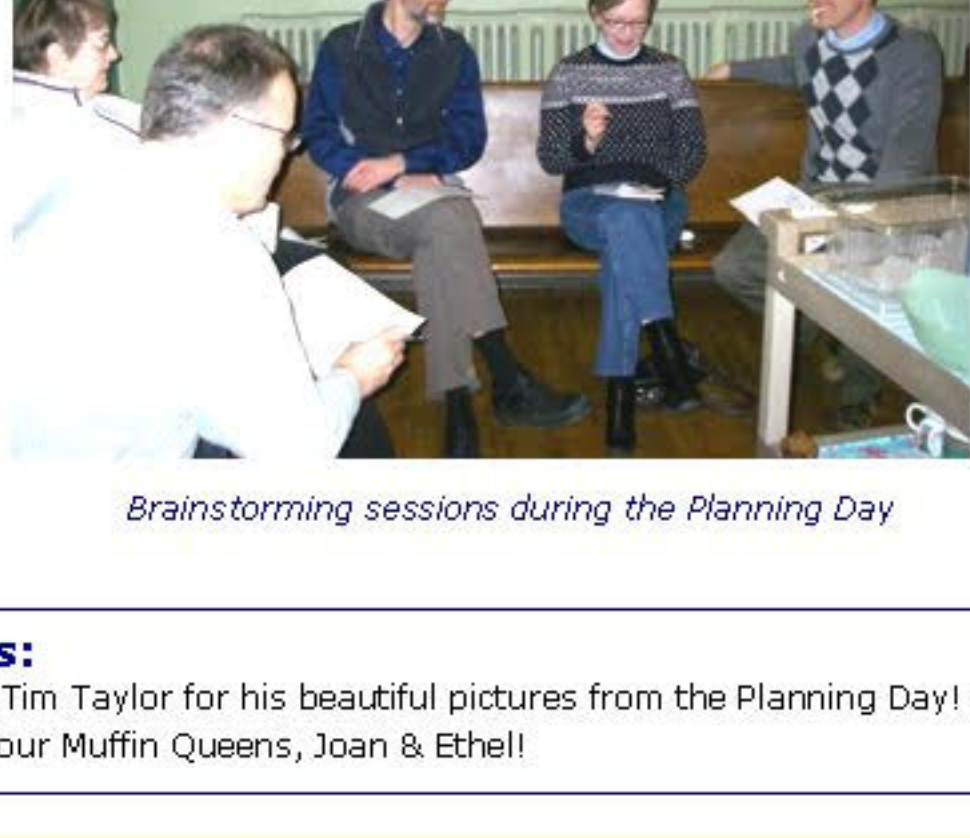
Our traditional Burns supper includes haggis enhanced with a dram of whisky, cock-a-leekie soup, roast beef, neeps (turnips), tatties (potatoes) and a whisky-laden dessert and non alcoholic desserts as well. This evening steeped in ritual, includes a tribute to the immortal memory of Burns, poetry, singing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



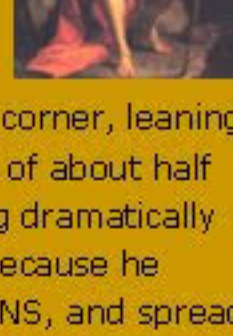
Brainstorming sessions during the Planning Day

Thanks:

Thanks to Tim Taylor for his beautiful pictures from the Planning Day! And special thanks to our Muffin Queens, Joan & Ethel!

How The Word Gets Around

Streetcorner proselytizers are not uncommon at the particular corner where I catch the bus, Dundas and Hurontario. Most of them are fundamentalist Christian, but sometimes they are Mormons (in pairs, of course) and occasionally Islamic. Just last Saturday, I witnessed an appalling sight involving one such evangelist. There was an East Indian woman of about sixty on the corner, leaning on a shopping cart containing her groceries. Over her stood a man of about half her age, white, clutching pamphlets in one hand while gesticulating dramatically with the other - arguing with her. These words of his I caught (because he shouted them, angrily): "JESUS said, go out into to ALL THE NATIONS, and spread the GOSPEL!" I'm assuming his efforts to convert her had met with some resistance. Now, I couldn't think of a worse way to witness to something that is supposed to be, after all, "good news". His body language clearly suggested an angry parent lecturing a naughty child - and with a woman old enough to be his mother, and a stranger to boot. (But did I do anything to intervene? No, I did not!)



In this week's gospel reading, the Word has come into the world; and the time has come for the Word, in the person of Jesus, to make Itself heard. So how exactly does this happen? Does Jesus stand up in the synagogue, or on a rock in the wilderness, glowering and gesticulating and shouting like everyone's angry daddy? That seems to be more John the Baptist's style. No, instead, Jesus comes to be baptized by John like any other sinner. And when he does so, John has a vision of the Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove, and knows him for who he is - God's own offering to the world - someone far greater than John himself. He happens to mention this to two of his disciples, who there and then decide they'll follow Jesus to see what he's about. They spend a day with him. One of these (now former) disciples of John is Andrew, who goes to his brother Simon, and tells him, matter-of-factly: "We have found the Messiah"; and then takes him to be introduced. And so it begins. It is all done casually - and yet everyone involved senses that they are on the verge of witnessing a rare and ecstatic event - the breakthrough of the divine into the human realm. "You will see heaven wide open and God's angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," Jesus promises them.

How can we communicate this Word of Great Joy to others outside the church - I mean, to people who would never consider setting foot in one? I have to say, I'm at a loss. I don't want to try to "convert" people, like the man with the pamphlets; besides, I wouldn't know how. My feeling is that nowadays people who have never had a church background tend to see Christianity as silly and outdated - or repressive and authoritarian - or downright dangerous. And these things are sometimes true, unfortunately - but by no means always. How can we casually set the record straight?

Lord Jesus, let your good news be heard afresh and heard aright to lift the spirits of this sorrowful world. 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 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

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.

