

St. Brice's Anglican Church Newsletter December 17, 2022.

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St. Brice's Anglican Church

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Table of Contents

<i>Spiritual Development</i>	p. 3
<i>Property & Administration</i>	p. 6

Christmas Joke

Q: *What did one Christmas tree say to another?*
A: Lighten up!



St. Brice's Visioning Scripture

“Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.” Colossians 3: 14, 17 (NLT)



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Christmas Services



St. Brice's principal Christmas service will be Christmas Eve, 7pm.

For those who prefer a late-night service on Christmas Eve, there will be a service at our neighbouring parish of **St. John's (Main St. & Sherbrooke St.) at 10pm.**

At St. Brice's, there will also be a service on **Christmas Day at 11am**, using the traditional *Book of Common Prayer*. (Our new exterior sign advertises a "meditative" service on Christmas Day, at 11am, because most passers-by wouldn't recognize what a "B.C.P." service is. ☺)

Of course, all these services will be celebrations of the Holy Eucharist.

Sacramental Care



If you know of anyone who would like to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion over the Christmas season, but is unable to come to St. Brice's, please leave a message at the parish office

(705-474-4005), and the rector or one of the eucharistic ministers will administer Communion at their homes or residences.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about joining parish life, or about being baptized, please contact the parish office (705 474-4005), and we would be happy to meet -- to invite, and to explore more about what is involved.



I (PA) have written Archbishop Anne Germond, asking if she would be able to visit St. Brice's in Easter season. As part of this visit, I hope that she will Confirm candidates, or Receive candidates who have already been confirmed in another Christian tradition. For

those of us who were baptized when we were very young, Confirmation is when we identify that we are taking on our baptismal vows for ourselves. "Receiving" is welcoming those who have chosen to make St. Brice's their spiritual home, within the Anglican tradition.

Alpha

Some of us are familiar with the Alpha Course, a light-hearted introduction to (or review of) the Christian faith.



Participants gather once a week – usually for something to eat, followed by a video and discussion. The course lasts about 11 weeks. About halfway through the course, participants

are encouraged to go on a short retreat (Saturday or late Friday-Saturday).

Topics include "Who Is Jesus?" "Why Did Jesus Die?" "Why Does God Allow Evil?" and so on.

People can say as much or as little as they like, and there are no stupid questions or opinions.

Before COVID-19, Alpha Courses were always offered in person, but in the past couple of years, they have been offered on-line. We will choose whether to offer the course at St. Brice's in-person or on-line, depending on who is participating.

If you would like to know more, here is a great introductory video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fViYK_Xb3Wg

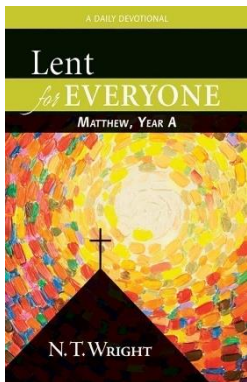
If people are uncertain if they want to join the course or not, I suggest that people check out the first gathering. If you enjoy it, keep coming. If you feel it's not for you, or if you don't have the time, then don't come. No one will bother you if you drop out.

If you'd like to try it, or want more information, please call 705 474-4005; or email peter.armstrong@ns.sympatico.ca

Auditions

A few of us are doing some exploring about whether or not to put on a simple play of some kind at St. Brice's in 2023. If you have acting experience of any kind (or no acting experience but would like to try it), please contact the parish office (705 474-4005).

Lent Book on Matthew



In 2023, Lent will begin on 22 February. (Lent is the Church season lasting 6 and a half weeks until Easter.)

Some of us read Bishop Tom Wright's book on Luke last Lent. This year, we will be reading the Gospel according to St. Matthew most Sundays. Bishop Wright also wrote a similar book for Matthew, called *Lent for Everyone: Matthew, Year A*. The cost of each book in a bulk order is \$17.

If you would like a copy, please leave a message at the parish office (705 474-4005). Please order your copy soon, to be sure to get it before Lent begins.

Homelessness

There is widespread concern about the number of people who are homeless in North Bay (and many cities across Canada). As well, The Gathering Place -- the place to get free meals in St. Brice's neighbourhood -- no longer offers meals on weekends. (First Baptist Church has begun offering simple suppers on Saturday nights.) There are some plans in place to offer neighbourhood "warming centres" during the cold months.



There will be a free Christmas Dinner at the Pro-Cathedral, Christmas Day: Dine in, 11-1:30pm; take-out, 1-1:30pm. There are requests for community volunteers. If you

are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact the parish office (705 474-4005).

PROPERTY & ADMINISTRATION

Hall Use

We occasionally let outside groups use the hall. First, this is a means of connecting to the community. Second, it is a modest source of income.

For example, this coming Friday, a local college class is using the hall to provide a community Spaghetti Supper before Christmas. Students have arranged the necessary insurance, taken the Food Handling Preparation Course, have ample volunteers and supervisors, and are committed to cleaning and tidying up afterwards.

If you know of a group who might want to use the parish hall, please contact Diane at the parish office (705 474-4005).

Heating

In a previous newsletter, we expressed concern that our heating bill was projected to increase about \$5000 in 2023.



(After contacting Enbridge Gas, that figure was reduced to a still-significant increase of about \$1200/ year.) That has led us to see if we can make an investment to reduce our heating costs. We have learned that the furnace in the parish hall is near the end of its service life.

A small Task Group is exploring options. We hope to have an interim report for parishioners in the

beginning of 2023, and a final report (if it's ready on time) for the Vestry meeting in February 2023.

Christmas-January Support

Christmas is a wonderful time for many, but hard for others. Sometimes we miss loved ones who have spent previous holidays with us, but they are now deceased. For

Meeting Needs

others, December-January is a time when some people struggle financially. St. Brice's quietly meets urgent

needs within our congregation, or in the wider community, to the best of our abilities. If people would care to make modest donations, gift cards for groceries, or support for medications, these gifts are always welcome.

Vestry & Reports



Annual Vestry Meeting

The next St. Brice's Vestry (annual meeting) will be held on Sunday, February 5, following the combined 10am service and a pot-luck lunch.

If you are responsible for submitting a report for the Annual Report, please submit your report – preferably by email – by 19 January to the parish office [stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca].

Financial Update



I have no further financial update. 2022 has been a challenging year for St. Brice's financially. It seems very likely (though we won't know for sure until the end of the year) that we will end the year with a significant financial deficit. While we have savings from previous years, it's not sustainable for us to run deficits each year.

We are deeply grateful for people's offerings as they are able. Money is one of the tools which helps make ministry happen. The Finance Committee has been working hard at exploring options. We anticipate we will be giving an update, with a few options to consider, early in the new year.

[graphic not for website]