



NewsLetter

The Anglican Church of St. Augustine of Canterbury

Advent Wreaths—The History Behind the Tradition



Sometimes we assume that all church traditions are ancient. But some of the customs and traditions we've come to enjoy are relatively new. This is the case with the Advent Wreath.

Advent Wreaths feel ancient. That's because ancient peoples also favoured the symbols of the circle and light. Many cultures in the northern hemisphere, including Britain, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden used evergreen wreaths in December, to symbolize the hope for spring, new life, and renewal. The evergreen boughs were one of the few symbols of life in the harsh and dark winter months.

Some credit a German Lutheran minister, Johann Hinrich Wichern as the inventor of the

Advent Wreath or Adventskranz in German. He was a pastor at a children's mission school in Hamburg. Every day, the children pestered him, asking, "is it Christmas yet?" In response, he took a large wagon wheel, and 24 red candles and 4 white candles. Each large white candle represented the Sundays in Advent, and each small red candle represented a weekday in Advent. Candles were lit daily to mark the progression through Advent towards Christmas.

Modern Advent Wreaths were simplified to what you might recognize now; four candles representing the Sundays in Advent and then a central Christ candle, lit at Christmas. You may have also have seen Advent Wreaths with purple and rose, or blue candles, in a desire to connect the candles to the liturgical colours used in churches.

Advent Wreaths were brought to North America in the 1930's by Lutheran German immigrants. Initially, they were exclusively used for devotions in the home. They've only been a part of worship and liturgy in church for 40 or 50 years.

This year, we're trying a new version of the Advent Wreath. We're setting up four pillars with candles around our altar, with the Paschal Candle at the centre. The Paschal Candle will be the Christ Candle and the four candles will be the Sunday candles. As we gather in the circle around the altar, we, members of the Body of Christ, will fill in the wreath. We hope it will be a big, generous symbol and we invite you to step into the wreath and step into this method of keeping time.

Advent & Christmas 2018

**The Anglican Church of
Saint Augustine of Canterbury**
1847 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON, M4G 3E4
416.486.2656
Web: www.saintaugustine.ca
Email: augustine@bellnet.ca

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From the Deacon—Book Study

Atul Gawande's book *Being Mortal* was recommended to me last summer by my sister, Sarah. She had read it for a book club and highly recommended it. She thought that anyone involved in a caring community should read it too. I was fortunate enough to find a copy at the bazaar (right after I had ordered it on line!) and completely agree with Sarah. And to that end, I encourage each of you to read it and participate in 2 afternoons of discussion: Saturday, January 19th and Saturday, February 16th.

Gawande is an American of East Indian descent and is a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital, a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and a professor at Harvard Medical School and the Harvard School of Public Health. *Being Mortal* is not a complicated, medical read! It is "wise and deeply moving, an essential and insightful book for our times".

Yes, this book deals with difficult questions that perhaps we might want to ignore. But they are important questions about living a life with meaning. It is not "just about dying and the limits of medicine but about living to the last with autonomy, dignity, and joy."

We'll gather at 2 pm over a cup of tea. Please read the book in advance: you can get it at the library or local bookstore. There will also be several copies available to borrow.

The Rev'd Beth Nelson

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You and your family might wish to introduce an Advent Wreath in your own home. All you need is four small candles, a little greenery, and a larger centre candle. The candle colours really don't matter. Use your wreath as a centre-piece on your dining table. Pair the lighting of the candles with scripture readings or personal prayers. Use it as a conversation piece when you host guests; it's a way to talk about your faith and share it with others. It's an opportunity for prayer, meditation, and respite from the commercial side of the season. In a culture gone mad at Christmas, it's an opportunity to pull the light of Christ into our homes.

The Rev'd Megan Jull

#AdventWord 2018

2 Dec #Journey	14 Dec #Prune
3 Dec #Watch	15 Dec #Prepare
4 Dec #Focus	16 Dec #Rejoice
5 Dec #Night	17 Dec #Sing
6 Dec #Light	18 Dec #Ancestor
7 Dec #Sprout	19 Dec #Wash
8 Dec #Alert	20 Dec #Ablaze
9 Dec #Wild	21 Dec #Sign
10 Dec #Cry	22 Dec #Expect
11 Dec #Grow	23 Dec #Persist
12 Dec #Rough	24 Dec #Peace
13 Dec #Smooth	25 Dec #Celebrate

www.AdventWord.org   

#AdventWord is a global, online Advent calendar. Each day from the first Sunday of Advent through Christmas Day, #AdventWord offers meditations and images to inspire and connect individuals and a worldwide community of believers to the themes of Advent. You are invited to participate by posting your own images using the hashtag #AdventWord and the word of the day, for example, #journey. You can stay up-to-date by visiting AdventWord.org or following the project on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). #AdventWord was established by the [Society of Saint John the Evangelist](#) (SSJE) in 2014 in partnership with the Office of the Anglican Communion. In 2017, [Virginia Theological Seminary](#) joined as a production partner.

The Rev'd Beth Nelson

Reach Grant

On October 25th, Mike Rapson and Megan Jull pitched our Reach Grant proposal to the diocesan committee. We're pleased to share that we received our full funding request. This money will fund a number of community engagement activities in 2018/2019.

The first event was to host a kids' crafting table with Advent themed crafts. We welcomed a number of children from the community. Our upcoming project is to host a Christmas-themed PA Day camp so that kids can learn about the real story of Christmas. For 2019, events include a second PA Day camp, an Easter egg hunt, the Blessing of Bicycles, and the Blessing of Animals.

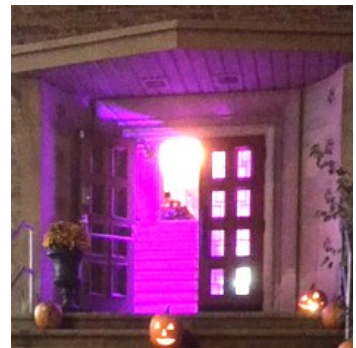


Parish Picnic and Commemoration of Orange Shirt Day

On September 30th, we gathered at the Fleck family home for an outdoor service and picnic. This year, we commemorated Orange Shirt Day to remember and honour Residential School victims and survivors. We welcomed guest leader Sandra Campbell. Sandra is a member of the Mohawk nation and works in Indigenous ministries in Toronto. She is also an M.Div student at Wycliffe College. Sandra led us in elements of Indigenous spirituality, including the prayers in four directions, drumming, and smudging.

Halloween at St Augustine's

On Halloween Night, we opened up the Broadway doors and welcomed in the neighbourhood. We decorated the church and handed out candy and welcomed close to 50 kids and their parents. It led to a number of interesting conversations with parents reminiscing about their days attending Girl Guides in our hall. Other parents checked out the worship space and inquired about rentals. Many parents recognized Megan from connections with Northlea school. Last week, while Megan was chaperoning a field trip, another parent volunteer asked about the church and commented on how impressed they were that the church opened up the doors and welcomed the community. Their children had attended the Children's Garden Nursery school for years, but this was the first time they had been upstairs and seen the worship space. Thanks to all the helpers that made the event such a success.



Warden's Report

The Wardens thank everyone who has participated in the many events of the past few months. We look with great optimism to what is in store for us this next quarter. At last month's Advisory Board with Margaret Fleck's help, we discussed the advantage of 'small groups' to meet people, to learn, to do and to succeed. Some of the areas where we will be posting HELP WANTED are: Gardening, a Senior's get together (Sages), Sunday School assistants, making jams and jellies, sprucing up the information table and bulletin boards etc. Please call Judie at 416-423-4813 or 416-357-6193 for more information.

In each of the past two years we have raised over \$9,000.00 with fundraising events. We can do even better in 2019. Two events are planned and many more will follow as we start the New Year. This year's Wine and Cheese Silent Auction will continue the contribution from Alex Farm Cheese shop on Bayview who provide a bargain on cheeses specifically selected to go with your wine. See the poster for more details.

The second event will be the Mystery Dinners on February 9th. Four or five hosts will offer to prepare dinner for six or eight guests. We will sell 25 to 50 tickets to diners at a cost of \$40.00 per person. Diners arrive at the church at 5:30 on February 9th and enjoy a glass of sherry together. Diners are randomly allocated to a host and head out for dinner at 6:15. Tickets will go on sale during December.

This year has been a tale of two very different periods in the financial health of our parish. Rather than provide the usual graphs of year to date revenue and expenses, we have decided that this would be a good time to explain how this year has been different.

January through to the end of July was a period of change. We started out the year without a permanent priest in charge and a continuation of the decline in givings that had happened over the events of the previous years. Although givings had declined, so had our expenses, as we were not paying a full-time priest. This situation meant that there was a surplus in 2017. Thankfully Megan joined us in March so we had a full time priest's salary to pay.(a good thing!) We also had less revenue from the beginning of May, as our rectory rental income ended when the renters left so we could begin much needed renovations to the house.

Our expenses went up but we did not see any corresponding increase in givings over the period January to July. By the end of July, we had racked up a deficit of over \$19,000.

With Megan in the rectory from the beginning of August, the Wardens viewed this as the beginning of a more predictable financial situation. Indeed, expenses have been fairly even from August through to the end of October. Givings have been increasing starting in August which is extremely encouraging. The increased givings have allowed us to chip away at the deficit. At the end of October, the deficit was down to \$17,000. Thanks to all who had the ability to increase their givings so far. Please keep up the good work. We hope that this is the new normal.

Your Wardens—Judy Arrowood, Mike Rapson, Bill Empey

Remember this date!!

**Shrove Tuesday is March 5, 2019 with-
Pancakes and all the trimmings**



**ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY'S
ANNUAL
WINE AUCTION**

1. December 9 – An introduction to the wines – have a look and stake out your favourites
2. December 16 – Meet the cheese companions – Alex Farms on Bayview proposes cheese matchings – at a discount – to go with your wine
3. December 23 – Make your purchase and head home with a very special gift

My Kenyan Journey

"Your friend's mother is your mother too." I came across this African proverb before I left for Kenya and boy, did it ever resonate... (I'll come back to this.)

October 20-29 is a 10 day experience I will never forget. I'm so grateful for RBC selecting me and 46 other staffers from across the world to go on this life re-affirming trip. We were selected based on our commitments to our communities – for not being indifferent to trying to make a difference. I couldn't wait to go shoulder to shoulder with my colleagues - building hope and sharing care.

To say that our 10 days were packed is an understatement. We barely touched down in London when we were whisked away to Nairobi and had giraffes eating out of our hands. A few hours later we found ourselves at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust –an orphanage where rescued elephants are nursed back from vulnerability before being reintroduced to the wild. My cousin sponsors a few elephants at DSWT and she insisted I say hi to her three fosters. I did, including a baby elephant named Merru who was brought in badly beaten. (Sadly, I learned upon my return home that he



had recently succumbed to internal injuries.) This was just one of several heart-wrenching stories to unfold.

Our next stop was to our Bogani base camp in the Maasai Mara. What a welcoming – filled with “Jambo” (Swahili for hello), smiles, singing and waving hands everywhere. I instantly felt at home in our gorgeous “tents” where we weren't lacking for amenities. (Who cares that we were off the grid without cellular service.) We came from all over the planet but with love and respect the underlying language, immediate and easy interactions were a matter of course. The togetherness forged here felt familiar and familial.

My eyes were opened to a whole new culture. The Kenyan people - their values, joy and perseverance draws from a vessel that will never run dry. We tend to think of their struggle as suffering but instead, they choose to reflect hope, kindness and grace. Their sense of community is something we can all aspire toward.

Each morning we had the option to hike (over the savannah or into the mountain range) accompanied by Maasai warriors; go for a jog; do some yoga or sleep in (but why would you?). After breakfast, it was a whirlwind of activities including: Building the foundation for a [WE.org](https://www.wearecanada.org) college – we take education for granted here but in Bogani communities, it's a privilege. A water walk – where we lived out one aspect of their routine by carrying water (20kg over 1km) from the Mara River back to the village homestead. It wasn't easy and they do this daily! Visits to the Kisaruni (which means a peaceful place) Girls Secondary School and Kipsongol primary school – where we got a sense of how their learning is attached to principles of attitudinal healing. I met a brilliant nursing student named Joy, who introduced me to

(Continued on page 6)

her friend Faith. I thought, “Wow, Joy and Faith together, I wonder if Mercy is present too...and lo and behold, they introduced me to Marcy. (Close enough, it was meant to be!) We also visited their markets, a hospital; took in a business meeting - where we saw how members took care of each other’s urgent needs through a social savings practice and got to see Oleleshwa farm – where RBC put in their first water irrigation system to facilitate self-sustaining economic growth for the community. We were engulfed by the whole village upon our arrival! So much exuberance and.....tears. I’ll never forget the children and elders taking our hands in a parade of song and dance. Truly touching.

What’s Africa without a safari (or three)? We were up close and personal with elephants, buffalos, rhinos, impalas, herons, hippos, gazelles and on and on. I missed out on seeing leopards but did witness a lion stalking a mixed herd of zebras, buffalos and warthogs. Alas, no pursuit ensued. I didn’t expect it as we were told it was the lioness who did the majority of the hunting. The male laid back (typical of males eh?) to protect their pride (double entendre intended). We were never in any danger as our conga (a wooden club) carrying Maasai Warriors were always on hand both as guides and protectors. Known for their fearlessness, they were so approachable and knowledgeable, teaching us their traditions and training us on the conga. Jackson and Wilson are not only warriors in the traditional Maasai sense but also educated ones with degrees and a published book (The Last Maasai Warriors). I even got a signed copy!

So, back to the proverb: “Your friend’s mother is your mother too.” Maternal love became the ongoing theme for me on this trip. We lived it in the way the village mamas of Emori Joi welcomed us into their home. We saw it in the focus displayed by the mamas of the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) to support their families. We experienced it when the mamas came to our camp and beaded with us. We learned of it in how the students of the Kisaruni Girls School infuse their active learning with diversity, community and maternal instincts. And finally, we embraced it each night at dinner when we shared stories of how our own mom’s forged their values into us. My most amazing mom has since passed on but with the friendships developed here (and also very much at St. Augustine’s) it feels like I have many moms.

I came here hoping to help a Mara community realize dreams but it is I who has been reminded of a greater sense of hope. The final gift given to us - a Maasai shuka (an African blanket) is symbolic of this trip: being wrapped in Kenya’s warmth and kindness and, hugged by the confluence of two different cultures.

Amani (Peace)

Tom Wong



PA DAY CAMP
FOR KIDS JK TO GR 8
DECEMBER 7, 2018

Only \$5
includes lunch!

*Come and explore
the real story of
Christmas*

Stories, games, crafts, and more!
Give your child a fun-filled day while you work, shop, or
prepare for Christmas in your home

Email the Rev'd Megan Jull for more information or to register: megan@saintaugustine.ca

The Anglican Church of
St Augustine of Canterbury 1847 Bayview Ave @ Broadway Ave
416.485.2656 saintaugustine.ca



Raffle
Draw Date is Sunday, December 23, 2018

1 of 2 \$50 Gift Certificates from
THE BAY

\$50 Gift Certificate from
FLOKA SALON
Sunnybrook Plaza
416.480.0880 flokasalon.com

Gift Basket
WINE & BELGIAN BISCUITS
includes \$25 Whole Foods Gift Card

\$25 Gift Certificate from
WHOLE FOODS
Bayview and Broadway
416.481.0090 wholefoodsmarket.com

Fall Fair 2018



Thanks to Gina and Barb for their leadership, and to all the many helpers who made our annual Fall Sale a success. So many took part, setting up and taking down, staffing tables, cooking and serving lunch, and contributing baking, plants, sewing, and knitting. Over \$3,600 has been raised so far and raffle tickets are still on sale.

The Groove Room

August was a vacation month for the Groove Room but we were right back at it in September. It seemed that everyone must have kept up their practicing over the summer as we had some very good performances. In October we had a large crowd with a bunch of people visiting from the Leaside chapter of Probus, a retired business people's organization. They heard about the Groove Room from the free advertising section of Leaside Life. Thomas Rapson took the opportunity to play his first original song which was well received.

We had a treat in November as five young ladies from Stagecoach East sang a couple of songs from Broadway musicals. Stagecoach are the people who rent the church on Saturday mornings teaching singing, dancing and acting. We continue to have good crowds in this our 5th season with all of the money raised going to the Flemingdon Park Community Food Bank. The next Groove Rooms are on Friday December 14th from 7-8:30p, and on Friday January 11th at the same time. Admission is \$5 per person.



Mike Rapson

COME CELEBRATE *Christmas* ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY ANGLICAN CHURCH

1847 Bayview Avenue at Broadway Avenue

CHRISTMAS EVE
DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25

4:00pm Children's Service
7:00pm Candlelight Service

10:30am Holy Communion

BLUE CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 13

6:30pm A candlelight prayer service
for when Christmas is a difficult time

EPIPHANY
JANUARY 6

8:30 am and 10:30am
Children's Program at 10:30am



1847 Bayview Avenue 416.485.2656 saintaugustine.ca

BLUE CHRISTMAS

a candlelight prayer service for when
Christmas is a difficult time

Thursday
December 13
6:30pm

It is not always easy to feel joyful at Christmas. Grief, illness, traumatic memories, and financial constraints can make it hard, especially when expectations seem so high.

This candlelight prayer service is followed by refreshments. Members of the pastoral care team will be available for conversation, prayer, and support.

Priest-in-Charge

The Rev'd Megan Jull
megan@saintaugustine.ca

Parish Deacon

The Rev'd Elizabeth Nelson
elizabeth.jane.nelson@gmail.com

Honourary Assistant

The Rev'd Dr. Margaret Fleck

Music Director &
Parish Administrator
NewsLetter Editor

Marcus Reinkeluers
augustine@bellnet.ca

Wardens

Judie Arrowood
Mike Rapson
Bill Empey