THE ELM LEAF NEWSLETTER

The Parish Church of St. Peter

April 2012 issue

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Baptism – Part 2: Initiation into the Church

In the previous Elm Leaf Newsletter, my message focused on Baptism as a Sacrament: 'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.' Through the cleansing act of water (an outward and visible sign) we are 'washed clean,' born into a new life in Christ (an inward and spiritual grace), and initiated into the Household of God within the context of Christian community.

This second reflection on baptism is an attempt to identify why people ask for Baptism in the church, and what is expected of those who receive baptism as adults and/or sponsor children.

When I was a child in the 1950's, baptism was seen as a private sacrament. My own baptism took place at a private service on a Sunday evening. Those present were members of my family along with close friends and Godparents. There was, at that time, no sense in which the parish or wider church was involved.

However, this has shifted significantly over the past 30 years during which time scholars have helped us reach a new understanding of the meaning of baptism and the important role it plays in the life of the whole congregation. Increasingly, returning to the practice of the early church, baptism is understood as a corporate act, by which the individual is given the gift of new life and becomes part of the Christian community: 'The Household of God.' Therefore, recognized as a community event, it is important that baptism be celebrated within the context of the worship of that parish family, with the community present to support and receive this new member.

In the early church, baptism was for adults, who were baptized at the Easter Vigil after a lengthy period of preparation that took months or even years. The children of Christian parents could also be baptized because of the faith and commitment of their parents. Over time, as Christians became more numerous, baptism of infants became the more popular custom. Baptism is incorporation into the Christian family. Patricia Bays in her book, 'This Anglican Church of Ours' writes, "So the Anglican Church, along with a number of other Christian denominations, baptizes infants and small children when other Christians are willing to make (and follow through on) the

(continued next page)

Baptism (cont.)

baptismal promises on their behalf."

Baptism, indeed, is a big commitment; one in which adults receiving this sacrament as well as those sponsoring a young child (i.e. parents and/or godparents, etc.) are committing to membership into this unique 'Household of God' as well as a life of service to others, of love, of action for justice and peace – both within the church and beyond.

At our Annual General Meeting in February a decision was made to develop a policy on Baptism at St. Peter's. This policy will strive to create an environment and process allowing those requesting baptism to grow in their faith, their understanding of this sacrament, and their commitment to the vows made within the baptismal service. If you are interested in participating in the formation of such a policy, just let me know and we'll include you on the team.

Yours in the ministry we share,

Rev. Canon Donna Joy

Musical Notes

I often read Doug Speirs' column in the Free Press as I am eating breakfast – it's just a nice, light-hearted way to start the day! On Friday last week, he wrote about the 10 best and the 10 worst jobs of 2012. Of course, I didn't expect Church Music Director to be in either list but I read them all and it wasn't there – and I didn't see Priest, either! I suppose in this very secular world we live in, few people would even think of a Church Music Director or Priest, if asked to come up with a list of occupations. There aren't very many of us, compared to the number of say doctors, teachers or plumbers and speaking for myself, a Church Music Director is more aptly described as a calling than a job. Certainly I have a job description which lists my responsibilities for which I am paid on a regular basis. But I "work" at St. Peter's and I "worked" for many years before that at St. Andrew's River Heights because a voice I couldn't ignore was calling me to serve in this way.

Also last week, I acquired a St. Peter's photo directory which will be a help in putting names to faces – I wish I had received one earlier AND I wish this one wasn't five years old – but it will be a help! At the beginning of this book, there is some interesting history of St. Peter's along with lists of former Rectors, Sunday school superintendents, Youth Directors and Wardens, all with their dates of service. The Secretaries and Organist/ Choir Directors are also listed, presumably in order, but without any dates. I wonder if we could put our heads together and fill in the blanks here so that when a new photo directory is done, we'll have dates for everyone!

Now to the main part of my message – I want to say how much I appreciated the work of our choir in these past weeks as we prepared all the music for Holy Week, and their wonderful musical leadership through four services in four days! I didn't even give them a week off since we have anthems to prepare for upcoming services. I'm sure they are all looking forward to summer holidays.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I'd like to issue another plea for men to consider joining our choir. A part-time commitment is possible, full-time would be even better. I continue to believe that St. Peter's should have a mixed choir. For one thing, we obviously have a mixed congregation and the choir should reflect that. And from a practical perspective, virtually all the music in our library is for mixed choir. I should stress however, that in spite of our balance issues, we would welcome any women

who are interested in joining the choir!

So far, we have not been successful in attracting a tenor or baritone student on our bursary program but I remain hopeful on that front. I will be publicizing it again this spring/ summer and I ask for your help – if you are aware of anyone who might be interested, please contact me for more information.

Thanks to all for your continuing support.

Linda Fearn

Mission and Outreach

The Mission and Outreach Committee would like to say a great big thank you to all who brought tins of tuna as part of the 40th Anniversary Challenge for St. Matthew's Maryland Community Ministry. We reached our goal and then flew by it, collecting 157 tins of tuna and other varieties of fish.

The next Mission and Outreach Committee will be happening on Tuesday, June 5 at 4:30 pm. All members of the parish are invited to come and join the committee or just visit and see what it's all about. We will be planning our Fall Activities.

Cori Dorrian

One of the tin can edifices

St. Peter's in Pictures

Our palm procession

Preparing for Palm Sunday service

Garden of Gethsemane

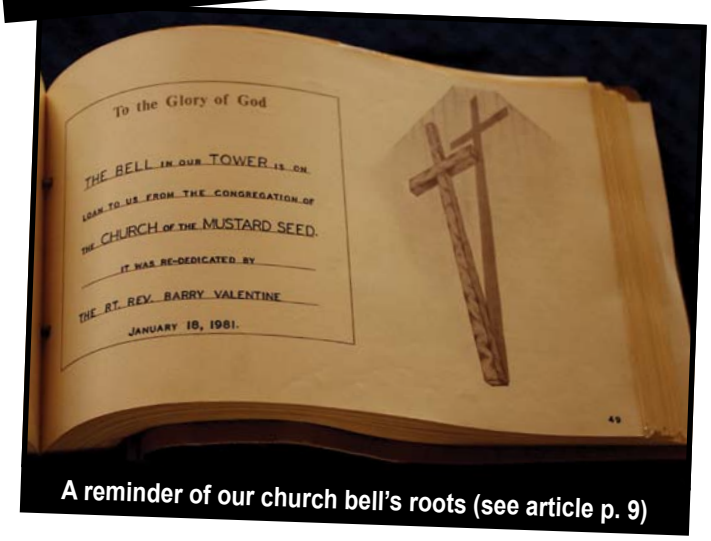
Our proclamation to the neighbourhood

A beautiful display for a day of celebration

Gathering and enjoying the trumpet & piano duet

Two of the tin can architects

Fun with tuna tins (see article p. 3)



A reminder of our church bell's roots (see article p. 9)

Rector Responds to Frequently Asked Questions

What is the book that is processed behind the cross and why is that done? Who decides these practices?

The book to which this question refers is the Book from which the Gospel is read. It is a book intentionally chosen to be significant in size and dignity, and carried upright, at approximately chest height. The book is honoured in this way as an acknowledgement of the presence of Christ, who speaks to us in the Gospel, entering/moving in and through the gathering.

Canonically these decisions are made by the Incumbent/Rector. However, here at St. Peter's our rector works collaboratively with a well trained and committed Worship Planning Team. Together they reflect on such things theologically, liturgically and scripturally. These decisions are made together but always – ultimately - with our rector's input, leadership and approval.

Why do people bow when passing in front of the altar?

A bow signifies reverence and honour. So, when people bow when passing in front of the altar (and the cross) they are acknowledging with reverence and honour the sacrifice Jesus has made for us and the ways he continues to nurture us through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In Philippians 2:9-11 we are reminded that "… at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow."

Rev. Canon Donna Joy

From Hippie to Priest: "With a Little Help From my Friends…"

During our February Women's Friendship Breakfast I had the opportunity to observe, with pride, how our group is made up of helping friends. We share the duties, we share our talents and interests, and we share this time with Jesus: our friend. The title that I have chosen for this article is from a Beatle's 'hit' and seems an appropriate application to our group, even if John and Paul (the Beatles, not the disciples!!) had more psychedelic thoughts in mind when they wrote the tune in the 1960's. So, why???, do you ask, is the chair of the Women's Friendship group making a connection between our present day ministry, and some of the more extreme social behaviours of the last century?? Well, because our leader, our priest, our Donna Joy, is this connection. With the Women's Friendship Group she shared her transcendental, transactional and transformational experiences, from within, beyond, and back to, the world of faith and Christianity. As several members of our congregation have requested to also share in her story, I will attempt to paraphrase her presentation and explain how Donna went from Hippie to Priest, with a little help from her friends.

Donna is presented with Buzz Lightyear as a token of thanks for her presentation

Donna began her life as the third daughter of an Anglican father and an atheistic mother. As far as religion, it was a divided household. From her early years in West Vancouver's St. Christopher's Anglican Church memories of Baptism, Sunday School and "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know" remain vivid for Donna. Her life was 'normal' for that period with expectations of discipline, regimentation and conformation to outside expectations.

This all changed in the 1960's with the birth of the Hippie movement, and was further challenged as she saw her American friends being drafted to serve in Viet Nam. Guided by the courageous and prophetic work, and leadership, from Martin Luther King Jr. she became excited about the Civil Rights Movement; about actually speaking up for something that one perceived as problematic. The idea of finding one's voice became exceedingly attractive to Donna, who had been the youngest (relatively shy) child in a household of strong personalities.

Thus Donna began a period of experimentation and exploration into what a completely different world could potentially look like. At this point in her presentation, Donna reassured us, "Now, before you become too worried about just how far off the rails I drifted during that period in my life: I can assure you... not so much."

Like many Hippies, Donna was looking for transformation in the social and political influences of those times, as well as within herself. For some, this resulted in participation in the psychedelic revolution as a means of discovering new 'truths' for society, while others were looking for a new pathway to God. As a good scholar, Donna explained: "The term psychedelic is derived from the Greek words, 'psihi' – psyche, or soul and dilos - 'manifest' - translating to 'soul-manifesting'. So, a psychedelic experience is characterized by the striking perceptions that something deep within the soul is discovered and made manifest in a new way."

Unlike many Hippies, Donna – for a majority of that time - had a 'real' job in the education sector at the School Board in West Vancouver. She maintained her residence in her hometown, and remained very much connected with her family. Her experimentation did involve exposure to Transactional Analysis, which is a method for solving problems based on secular humanism. Following this 'I'm O.K., You're O.K.' philosophy led to an even further departure from Donna's Christian roots as this philosophy embraced human reason and overtly rejected religious dogma. Later, Donna could see how human reason is indeed to be highly valued, but rather than contradicting God's teaching it is one of God's gifts.

Donna was also influenced by Freud's teachings which viewed God as a human construct, that we use as a crutch until we reach a point of maturity. Following this scientific and logical approach led Donna to believe that the power to accomplish anything was fully within her. In addition to all this, during this period Donna, along with the Beatles and so much of the world at that time, was introduced to Transcendental Meditation. Although initially based on religion, the 1960's version of meditation shifted its emphasis to scientific and creative intelligence. The music of the 1960's also influenced Donna's shift to a belief in the ultimate power of the individual, the abandonment of Jesus, and the acceptance of her mother's 'take on things.' So with a little help from these 'friends' Donna became satisfied that she had actually outgrown the need for any kind of a God and the belief in the self as the source of all knowledge and power.

This all changed in 1977, literally in a heartbeat – that is, the heartbeat of her first child at the moment of his birth. She realized that only God could be the creator of life, and that we are simply channels through which this life is brought into the world. As her family expanded, and the children's questions about life and faith demanded solid responses, Donna started to see flaws in the belief system that she had adopted during the 1960's. At this time she returned to the Anglican Church after an extended time away. While exploring the idea of Baptism for her children she became fascinated with the liturgy, which had changed significantly since her teen years. Through the liturgy she found herself in the company of God the creator of all life whose Presence she felt so strongly in the midst of child birth. Through the liturgy found a tangible way in which God had visited this earth through Jesus. She discovered a whole new world view, a transformed world – a world turned upside down, an altered state. Unlike the altered state that some sought during the psychedelic

(continued on page 12)

You Are Invited!

To join us at the
Northern Lights Lacemakers'
Third Annual Lace Day

Saturday, June 2, 2012
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

St. Peter's Anglican Church Hall
755 Elm Street at Grant Ave.
Winnipeg, MB

Lace Demonstrations, Displays, Items for Sale

Donation at the Door. Refreshments Available.

The Northern Lights Lacemakers have been meeting the last Sunday of the month in the basement of St. Peters for 5 years now. We would very much like to extend this invitation to everyone.

Ten years ago

in THE ELM LEAF

Ten years ago, St. Peter's was on the move. As these things often happen, it might have started with a dream of one or two. The dream was articulated to two or three others, maybe over coffee in the hall or in a conversation in the choir room. It really doesn't matter how it started; what matters is that a journey began.

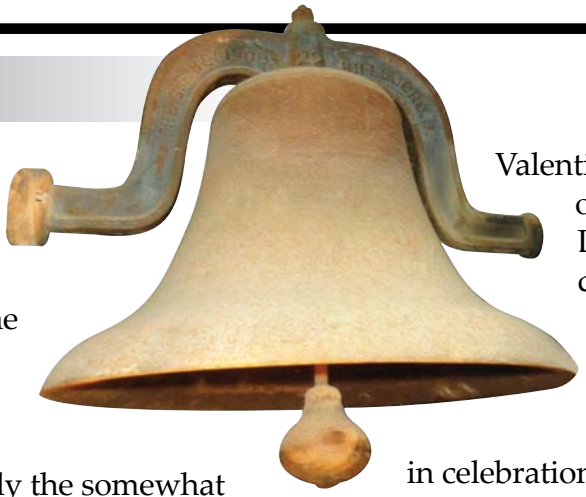
Ten years ago or so, the good folk at St. Peter have decided to re-pitch the tent. In an effort to make the sanctuary accessible to all, the decision was made to renovate the holy ground where the folk in this congregation had worshipped for so many years.

Ten years ago, the hammering and sawing, the dismantling and the restoring was well under way. In the gap between the old and new, a new place was needed for worship. A chair here, a table there, some linen, candles, a cross and lo and behold a table became an altar and a hall became holy ground. Those of you, who were around here then, remember the experiments in worship: the imagination that would never have been plumbed had it not been for the renovations to the sanctuary. Some of it you liked it, some of it you didn't. Some of it moved you to tears, some of it to giggles. All of it more than likely had you counting the sleeps until you could move back into the old place that was being transformed into the new. And then the day came when God's pilgrim people returned home. Those of you, who were part of things back then, might still remember the first time you looked at the new place. Some of it you liked it, some of you didn't. For some, church would never be the same. The smell of candles of hundreds of weddings and thousands of funerals lost in the smell of new wood and new paint. For others, the change couldn't come fast enough. That's what happens when the church is on the move.

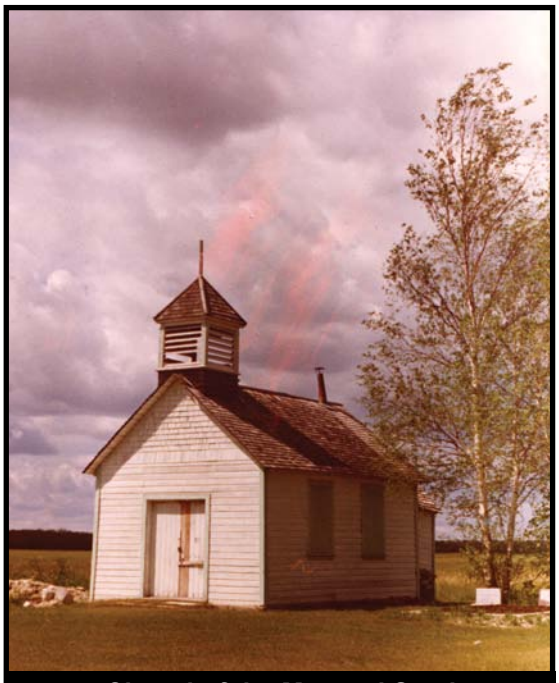
Church people like some of us, get comfortable and even complacent. Our hearts and we like the old hymns are warmed by the familiar liturgy and we sit in the same pew. Others take to change like mallards take to water. Sometimes I think that dissonance is within us all. Part of us like the familiar and the old while other parts of us like the new, the post-modern, where everything is a moveable feast. I have come to believe that is what makes up the church of the twenty-first century. We are doing this little dance between the old and the new. Sometimes it is one step forward, two steps back. Sometimes the steps are easy, sometimes they are difficult. I think in order for the church to be alive in these fledgling decades of a new century we have to be on the move, strengthened for the journey by the "stuff" of the past in order to embrace boldly a new day. The holy ground shifts and the church moves.

Compiled from the May 2002 issue by Terry Hidichuk

The Bells of St. Peters



Many, but by no means all, St. Peters parishioners know that there really is a bell in the church's bell tower. Those who know it best are the teens and young adults who attended St. Peter's Sunday School in the twenty or so years leading up to about 2009. For many, many years, the weekly rallying cry signalling the beginning of Sunday School was not "The Lord be with you" but rather "who wants to ring the bell?" At times, the line up outside the bell tower would reach back to the hall with children waiting patiently for their turn for a couple of tugs on the bell pull cord. Two year olds were not too little and sixteen year olds were not too big. Especially for children visiting the parish, ringing the church bell elicited big smiles and bright eyes.



Chapel of the Mustard Seed

And woe to the teacher who tried to start class before the bell had rung!

Occasionally, the bell ringers, usually the somewhat rambunctious older boys, would get a little carried away. They discovered that pulling too hard on the cord could cause the bell to flip over and get stuck upside down. This would necessitate a confession to Mr. Cook who, after giving them his best chagrined look, would have to climb the creaky tower stairs to right the bell. The boys would offer to climb the stairs and fix it themselves but Mr. Cook wisely declined this suggestion. Young folks have often found the stairs enticing but climbing them has never been encouraged, although it is necessary to go visit the bell during the annual inspection of the church's fire alarm system. We can all rest assured knowing there is a fire alarm device in the bell tower.

The bell in St. Peter's bell tower does not actually belong to St. Peters. Rather it is on loan to us from the Chapel of the Mustard Seed, located in Robinson's Spur Cemetery near Matlock, Manitoba. The Right Reverend Barry Valentine, bishop of Rupert's Land, re-dedicated the bell to the glory of God and in celebration of the building up of our church on the Feast of the confession of St. Peter, January 18, 1981. This was 20 years after the dedication of the church building itself in April 1961 and 10 years after the narthex, offices, and meeting rooms were dedicated in 1971. The dedication of the parish hall took place on October 3, 1993.

Recently, encouraged by Roy Pennington, the parish recommenced the ringing of the church bell for regular services and on special occasions. The bell-ringers welcome worshippers by ringing the bells at about 10:15 each Sunda. The pull cord works just fine and nobody has to climb the rickety stairs so everyone is capable of ringing the bell. If you want to give it a try, speak to Roy or call the church office (488-8093). Just make sure that when it is your turn to ring the bell, you don't pull too hard or Mr. Cook is going to be mad at you.

Roy Pennington
Yvonne Kyle

16 Questions with... Bill Harwood

Where were you born?

Port Hope, Ontario – 60 miles east of Toronto.

How long have you been coming to St. Peter's?

Since May 2003

Why did you choose to come to St. Peter's?

When driving home my wife and I would look for an early morning service and we found one here. Also, we had a connection to St. Peter's and we wanted to come to a place that we knew.

What do you do for the church?

Right now I serve as part of the maintenance crew. I am the Chair of the Creation Care committee and am a past member of vestry.

Tell us about your family

I have been married to my wife Ann for 37 years. We have two children, one son and one daughter.

Do you have any pets?

We used to have a dog before we moved here from Thompson.

Where do you work? Do you like your job?

I like my job very much – I am retired! I worked for Vale Mining in Thompson

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Geocaching, which is a treasure hunting game where you use a GPS to hide and seek containers with other participants in the activity. I also enjoy being in the outdoors, and doing newspaper puzzles.

Bill at the All in the Hall Garage Sale

What is your passion?

Nature.

What did you like to do when you were younger?

I liked to hang out with my friends. I liked participating in sports and I liked camping through my involvement with Scouts Canada.

What are some of the things that are important to you?

Family, peace in the world, trying to help those who are less fortunate, and trying to take care of the planet.

What are some adventurous things that you do?

Geocaching and travelling.

Are you now or have you ever been on YouTube, Facebook or Twitter?

No.

Do you thing that the Bible is literal or metaphorical?

I think that parts of the New Testament are literal.

Where have you travelled? Do you have a favorite place to travel?

I have travelled coast to coast in Canada. I have been to different parts of the U.S. I enjoyed travelling to parts of Newfoundland, B.C. and Manitoba.

What is your favorite movie?

Old Yeller

Sapphire, Sarah & Bryn
Senior Sunday School

Photo of Donna on p. 6 courtesy of Stephanie Giberson-Kirby. Photo of Cori on p. 11 courtesy of Cori Dorrian. All other photos in this edition are provided courtesy of Ian Chalmers.

16 Questions with... Cori Dorrian

Where were you born?

In Winnipeg – at Misericordia Hospital.

How long have you been coming to St. Peter's?

For fifty years – ever since I was a baby.

Why did you choose to come to St. Peter's?

I decided to come here with family. I've always felt a connection to St. Peter's.

What do you do for the church?

Right now I serve as the People's Warden. I am on the Mission and Outreach committee, and I help with the Altar Guild.

Tell us about your family

I am married to my husband Colin and we have three daughters.

Do you have any pets?

No pets at all because of allergies.

Where do you work? Do you like your job?

I am employed by the Government of Canada in the area of food inspection. I am very happy with my job.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Participate in church activities, as well as walking, knitting and sewing.

Cori at work

What is your passion?

Family, knitting and sewing.

What did you like to do when you were younger?

I liked to participate in the Girl Guides program.

What are some of the things that are important to you?

Family, my church activities including PWRDF and Kairos, Mission and Outreach, and helping others.

What are some adventurous things that you do?

I have travelled to Japan and Peru. I would like to travel to Europe. I also like go camping in the wilderness.

Are you now or have you ever been on YouTube, Facebook or Twitter?

I've been involved in a video that was posted to YouTube as part of the "Silent Night" project with the choir. I am not on Facebook or Twitter.

Do you think that the Bible is literal or metaphorical?

I think that it can be metaphorical – readers can relate it to their own lives.

Where have you travelled? Do you have a favorite place to travel?

I have travelled to many places, including Peru and Japan, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Trinidad, the U.S. and many towns and cities in Canada

What is your favorite movie?

The Hunt for Red October

Noah, Ben & Nate
Senior Sunday School

Elm Leaf Editorial Team

Publishing Editor
Marcus Le Nabat

Assistant Editor
Yvonne Kyle

Please submit articles you wish to see published to one of the editors for consideration. Next issue is planned for Oct. 2012.

Hippie (cont.)

1960's, Donna found that Jesus was/is the altered state that unmasks the face of God. She realized that any powerful act made known in/through us is nothing less, nothing more than God working through us.

At this time Donna was beginning to discern a vocation in Social Work, but this plan was derailed as she chose to follow the path encouraged by her church community which was to study theology. She received diocesan and national church approval and proceeded through many years of study. Her academic interests continue to be 'Feminist Theology' and 'The Effects of Modernity on the Life and Theology of the Church.'

Since receiving the Sacrament of Ordination in 1990 Donna has served as a parish priest and has also been given numerous diocesan and national church opportunities. Her theology continues to grow with a deepening realization that life is not primarily about any one of us as individuals: "Life is about the God in whom we live and move and have our being. Life is about opening ourselves to that God whose power is just waiting to fill and inform us. Life is about living (not independently as individuals) but interdependently as the Body of Christ."

Donna's early church memories of "Jesus Love Me, This I know" now resonate deeply within and throughout her life. This extraordinary little hymn shaped her as a child and with further influence from the great 20th century theologian Karl Barth, has once again become perhaps the most profound insight of her life and faith thus far. She concluded our breakfast meeting with leading us, in this hymn. We are very blessed indeed to have this Hippie-turned-Priest as our friend.

Stephanie Giberson-Kirby
Chair, Women's Friendship Group

Labyrinth Walk Marks New Beginnings

On Saturday, March 3rd, the incoming Corporation and Vestry members of St Peter's met for an orientation led by the Rev. Canon Donna Joy. After an opening prayer, some team-building exercises and a review of the coming year's parish goals, the labyrinth was introduced as a spiritual exercise. The walk that followed on this sacred path marked the beginning of a new year of ministry. Experiences varied. For some it was a time of unexpected insight: "I finally get it… the difference between a labyrinth and the confusion of a maze. This is another way of grounding us in our faith"; for others, "It was meaningful to share this walk with our leadership team"; for some it was a first experience; for others, "I found it really tough". For all it was a chance to experience St Peter's labyrinth together.

On Friday, March 9th, Confirmation candidates and their mentors met for a 'make your own pizza' dinner followed by an introduction to the labyrinth. They had requested this experience after learning about different types of spiritual and meditative practices in our Christian faith. The walk that followed was done with great reverence. For most of the confirmands and some of the mentors walking the labyrinth was a new experience. Following the walk some expressed how peaceful it had felt; many were surprised to learn that the earliest known Christian labyrinth had been laid in the floor of a basilica in Algeria in 324 AD; some wished they could keep forever the feeling they had in the centre; some felt that they would like to attend a regular Thursday evening walk occasionally. All were pleased to have learned a bit about the labyrinth and in particular, our labyrinths at St Peter's, both indoor and outdoor.

Betty Currie