



**CHRISTMAS
2015**

Dear Friends

Greetings this Advent and Christmas season.

I don't know about you, but this year, I am planning my gift giving early, well not as early as most of you, but for me, earlier than last year.

If I am trying to do things *sooner* I am also trying to do things *differently*. So I am open to suggestions.

Rick Mercer wants me to give someone a Plan Canada goat, and that's not a bad idea. A gift should genuinely benefit the recipient, and there are hundreds of thousands of children and families and single folks in less affluent parts of the world who could use a goat as a contribution to livelihood and community.

Last year my clever sister gave me a sponsorship for a vision assistance dog. Given my own sight challenges and my longstanding involvement with the CNIB this was a brilliant idea. And we've got the picture of the four-legged fella to prove it.

I am curious to know what drives your own gift giving. Send an email to rector@colwoodanglican.ca or better still give me a call at 250 474 3031, or best of all, take me for coffee sometime in December.

The practice of gift-giving comes from the offerings of the magi to the two-year old Jesus (which is really an Epiphany story, so stay tuned). Tradition enhanced things along the way and the whole notion of Jesus Christ as God's gift to the world and all creation enhanced the practice. But then, a noble

spiritual practice was lost in a haze of consumer self-satisfaction. So let's reclaim our heritage! Christ is God's gift to the world and to us. Let's somehow build that truth back into our sharing of gifts. Let our gifts embody God's gift to us in Christ.

Another great response to God's goodness is to celebrate together. So let's gather together:

On Sunday morning, December 20th

Our church school will provide leadership in a special programme followed by Holy Eucharist and communion.

On Monday evening, December the 21st at 6:30 p.m.

for Community Caroling; meet in the parking lot at 6:30 p.m. (if the weather is questionable call the church for instructions)

On Christmas Eve

We offer two very different worship experiences. Bring your guests and join us:

At 6 p.m. for THE CHRISTMAS

STORY, a more casual celebration with our popular **Every member Christmas**

Pageant (no memorization required; bring your own costume and props if you wish). **This service will include a celebration of the Holy Eucharist.**

At 10 p.m. for CHRISTMAS, CAROLS, CHOIR AND COMMUNION

a **Traditional and Reflective service**. Later at night, we glimpse the (candle) light of Christ together.

On Christmas Day - Join us for a Service Of Thanksgiving With Carols and Holy Eucharist at 10:30 a.m. in the chapel.

This year we again invite your special financial contribution through the enclosed offering envelope. Your contributions allow us to minister here on the West Shore, on these islands and nationally. Thank you for your support of our Gospel-work.

The wardens, church staff and volunteers, parish council members and my family, all join in wishing everyone a blessed Advent and Merry Christmas.

