



January 2025/ VOLUME IV /ISSUE 10

Submissions to: [casgranews@gmail.com](mailto:casgranews@gmail.com)

## January Worship Services

Castleton @ 9:30 am / Grafton @ 11:00 am

- January 5**      **Epiphany - Story of the Wise Men**  
Worship Leader: Rev. Janet Warren
- January 12**    **The Baptism of Our Lord**  
Worship Leader: Rev. Janet Warren
- January 19**    **Worship Leader: Rev. Janet Warren**
- January 26**    **TBA**



*"In the New Year, never forget to thank your past years because they enabled you to reach today! Without the stairs of the past, you cannot arrive at the future!"*  
— Mehmet Murat Ildan

**World Day of Prayer**  
**Friday, March 7, 2025.**  
**St Andrew's UC, Grafton**



The planning team still needs more members.  
Please contact  
*Donna Budgen at*  
*613-439-9591*  
*[djbudgen@icloud.com](mailto:djbudgen@icloud.com)*  
to add your input into this very special community service.

*You are invited ...*

.... to join the team in setting up refreshments on occasional Sunday mornings at St. Andrew's.  
Concerned that you don't know the "drill"? Speak to anyone who presently does it and ask to "shadow" them.  
Don't like to bake? Cookies are usually available in the kitchen refrigerator and store-bought goodies are always welcome.  
Ready to try it? Sign up on the sheet at the back of the sanctuary.



# Christmas Gatherings



**Advent  
Luncheon**



**Get  
Together  
Gals**

**Cozy  
Comfort**



## The Get Together Gals

held their Christmas meeting on Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. A social time was enjoyed. Irene Clarke presented a reading about the Winter Solstice (see below). Marion McComb conducted a Christmas Bingo game with some prizes awarded. The Christmas Bingo game proved to be very popular and lots of laughs were enjoyed! A potluck of a variety of delicious goodies was enjoyed with a cup of tea.

The next meeting of the Get Together Gals is scheduled for **Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at Castleton United Church...weather permitting.** All are welcome to attend. We will continue to work on making milk bag mats and fidget muffs or bring your own project or just come to enjoy a social time. Light refreshments will be served.

## Cozy Comfort

gathered for a Christmas luncheon at the Whistling Duck restaurant in Brighton. So enjoyable it was that a decision was made to return to the same location for a June luncheon.



Cozy Comfort will be meeting next on **Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at St Andrew's in Grafton.** We will be discussing the book, "Leaving Church" by Barbara Brown Taylor. A copy of the book is available from Donna Budgen.



## The Winter Solstice



*Aurora Borealis in Yellowknife  
- Christine Hammond*

time is no longer celebrated as it once was, with the understanding that this is a period of descent and rest, of going within our homes, within ourselves and taking in all that we have been through, all that has passed in this full year which is coming to a close... like nature and the animal kingdom around us, this time of hibernation is so necessary for our tired limbs, our burdened minds.

Our modern culture teaches avoidance at a max at this time; alcohol, lights, shopping, overworking, over spending, comfort food and consumerism.

And yet the natural tug to go inwards as nearly all creatures are doing is strong and the weather so bitter that people are left feeling that winter is hard, because for those of us without burning fires and big festive families, it can be lonely and isolating. Whereas in actual fact winter is kind, she points us in her quiet soft way towards our inner self, towards this annual time of peace and reflection, embracing the darkness and forgiving, accepting and loving embracing goodbye the past year.

"Winter takes away the distractions, the buzz, and presents us with the perfect time to rest and withdraw into a womb like love, bringing fire & light to our hearth"

.. and then, just around the corner the new year will begin again, and like a seed planted deep in the earth, we will all rise with renewed energy once again to dance in the sunlight Life is a gift

a Happy Winter to you all...

Written by Brigit Anna McNeill

*Submitted by Irene Clarke*



## THE GIVING TREE GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

In past years, St. Andrew's has put together Christmas hampers with foodstuffs, toys and other gifts for families in need in our community. These families are identified by our liaison at Grafton Public School.

In 2023, due to time and volunteer constraints, it was decided to give gift cards for food and gifts rather than hampers. The gift cards really worked well. They allowed families to purchase clothing in the correct sizes and colours and toys that the children had specifically asked Santa for. The families appreciated the gift cards to grocery stores because they could choose the foods they liked for the Christmas season. Due to this positive response, we decided to continue to provide gift cards again this year.

In 2023, our Social Justice and Outreach Committee supported 3 families. This year, 5 families were identified by our liaison at the school. Based on family size, we gave grocery cards of \$300-400 to each family and gift cards from Walmart of \$100 per family member. Our total expenditure was \$4,100. Although that amount was not entirely derived from cookie sales, a good portion of it was due to the success of our Heavenly Helpings Cookie Factory.

Here's the response from our liaison at the school: *"No words could clearly express how grateful we are for this incredible generosity! Your team has truly made this holiday season bright for our families. Thank you so very much."* The principal also thanked us: *"Thank you Olivia! Please pass on our thanks to your whole team."*

I personally wish to thank our "team" of bakers who produce the delicious cookies that we sell. Let's keep baking throughout 2025 so we can make the holiday season bright for needy families again next Christmas.

*Submitted by Olivia Gibbs, Social Justice and Outreach Liaison with Grafton Public School*



## Heavenly Helpings Cookie Factory & Used Book Sale

On Saturday, November 30th, as part of the Grafton Christmas Market, the doors of our Heavenly Helpings building opened at 9:30 a.m. By 11:15, there was nothing but crumbs left and much fewer used books than when we began. People may have come in for the warmth of our building but left with hands and even some mouths full.



As mentioned in the article above, all the proceeds of our sales go towards community projects when a need is brought to our attention. We could not do this without our bakers who give their time, ingredients and skill in making mouthwatering cookies.



*Submitted by Donna Budgen on behalf of the Social Justice and Outreach Committee.*

**PLEASE JOIN US  
FOR A COMMUNITY LUNCH  
AT  
CASTLETON UNITED CHURCH  
1815 PERCY ST.**



**TUESDAY, JANUARY 21  
11:30 AM TO 1 PM  
\$10 PER PERSON  
**\*WEATHER PERMITTING\*****

