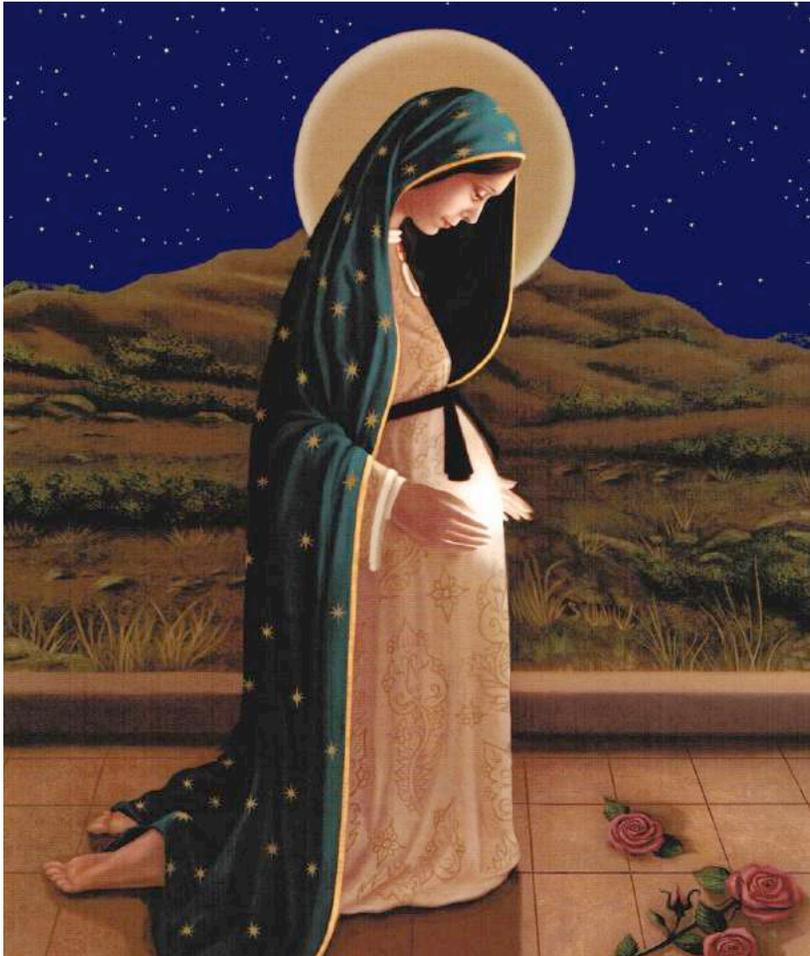


The Vine

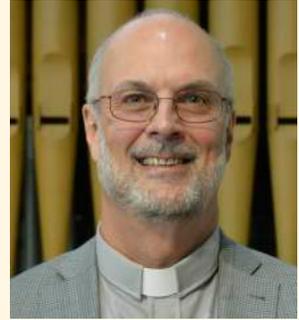


***My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.***

***From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.***

From the Rector

As Christmas approaches my mind turns to the familiar characters of the Christmas story. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the visitors from the east: all of them had been minding their own business when God asked them to do something. Mary was asked to carry Jesus, Joseph to believe the story and look after his family, the shepherds to leave their sheep and go see the new-born saviour, the Wise Men to make a long and dangerous journey to bring gifts. They might have complained, they might have stalled, they might have said “no.” But all of them came to realize they had an opportunity to be part of God’s answer to the world’s problems, rather than just leave it to others to make a difference. And so they said “yes.”



In their time, God began something new. He sent his son Jesus to show that the master of all cares for us so much, that even when we had gone wrong, even when our choices had proven a disappointment, he cared to extend himself to us, and come amongst us as one of us, to give us hope, to give us direction, to give us confidence that this gift of life is one worth having, worth living to the full. In our time, God continues to call people to join his cause. He invites us, as he did the shepherds, to come and see what he is doing. He asks us, as he did the visitors from the East, to offer gifts to support his mission. And he asks us, as he did Mary and Joseph, to trust the good news of great joy: a Saviour, Christ the Lord, has come to establish the loving rule of God’s kingdom.

Through the Christmas story God invites each of us to make a difference. The Prince of Peace shows us a hurting world, deeply in need of the healing effects of compassion and justice and peace, and he invites us to help make it better. He asks us to join the angels and sing with our voices, and also with our hearts and hands and wills: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards all people.

I look forward to singing those words and celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace with you at St Mary Magdalene this Christmas.

May Grace be to you and yours, and Peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, all through this Christmas season.

Yours faithfully, Charles

Remembrance Day Jazz Vespers

A full church appreciated the combination of poetry, prose, personal narrative, and Jazz Music during our annual Remembrance Day Jazz Vespers Service. Musical support was provided by a Jazz Quartet headed by Brian Barlow on drums, Andy Sparling playing trombone, Dave Barton on guitar, and Paul Clifford on bass. The church choir under the direction of Michael Goodwin offered a moving anthem: *The Mansions of the Lord* by Nick Glennie-Smith and Randall Wallace.

This year the theme was *Remembering Vimy*, as this was the 100th anniversary of that battle. Dramatic passages and excerpts from *The War as I saw It* by Canon Frederick George Scott, read by Ron Howes, John McCarthy, Fred Robinson and Stuart Ross, offered an account of the nature of the battle. The service included hymns, as well as songs from the WWI period and Malcolm Ross sang *A Hymn for Remembrance*, by Charles Henry Wood.



A highlight of the evening was a personal reflection offered by David Sutton. Earlier this year, David attended the anniversary ceremonies at the Vimy Monument in France, and while there, he found the grave of the uncle of his two New Zealand cousins. David shared that the family has never forgotten him but to their knowledge, no one has ever had the opportunity to visit his grave. David felt privileged to have been able to do that on 9 April 2017, 100 years to the day after he was killed.

The front of the church and the chapel featured photographs and other memorabilia of family members who had served in the armed forces. After the service people took the opportunity to reflect on the displays. People lingered to chat as the evening concluded with a time of fellowship over warm cider served by Patti Abel. Special thanks to Joan McBride who organized the evening, and to John Inrig, Nell Kottick, Helen Pinkerton, Shirley Stone, and David Sutton for their invaluable support.



Our new sign of the times

For many years after renting and then buying our old stand-up (most of the time) sign and then fighting with it with bitterly cold fingers in the winters, it was decided that a new sign was in order. The “old girl” had done a great job of getting out the word about what we were doing or going to be doing. The lettering was getting old and brittle and often there weren't enough of them. It was time to look for a more user-friendly way of getting the job done.

The search began several years ago with a survey of signs in The County and elsewhere. Modern electronic signs with LED lighting and much improved letter capacity were preferred. Manufacturers were identified, and it became apparent that most if not all came from China. (Doesn't everything!) One church bought directly from a Chinese supplier, only to discover that all instructions for installation and operation were in Mandarin, which caused them a delay of over a year. A road that didn't need to be travelled again!

After checking out various Canadian and US electronic sign suppliers, it was decided to go with a Toronto firm called Greentrak. They came down and showed us their sign and the possibilities that it had so that we were then able to select the size and pixel count. We engaged Scott Wentworth to design and build the sign base so that it would tie in with the Church architecture. Wentworth gave us two proposals, the less expensive one being selected.

Once this information was in hand, we formed a budget, got it approved by Leadership and then proceeded to raise some money to try to get it installed before winter. Once we had raised some money, it gave us the faith to continue with the project. Bridging money, if needed, could come from our investments until all required funds were raised.

The sign was finally installed in October, to the delight of all the frozen-finger people who no longer had to face the hardship of another bitter winter. Now all changes to the sign can be updated from the comfort and warmth inside of the church.

As of today, we still need to raise in the order of \$4000 to pay off the costs of the sign. We heartfully thank all those



who have stepped forth so generously to support this endeavour. It was faith in you that gave us the strength to proceed and accomplish this project.

Our sincerest thanks to all.

The frozen finger band led by John Clarke

Our Christmas Tea, Bake Sale and More

As in past years, this event was held on the first Saturday in November - this year it was 4 November. The Parish Hall was beautifully decorated to welcome visitors to our annual event.

Over 160 people were served a wonderful Tea of sandwiches and sweets and enjoyed the festive atmosphere and warm fellowship. Our Bake Table was loaded with pies, cakes, tarts, breads and more. Grandma's Cupboard was well-supplied with a wide array of jams, jellies, honey and pickles. The White Elephant Table was overflowing with lots of good buys. A Silent Auction included an original water-colour generously donated by our own "Old Master" Tom Field, a set of photos depicting the four seasons taken by Mary Brett, an interesting crocheted Father Christmas throw and several other items. There were five Christmas Gift Baskets in our draw this year. The baskets were packed with an array of donated items: chocolates, napkins, crackers, cookies, maple syrup, etc.



The day was a great success and raised over \$4,500! So far, \$2,500 has been given towards the cost of our new outdoor sign. Of the remaining \$2,000, to date, \$200 has been donated towards the Primates World Relief Development Fund's (PWRDF) 'World of Gifts' which will help needy people around the world. For each of the dollars donated for the gifts chosen, Global Affairs Canada will match them with \$6.

Many thanks to all those people who put in a lot of time and effort to make this event such a success. See other pictures in the photo collage later in the Newsletter.

A joy that's shared is a joy made double. (Proverb)

Joy is not in things, it is in us. (Benjamin Franklin)



Christmas Stories, Songs & Cookies

Our Advent Afternoons of Christmas Stories, Songs and Cookies returned this year. Large and appreciative audiences enjoyed the stories as our own Claudia McCabe read her story *Mrs. Toddlebottom's Christmas* on 3 December, and Joan McBride and Rick Zimmerman were joined by younger helpers to present *The Velveteen Rabbit* on 10 December.



This year there was special music to accompany *Mrs. Toddlebottom's Christmas*, and Claudia launched the CD recording of her story (see item on opposite page). The singing was enthusiastic, and the cookies were delicious and children had a chance to do some cookie decorating. Lots of people expressed how much they enjoyed the stories, and commented on how this was

the perfect start to the Christmas season.

Thanks to Wendy Murphy and the many parishioners who baked the cookies; to the local Metro store for donating the *Scribbler* decorating gels; and to Nell Kottick, Helen Pinkerton, and Sue Rowe for organising the warm drinks, which everyone enjoyed. Many thanks also go to Joan McBride and a large team that included pianist Celia Sage, guitarist Graham Pilkington, and, of course, the story tellers Claudia McCabe and Rick Zimmerman. See other pictures later in the Newsletter.

Mark your calendars: Sunday 24 December (Christmas Eve) at 4.00 pm, we are holding our Family Service, *The Prince of Peace*. This is an inter-generational service for kids of all ages from 1 to 101 and will have a similar format to *Christmas Stories, Songs and Cookies*. It offers an engaging account of Christmas in song and story that will enchant and fill you with the Christmas spirit. We like to emphasise: *no prior church experience is necessary*.



Mrs. Toddlebottom Launches First CD

The first Advent Sunday afternoon on December 3 was also the occasion for Mrs. Toddlebottom (aka our own Claudia McCabe) to introduce her first CD to the world.

Mrs. Toddlebottom's Christmas is a tale of dreams, magical adventure, and Bloomfield the cat's search for a perfect snowflake. It was written for children ages one to one hundred and one for all who believe in the forever wonder of Love.

This winter's tale takes place in Prince Edward County, where Mrs. Toddlebottom was born and raised, as were all here beloved barn cats. Many of the cats have names inspired by The County's villages and towns. Bloomfield, scalawag that he is, is the lead character in the story. Among his endearing qualities, Bloomfield has the patience, persistence and courage of a true hero.



the behind-the-story story

The most serendipitous thing that could have happened happened when, quite upside down, I came to live in Prince Edward County.

What I didn't know at the time was that the story of Mrs. Toddlebottom's Christmas was beckoning. And with the wonderment of Mrs Toddlebottom's story, snowflakes of the most sparkling kind welcomed me with blessings beyond this heart's imaginings. When suddenly inside out, back to front, and upside down again.....it was the purveyors of love who steadied my wobble, turned me right

side up, and patiently taught me to make angels in the snow once more.

Blessings that left me bursting with thankitudes of the most grateful kind.

So many blessings from so many snowflakes.

To each and every one of you, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Perfect snowflakes come in all shapes and sizes. You just have to keep your eyes open....and your heart, of course! And keep looking.....



The CD was recorded at BigBMusic in Belleville and the music features voices of kids from The ROC. The CD costs \$20 and is available from Books & Co., Printcraft, Gilbert & Lighthall or from Claudia's own website: www.cjmccabe.com.

At Bloomfield's request, proceeds from the sale of the CD are going to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Fall Study Series - Exploring the Eucharist

Each Wednesday morning from October 18 to November 15, about twenty parishioners gathered in the church to explore the Eucharist. Our Rector Charles led us through the series with studies on “The Passover Celebration”, “The Last Supper”, “The Liturgy of the Word” and “The Communion”, and ending with an Instructed Eucharist in the Chapel on the final Wednesday. This series drew attention to the relationships of the Passover, the Last Supper and the Eucharist and their scriptural context

Charles used material from “The Meal Jesus Gave us” by Bishop N.T. Wright (2015), and two short videos of Tom Wright on the Eucharist. The result was a most engaging and stimulating series, with discussions running into overtime. More than that, we were all transported into a more profound and lovely understanding of the Eucharist, our central and timeless act of worship as followers of Jesus.

The Passover Celebration is centred on a family meal, during which the story is recounted of the Jewish people being enslaved in Egypt, then rescued by their God, and led into their Promised Land. It was this ritual that Jesus asked his disciples to arrange in the “Upper Room” just before his betrayal and arrest. But as Tom Wright points out, Jesus turned the occasion into the foundations of what we celebrate as followers of Jesus in the sacrament of Holy Eucharist or Holy Communion. As the Jewish people remember the deliverance and flight from Egypt into the Promised Land in the Passover Meal, we remember our salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, as we share the bread and wine in our Eucharist celebration.



We were all captivated by a short YouTube video describing Leonardo da Vinci's wonderful fresco of the Last Supper, painted in Milan over 500 years ago. We were directed to the reproduction of this in the beautiful stained glass window which overlooks the pulpit and faces the side chapel. Charles produced an annotated copy of the photograph of the window featured in “the Windows of St Mary Magdalene” by David Gilbert and Kenneth Liddon (Picton 2013).

Following the discussions of the Passover and the Last Supper, we viewed another video of Tom Wright describing how the Liturgy of the Word sets the

scene for the celebration of Communion. He suggests that “the recitation of scripture in worship is the Christian equivalent of the cloud and the fire in the desert”, reminding the Israelites of God's presence with them on their journey to the promised land. We have more than one reading in our worship services to remind us that they are parts of a larger Biblical narrative. “They function as little windows on the larger narrative”, and we are “like little children pressing their noses on a window to see what's going on outside”. We might also reflect that windows not only allow you to see outside, but also that they allow the space on either side to be illuminated. As we pay attention to, and become engaged with the readings, we sense the presence of God in preparation for the Communion.

The Eucharist celebrates the “pillar of cloud by day and fire by night”, whose name is Jesus, and who stands in our midst as he promised. Indeed the Eucharist is the sign of his presence in our midst, and is a perpetual reminder that his transforming power in our lives enables us to go into the world as followers and representatives of Jesus.

In our final meeting we shared in an Instructed Eucharist in the Chapel. Charles brought our Fall Study Series to a very meaningful and lovely conclusion, as we reviewed the previous sessions in the context of the celebration of the Eucharist. A series of handouts was produced for the study series, and for those who could not attend I would recommend these as a basis for “ongoing transformation”, in our own lives and as a Christian community. For those interested, study materials are available on the church website.

Bob Mason

Martin Luther at 500: Service

The miserable cold and rainy weather did not discourage an appreciative crowd from coming to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther fixing his 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenburg, Germany. The Sunday evening service on October 29 featured a guest speaker and special music and we were delighted that many from across the community took the opportunity to attend.



We sang two hymns written by Martin Luther, and listened to an interesting talk on Luther's Theses, given by Dr. Tom Power, adjunct professor of Church History at Wycliffe College in Toronto. Our choir sang a beautiful anthem, “*Lord, make me to know thy ways*” by William Byrd, and Josie Farrar sang an aria from Cantata No. 202, the Wedding Cantata, “*Sich üben im Lieben*” by J.S.Bach, accompanied by Walter Kipp playing the oboe, and Michael Goodwin on the harpsichord.

Robert (Bob) Mercer 1927-2017: Our Mr. Jack of All Trades



Robert Henry Mercer, well known to us all as Bob, was born on 11 May 1927 and raised in Hamilton, Ontario. At the age of 17, he enlisted in the Navy during World War II and while in service, he travelled to England, Ireland and Scotland. He was a proud Veteran and bragged about his good physical shape which enabled him to march in the Remembrance Day parade and be a wreath bearer.

After the war, living in Toronto, Bob met the love of his life, Joan, while attending a church youth group. This meeting had been facilitated by his sister, June, who had already married the love of her life, a wonderful man, familiar to all of us, Canon Rev Stan Whitehouse. Stan at the time was interning at a church in east Toronto and had suggested to Bob that he attend a youth group in west Toronto. The church was part of Bob's life. In September 1951 Bob and Joan married and stuck together through thick and thin, love and friendship for over 65 years. At family gatherings they often said "look at what we started": after four children, 13 grandchildren (including a set of triplets), and 13 great grandchildren with the spouses and significant others all thrown in, we are a crowd. Bob loved his family and was always eager to assist with renovations and repairs.

This spilled into his church family life at St. Mary Magdalene, always there to fix this or that, change a light bulb high up in the church, or paint a sign. He was a deputy warden several times. After one tea in the Parish Hall, when patrons had been plagued by the intrusion of wasps, Bob made a custom screen door that is still in use today. He was part of the team involved in selling the church rectory next door, the Washburn House. After many years of being rented there was much work to be done to ready it for sale. Bob also helped the municipality to sever the water and sewer lines from those of the church. This was no small undertaking. For many years, he willingly organised and volunteered with the "Meals on Wheels" program: Joan did the driving whilst Bob delivered the meals running door to door. Bob enjoyed helping with church functions whether it was in the kitchen doing dishes, cooking for the Pancake Supper or in the hall dressed in his white shirt and red tie waiting tables at the Christmas Tea at 90 yrs old. He was a "jack of all trades".

During his life Bob was a salesman with General Foods and then MCA/Universal Pictures. The latter involved selling shows, like The Monkeys and The Munsters, to local TV Stations, across eastern Canada. One of the benefits to this job was a yearly convention in Los Angeles where he met a lot of the stars, such as Alfred Hitchcock and Glen Ford, from these shows.

Tiring of Toronto city life and all the time away from his home and family, Bob looked for a new line of work - any business preferably one with a house included. So in 1970, with no experience in the field and never having lived outside a large city, Bob and Joan sold their Etobicoke home and moved the family to Stayner, a small town south of the Collingwood-Wasaga Beach area, to become the proud owners of Stayner Meat Packers and Slaughter House.

In 1974, after four years of long hours and hard work, Bob uprooted the family again and moved to Prince Edward County to own and operate two nursing homes. Once settled in The County, Bob and Joan felt content and at home and soon became involved with the Anglican Church. With the closure of the nursing home "Uplands" in 1991, the large century home was left empty. Later in the year the Mercers moved in and Bob retired into a lifestyle of relaxing and volunteering. He cared lovingly for his beautiful gardens and maintained the building and grounds and was an active force here at St. Mary Magdalene Church. He was even fixing fences a couple of days before his death at 91 years young. He was a large cheerful presence wherever he was and he is greatly missed.



The Mercer Family

Stan Whitehouse: a memorable milestone



This December 21 marks the 65th anniversary of Rev. Stan Whitehouse's ordination as Deacon in 1952. He was ordained as Priest the following October 28, 1953. Stan points out that December 21 was the Feast Day of St. Thomas, The Doubter, and that October 28 was the Feast Day of St. Simon and St. Jude, the saint of lost causes! However, we all know that Stan has not been afflicted with doubt or regret.

Stan was baptised, confirmed, married and ordained at the Church of The Transfiguration in Toronto. He and his wife June moved to Manitoba where Stan spent his first 15 years in ministry. He moved to The County when he "retired", in 1990. Until recently, he officiated at the Wednesday Eucharist. Today, Stan still shares freely of himself in thoughtful and friendly conversation.

We are blessed to have Stan as a member of our congregation. God bless you, you are an inspiration to us all.

Basketeers

Our parishioners have embraced the Alternatives for Women organization and the work it does to support at-risk families in our community. During the past year we have been able to make many deliveries of donations (toiletries, clothing, small household items, etc) to their offices. Donations are collected in bins at the back of the church, on an on-going basis.

Our relationship with the organization has grown in ways we could not have anticipated when we initially made the decision to support them through the Basketeers program. We have moved to a new level of partnership with them, ensuring they now receive items that are specifically needed by the families. In this regard, and as we did last year, our major drive for donations will be in January and February. This drive will be for specific items; Alternatives for Women will supply us with a shopping list, and we will make this available for our parishioners to select items of their choice for donation. The donation of funds will allow us to purchase larger items, such as toasters, electric kettles, sheet sets, etc. We have discovered that donations for the youths, particularly boys, has been lacking and we want to ensure that gaps such as this are covered.

A new chapter of Basketeers, which traditionally donates baskets and hampers in time for Christmas has recently formed in Bloomfield. The expansion of this type of support is wonderful to see.

A group of us from our church attended the Alternatives for Women Open House on 22 November. It was heartening to hear of the ways in which they continue to strive to meet the needs of their families. A poster and leaflets with information on their upcoming AGM have been posted at the back of the church.

Well done, your support is greatly appreciated.

Janet Howes

Space for rent

We have a wonderful Parish Hall. Upstairs we have a large, brightly-lit hall and kitchen. Downstairs there is the smaller, more intimate Macaulay Room and kitchenette (recently renovated).



These rooms are available **For Rent** to individuals or organizations at very competitive rates. If you, or any one you know, is looking for one-time, short-term or long-term room rental, please ask them to call or text Janet Howes at **613-503-9415** or the church office at **613-476-3303**.

Read and Rejoice

As part of our **Seniors'** Ministry, we hosted **Christmas Services and Parties** at Hallowell House Nursing Home on Wednesday 6 December and at Kentwood Nursing Home on Tuesday 12 December.

The **Magdalenas**, the women of the church, donated \$400 to **Outreach** this December: \$200 was given to the Children's Foundation **Angel Tree Program** in Picton and \$200 to the **New Life Girls' Home** in Consecon. This money was collected throughout the year at the Magdalenas' monthly potluck lunches.

A donation of \$650 has been given to the **Gilead Fellowship** Church to help with their preparations for the **Christmas Day Dinner** at the Picton Community Centre. Anyone can attend this event.

We continue to enjoy fellowship and get to know each other at our **Coffee Time** after the 9.00 am and 10.30 am services each week. Many thanks to Sharon Crowells (9 am) and Nell Kottick and Helen Pinkerton (10.30 am) for making sure this happens and also to all people who provide the treats.

The Picton United Church **Food Bank** continues to receive considerable **donations** of non-perishable food items and toiletries collected each month on Food Bank Sunday (first Sunday). Thanks to John Hughes for delivering them and Ron Howes who is usually there to accept them.

Our "**Joyful Noise**" singing group continues to entertain residents in The County's retirement and nursing homes. .



Upcoming events

PEC Ecumenical Choir Concert, 16 December at 2 pm

Under the direction of our choirmaster, Michael Goodwin, five settings of the Magnificat (Song of Mary) will be featured in this concert. The main offering is by J.S. Bach, with full orchestra. Other settings are by the 16th century Italian composer Monteverdi, and three by 20th century composers, Randall Thompson, Andrew Carter and the Estonian Arvo Pärt. Tickets \$20 adults and \$5 students.

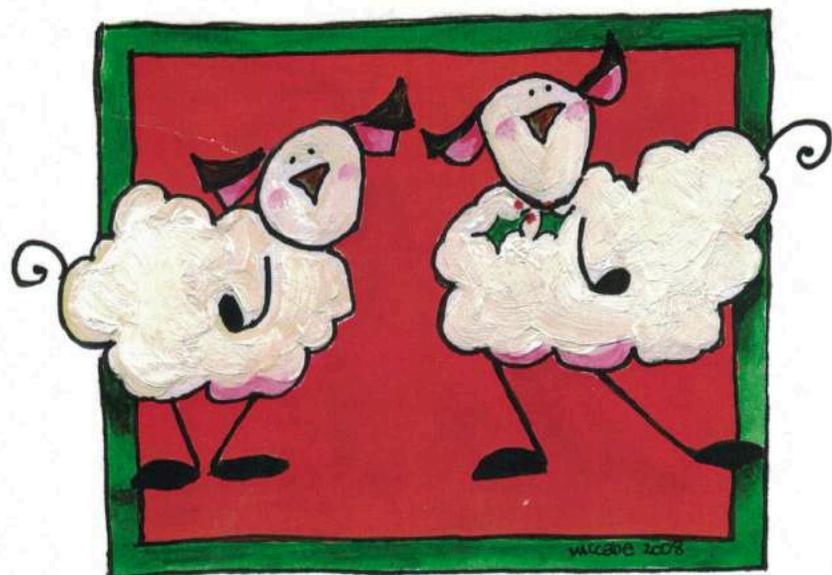
After 10 years of directing the PEC Ecumenical Choir, this is Michael's last concert with this choir. He will continue to direct the church choir and perform in the group "Four Play" and other small groups.

Milestones

Marriages:

Stephen Anthony Dean and **Anne Ashley Best**, both from Ottawa, on 7 October

John Curtis Burns and **Katherine Eileen Emes**, both from Picton, on 13 October



merry christmas, Two Ewe
and marvelous ramifications
in the New Year!

Worship Services

Sunday	9.00 and 10.30 am
Wednesday	10.00 am
Tuesday	3.00 pm Silent Prayer
December 17	10.30 am Service of Lessons & Carols
December 24	9.00 am Communion Service 4.00 pm Family Service 7.30 pm Choral Communion Service
December 25	10.00 am Communion Service
December 31	9.00 and 10.30 am

Upcoming Events

PEC Ecumenical Choir Concert: Magnificat 16 December at 2 pm.
Tickets \$20 (students \$5)

Annual Vestry Meeting: Sunday 4 February 2018. Follows the 10.30 service and potluck lunch (no service at 9.00 am)

Men's Breakfast: 8.00 am last Friday of the month at the Waring House

Magdalenas' Potluck Lunch for the women of the Parish: 12 noon usually last Friday of the month in the Parish Hall

Food Bank Sunday: First Sunday of every month. Please donate non-perishable food items (including pet food) and/or toiletries



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