

THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF ST MARK & ST PHILIP
WINTER NEWSLETTER

My continuous prayer and dedication to our parish family. The season of Advent gave us four weeks to prepare and pave the way of the Lord. We did lots of prayer in this season to amend our lives to be better persons, and to prepare for the coming and celebration of the lowly birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We opened the door of our hearts and lives for Him to come in and live in our lives, in our thoughts and in our deeds. This church tradition of preparation is worthwhile because our Faith dictates us to do so for He will come to us as our sole saviour and true friend. In the span of four weeks, we prayed unceasingly for peace, joy, love and hope for our world. We felt the brokenness of this world and again and again we prayed and are still praying for a harmonious society. After the four weeks of the Advent season, we met all together on Christmas Eve. We sang hymns of praise and thanksgiving for His coming. We even lit candles while singing "Silent Night". The lit candles in our hands gave joy and inspiration as we longed to witness His lowly birth. We felt how hard it was for Mary and Joseph, His parents, when His birth was in a stable with animals to provide warmth, and lying in the manger, no cry was heard. We saw how happy the shepherds were to tell the good news of what they witnessed to all the people in that region. On Christmas Day we had a silent Communion Service that fulfilled our waiting. It is all about love.

Four days after Christmas, we were blessed by the presence of The Most Rev. Gregory Kerr-Wilson specially when he conducted the Confirmation service to our 21 candidates. We were blessed by his encouraging homily, and by having him preside over our Holy Eucharist. We enjoyed our fellowship at the lower hall, sharing thoughts, foods and stories. These are all the fruits of God's love to our parish family. We may have encountered lots of challenges in the past, but due to His love and care, we are still here gathering and worshipping.

The shining light and star of Christ remain shining in our lives. That star also served as the guiding light of the Three Wise Men when they started their journey finding the Baby Jesus. King Herod tried to tricked the Wise Men into giving an update as to where Jesus was born. King Herod was jealous, wanting to kill the Baby Jesus. But God's protecting hands were and will always be there to protect the Baby Jesus. Work of the Angels through a dream was also involved, giving warnings to Joseph and the Three Wise Men. The Three Wise Men finally found the baby Jesus lying in the manger on the day of the Epiphany of the Lord, having Mary and Joseph beside Him. The Three Wise men offered their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold symbolizes kingship, frankincense symbolizes divinity, and Myrrh an embalming oil that symbolizes death. To make this article short, the life and works of Jesus tell us of the salvation history. Again and again, He remains faithful to us. We are then expected to be true to Him by walking humbly and being thankful for His act of love and kindness. HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE, MAY YOU CONTINUE TO REACH OUT, SEARCH OUT AND INVITE MORE PEOPLE TO JOIN THE SHEEPFOLD OF CHRIST.

Padi Joey Vallejo, Incumbent Priest



PARISH POTLUCK

Our second annual "Jingle Bell Potluck" was held on Saturday, Dec. 7th. Approximately 21 parishioners attended, and enjoyed a tasty potluck lunch, a mixture of Christmas and secular music by

our guitar group, and a chance to sit down and visit in the midst of a very busy holiday season. Donabel Vallejo got some attendees up on their feet doing a traditional bird dance, and a little Texas-style line dancing as well! Thanks to everyone who took part - We know how busy life can be at Christmastime.

PARISHIONER PROFILE - SHONA B.

Shona has been a parishioner for about 2 years. She is one of four children and was born in the Philippines. She and her husband have 2 children, aged nine and 11. Shona's proudest accomplishment in life so far was the reunification of her family, with the help of Canada's immigration program. She feels very blessed to be able to live and work close to her family members in Calgary.

In terms of her experience with "church", Shona's earliest memories go back to childhood, when her father was a layman in a small church and the family attended church and Sunday School. Shona also taught two-week Vacation Bible Schools every summer while she was a college student, and was sent to other parts of the country where there were Anglican churches. Shona was born and raised as an Anglican, but Anglican churches were often quite some distance from where she lived and worked, and so she became a "born again" Christian for many years. Meeting Padi Joey and finding out that he was an Anglican Priest led her and her husband to join the Anglican Church again.

Shona's faith was particularly important to her when she was far away from her family and the only way to comfort herself was through her faith. She says "It was my strength and my guidance that led me to the right path and direction in life".

She values the feeling of comfort and belongingness that comes from being a member of the congregation at SMSP. Sharing and gathering together is important to Shona, especially because we don't always know what is going on inside of other people. Sharing God's word can lift people's spirits. Shona appreciates a smaller congregation because everyone knows one another and "We are like one family- we laugh, we eat, we pray as one and we join helping as one".

Shona finds the part of the service where prayers are offered for the sick, for healing, and for everyone to be very powerful, because deep inside all of us, we all need prayers but may not want to go up to the front to be prayed for publicly. It is still good to know that we are being prayed for.

One hymn that always moves Shona to tears is "The Old Rugged Cross", as it brings back memories for her.

Shona has two life lessons to share with others :

"Never fail to try more"

" He who began a good work in You will carry it to completion." Phil. 1:6

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **The Annual Meeting of SMSP** will take place on Sunday, Feb. 23rd, after the 12:30 PM service. *All parishioners are asked to attend.* Please bring either a plate of sandwiches or finger food, or a dessert such as cookies or squares.

An information package re: the AM will be available on Sunday, Feb. 16th.

- "Coldest Night of the Year" walk will take place on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, to raise funds for "Feed the Hungry" and "Kairos" low income housing in Calgary. To support the 18 teams that are walking, visit www.cnoy.org/location/calgarydowntown
- 78th Convention of Synod will be held on June 5-7, 2020. Details to follow.

Parish Priest: Rev.(Padi) Joey Vallejo

Parish Officers

Incumbent's Warden: Leslie Miles

People's Warden: Marilyn Croot

Treasurer: Harold Hippe

Envelope Secretary: Andrew Daye

Organist: Mary Ross

Sunday School Coordinator: Donabel Vallejo

ACW: Vacant

Prayer Partnership: vacant

Altar Guild President: Marilyn Croot

**Parish Council: Thomas Cadaweng, Cheryl Cadpa, Carolyn McLennan, Mary Smith,
Sharen Stevenson**

Lay Delegate to Synod: Donabel Vallejo

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Email: office@parishofstmstp.com

GOING INTO HOSPITAL??

If you are, it is helpful for the parish and clergy to know so that you can be remembered in prayer and visited. If you can't send a message yourself – let a family member, friend, or a member of the nursing staff know that your faith family is important to you and get them to phone and leave a message at the church: (403) 244-0198.

Don't forget- Automatic Debit is now available for your offerings. Please let Andrew Daye know if you wish to set up this automatic service. Sets of monthly envelopes are also available for 2020.

The deadline for submissions for the Winter issue of the newsletter is Feb. 23, 2020. There is a submission box outside the church office, or you can e-mail your submissions to murmor01@telusplanet.net - (subject line: "SMSP Newsletter"). Thank you!