

Melfort United Church

December 2018 / Christmas Newsletter

Mark Your Calendar

12.2

Communion Service
Noon Lunch

12.9

Food Bank Sunday
Rotary Carol Festival
2 pm & 7 pm

12.16

White Gift Sunday

12.23

Third Sunday of Advent

12.24

Christmas Even Candlelight
Service @ 7 pm

12.25 – 01-01

Church Office Closed

12.30

Fifth Sunday
Worship Leader:
J. Stevenson

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK ADVENT MESSAGE

Luke 21:25-28; 34-36:

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

--- *"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

As I read this Luke's Gospel Lesson for the first Sunday of Advent season and listen to the morning news in our country and elsewhere in the world, I am asking myself whether the signs of our time are any different from that of Luke's audience more than 2000 years ago.

Like in Luke's time, we still are witness to signs of struggles, challenges, suspicion, and mistrust in our lives and in the world.

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FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK CONTINUED

Fear and hopelessness still abound all around us.

I heard that GM Auto Company in Oshawa will soon close its doors and 3000 or more employees will lose their jobs as a result of that closure. I also heard that our country's oil companies are badly struggling to make ends meet, especially in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Such companies have also been forced to lay off thousands and thousands of their employees.

It's no good news at all, especially in regard to our country's economic outlook or for the people whose livelihood and well being depended on these jobs. There are so many other signs (individual or corporate) that spell doom in people's lives and render them desperate and hopeless. As Luke puts it, when these things take place, they cause people to faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon them, as the foundation of their lives is shaken.

But Advent is also not supposed to begin that way. It is supposed to be about hope, peace, joy and love. It tells us that, in the midst of what seems to be darkness all around us, a light is coming to clear that darkness and illumine the way towards new beginnings. In Advent, we expectantly wait and prepare for that Light to come and shine upon us, inspiring hope, peace, joy and love in us once again to face it all with courage and faithfulness. Advent tells us that the future will be far much better.

In our struggles as individuals, as a church, as a nation, and the world, we celebrate this season of waiting and preparation for the birth of he who is the hope, the peace, the joy, the love and light for the world. May we, therefore, be on guard not to be weighed down by those worries and struggles of our lives, but be ready at all times to joyfully welcome that day. May we be alert at its coming, lest it catches us unexpectedly!

I wish you all and your families, a hope, peace, joy, and love filled Advent season and a Merry Christmas!

Rev. Emmanuel Menyereye

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2019

Melfort United Church will host the "World Day of Prayer" Service on Friday, March 1, 2019.

Invitations will go out to other denominations in January, after a planning meeting has taken place including representation from each Church in Melfort or area.

The World Day of Prayer Service for 2019 has been prepared by the people of Slovenia.

Local Contacts:

Robin Miazga

Gwendolyn Mills Wood

FINANCE COMMITTEE

We would like to say "hats off" to all those involved in the many different fundraisers that were held in our church. These events are so important for the future of our church family both spiritually and financially. The noon luncheons, Scott Woods Concert, two yard sales, pie sales, GST auction, fall supper and Fundschrift all helped to raise over \$20,000....wow, what a huge difference that made to our budget. To the organizers, the workers, the supporters, Thank you thank you one and all.

This is Peggy's last year on the finance committee, leaving only Cheryl and Kim. As the New Year approaches along with the Annual Meeting please consider taking your turn on the Board...Finance Committee will definitely need another person or two.

***May the Spirit of Love, the Beauty of Hope
and the Blessing of Peace
be your gift today and always!***

Merriest of Christmas from us to you.
Peggy George, Cheryl Sproule and Kim Eskowich.

THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST

rediscover the
strength and faith within you
vibrant and fresh
your christmas and new year gift
from Jesus Christ our savior

CO-CHAIR GREETINGS

Once again, we have had a very busy and productive fall – Fall Supper, Tea and Bazaar, Pie Sale, Garage Sale, Choir Practice, Joint Needs Assessment to name a few things that have and are continuing to happen in our congregation. Thank you all for your participation.

The Joint Needs Assessment Committee (Rick Peters, Sue Amundrud and Christine Dean) are hard at work. In the near future they will want our input, and it is very critical that we support them in the process by participating when we are called upon. They want to know and understand what the needs and wants are for our community of faith. They cannot do this unless we actively participate.

Advent is a time of waiting and preparing. It's also a time to reflect and appreciate. The next few weeks are busy with concerts, staff and friend get togethers, baking, plays, all things that make the season special. But try to sneak a moment each day to reflect on the upcoming birth and the many blessings in our lives.

On behalf of myself and my trusted Co-Chair Lorne, we wish you a Blessed and Merry Christmas!

Respectfully submitted by Don Neher

I'M GLAD MY CHURCH NEEDS MONEY

Frequently we hear those words as an accusation against the church. On the contrary. In fact, those words can be a very high compliment!

I'm glad my church needs money. If it didn't, it would mean we weren't interested in spreading the message of Good News and had no hope.

I'm glad my church needs money. If it didn't, it would mean it wasn't interested in teaching children, in inviting in those who do not have a faith community, of welcoming new folk and thus had no future.

Yes! I am glad my church needs money!! The fact that it does need money means it has not forfeited its zeal, compassion, concern, evangelism and future. The vision is still there searching for the places God is calling us forward to be.

My church needs MY gifts and I'm glad. I wouldn't want to be a member of any other kind.

Let us respond generously, and pray fervently that our gifts may be used wisely and well in the furtherance of the Love, Joy, Peace and Justice of Jesus. Amen!

Respectfully submitted by Jeanette Stevenson



Luke 2:11-14

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with an angel, praising God and saying, “Glory be to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

We have some very festive worship services planned for December.

December 2nd is the first day of advent, and we will be celebrating with Holy Communion and lighting of the HOPE candle.

December 9th we pause to celebrate PEACE by lighting the Second Advent candle.

December 16th we receive the light of JOY as we rejoice with the White Gift Service. Unwrapped gifts are accepted for the Salvation Army toy drive and the Hadwen sisters are collecting pajamas for the Salvation Army hampers as well. All donations can be left in the vestibule.

December 23rd we observe the fourth Sunday in Advent. Today we light the candle of LOVE. Join us in church early as Hymn sing starts at 10:20.

December 24th we come together for our evening candle light service. It is a truly touching service with many families and friends coming together for the celebration. Join us at 7:00 pm.

Each Sunday in Advent we will have special readers and we always look forward to the music provided by our passionate and spirited choir.

December wraps up with a special service lead by the Stevenson family on the 30th.

Respectfully submitted by Jean Senecal

PEOPLE NEWS

Funerals

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of:
Lorraine Doris Folden
Elmer Iris Irvine
Diana Edith Nielsen

Marriages

Rylan Peter Gates and
Jillian Anne Horkoff

Baptisms

Evie Caryse Steffen,
daughter of Robert Steffen
and Lacey Wilton



As we rejoice and celebrate this wonderful season of Christmas, let us not forget to thank baby Jesus for coming into our lives.

MELFORT UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Thank you to everyone who helped make the "Aging Well" Noon luncheon and the 2018 Tea & Bazaar a success. We really appreciate your organizing, help and support.

Please help Naomi with their "Mitten Tree". They will gladly take hand knit or bought mitts to donate to charity. Instead of a gift exchange, Women Alive donated pyjamas for the Hadwen Girls' PJ Project.

UCW is hosting the January 13, 2019 Noon Luncheon.

January 17, 2019 will be UCW's Annual potluck Meeting @12:00 noon.

Melfort UCW is hosting the World Day of Prayer on March 1, 2019.

Wishing You and Yours a Blessed Christmas!

Respectfully submitted by Gale Strachan

CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS

The church office will be closed from December 25th to January 1st, 2018. Donations will still be accepted during this time. You can drop the donations in my mailbox or mail them to Box 1064. I will also be periodically checking the voicemail and email over the holidays if you have any pressing concerns.

For pastoral care emergencies, Emmanuel will be able to be reached on his cell at 306-930-4093.

I am blessed every day by your kindness, help and dedication as volunteers. You make my job easy. Thank you!

Merry Christmas!

Denise

Let us together prepare ourselves to welcome him into the homes of our hearts. Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones.