



The Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener

ON EAGLE'S WINGS

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Notes on Pudding Factory 2022

Charles Stuart

Pudding Factory and the Community

One of the issues that concerned the convenors of Pudding Factory 2022 was its viability. Would there be enough volunteers to share the work? Would the sales be sufficient to make the effort worthwhile? In the event, there were just enough volunteers. And despite jitters over sales, all of the puddings made were sold – proof that doubling the volume of production from 2021 was a sound decision.

The venerable Pudding Factory volunteers were out in force in 2022, and their continued participation cannot be appreciated too much. There were also several newish and first-time volunteers from the congregation, some of whom effortlessly assumed leadership roles, which was most helpful. (And noted for next year!)

As a relative newbie at Pudding Factory, I was surprised to learn a couple of things. First, the puddings we make are part of the Christmas tradition for hundreds of purchasers, most of them repeat buyers who could not imagine a Christmas dinner without one of these delicious desserts. Second, there are quite a few volunteers whose relationship with the church is exclusively through Pudding Factory. These individuals may not attend services or participate in the life of the church in other ways, but they reserve time well in advance to help make puddings.

The media attention around this year's Pudding Factory stimulated interest amongst some who saw the broadcasts or read the articles. I have personally added four to six new names of people with whom I spoke who are intent on volunteering for next year. One person works for a corporation that offers paid days of voluntarism to employees and mentioned that volunteers might be available through this program. I also spoke with two individuals who work with at-risk youth and conveyed an interest in arranging for their involvement next year; one of them has made similar arrangements for past factories. (In a separate development, a small group of volunteers from One Roof made a valuable contribution this year by moving all the Pudding Factory equipment from the ACW room to the upper parish hall and working at the mixing table, and they have stated their interest in continuing the involvement.)

We shall see what comes of these contacts and possibilities. But I am quite optimistic that next year's Pudding Factory will see an increase in both numbers of volunteers and puddings produced. Equally important, Pudding Factory is clearly one of the many ways in which St. John's interacts with the broader community around it. The making of puddings has long been part of the fabric of church life here, and it is a notable aspect of the public image of the church. I expect that there will be further opportunities to engage with the broader community through Pudding Factory, and I look forward to inviting more newcomers into our church.

Pudding Factory: The Manual

Before joining Pudding Factory this year as a convenor, I was quite ignorant about how the whole thing worked. Over my more than ten years as a

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congregant at St. John's I had volunteered at most four hours at the factory, and always at the mixing table. While I appreciated the product, I had little idea about how it was made. I suspect my ignorance was bliss. If I had had greater insight into the organizational demands, long hours, and hard labour involved in being a convenor, I might have demurred at the invitation to step aboard. But I'm glad I didn't; this year's experience was awesome, steep (and ongoing) learning curve and all.

So many volunteers have devoted so much time and effort to Pudding Factory that many of them slip effortlessly into their various roles. The institutional memory of the long-time volunteers is impressive. Ask a question about some aspect of making puddings and the answer will usually draw upon decades of experience.

There is tremendous value in oral tradition, but I'm a written-word sort of guy. I like to see things fixed in print. And what do you do if institutional memory fades and there's no hard copy as backup? While the Pudding Factory binder is an essential reference, it is not exactly a comprehensive instructional manual on how to make puddings, nor is it intended to be so.

Maybe what St. John's needs is exactly that: a set of instructions on how to make puddings.

I have therefore decided to try to compile a concise manual that lays out all the stages of this enterprise. A document that will provide an overview of the operation at a glance. An assemblage of vital information on organizing human resources, managing time and schedules, converting weight and volume figures accurately, etc. And one that will be available to Pudding Factory organizers and volunteers in paper and electronic formats and can be updated and corrected with ease.

A Word of Thanks, and a Word on Thanks

As another Pudding Factory has come to a successful conclusion, a heartfelt expression of thanks is in order to all who volunteered to make this year's effort a success!

As one of the four convenors of Pudding Factory 2022 I feel an enormous debt of gratitude to all the volunteers. It was an honour and a pleasure to be toiling amongst you. I know I share with my fellow novice convenor Andrea Balfour a special expression of thanks to our more seasoned convenors Judy Schantz and Jennifer Uttley for their wisdom, guidance, and uncountable hours of hard work.

Among this year's convenors there was some discussion about how to convey our thanks. Thank-you cards are sent

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Fancy Shortbreads

Jean Wright

It's that time again! Jean's shortbreads will be on sale starting Nov 20th in the Parish Hall. Proceeds go to church programs. The same price for the last 5 years - \$5 a dozen. Ideal for a gift, Christmas or just eating them before you get home. Can we surpass last year's amount of \$540?

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to volunteers from outside the parish. Should we not be sending cards to all volunteers, whether parishioners or not? A nice idea, but it would be a lot of extra work. Potentially risky, too. What if we were to send out cards but miss one of our parish volunteers and give unintended offence? What a pity it would be if by going to tremendous lengths to let parishioners know how much we appreciate them, we ended up offending and alienating some.

We quickly came to the realization that, as with most things related to Pudding Factory, maintaining decades-old traditions is best, and issuing a general note of thanks to parishioners perfectly acceptable. We also recognize that as Christians and churchgoers at St. John's, Pudding Factory is just one of the many ways in which we perform acts of service and involve ourselves in the life of the church.

Thanks to everyone yet again. And see you next year!

Postscript: Suet (Sue What? Sue Me!)

The upright freezer in the green kitchen found in the church basement is full of vacuum-sealed bags of suet. Due to a clerical error, an excess of suet was ordered. By "clerical" I don't mean to imply this was the fault of anyone at St. John's who sports a clerical collar. Rather, the fault was that of a clerk. And the clerk in question was yours truly. (See note above regarding the need for a Pudding Factory manual and improved metrics for converting volume to mass.) Apologies for any inconvenience. And rest assured that the suet will still be in excellent condition for Pudding Factory 2023. Indeed, next year's profits will be slightly improved as little or no suet will need to be purchased, just as this year's were slightly lower as more was spent on suet than required.

Bales

Rosemary Cliff

As you are aware our bales donation to Kenora is in abeyance and it is unclear if and when it will be needed again. I am very happy though to report that we have been asked by Fr. Enrique Martinez, Rector of five Anglican churches in Long Point, if we could again supply a donation for the Hispanic migrant farm workers. Fr. Enrique has specifically asked for **men's only** warm winter wear, including jackets, sweaters, 'hoodies,' toques and gloves as well as some hygiene products such as toothbrushes/razors/soap etc. The Huron Farmworkers Ministry is working all year round with farmworkers and although they don't presently have the same number of farmworkers as they have in the spring/summer season they still have some workers who stay in Canada for the full year. I understand that the goal of the Huron Farmworkers Ministry is to collect clothes twice a year; however, they are happy to receive any donation at any time of the year. Donations may be put into the box under the table in the Narthex and there is a container in the gym. Donations will be collected up to and including Sunday, December 11. If you have any questions/concerns please contact Rosemary Cliff at rosemarycliff@rogers.com.

Christmas trees in many ways point to Jesus

Dr. Paul L. Stump (submitted by Judy Maybee)

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Each year, churches across America present a "Living Christmas Tree." That Christmas tree is what first captures our attention. Then comes the story behind that tree.

That green Christmas tree holds many symbols that point to Jesus Christ.

1. The star on top reminds of the Star of Bethlehem, pointing the wise men to Jesus.
2. The angel on top reminds of angels' announcements to Joseph, to Mary and to the shepherds, announcing our Savior's birth.
3. The ornaments bedecking the tree remind of the beautiful fruit of the Spirit that Jesus displayed during his life.
4. The lights on the tree depict that Jesus is the Light of the World.
5. Those lights on the tree may be many different colors; so Jesus brings the light of salvation to all colors and races of man.
6. The branches of the Christmas tree reach out, a reminder of Jesus' love reaching out to the world.
7. The water pan under the tree is the water of life for that tree, and so Jesus is called "The Water of Life."
8. That evergreen tree reminds of the everlasting life that Jesus Christ offers.
9. The garland wrapping the tree reminds that we are enfolded and wrapped in Jesus' tender care.
10. The fir tree gives off a sweet fragrance. That sweet fragrance is a reminder that we should emit the sweet fragrance of Jesus.
11. That Christmas tree, made of wood, is a reminder that Jesus was crucified on a wooden cross.
12. The tree stands as a silent sentinel, reminding me of Jesus Christ's silence before his mockers.
13. The tree has given its life in order to bring joy and gladness to its beholders; Jesus gave his life to bring deep and lasting joy to men's hearts.
14. The white blanket under the tree is a recollection of Jesus' purity.
15. The triangular shape of the Christmas tree speaks of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
16. The tree, green in dead winter, becomes a welcome sight in the midst of otherwise drab and dreary wintertime — a reminder that in the storms of life, Jesus' presence is a welcome privilege.
17. The tree is unique: no two trees are exactly alike — a reminder that Jesus' love extends to all mankind, with no two people just alike.
18. A real tree lingers after you remove it from the house, leaving behind its little needles in the carpet, perhaps 'til next summer. Jesus, in a physical sense, is not here today but the fact of his presence lingers.
19. The tree is capable of bearing a heavy load without breaking. Jesus came to bear the heavy load of all our sins without breaking.
20. A Christmas tree becomes the center of attention in a room, reminding us that Jesus Christ should be the very center of our lives.
21. The evergreen tree, with one continuous trunk, reminds of the one way to heaven, through Jesus Christ. In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man comes to the Father but by Me."
22. The top of the tree points skyward, to where Jesus Christ sits today, interceding for us.
23. The gifts — purchased with love and sacrifice — at the foot of the tree become a reminder that we to present our lives as gifts to Jesus.

Thus, the Christmas tree becomes of storehouse of symbols. At this Christmas season, let us present the greatest gift we can ... by giving ourselves, in faith believing, to Jesus Christ.

Dr. Paul L. Stump is senior pastor of Colony Community Church in Daytona Beach.