

Dear Readers:

Thank you to everyone who called last week about the mix-up with the church and community news. We certainly appreciate the good-natured notifications that we received and apologize both to you, the reader, for any inconvenience our "technical difficulties" may have caused, and to our dedicated writers, many of whom wrote special messages for the holiday season. We have included some of those messages in this week's edition in an effort to make good on something that went terribly wrong.

- The Editor

COTTAM

The big day that many of us were looking forward to has come and gone. There seem to be more outdoor decorations than ever and I want to say thank you for getting in the spirit of the season.

My daughter bought an ornament that says "This Home Believes". Now at first thought you might think of Santa because he seems to get a lot of press at this time of year, but there can also be a deeper message in that statement - the true meaning and that is the celebration of the Birth of Christ. After all it is called "Christmas".

Hopefully you were able to get together with the ones who are special to you and, if not, remember "good will towards man" doesn't have to stop just because Christmas has passed and remember to "pray for peace for people everywhere".

May you and yours have many blessings in the New Year.

Cottam United

The choir did a great job with the Christmas cantata.

Sun. Dec. 31, first after Christmas worship at 10:15 a.m. There will be no Sunday school Dec. 31. Starting Jan. 7 grades 6-8 will be taught by Sarah and Sharon. Teachers are needed for Jan. 14, 21, 28. If you can help in the nursery please sign up on the calendar posted on the nursery door.

C.E. meeting on Jan. 14 following the worship.

Happy birthday blessings to Andrew Gilliland on Dec. 25, Ryan McLeod on the 26th, Adam Armstrong on the 27th, Murray McLeod and Michelle Bezanson on Jan. 1 and Sharon Chalmers on the 6th.



PAQUETTE

Hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and wishing all a safe, Happy New Year.

The Bishop's Levee takes place on Jan. 1, 2007 at St. John's, Sandwich at 3 p.m. All are welcome.

Anyone interested in being in the choir for the Confirmation Service on Jan. 21, please contact Rev. Jane. Choir practices are scheduled for Jan. 2, 9, 16.

Vestry meetings at both parishes are fast approaching. Any group wishing to submit a request for special funding for the coming year, please present to Peggy or Ed as soon as possible before the budget meetings.

The parish is invited to a New Year's Eve Open House at the rectory on Sun. Dec. 31 from 2-4 p.m.

You are invited to our first annual Epiphany on Sat. Jan. 6 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Stephen's Parish Hall. Please bring an item for the potluck lunch. Beverages will be supplied.

Meat pie production begins on Jan. 10, 2007. Please get your orders to 519-969-1030 as soon as possible.

Passing on Season's Greetings to the parish from Jean Dickin, Irene Houghton and Kent and Helen Gardiner.

Birthday greetings to Wyatt Mactier who turned two on the 28th, Cathy Cull on the 30th and Denise Mactier on the 31st.

WOODSLEE

Golden Links card game winners on Fri. Dec. 15 were Joanne Diesbourg, Thomas Allison, George Diesbourg, Blanche Vetur, Madeline Diesbourg and R. Mogyorodi. Door prizes went to Ethel Allison and Vera McMurren.

Golden Links card game winners on Fri. Dec. 22 were Blanche Vetur, R. Mogyorodi, Patty Sylvester,

George Diesbourg, Garnet Galloway, Mary Demars, Thomas Allison. Door prizes went to Don Sylvester, Joanne Diesbourg and Vera McMurren. Next card games Fri. Dec. 29 at 7:30 p.m.

Woodslee Friendship Club

The Woodslee Friendship Club's Dec. 11 card party was well attended with Lloyd Dewhirst and George Diesbourg taking the prizes for the men. The winning ladies were Evelyn Murray and Blanche Vetur.

The Friendship Club's last card party for the year was held on Dec. 18. Winners for the men were Goerge Diesbourg and Dave McMurren. Top honours for the ladies went to Isabel Hayes and Blanche Vetur.

January will be a busy month for the Friendship Club. On Jan. 8 we will be discussing the amount of the 2007 membership dues. This will start at 12:45 p.m. followed by cards at 1 p.m.

Everyone is invited to the monthly potluck supper at 5:30 p.m. on Fri. Jan. 12 Bring a dish and share the food and friendship. The amount of the dues will be finalized by then and can be paid that night if you wish.

On Jan. 15 at 12:30 there will be the election of the Executive Committee - President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary to be elected. All members are urged to attend. Regular card party to follow.

Living Word

Our congregation received a rich blessing on Sunday, Dec. 17 as 32 children presented a wonderful portrayal of the nativity story. Our gratitude goes out to Connie Bruner for all of her work in making the day a great success. Thanks also to everyone who worked behind the scene on a variety of tasks including shepherding the cast at the cast party. We very much appreciate the support of family and friends who filled the sanctuary to encourage the little actors and actresses.

Merry Christmas from the Lord's House to you and yours.

Woodslee United

A Big Thank You ... to the choir directors, choir members from Belle River and Woodslee and others who participated in the Christmas Cantata Sunday morning. Their gift of music is a wonderful way to celebrate the meaning of Christmas!

Merry Christmas to all!

Special thanks is extended to Rev. Don Mannell for his assistance with our communion service.

Sunday Service Hours at Woodslee are at 11:15 a.m.

Our Secretary will be off for the holidays. She will return to the office on Thursday, Jan. 4.

Child care for infants and toddlers may be available during the worship service. Please check with one of the ushers. Sunday school takes place during the worship service. The children remain with their parents for the beginning of the service and then leave after the Children's Time is finished.

Please remember that non-perishable food items are needed at all times of the year for the Downtown Mission. These items can be placed in the container near the entrance doors to the hall. Also needed are small margarine tubs or similar containers so that single servings of meals can be sent home with their clients.

Congratulations to the Woodslee Sunday School children. You raised \$141 at your Hotdog Lunch last Sunday! This money has been donated to the Downtown Mission to help those in need during this Christmas Season.

Thanks to everyone who brought in unwrapped new toys and non-perishable food items during our White Gift Season.

Trinity U.C. would like to invite anyone who needs good, used clothing to come to the church on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information call 519-945-8022.

The colder weather will soon be here the "Warming Tree" will be set up on the first Sunday in December. You are invited to bring hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, socks, etc to help decorate this tree!

Ladies Bible Study, Mondays, at 7:00 p.m. in the Round Room. Everyone is welcome.

Choir Practice, Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. New members are welcome and needed. The practices are approximately an hour in length.

If you are responsible for a report for the meeting booklet, you must have it into the church office no later than Sunday, Jan. 7 so that the booklet can be compiled and printed for the official board meeting on Jan. 23.

Looking ahead: The annual meeting date is Sunday, Feb. 4 at Woodslee.

COZY CORNERS

Bethel-Maidstone United

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas.

Clifford and Ethel MacKenzie would like to thank the people of Bethel-Maidstone who came to Clifford's 90th birthday party, for all the greeting cards and gifts they gave him. May God bless all of you.

Tai Chi will begin at Bethel-Maidstone Jan. 2 and Jan. 9 at 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome.

Communion will be held on Sun. Jan. 7, 2007.

The nursing home service at Iler Lodge will be on Tues. Jan. 9 at 2 p.m.

Soup and sandwiches will be served on Jan. 14 following the service.

Community Social Time at Bethel-Maidstone will begin on Jan. 15 from 1 to 3 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come out to play cards, games, socialize and have fun.

Bible Study returns on Wed. Jan. 17 at B-M from 7:00-8:15 p.m.

January is Lasagna Month. The stewards will be taking orders for lasagna until Jan. 21 and ready for pick-up on Jan. 28. Contact Wayne, Carson or Rob.

Please keep Marcy MacKenzie, Gary Coomber, both in hospital, and any others who are not well in your prayers.

A Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year to All

- Bev Holland

ESSEX

Christian Reformed

Happy New Year. May this new year find you and your family well and the Spirit of the Lord filling your lives with His peace. In this time of new beginnings we would like to extend an invitation to you and your family to attend our Sunday service beginning at 10 a.m. with Pastor Fred Heslinga and also to our New Year's Day service beginning at 10 a.m. on Mon. Jan. 1, 2007. Nursery is provided for both services.

Our GEMS and Cadets meet Mon. Jan. 8.

Coffee Break Bible Study Program meet on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m.

For more information call 776-5071.

Please turn to page 17 for more community news.

St. Paul's Anglican

If you are responsible for a report for the Vestry Booklet, please make sure that you have it completed and submitted into the church office no later than Wed. Jan. 10. The booklets will be ready for distribution on Sun. Jan. 21. Vestry meeting on Sun. Jan. 28.

Essex United

Sun. Dec. 31 year end worship service with Rev. Doreen at 10:30 p.m.

The donations to the Mitten Tree were all appreciated.

Salvation Army

Band practice, Thurs. 7 p.m.

The Candlelight Service Sunday night was just beautiful, as was the candle lighting.

Hope you have had a Merry Christmas and will have a Happy New Year. Hope to see you in the New Year.

BROOKER

Wishing you all a very "Merry Christmas".

Erin Jones of London was home the weekend before last visiting with her parents and Robyn.

Cathy and Ron Bondy and their four sons who are currently at Kansas City arrived at Bob and Doreen Taylor's the weekend before last to spend the holiday season with them.

Please remember Doug Cowell in prayer.

MAIDSTONE CROSS

Merry Christmas everyone!

The Giving Tree gifts have been collected. Thanks to all those who generously provided them. The New Year's Eve party at St. Mary's has been cancelled.

St. Mary's pie bakers thank everyone for their support this year.

Remember the sick, especially Blanche Knuckle.

Have a safe and happy New Year.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE ESSEX FREE PRESS IS 110 YEARS OLD!

OUR ARCHIVES DATE BACK TO THE 1890'S.

The Essex Free Press