



2025 Christmas Letter

As another year ends, we once again send warm holiday wishes to the entire St. Peter's family. Our *Christmas Letter* has now become an annual tradition and affords us an opportunity to look back upon the past summer, and to look forward to the future. It also allows us to express our deep gratitude to all those whose kindness and support makes St. Peter's on-the-Rock the amazing summer parish that it is.

This past summer featured multiple performances by young musicians as we celebrated ten years of the **Music Scholars Program**. Launched in 2016 with a generous endowment by the Walter Family, this program has enriched our worship with performances by talented young musicians, many of whom have gone on to pursue studies and careers in music. Let us all extend our warm thanks to **Bern Kelly**, who has administered this program on behalf of the Wardens since its inception a decade ago.

Summer 2025 also showcased another successful children's music theatre day camp. **Morgan Strickland** and **Tanya Granata** of SOPAC Ottawa and their 23 young charges took over our church and island for a boisterous week this summer, which culminated in a Friday afternoon performance of **The Lion King**. Over the course of the week, these kids master not only their singing and speaking lines, but also learn choreography, design and make their own costumes and learn how to do theatre-style makeup and hair. That they can pull together a delightful performance after just four days together remains a mystery.

This year also saw the transition to our new treasurer, **Phil Hunt**. Phil reports that we are ending the year on a strong note, with donations slightly ahead of last year at this time, and average attendance at our Sunday services is also slightly up over 2024. In addition to Sunday services, our rustic church hosted other joyful events in 2025 including three baptisms and three weddings. Departing from usual practice, we also hosted a touching memorial service for long-time parish member and Sunday School leader-extraordinaire, **Betsy McGregor**, who passed away last spring.

However, financial challenges persist as inflation has impacted many of our non-discretionary expenses such as insurance, septic pump-outs and marina charges for boat slip, parking and boat storage. We are certain all cottagers are aware of these rising costs! For those able to donate to St. Peter's this tax year or early in the new year, we invite you to consider making a tax-deductible contribution. There are many easy ways to do so, as set out on the Giving page of our website (www.stpetersontherock.org/giving). Our Endowment Fund also welcomes larger gifts, including stocks and equities.

Looking ahead, we will be welcoming **Rev. Megan Jull** as our priest next July. She is presently the incumbent at Saint Augustine in Toronto, and has also recently started doctoral studies at Trinity College, University of Toronto. She will be joined at St. Peter's by her husband Chris, a high school teacher. Their three teenaged children will also spend some time at the lake. This coming August will be a repeat of the last two summers, with **Rev. Paige Souter** and **Rev. Steven Mackison** sharing duties over six Sundays.

And more fantastic news as we look ahead - **we have a Junior Warden!** Please welcome **John Matthews** to the Wardens team. He is a regular at the 8 AM service and has a cottage on Clear Lake. Says John: "*St. Peter's on-the Rock has always been a special place for the Matthews Family. I am looking forward to the family tradition of volunteering within such a special community.*"

In closing, the Wardens of St. Peter's thank all of you who have made financial contributions and have given so generously of your time to support worship activities in our beautiful island church. As we embrace the joy of this holiday season, we are especially grateful for the support and fellowship of our St. Peter's family. We wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and heart-filled holiday season!

Sincerely,

Your Wardens,

Rachel Corbett, David Hubbs and Andy Bouffard