



St. Andrew's
G U E L P H

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November 24th, 2013

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Christmas is coming. I know, you know that already... but what I really want you to know is that Christmas is coming to St. Andrew's Guelph and we couldn't be more **excited** for what we have in store this year! Along with this letter, you will find the listing of our 2013 Advent and Christmas services. We are celebrating the season under the theme of **"Christmas Homecoming: Family, Friends, Familiar and Fun."** We hope that you will take the opportunity this year to invite your friends and family to the various services we have planned. It is a pleasure to be able to lead many of these services over the coming weeks but I also must confess that I love the opportunity to be out of the 'spotlight' as well. Cordelia, our youth and church school children along with some more mature 'thespians' are busy preparing for our **"All Ages Christmas Pageant"** to be held on December 15th. In addition, Fred and the choirs are practicing for the varieties of special music that will be featured throughout December and especially at our **annual Lessons and Carols service**. It is going to be fun to be at St. Andrew's over this season.

And as always, the 'advent' of Christmas means the coming of a New Year. Here are some things to look out for in the coming year in the areas that I lead:

- We've had a fun fall as we've journeyed with **The Bible Trail Mix** – starting with Genesis and ending with the seven churches of Revelation. In the New Year, we are going to be spending some more time with our ol' friend Rev. Dr. Kennon Callahan and his **Twelve Keys to an Effective Church**. After Easter, I'm looking forward to sharing a series on the Book of Job.

- The **Thursday Morning Bible Study at 10AM** in the Church Parlour will begin again on **Thursday January 9th**. Keep an eye out in the Sunday Bulletin to see what the upcoming readings are.
- **St. Andrew's Book Club** starts up again in January (there will be no meeting in December). Our first book club meeting of the New Year will be **Friday January 17th** at 6:30PM (*****NOTE the much earlier date this month**). Our first book of 2014 will be: **The Reason I Jump** by Naoki Higashida. Other upcoming titles will be: **Escape from Camp 14** by Blaine Harden, **The Tiger** by John Vaillant, and **The Gifts of Imperfection** by Brene Brown.

It is my hope that during this season of expectation and waiting that you will discover anew **the ways that God is renewing and transforming this world**, even renewing our very selves. May the birth of the babe in Bethlehem fill you to overflowing with promise, joy, and love that will spill over into the year ahead. A very **Merry Christmas** and a **Happy New Year** to you and those whom you love from my family to yours.

Have fun this season,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Borthwick', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Rev. John Borthwick