

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. John's,

One of my favorite services at St. John's has always been *Carols and Lessons for Advent*. Music and words start in a dark mode, slowly and steadily moving towards light, anticipation and joy. I hold on to that passage as the days get darker and the COVID situation is worsening on so many levels. Yet there are signs of hope and rays of light, like yesterday when the kids from across the street cleared the snow from my driveway.



PWRDF is one of those bringers of joy and light. Here are some vignettes of help given to manage the global COVID pandemic.

Women in Bangladesh use their scarves as face masks and practise physical distancing while lining up for supplies from PWRDF partner UBINIG. A grant of \$11,000 was used to support 965 families with soap, masks, food items and seeds,



In Kenya, a grant is given for refugees in Kakuma Camp to purchase much needed equipment::pulse oximeters, digital blood pressure machines, electric suction machines, non-contact thermometer guns, oxygen concentrators, oxygen cylinders, oxygen gauges and personal protective equipment (PPE). Kakuma is home to 182,000 refugees, and the number is still increasing due to regional conflicts and famine affecting the region.

In South Sudan, Community health promoters reach displaced community members with hygiene and sanitation awareness through radio and megaphones. 522 households receive soap each month, containers for water collection and storage, and a bucket with taps for hand washing. PWRDF is contributing \$15,000 to this \$40,000-project, with the remaining funds coming from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada.

In Rwanda, Partners in Health distribute monthly medicine supplies to patients with HIV or cancer via drones so that they do not have to walk for many miles, exposing themselves to COVID-19 infection.

Continuing from last year, St. John's will support the **shallow well** project in **Makueni Township of Kenya**. You may remember the progress report from Richard Librock which we sent you during the summer. In it, Richard wrote:

"In future a solar pump will be installed instead of a hand pump. The power of the sun and a solar panel are all that is required to pump water. With the installation of solar pumps many more people will be reached in future. Solar pumps also mean less maintenance since the solar pumps creates less disturbance in the well than does metal rods used with a hand pump. Clean water and soap are prerequisites for greater frequency of hand washing that is now required in the COVID-19 era, so the establishment of shallow wells is now even more important."



In the 2020 gift catalogue, PWRDF is asking for **\$2,600 to build a well with a solar powered pump**. As of Oct. 31, St. John's held \$ 3,715 in PWRDF designated funds. It should not be difficult to fund two wells. **Or can we reach \$7,800 for three wells and pumps?** You will find the project written up in this year's *World of Gifts*, pwrdf.org/worldofgifts. Of course, you can also designate your PWRDF Christmas gift to any other project listed in the catalogue.

Finally, PWRDF offers you a choice of two Christmas cards:



You can order the cards on line at https://pwrdf.org/christmas_cards2020/ or phone Mike at 1 866 308 7973



In the midst of all our grumbling about inconveniences, loss of community and close touch with family and friends, and anxiously facing the threat of a COVID infection, let us remember the abundant gifts of grace and make a sacrifice of thanksgiving "for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ".

With greetings during this time of Advent and Christmas

Doris M'Timkulu, with Doreen, Elaine, Janet, Helen and Nancy

