

# The Parish Church of St. Augustine of Canterbury

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## Christmas 2009

*You will conceive and bear a son:  
Salvation shall be his name,  
The off-spring of David for Israel's throne.  
No end will there be to his reign.*

This modern paraphrase of familiar ancient words (Luke 1:30-34), reminds us of what was asked of Mary so long ago and provides part of the underpinning of our faith story. We know what happened to the baby. He grew, full of the presence of God, to be a 'Light in the Darkness', the 'Bread of Life' and the 'Hope' of his people - then and now.



But that is not all! To quote Meister Eckhart, a Christian mystic writing in the 14<sup>th</sup> century: *'What good is it to me if the Son of God was born to Mary all those years ago, but is not born in my person and in my culture and in my time?'*

So when we look into the crib and see the baby, and when we hear the familiar Christmas scriptures and sing the carols we know so well, will we be able to listen for the invitation in our hearts? Will we pay attention to the urging of God, that we too give birth to the spirit of Christ in our lives, and for our times? As we *'Live Christ in Community through Service,'* will we see that as answering a resounding "Yes" to God? This Christmas, will people find the Light, Bread and Hope that marks the presence of Christ, through our work and in our compassion? And will Christ be born over and over again in our time and for our community?



*Like Mary before us, each one here  
Is asked to give birth to God's son.  
God's seeking our hearts, there's nothing to fear.  
Come Lord, and your will be done.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Children of God!  
God has been shown to be faithful and true!  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Don't be afraid:  
God's favour is resting on you.*

If this happens, a new Christmas Star will shine, and wise people will come to worship anew and find hope for the world in a tiny baby. What better gift could there be?



Quotes from: *Annunciation* by the Common Cup Company.

**Dear Friends,**

Christmas is a time for giving both to those around us and to those in our community with whom we would like to share our good fortune. We hope the following information will be useful.

### **Christmas Gifts from our Parish to our Community**

Thank you for the generous support you gave to the November 21<sup>st</sup> Fiesta Fundraiser. As the congregation was informed, this was to be our major Advent fundraiser. Your generosity was overwhelming. Nearly \$6000 was raised to support our outreach projects. Eight tickets to the Fiesta were purchased by St. Augustine's members, as gifts to our neighbours, the Spanish Mennonite Church that rents our hall.

- The Advent Planning Committee had chosen **No Room in the Inn, Bissell New Clothes Program** and **The Edmonton Christmas Bureau** to be the recipients of our outreach.
- This year, **No Room in the Inn** will assist **Edmonton Inner City Housing Society's Harry Holt Place Project**, which provides housing to homeless singles and couples.
- Thanks to Mary Oswald and Bill and Donna Buchanan who concurred with the decisions of the Advent Planning Committee for the distribution of Advent Outreach Money to the three agencies listed above.

*Could these be examples of 'Light', 'Bread' and 'Hope: bringing the presence of the Baby of Bethlehem into our community during our time?*

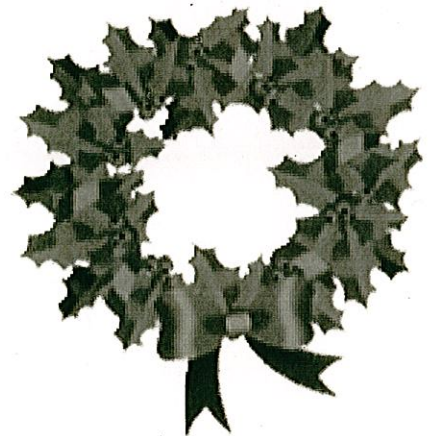
### **Christmas Gifts to Our Staff.**

Your Vestry decided to use the Open Christmas Offering (The cash that is placed on the offertory plate during the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services) as an opportunity to gift St. Augustine's Staff: a means of thanking them for the work they do on our behalf. We wished to show our appreciation for their dedication and efforts in caring for our community. This money will be given to Kathie Sutherland, David Brehmer and The Reverend Bob Peel. If you wish to use a cheque instead of cash to contribute to these gifts, please ensure that your cheque is made out to St. Augustine's and clearly marked, 'Gift for Staff'.

If you wish to contribute further to our Advent Outreach Projects please ensure that your cheque is clearly marked and a receipt will be provided.

The regular offering money in envelopes will be placed in the church funds and receipted as usual.

On behalf of Vestry, we would like thank everyone who has worked so very hard this year to keep our parish healthy and active and fulfilling its mission. We would like to wish everyone a peaceful and blessed Christmas and a very Happy New Year.



Phyllis Molyneux  
People's Warden

Val McCormack  
Rector's Warden