

CALVARY Catalyst

ADVENT • CHRISTMAS 2022



REJOICE! REJOICE!

Over the past weeks, it has been wonderful to be outdoors and dressed like it was summer. As I have been raking the generous amounts of leaves, my mind does start to wonder as I wander around the yard. Along with my various chores to prepare the yard for winter, I start to think, no... actually hum some of my favourite Christmas hymns.

Many of you may have already started to hear Christmas music in the retail stores, some of which will soon be resonating in our hearts and homes as we anticipate Christmas once again.

One of my favourite hymns, Voices United #1, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is one way I like to start the Advent season, the season of expectation in the Christian calendar. The four Sundays of Advent encourage us to prepare the way in our hearts for the baby Jesus with hope, peace, joy, and love. It is a time to reflect not only on the wonders of the birth of our Saviour but also the angel that appears to Mary and then the journey of Mary and Joseph to the manger for His birth. For unto us is born the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace. Born for you and me.

There are many traditions that we have in preparing for Christmas: the singing of carols, decorating our homes, and preparing Christmas baking as we get closer to celebrating the birth of the Christ Child. Presents and the last-minute shopping mayhem also fill our time as we share the excitement of the season with family, friends, and neighbours. There is joy to be shared and there is hope that the love of Jesus is with us not only at this time of year but throughout the new year that is to come.

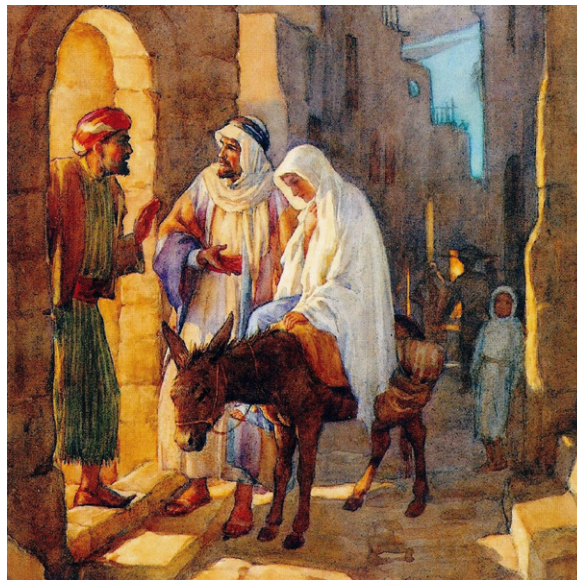
We have so much to look forward as a congregation and it is with great hope that we continue to spread the good news of God's love for each of us, the love that came down at that first Christmas. May you and yours find the meaning of Christmas once again in the hearing of scripture, the singing of the familiar hymns and the uplifting music of the choir at the Sunday Worship

Services, Christmas Eve (7pm) and Christmas Day service (10:30am). Jazz Vespers with Denise Pelley (Dec. 14th) and the Blue Christmas service (Dec. 21) may also bring you the joy and peace of the season.

One of my heartfelt prayers this Christmas, as it has been in the past, is to remain mindful of those that are without hope or joy during this time of celebration. If you know of someone that is without hope, I encourage you to reach out to them and spend cherished time in sharing the love and hope of the season with them. An act of kindness to a family member, a friend, or a neighbour is often all some people need to know that they are not alone, and the love of God is shared with them through your unselfish act of kindness.

May the warmth and glow of this Christmas season be with you, your family, friends and neighbours as we continue to share the good news of His love for us with all those we encounter. It truly is a time to sing of rejoicing. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

In Peace, Hope, Joy and Love,
– Rev. Kerry



Calvary Worship Schedule

November 27	– Advent 1, Communion
December 4	– Advent 2, Memorial Sunday
December 11	– Advent 3, Music Sunday
December 14	– Jazz Vespers with Denise Pelley at 7pm
December 18	– Advent 4
December 21	– Blue Christmas Worship at 7pm <i>A quieter, reflective service of prayers and readings...</i>
December 24	– Christmas Eve Worship at 7pm
December 25	– Christmas Day Worship at 10:30am

From the office files

Calvary United Church has been saddened by the passing of:

Lillian Currie
Eileen McNichol



Meet Patrick Brophy



Patrick joined the Calvary staff as custodian in mid-September. He works mornings, Sunday to Friday. Pat wants to get to know the Calvary members so please introduce yourself to him if you are at the church when he is working.

A Birthday Milestone!



On September 29th, Reta Astles turned 102.
– Karen & Bill Butt

Denise and Nevin



On Oct. 16th, Sunday Worship featured Denise Pelley, well-known vocalist and speaker, and Nevin Campbell on piano for a special program entitled *“Let music be the fountain of youth... and play on.”* The presentation featured well-known music selections including *“Shower the People”* by James Taylor and *“Hallelujah”* by Leonard Cohen. You can view the recorded service on our YouTube channel.

Denise and Nevin will be joining us for the next Jazz Vespers service on Dec. 14th.

– Kim Knowles

On becoming an Affirming Church

On Wednesday Apr. 20th, 2022, an ad hoc committee made up of members of Calvary presented a proposal to Calvary Council in regards to starting the process of Calvary United Church becoming an Affirming Church.

Council was in favour of starting the process. Some of the members of the original ad hoc committee and a few new ones have been gathering educational information in order to provide the congregation with knowledge of what becoming an Affirming Church means. In the months ahead, we will be presenting quick narratives during worship services about Affirming and what steps the church has to make in order to be classified as an Affirming Church.

The members of the congregation will have an opportunity to actually vote on this decision. Taking that in consideration,



the process can take from a year to two or three years before the final decision is made at a congregational meeting. The main purpose of being Affirming is to make Calvary a church that welcomes everyone no matter their age, abilities, social/financial status, ethnicities, sexual identities and gender identities. The United Churches that become Affirming Churches are members of Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble (AUSE) which is part of the United Church of Canada. They are all across Canada and some are here in London.

Later, scheduled educational sessions will take place in which everyone will have an opportunity to learn more and to ask questions. The goal is to make certain that everyone understands what affirming means so that they can make an informed decision when a congregational meeting is called.

Our Committee members are Bill Butt, Jill Lucas, Ruthanne McLagan, Kathleen Rainey-Meatherall, Kathie Leigh and Mary Kannakko.

– Mary Kannakko

Shopping/gift cards

Order dates for Fundscrip Gift Cards are Nov. 21 and Dec. 5 and probably the 12th or 19th depending on when they close up for Christmas. Then we'll resume the program in January. Gift cards are a great idea for those hard-to-buy-for people on your Christmas list. New stores are added all the time so go to www.fundscrip.com for an up to date list of cards available or pick up a paper order form from the church. One new card that should be popular as a stocking-stuffer is for McDonalds! Questions? Contact Nancy Hind nancyhind@rogers.com or 519-434-4048.



CALVARY Catalyst

The Calvary Catalyst is published four times a year. Its purpose is to inform and report on news and events of Calvary United Church.

Submission deadline for the next issue is:
Tuesday, March 14th, 2023.

Send submissions to Bruce Jones: scouterbruce@rogers.com

Calvary United Church

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email: calvaryuc@execulink.com • www.calvaryuc.ca

Another wonderful JAZZ Vespers



The JAZZ Vespers Quartet... Nevin Campbell, guest vocalist Laurraine Sigouin, Sandy MacKay, Larry Ernewein, and Ken McLagan.



Tabitha Carey, Candidate for Ministry.



Vocalist Laurraine Sigouin.

Rev. Kerry.

Halloween in the Village

Rev. Kerry, Ruthanne and Heather were part of the volunteer group playing Halloween games with the children during Halloween in the Village. Ruthanne was the Crazy Cat Lady. Children and adults alike loved her costume and she was even interviewed by CBC news about her costume!

Rev. Kerry was a giant inflatable pumpkin. He was part of the organizing committee and not only supervised the games but walked in the parade as well.

It was a beautiful day and hundreds of Villagers participated in the variety of events!

– Heather Guild



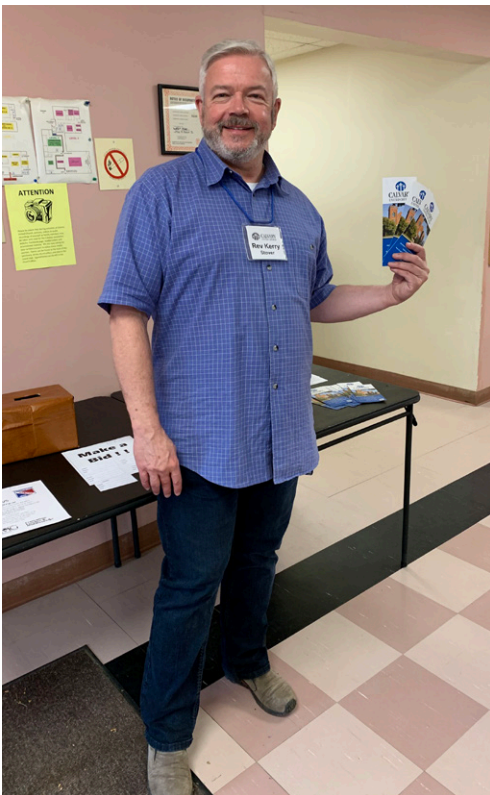
Rev. Kerry.



The Crazy Cat Lady!



On parade... the Witches of Wortley.



A smile and a warm welcome from Rev. Kerry!



Antique 'treasures' with Brian...



Calvary's resident artist... Ruthanne!

Calvary's Fall Bazaar...

They came, they saw, they purchased! This year's Calvary Fall Bazaar was a wonderful success. From baked goods to books, plants to jewellery, gently used to frozen foods, and crafts to preserves... plus an art gallery too! We had it all. Thanks to the many volunteers (and donors) who made the Bazaar happen.

The profit from the Bazaar (including after church on Sunday) is \$5,135.95. Congratulations everyone. A job well done!



Everyone's favourite table... Baked Goods, with Liz, Fran, Brenda and Mary.



Kathi, Jane and Susan with Christmas Gift ideas.



Ken, Heather and Brian... Gently Used Items.



Dale, Lisa and Carly doing a little shopping!



Anne and Pam with homemade treasures.



Jewellery anyone? Kathie, Nadine, and Erica.



Bonnie, Linda and Marg... featuring frozen foods in support of CFGB.



We've got a plant for you... Bonnie, Karen and Alf.



The Book Guys... Bruce, Robert And Bill.



Jill with the jewellery...

CFGB: Hunger on the Hill

As many of you know, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of Canadian churches (including the United Church of Canada) and church-based agencies working together to end global hunger. At the Foodgrains Bank, humanitarian relief and long-term development both aim to improve

food security for people around the world.

Global hunger was beginning to plateau and then decline until 2016. Unfortunately, in recent years hunger has risen sharply to about 828 million people in 2021 who are either acutely hungry or food insecure due to lack of strong food systems, political instability,



Mitch Olson, volunteer CFGB, Ary Vreeken, staff CFGB, Lindsay Mathysen, NDP MP London Fanshawe, Thomas Neufeld, volunteer CFGB, Bonnie McNichol, volunteer CFGB.

conflicts (such as in the South Sudan and more recently in Ukraine), droughts and floods. This number is up by 150 million since the outbreak of COVID-19.

This year I was privileged to be among 20 volunteers from across Canada who attended what's become an annual event, called Hunger on the Hill, in Ottawa. The purpose of this event is to advocate on behalf of the CFGB for continued support for international development. Hunger on the Hill began on the evening of Saturday, Oct. 15 and concluded the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 18. In Ottawa, staff from the CFGB provided training sessions about government policy, climate resilient agriculture and the highlights of the package we would be delivering to MPs on Tues. Prior to the event, we attended two learning sessions on Zoom in the month of September. On Sunday (Oct. 16) we worked with our groups of four, doing role playing of mock MP meetings. On Monday, veteran Liberal MP John McKay (in office since 1997) and conservative MP David Epp, first elected in 2019, met with us in the morning to help us understand what to expect when meeting with MPs. Monday afternoon we walked to parliament hill to attend a session of question period.

At the G-7 summit in June 2021, Canada pledged 5.3 billion dollars to be allocated towards climate finance over five years, 2021 to 2026. The purpose of meeting with MPs was to ask that 500 million dollars of the 5.3 billion dollars of Canada's pledged monies be allocated for Climate Resilient Agriculture. This will contribute to the achievement of one of four desired outcomes of Canada's climate finance package, climate smart agriculture and food systems. Investments should target small-scale

food producers, especially women in building climate resilient food systems because 79% of women in least developed countries derive their income from agriculture.

Each group was scheduled to meet with at least four MPs. Some groups ended up meeting with six. Unfortunately two of our meetings with Conservative MPs were cancelled at the last minute, likely due to voting in the house. Our group met with Dean Allison, Conservative MP for Niagara West, Lindsay Mathysen, NDP MP for London Fanshawe and Sonia Sidhu, Liberal MP for Brampton South. All three MP meetings went well and our message was received with interest and support. One of the things I took away from this experience is that we are all guilty of complaining about our government officials. However, after meeting with them, realizing how busy their schedules are and how much responsibility they have taken on, I have a new appreciation of what public service entails, (even if we don't always agree with opinions on certain issues.) I was particularly impressed by Sonia Sidhu's persistence. After rescheduling twice, as she was on house duty, she met with us at around 5:30.

I'll end on a more personal note.

While our group waited in her office I noticed two dolls on her shelf. I asked her staff if I could have a closer look. I was excited to see that they were dolls from the UCW's Bread Not Stones project. You may recall that all MP's were presented with these dolls in 2017 to keep child poverty in Canada ever present on the minds of politicians. What moved me was that she still had them prominently displayed, even after moving offices in recent years.

Earlier this week at a debriefing session on Zoom with our CFGB volunteers and staff, it was shared that our meetings had an impact. Stay tuned.

– Bonnie McNichol



CFGB/Caradoc Growing project update

Through the generosity of the Calvary congregation, a total of \$2700 was received in donations during the 2022 fundraising campaign which

ended on Nov 1. These donations will be submitted to the CFGB national office and matched on a 4 to 1 basis by the Canadian federal government. Thank you to all for your generosity as CFGB strives to end world food insecurity and hunger. Frozen entrees were sold at the Fall Bazaar and profits from the sales will go to the National CFGB as well.

– Kathie Leigh



Calvary Green

Intermittent morning rain brought our Sunday, Sept. 25 garden dedication inside to the Sanctuary... a beautiful service and blessing led by Rev. Kerry was shared by all.

Next Spring we are looking forward to continuing to grow and improve the garden, with a possible expansion to the front lawn between the steps! There are lots of existing pollinator plants that will need to be separated and replanted there. Our front walkway will happily be the recipient.

We received good feedback from the watering teams and will be implementing many of their suggestions. We hope everyone will continue to schedule the

garden into next summer plans, and we always appreciate new helpers. Also on the 'wish list' is a meditation bench or two and a memorial plaque for families to honour their loved ones. Any other suggestions or ideas are always welcomed. Most of the herbs from our outside planters are relocated into white bins and share sunny windows in the library. Please help yourself, scissors are there to snip.

Since our last Catalyst, Calvary Green has participated in a number of outdoor Equinox (Spring and Fall) and Solstice (Summer) celebrations with drumming circles held jointly with Greening Sacred Spaces/Climate Action London, honouring our seasonal changes. On Oct. 25, we were invited again through Greening Sacred Spaces/Climate Action sponsored by the City of London and hosted by London PROBUS clubs, to a 'Climate Change and You' workshop... always something new to learn from the other participating groups. Most pictures on the display board and the beautiful floral arrangement were from our garden.

And lastly, thank you everyone for your continued support of all our Recycling Efforts... the Milk Bags, All Plastic for Metro and the Used Batteries Collection.

You are the reason Calvary Green is thriving.

— Lyse Geldard



FOR THE LOVE OF CREATION



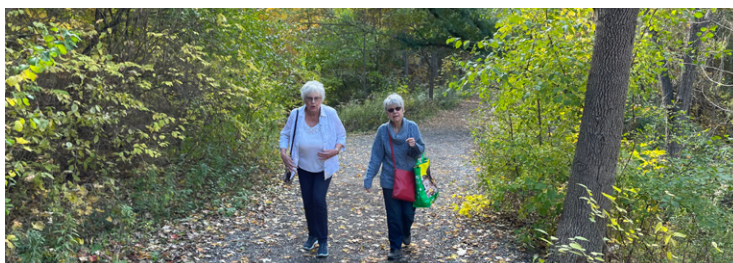
Hello & thank you from The London Community Chaplaincy!

On Sunday, October 23, a group of individuals participated in the annual London Community Chaplaincy Walk-A-Thon. We enjoyed the sunny and warm weather as we made our way through the Limberlost area and through trails at Medway Valley. Calvary has raised \$2,730.00 to date! These funds will be used for the many activities carried out at the Chaplaincy. The children at both locations will enjoy a Christmas Party with pizza and ice cream and a visit from Santa! Thank you to all who sponsored me!

Rev. Pam advises that "Fall has been very busy with post-pandemic programming in full swing. We have had many after-school programs such as violin, art, sports, junior youth group, girls' and boys' specific drop-ins and PA day fun. High schoolers enjoy many monthly lunch gatherings and special events. For parents, we have weekly breakfast and seasonal events to add a sense of community belonging. A Fall favourite this year was a day trip to visit a variety of farms and to see the Fall leaves. These challenging economic times are certainly being felt by our community families, and we are doing as much as we can to support them with rides to the food bank, sharing from our emergency food cupboard and offering fresh produce from our partnership with the London Food Coalition. We remain very grateful for all your support and prayers".

Wishing you a Merry Christmas, and all the best for the New Year!

– Linda Baker, Outreach Committee



Gone Home



The 31st Scouting Group of Calvary has lost a gentle giant of a man. John Blacklock (Scouter Jack) passed away on October 17th. He had a long career in Scouting and was most recently the Group



John Blacklock

Commissioner. He also wrote the Commissioner's Corner column for the Catalyst.

He loved working with youth, always encouraging them to "Be Prepared" and "Do their best." The tributes I've seen online from many of those youth are very touching.

Here is what his son Adam put on social media about his passing...

It is with deep sadness that I say these words on my Dad's Facebook wall. My Dad, John Blacklock passed away yesterday.

Those who knew, understood that losing his wife, My Mother Cindy, was just about all he could handle in life... I believe in my heart, that they were always destined to be together forever.

"They have both decided to leave the party."

Til we see each other again Dad...

Rest in the sweetest peace.

It has become traditional over the past century for Scouts who pass away to have been described as "Gone Home."

Benevolent offering update

It has been customary over the past several years to have a separate Benevolent offering during each Communion Sunday. Funds from this offering are deposited to the Calvary Benevolent account, managed by the Outreach committee.

We would like to take this opportunity to update you on the uses of these funds. The first item is the Community Breakfast on the third Saturday of every month. A free breakfast is offered to those in our extended community who are in need of a hot meal and a friendly greeting. Prior to Covid, folks were invited into the lower meeting room, served at the tables by a dedicated group of volunteers. This was modified during Covid. A bagged breakfast was prepared and made available at the Garfield door. Recently, space has been opened up so folks can eat their bagged breakfast inside, or they can pick up and take away, as before. In either case, breakfast consists of a hot egg and cheese sandwich, juice box, chocolate milk, three pieces of fruit, a granola bar or muffin and of course, a cup of coffee. The numbers of visitors fluctuate but we send between 20 and 30 people into a Saturday morning well fed.

The London Community Chaplaincy is another beneficiary of your support. The Chaplaincy supports families and builds community for many living in poverty. Through your donations, we have been able to help send kids to day and overnight summer camps, an opportunity that their parents would be unable to provide without this support. Summer programs, other youth programming, family crisis support and an on-site food bank are some of the other things the Chaplaincy does and we have been able to support, especially in the darkest days of Covid with jobs lost, schools closed and families in distress.

Until recently, grocery cards were purchased with benevolent funds and provided to folks who arrived at the church office. To spread support further, the decision has been made to use these funds to support organizations which touch many people. Which organizations to support will be discussed on an ad hoc basis when funds become available.

So, thank you for your continuing support of the Benevolent fund.

There are separate offering plates, located at the doors on Benevolent Sundays. If you are watching the service at home, and are able to drop off or mail a donation to the church, it would be greatly appreciated. Providing your name and address will allow the church office to issue a tax receipt. For those in church, this can be accommodated by using the offering envelopes located in the pews.

– Kathie Leigh, Outreach Committee

Calvary Library

Advent is the season of preparation for Christmas. Allow yourself some time to prepare with help from your Calvary Library. The Library has a multitude of resources for Advent, including stories of the Nativity, heartwarming and humorous stories, music, meditations, and "Ideals" for poetry and memoirs. The children's collection is extensive. We're sure you'll find something of interest on the book cart and in the displays set up in the Library.

As more of us spend time with extended family and friends, Advent and Christmas 2022 will thankfully be very different from the past couple of years.

Season's greetings to all from your Calvary Library Committee.

– Darlene Sanderson

Blue Christmas Service, Dec. 21 at 7pm

Feeling you need some quiet time before the excitement of Christmas? Feeling out of sorts this year as you prepare or try to avoid the holidays? Rev. Kerry invites you to attend a Blue Christmas service on Dec. 21st at 7pm in the sanctuary.

What is a Blue Christmas service? It is for anyone that is going through or having a rough time with the holidays

due to anxieties, grief, sadness, melancholy or just needing some quiet time before the holidays. It is also available to those finding the joy in the holiday season and are in need of time to reflect on the season. We come together to hear scripture and listen to reflective seasonal music that emphasises that we are not alone at this time of the year. This service will not be live-streamed.

Welcome Back Sheina!

Well, it's been a while. I have been BUSY. When was the last time I submitted an entry to the Catalyst? A question that has no answer.

So what have I been doing the last couple of months? I spent my summer working at the London Ice Cream Company making (you guessed it) ice cream. It was a pleasant experience, but I can confidently say that I've had more than enough ice cream to last a lifetime. I'm also pretty sure I still have ice cream in the freezer at home.

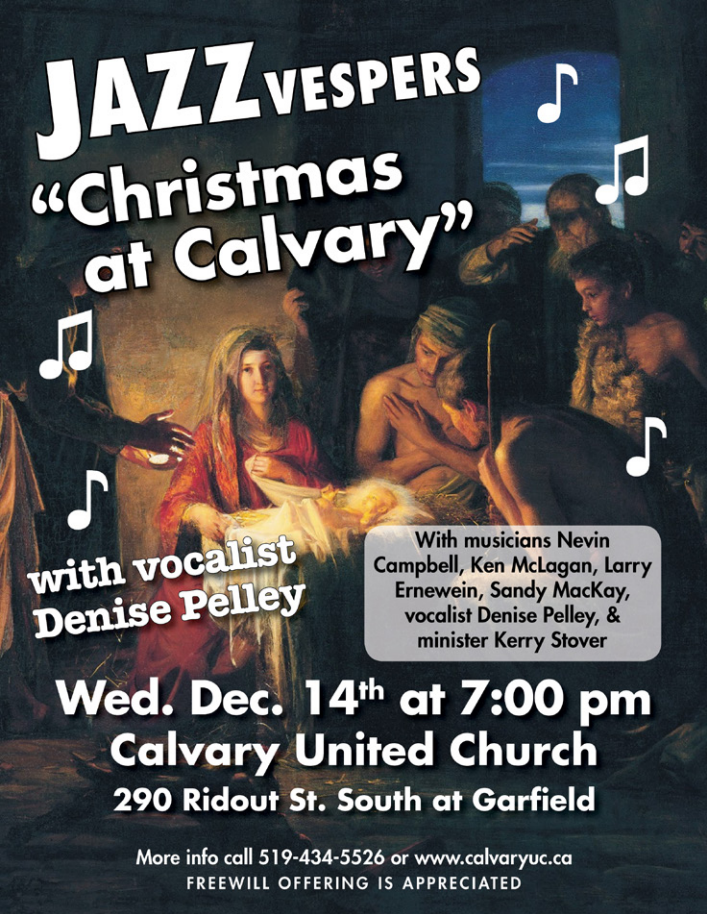
Additionally, I got my first apartment! I'm living off-campus in St. Catharines with some friends and all is going well. We have managed not to drive each other crazy or burn the place down. Making time to cook food has been a learning curve, but I have gotten the hang of it. I also have this awesome little cookbook with lots of fun recipes for me to try (wink, wink).

What else is new? I'm an intern with Brock Campus Ministries. I get the wonderful job of organizing events out of the Faith & Life centre on campus such as bible studies, hikes, halloween parties, etc. I'm really enjoying this position and have made some great friends because of it.

Overall, I'm really enjoying my second year of university. Having 90% of my classes in-person was a big change, but a welcome one. In addition, it's great to see how alive the campus is this year, with lots of new clubs and activities to do. I look forward to seeing what the rest of this year has to offer.

Until next time (whenever that may be),
– Sheina

Looks like an amazing Jazz Vespers!



JAZZ VESPERS
“Christmas at Calvary”

with vocalist **Denise Pelley**

With musicians Nevin Campbell, Ken McLagan, Larry Ernewein, Sandy MacKay, vocalist Denise Pelley, & minister Kerry Stover

Wed. Dec. 14th at 7:00 pm
Calvary United Church
290 Ridout St. South at Garfield

More info call 519-434-5526 or www.calvaryuc.ca
FREEWILL OFFERING IS APPRECIATED

Getting ready for the Bazaar...



Bonnie and Marlene preparing tourtières.



Sorting the books into categories...



It takes many hands to set up such a large event. A big thanks to everyone who helped!



VS



Draw

London Knights vs Kitchener Rangers
Wednesday, February 8th, 2023 at 7pm
Club Seats: Section 114, Row F, Seats 15,16,17,18
Parking Pass Provided
(Total Value \$170.00)

\$50 Reserve Bid
Donated by:
Dave and Christie Mullen
A. Millard George Funeral Home &
Cremation London & Middlesex
60 Ridout Street South
London, ON



Draw for London Knights Hockey Tickets

The winning bid was \$120.

Thank you to AMG Funeral Home and Cremation London & Middlesex for this generous donation to our Bazaar.