

# WARDENS' WIRE



**The  
Wardens'  
Wire**

**ISSUE # 22**

**DECEMBER 3 rd**

**Sun. Dec 3**

10.30 AM HOLY COMMUNION

Wed. Dec. 6

1.30-3 pm Bible Study

**Thurs Dec 7**

**2.00 pm Vestry meeting**

5.30 pm Soup & a bun followed by

7.00 pm Compline service

**Fri Dec 8**

6- 9 pm AA meets

**Sun Dec 10**

10.30 am Morning Prayer

**Mon Dec 11**

6 – 9 pm Hamilton Schola Cantorum

Sing a long Christmas Carols and Pot Luck meal

All invited – bring a friend! \*\*\*

**Thurs Dec 14**

5.30 pm Soup & bun followed by

7 pm compline service

Fri. Dec 15

6 -9 pm AA group meets

**Sun Dec 17**

10.30 am Morning Prayer

**Thurs Dec 21**

5.30 pm Pot luck dinner before

7.00 pm Compline Service

**Sun Dec 24**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

10.30 am Christmas lessons & carols

**Mon Dec 25**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

10.30 am Morning Prayer

**Sun Dec 31**

10.30 am Morning Prayer

Pot luck lunch

NOTE: Church services for St Mary's Independent Anglican Church and the Vietnamese Hoi Than Tin may continue at 8.30 and 2.00 on Sundays at their discretion. The AA group may continue to meet at 6 pm on Fridays.

Craft Circle & Friendship Circle will also take a break for the month of December.

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IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE THIS SEASON, JOIN U ON MONDAY DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> at 6 pm TO ENJOY THE HAMILTON SCHOLA CANTORUM ...  
Pot luck dinner included.

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The most wonderful thing we do for the people we love ( and for those we don't in case there are any) and for the week ahead is to sing God Be In My Head every Sunday at the close of Service.

The tune, too, is beautiful. We know that it's ancient because the blue hymnal tells us it is from 1558. And we know it comes from the Sarum Primer because the blue hymnal tells us that too ( see hymn # 567, top right.) The area is home to Salisbury and hence to the famous Cathedral.

This week I was reading a short letter someone had written to the London Review of Books. It referenced a discussion about how we are often called after the city in which we live. We are Hamiltonians. People from London, England are Londoners. Those from Glasgow are Glaswegians.

The letter writer mentioned a man from Salisbury, England who objects to such a practice. The letter writer closed with saying " As a Sarumian, he should appreciate that there are no rules."

It took me a minute to connect the idea that those from Salisbury are called Sarumians from the area called Sarum where God Be In My Head was first sung. Everything connects to everything else if we look hard enough. - Judy

**BREAKING NEWS .....**

**It's Saturday evening – feet up, not a care in the world nor a task undone .....I'm**

**relishing in the joy of our very successful Christmas Market – thank you to all that helped ....all that contributed... all that purchased goods..... nearly \$2000 raised for our Refugee Sponsorship Fund ALISON**

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I love December. We can listen to and sing all kinds of music that springs straight from Glory.

I look forward to all of it but one piece of music strikes me more than others.

I am a fan of the art and poetry of the Rossetti family.

In the Bleak Midwinter, written by Christina Rossetti in 1872 is one of the most touching Christmas Carols imaginable.

She's got the stark coldness taken care of with descriptions of the

“frosty wind” that moans, the earth as hard as iron, the relentless “snow on snow”.

And then she warms it up for us, places it in context of the coming of the Saviour of the world when she reminds us that God is so big that even heaven cannot hold him, and yet, this powerful source of Life and Goodness arrived in the most meagre of conditions, in a stable.

She claims to be poor. What could a poor woman possibly give this Son of God in repayment for His sacrificial love?

She resolves her own question with the simplistic “Give my heart.”

And that is all He asks of us.

He gave His all. He asks for so little in return.

And it's such a simple, life-changing gift to give. - Judy

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### ***Thanks to Brian for this contribution to our Wardens' Wire***

God specializes in finding and reaching people who are out of reach. It took a while for Nicodemus to come out of the dark. But God was patient with this ‘undercover’ believer.

Afraid of being discovered, Nicodemus made an appointment to see Jesus at night. Daylight conversations between Pharisees and Jesus tended to be antagonistic, but Nicodemus really wanted to learn. He probably got a lot more than he expected – a challenge to a new life! We know very little about Nicodemus, but we know that he felt that evening's encounter a changed man. He came away

with a whole new understanding of both God and himself.

Nicodemus next appears as part of the Jewish high council (7:50) As the group discussed ways to eliminate Jesus, Nicodemus raised the question of justice. Although his objection was overruled, he had spoken up. He had begun to change.

Our last picture of Nicodemus shows him joining Joseph of Arimathea in asking for Jesus body in order to provide for its burial (19:39) Realizing what he was risking, Nicodemus was making a bold move. He was continuing to grow.

God looks for steady growth, not instant perfection. How well does your present level of spiritual growth match up with how long you have known Jesus?

#### **Strengths and accomplishments**

...One of the few religious leaders who believed in Jesus

...A member of the powerful Jewish high council

...A Pharisee who was attracted by Jesus' character and miracles

...Joined with Joseph of Arimathea in burying Jesus

#### **Weakness and mistake**

Limited by his fear of being publicly exposed as Jesus' follower

#### **Lessons from his life**

...Unless we are born again, we can never be part of the Kingdom of God

...God is able to change those we might consider unreachable

...God is patient, but persistent

...If we are available, God can use us

#### **Vital Statistics**

... Where: Jerusalem

... Occupation: Religious leader

... Contemporaries; Jesus, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Joseph of Arimathea

#### **Key Verse:**

...What do you mean? explained Nicodemus How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again? (John 3:4)

**Nicodemus' story: John 3:1-21;7.50-52 & 19,39,40**

We consider them a Christmas flower, and many people give them around Christmas time to symbolise good will and community spirit. In religious communities, the shape of the poinsettia flower is thought to symbolise the Star of Bethlehem, with the red leaves of the poinsettia symbolising the blood of Christ.

**If you wish to have Christmas poinsettias placed in the church during the Christmas season (Dec 17 – 31<sup>st</sup>) in memory of a loved one, please let Alison know.**

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**Many of you have met the Zadfar family who arrived in Hamilton from the refugee camp in Abu Dhabi one year ago in late November. For those of us who have met Fahim and Anis and their two little boys, Ferdaus and Soroush, it was love at first sight. They are a wonderful family and a gift to us all the way from Afghanistan. Their sponsorship group has asked them to report about the kind of experiences they have had since landing in Canada. It is a reasonable request and one that can inform sponsors as to what works and what doesn't. In response Fahim wrote the following letter to our congregation. Please take a couple of minutes to read it. Breathe it in. What he is saying is that our church is enacting Matthew 25 - welcoming the stranger. I find it to be an exciting letter. It helps me to know that with God's grace we are doing what we've been charged to do. With our love back to your family Fahim & Anis.**

## **Heartfelt Gratitude for a Year of Support and Companionship**

*Dear Members of church family, I hope this letter finds you well. Today, I am reaching out to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering support and companionship throughout our first year in this country and city.*

*As I sat down to pen my thoughts, my initial concern was about the length of this letter, but I felt compelled to convey my deep appreciation for your presence in our lives. Over the past year, your support has been a constant source of encouragement and motivation for my family and me. The connections we've forged within the church have played a crucial role in alleviating the pangs of homesickness that often accompany such significant transitions. Your thoughtful messages and greeting cards on our birthdays were particularly touching and brought immense joy to our hearts. These gestures were more than just notes; they were a reflection of the warmth and inclusivity that define this wonderful community. Throughout this transformative year, we have gleaned valuable lessons from our interactions with each one of you, and for that, we are profoundly grateful. The collective wisdom and camaraderie within the church have enriched our lives in ways we never anticipated.*

*On behalf of myself, Anis, and our children, I extend a sincere thank you to everyone for your kindness, generosity, and prayers. Your contributions have made our journey in this new land significantly more meaningful, and we are blessed to be a part of such a compassionate and supportive community. As we reflect on the past year, I offer my prayers for each one of you. May God's blessings continue to shower upon this cherished congregation, and may our bonds of friendship and faith deepen in the years to come.*

*With heartfelt thanks and warm regards,  
Fahim, Anis, Ferdaus and Soroush*

**(PHOTO ON BULLETIN BOARD)**

## Friendship Circle

> There was something missing at the Monday afternoon meetings but I wasn't sure quite what until Linda Mourot came along with her beautiful piano music. We had the people, the tea, the fruit, the sweets, the verbal games, the quizzes and even a new member who had seen our welcome sign, but now, with Linda's piano, we are complete and singing like nightingales. (Well...sort of.) Someone chooses a song and we've now perfected three: The King of Love My Shepherd Is, Thy Word, I Come To The Garden Alone and next week someone will suggest another one. The intent is to staple the copies together for our own little hymnary.

> We've added another bit of goodness too. Everyone will come equipped each week with a Good News story. Could be about anything at all but we need small snippets of goodness to remind us that although the world seems out of control He Who is in charge is not. – Judy

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*“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the Heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.” Genesis 1:14 KJV*

I've been outside this afternoon walking in a peaceful place, bundled up against the chill with my winter jacket already and a toque. The longer I stayed out the colder I got. The colder I got the better it felt to get home and put the kettle on. That hot cup of tea offered me total comfort.

And *how* we depend on comfort. Without the difference between hot and cold, or hungry and full, we'd never know what comfort was. Imagine having the same thing at all times? Life without contrast would be dull indeed.

The changing seasons offer up a magnificent way to appreciate contrast.

Only a few weeks ago the maple tree in my garden burst into orange, just as it does every year, a huge bright balloon lighting up the yard. A few days later now and there's not a leaf left hanging. Time to sweep off the porch, cover over the outdoor chairs, toss out the beautiful ferns in the planters.

And then we'll trust that what comes next is the usual: snow, ice, lower temperatures.

We hear so much about the changing environment, the failing ecosystem.

We can focus on what is wrong or we can focus on timeless truths. I never remember an Autumn when the trees forgot to change colour or a night sky without stars, or a spring without new growth.

I am not a scientist. (Ask any of my former teachers if they're still alive. They will corroborate my claim.) But I do know that there remains Someone in charge, Someone much greater than myself Who created the planet in which we live.

There is much to take our minds away from trusting in the promises we have straight from the Bible, so much to cause us to worry about world news, about the things we hear about climate conditions.

The choice is ours. We mustn't shut our minds to realities but worrying about it does not help any part of the problem. We need to focus on the things that never change, the comfort of the things that have been happening in orderly sequence straight off the pages of Genesis.

We can be assured that the moon will come out tonight and go back to bed in the morning to let the sun go at it for the next twelve hour shift.

In a world that currently feels off kilter in too many ways we have been given Hope for those things upon which we can depend.

We've been promised that "it was so".-

**Judy**

**JPS/AB 22**