

# St. Thomas The Apostle Anglican Church

110 Francis Street, Cambridge ON, N1S 2A1


## “KEEPING IN TOUCH – December 2023”

Website: <https://www.stthomascambridge.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St.Thomas.the.Apostle.Cambridge>

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### A FEW DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

- Tuesdays (1pm) Bible Study:** Please join us every Tuesday afternoon for a joint “St. Luke’s / St. Thomas” bible study, where we read and discuss the upcoming week’s readings. **NOTE: We will be taking a break from our bible study meetings in December, and resuming in January.**
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- Thursdays (1pm) Midweek Holy Communion Service:** Pastor Craig invites you to join him every Thursday afternoon for a smaller, quieter gathering for worship followed by a time of discussion and learning.
- Thur Dec 14 (7pm) Congregational Council Meeting:** Please note that all parishioners are welcome to attend any council meetings. Please contact Kathy Brown or Rick Furnival ahead of time so we set up for enough people. Note: This month’s meeting will be held by Zoom.
- Mon Dec 11 (12pm) ACW Christmas Lunch:** The ladies will be having their annual Christmas lunch at Zaz Bistro in Preston.
- Sun Dec 10 (1pm) ACIC Community Christmas Carol Singalong:** Back by popular demand, we will be hosting this annual singalong event which not only lets you sing your heart out, but gives you the background stories behind these much loved Christmas songs. FREE admission. Hot apple cider and goodies will be served afterwards. 😊



### Christmas Services

Sun Dec 24	(9am)	Advent 4:	Morning Prayer
Sun Dec 24	(4pm)	Christmas Eve Service:	Holy Eucharist
Mon Dec 25	(10am)	Christmas Day Service:	Holy Eucharist
Sun Dec 31	(9am)	Lessons & Carols Service	

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

If you have grown up in a church that doesn't keep the church calendar, the significance of doing so is not obvious; meanwhile, even those with a good sense of the calendar can miss the significance of Advent. It is a season in which we are to give special attention (both in our liturgies & in our daily practices) to spiritual things, enacting our expectation of Christ who has left us here for an indeterminate period of time (Acts 1:7), but whose return we await with greatest excitement.



“Keep your candle wicks lit,” “stay awake & watch.” As Christians, we are meant to do these things each & every day, all year long. Yet, in our daily lives, how we tend — like the disciples in the Garden — to fall asleep, & such life-giving prompts become easier to repeat as mantras than to regularly practice! That is the opportunity Advent opens for us. As the first season in our annual calendar, we look back to remember Jesus' birth in Bethlehem nearly 2,000 years ago while simultaneously looking ahead to the time when Christ will come again, ushering in an age in which all creation will be made new (Revelation 21:5).

A clue to doing so comes in the first week of Advent (December 3), when the prophet Isaiah calls out to God, “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!” Isaiah wrote more than 2,700 years ago, yet his voice is all urgency, pulling out all the stops, calling out to God. This is what it sounds like to express total confidence in God, complete dependence on our loving Creator/Sustainer/Redeemer. What better way could there be to proclaim this New Year as Christians? I invite you to do so this Advent, & pray that God will draw you into this rhythm of abundant life.

Craig+

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### CHRISTMAS OUTREACH TO GRAND VALLEY INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN

Your generous and kind donation has made it possible to give 300 new Christmas cards to the women at GVI to send to their children and loved ones this Christmas.

Thank you also for signing the Christmas card to them and for your prayers of hope and encouragement as we share in the joy of this Holy season.

We pray the Spirit of Christmas will continue to guide all of us, in our daily lives and in each of our ministries, with the Grace and Love of Christ.

The Reverend Cheryl Highmore,  
Deacon, Special Outreach Diocese of Huron,  
Trinity Cambridge



## Christmas Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to find words which have to do with Christmas.  
Some of the words have religious meanings, others are secular in nature.

1. Groceos \_\_\_\_\_
2. Naclorig \_\_\_\_\_
3. Rats \_\_\_\_\_
4. Scunttshe \_\_\_\_\_
5. Porduhl \_\_\_\_\_
6. Naast \_\_\_\_\_
7. Skagceap \_\_\_\_\_
8. Dressephh \_\_\_\_\_
9. Gramen \_\_\_\_\_
10. Galen \_\_\_\_\_
11. Limesotte \_\_\_\_\_
12. Vaniyitt \_\_\_\_\_
13. Gotscink \_\_\_\_\_
14. Virasou \_\_\_\_\_
15. Traweh \_\_\_\_\_
16. Gisehl \_\_\_\_\_
17. Wamsonn \_\_\_\_\_
18. Ejuss \_\_\_\_\_
19. Stranneom \_\_\_\_\_
20. Scamsthir \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW TO SHOW THE LOVE OF JESUS DURING CHRISTMAS

*“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.” –1 Corinthians 13:4-6*



Christmas just may be the best time of year to be a witness of the love of Jesus to the world. Of course, any day is a good day to show the love of Jesus, but people seem to be seeking more, hurting more and needing more during Christmas. You can show the love of Jesus, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-6, by applying each principle to your Christmas activities this year.

- **Love is patient.** Let's face it. Running errands, shopping, buying gifts, decorating, planning, cooking—it is time-consuming and somewhat intense. There can be a big temptation, even for believers, to become easily frustrated, irritable and impatient. But, God has called us to love others, and part of displaying that love is being patient in parking lots and store lines, and with those who aren't as polite as they should be. Your patience will shine the light of Jesus and stand out in a crowd.
- **Love is kind.** Take the opportunity to show an extra measure of kindness to those around you this Christmas. Bless your child's teachers with a gift or a special breakfast, reach out to those in need in your community through a food bank or by lending a hand in an elderly neighbor's yard. A small act of kindness goes a long way and gives you the precious chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those around you.
- **Love does not envy.** There may be some great gifts given to those around you this Christmas. Don't give in to the temptation to envy what others have. Rejoice with them, and thank God for the gifts you've been given—whether material or spiritual.
- **Love does not boast.** If you happen to be the recipient of a wonderful gift, be blessed and enjoy it, but be careful not to boast to others.
- **Love is not proud or rude.** Do you insist on your own way? When you are shopping or at a relative's home, can people count on you to be a blessing, or have they come to expect criticism and negativity? Be sure your words are edifying only—not critical or harsh. Shine the love of Jesus to everyone around you, and be a light in a dark world!
- **Love is not self-seeking.** Are you willing to give in to the desires of others now and then? You really wanted to have Christmas at your house this year, but relatives have other ideas. What do you do? Purpose to give preference to others this Christmas, and don't just show up grudgingly, do so with a warm and cheerful heart.
- **Love is not easily angered.** Do you get angry in traffic? Or how about when people don't move as fast as you'd like in the store and when someone is rude to you at the checkout counter? Instead of letting anger get the best of you, try something different. Determine to remain at peace no matter what. Show love and kindness to others. You never know what they might be going through. A simple act of tenderness may be just what they need.



- **Love keeps no record of wrongs.** Supernatural forgiveness. That's the heart of Christmas, isn't it? Jesus came to sacrifice Himself and wash all our sins away with His blood. During the season of the greatest act of forgiveness, check your heart and enter into Christmas without a drop of unforgiveness in your heart. If someone wrongs you, determine to forgive them right away.



**Moving past grief, on to the right road:  
an Advent message of hope from PWRDF**

“And they will call him Immanuel, which means God with us.” So said Matthew in sharing the story of Jesus’ birth, reminding listeners and readers of the prophetic words of Isaiah. This season of Advent we are reminded of how much we want to see peace but also hope, joy and love in our world. PWRDF’s vision of a truly just, healthy and peaceful world is even more compelling and urgent. Immanuel. God with us. May God especially be with those who are hurting, fearful, angry and grieved. May his presence help us respond to the enormity of grief with an enormity of compassion, one that helps us find and travel a better road to caring for all our neighbours. And as we move through the weeks of Advent with prayer and reflection, let us anticipate the birth of Jesus that brought lowly shepherds and lofty kings to a humble stable, along with a promise of hope.

Subscribe to PWRDF’s Advent resource *Hope in Action*, by Karri Munn-Venn at <https://pwrdf.org/Advent2023/>

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**Interfaith Statement of Solidarity from London’s Faith Leaders**

*(a heartfelt prayer signed by many Anglican, Lutheran, Mennonite, United, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic priests in London, along with many Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and other faith leaders. Even though it was written for citizens of London, the sentiments are true for all of us.)*

We, the undersigned, are keenly aware of the incredible pain, worry and fear many in our community are feeling. We live in uncertain times. Many in London have family in the Middle East for whom they worry. Many here are grieving death and loss. Together, we want to acknowledge that pain and suffering as something that transcends religion, race, or ethnicity. We grieve as one human family. As citizens of London, we know all too well how discrimination, acts of hatred and violence can result in the devastating and deplorable loss of innocent lives. It is with that in mind, and in the same spirit with which we have faced adversity in the past, that we stand together in this moment to say that though we have disagreements, we stand as one in saying that this time of profound brokenness cannot be used as a justification for any form of hatred or discrimination. As a praying people, we lament the loss of innocent lives across the Middle East, and we pray for justice for all peoples. We cry out for an end to all violence. We yearn for a lasting peace; peace for Israelis and Palestinians, peace for all global citizens, peace here between us all. We are neighbours. Neighbours who have stood together many times, under the most terrible of circumstances. We stand together again at this terrible time. We will always stand united against hate in all its forms. We offer this statement not to suggest any one political position on how a peace process should unfold, but as faith leaders sharing a message of unity.

# St. Thomas the Apostle's Financial Check-up

As with your own homes, St. Thomas is feeling the crunch of inflation. Our heating bill has more than doubled from previous years and our church insurance for 2023, which we had to pay in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, was a whopping \$6,155.69! With only one month left until the end of the fiscal year, here's what our income vs. expenses looks like:



Income @ Nov 30/23:	\$70,606
Expenses @ Nov 30/23:	<u>\$82,060</u>
Gain/shortfall:	(\$9,302)
<i>Amount needed to operate quarterly, per Budget:</i>	<i>\$18,300</i>

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## Christmas Eve & Christmas Day offerings

as in the past, will be distributed as follows:

- regular envelopes* → to **St. Thomas church**
- plain envelopes marked "food bank"* → to the **Cambridge Food Bank \*\***
- open givings & envelopes marked "priest"* → to **Pastor Craig** as a Christmas thank you

\*\* money collected will go directly to the Food Bank, not the Seniors Outreach Food Bank Initiative.

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## Answers to the Christmas Word Scramble

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|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1) Scrooge   | 2) Caroling | 3) Star       | 4) Chestnuts  |
| 5) Rudolph   | 6) Santa    | 7) Packages   | 8) Shepherd   |
| 9) Manger    | 10) Angel   | 11) Mistletoe | 12) Nativity  |
| 13) Stocking | 14) Saviour | 15) Wreath    | 16) Sleigh    |
| 17) Snowman  | 18) Jesus   | 19) Ornaments | 20) Christmas |



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"But if you want to remember how incredible this planet is, go out into nature. Unlike social media and the news, nature has no incentive to keep us agitated, angry, and anxious.

*Austin Perimutter*

May the love of Jesus fill our homes  
with joy and peace this Christmas!