ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2019 | AROUND THE DIOCESE

• Christmas Carol Service Returns to Mission to Seafarers •

SUBMISSION Jane Dittrich

On Friday December 20, 2019, the Mission to Seafarers (MtS) on Waterfront Road in Vancouver held their second annual Christmas Carol Service and party. The chapel and the main public area of the Mission were beautifully decorated for the season. The heritage chapel was full, with approximately 60 people in attendance. The liturgy began with the carol *Once in Royal David's City*, followed by words of welcome and the bidding prayer by presider, the Mission's Senior Port Chaplain, Rev. Peter Smyth.

As with the inaugural liturgy in 2018, many of the Carol Service congregation were from St Michael's Multicultural in Vancouver, including rector, the Rev. Wilmer Toyoken. A large percentage of those who regularly volunteer throughout the year at the Mission are from the Parish of St. Michael's.

Lessons were read by: Mission to Seafarers' Vancouver staff member Laura Cooney; long time MtS supporter and volunteer, Peter Goodwin, ODNW of St. James'; Teofilo Bosaing of St. Michael's; the Mission's chaplain from the Christian Reformed Church, Pastor Gary Roosma; Mission intern, Vincent Ng; long time Mission volunteer, Denis McMahon; and Senior Port Chaplain Rev. Peter Smyth.

Seafarers from three different ships anchored at the Port of Vancouver attended the service and festivities, which was an extra special addition to the evening. The three ships were *Iolocos Ambition, La Luna* and *Ecoan GO*. At the end of the evening, the Mission's chaplains presented the visiting seafarers with bags of Christmas gifts and various items to take back to their colleagues working on their respective ships. It was wonderful that everyone was able to pose for a group photo during the reception that followed worship.

The festive reception in the main gathering space of the Mission included coffee, tea, hot apple cider, baking and sweets provided by the Mission and volunteers. Everyone enjoyed the refreshments and treats as Christmas music played in the background.

Friends old and new enjoyed kicking off the Christmas season together in "the blue house on the waterfront" more commonly known as the Flying Angel Club (www.flyingangel.ca), and together celebrating the invaluable work, hospitality and ministry which MtS provides to seafarers and their families. ✠

The group photo. PHOTO Courtesy of Jane Dittrich

The Rev. Peter Smyth welcomes the capacity congregation. PHOTO Courtesy of Jane Dittrich

LEFT Candlelight dismissal. MIDDLE The Rev. Peter Smyth and Laura set up the hot apple cider while others look on and snap some pics.
RIGHT The Rev. Wilmer Toyoken with Jane Dittrich and Tomoko Ito, both parishioners at Christ Church Cathedral. PHOTOS Courtesy of Jane Dittrich

• Christmas Homecoming in Maple Ridge •

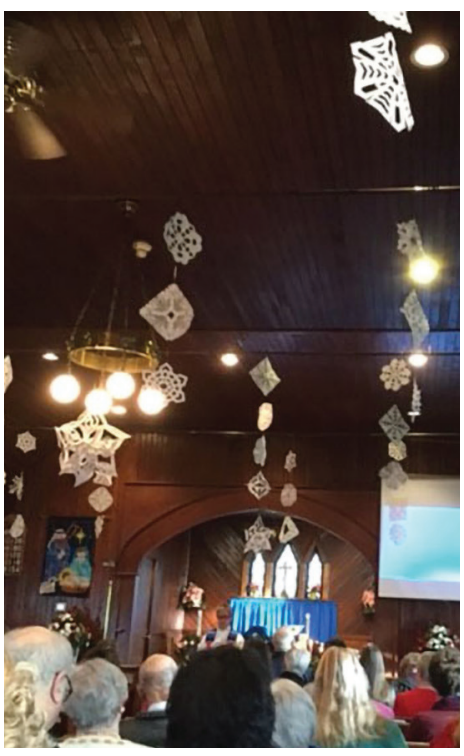
SUBMISSION Lisann Gurney

During Advent IV (Sunday, December 22), St. John the Divine, Maple Ridge held a very special Christmas Homecoming service. 130 neighbourhood households received hand delivered postcard invitations to this fun event! The morning service featured favourite carols sung under handmade snowflakes, and the festive reception afterward included door prizes, delicious food, and a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus and their elves, who had a small gift for everyone!

Planning and preparation were led by our *GroundWork* team — Tonya Bayne, Rosemary Stasiuk, Janet Coughlin, Lisann Gurney, and Rev. Laurel Dahill — supported by the entire congregation. Because of the parish-wide participation, our neighbours, guests, and visitors were able to get to know our parish in both prayer and fellowship.

The goal of the *GroundWork* special project was to create something designed to increase membership. The sanctuary of St. John the Divine was filled to capacity, and overflow seating was needed to accommodate everyone. ✠

Vicar, the Rev. Laurel Dahill and the Clauses.
PHOTO Lisann Gurney



LEFT Folks in the nave under the snowflakes. RIGHT The chancel is beautifully decorated. PHOTOS Lisann Gurney

• An Unconventional Christmas Eve • in Tsawwassen

SUBMISSION Elizabeth Murray, ODNW

At St. David's, Tsawwassen, Christmas Eve traditions received a new look for 2019 as these photos will attest.

During the 4pm Christmas Eve service, the officiant, the Rev. Dr. Ron Barnes with Bev Barnes added Jesus' birthday cake to the Nativity story. A homemade chocolate sheet cake with one large candle.

The traditional pageant also had a makeover with parishioners offering a radio-show-themed presentation written and directed by parishioner Allen Denoyers (centre in the top photo). ✠

PHOTOS Loy Seng