



The Spirit of St. John's Advent 2015

Gerry and Joyce Stephenson: Ever faithful.

Joyce and Gerald Stephenson have been members of St. John's United Church since they moved here from Saskatchewan many years ago. Gerry has served as Treasurer for the church for the past twenty-five years, and has witnessed as well as helped design many of the changes that our church has undergone in the last generation. For many years, Joyce has been our Archivist – ensuring that our history is recorded, catalogued, and maintained for our generations to come. For more than ten years, the regular publication of the Spirit has been Joyce's constant effort in design, writing and editing. Although both Gerry and Joyce continue to serve our congregation in other capacities, at the end of June, Gerry retired as Treasurer, and Joyce retired as editor of the Spirit. We will find an opportunity to thank them formally for their dedication in the next few weeks. Joyce continues to lead Prayer Group on Tuesday mornings, and serves on the Communications and Administration Team. Gerry is teaching our new treasurer, John Smouter all he needs to know about how to record and keep track of church finances. Future publications of The Spirit will be coordinated by the Communications and Administration Team. Please email your comments and suggestions to admin@stjohnsunited.ca



Paint Nite! and Ladies Day in October-Fellowship, Faith and Fund raising

Our weekend in October was most successful, on Friday evening, a Paint Nite fundraiser in support of the Syrian refugee fund welcomed aspiring artists to create their own work with guidance from an expert. On Saturday, a ladies retreat day saw some of the same women return for worship, conversation, and inspiration in a relaxed atmosphere with some great guest speakers.



LIFE & WORK OF ST. JOHN'S

Christmas Family Support: St. John's will again be sponsoring three families this season in our community that are experiencing financial hardship, and whom without our support would not be able to enjoy this holiday season as we do. More details about the families, and sign up sheets will be on the Family Ministries Board in the lobby. Your gifts and donations will be collected on White Gift Sunday, December 13th.



*A Candlelight Christmas
Sunday December 13,
7:00 pm*

Candlelight Christmas Service: On December 13th at 7:00 pm, the Chancel choir will present a musical offering of their best works for the season. Please join us, as we celebrate the season, and the birth of our Lord with congregational carols and traditional music.

Grief Gathering: Please join Sheila Tuesday December 15th from 4 to 6 pm. Those of you who are missing loved ones in this holiday season are invited to the Jean Henderson lounge for a time of conversation, food and worship. Your loss need not be recent. We all need to take time in the midst of the joy of the season to acknowledge the grief, and remember the life changes that we have all experienced.

Food & Fellowship: Friday night Community Dinners are served at 6:30 pm on December 20 and January 22, punch and fellowship begins at 6:00 pm. Full course home cooking with dessert and treats for only \$15, children under 12 eat free. Wednesday December 9 at 6:00 pm will be another A+ Dinner, great food and entertainment for seniors and guests.

Faith & Fellowship: On Monday December 21st at 7:00 pm all are invited to a short time of worship in the Memorial Garden as we celebrate the coming of the light of a new season in Word and Song (and enjoy hot chocolate and cookies). At this busy time of the year, we will welcome the pause between the seasons—and anticipate the renewed life promised to God's people.

Breakfast at Dawn continues every other week on Friday mornings at 7:00 am December 4th and 18th, January 8th and 22nd. Deep discussion on spiritual questions timely topics is a wonderful way to share breakfast with others. All are welcome.

Syrian Refugee Fund: With the change in our federal government, arrangements are moving more quickly than anticipated for the arrival of our sponsorship family. St. John's is working closely with the Halton inter-faith group, and expect that the family will be arriving in Canada soon. You can help by donating money, since the cost of housing in our area is substantial, and will be a bigger financial factor than originally anticipated. At this time, we are also most appreciative of donations of cleaning supplies and personal toiletry items. Once the family arrives in Canada, we will be able to reassess what immediate needs are, and will keep the congregation apprised of new developments. Thank you for your ongoing support.

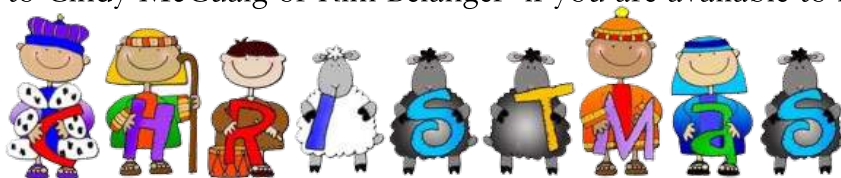
FAMILY, YOUTH & CHILDREN MINISTRIES



It's hard to believe Christmas is just around the corner! That also means that our Christmas Messy Church Worship Event: The Miracle of Jesus, is happening SOON! We hope that you can join us on Sunday December 6 at 4:00 p.m. for a potluck dinner, hands on worship, exciting stations, fellowship, and fun. There will be maps to follow and people to meet...angels to see and songs to sing...crafts to make and adventures to be had. It will almost be like a mini Vacation Bible School for ALL ages and we really hope you'll join us!

Please RSVP to Kim at kim@stjohnsunited.ca, or sign up on the Family Ministries Board in the lobby so that we can be sure to have enough supplies for everyone. Be sure to bring your favourite dish to share with others! Come and join families of all ages and stages to share in this exciting worship event. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

God Headquarters continues with an Advent theme!. All children and youth are welcome to join our weekly program Sunday morning after we gather for worship in the sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. Children 3yrs and under will be welcomed into the Nursery, children ages 4 through grade 5 will have lessons filled with scripture, music, crafts, games and more, and those youth in grades 6 and up will gather in the youth room to have a deeper time of reflection. We are in need of adult volunteers for all age groups—please speak to Cindy McCuaig or Kim Belanger if you are available to help out.



Calling all children and youth who are interested in participating in the 7:00 p.m. Family Service on Christmas Eve this year!

Beginning on Thursday November 19 from 7:00–7:45 p.m. we will be meeting to plan our drama, learn some music, and prepare for a meaningful service! All youth in SK and up are asked to join us for all rehearsals. Older youth will have larger roles and more music to learn while younger youth will have smaller roles...we are really looking forward to having all ages working on this wonderful presentation together. We will also have another few rehearsals added to the calendar so be sure to watch for further notices. Please speak to Kim, Svetlana, or Amy Moodie as soon as possible if you would like to participate.

Youth Christmas Banquet—Friday December 11. A potluck festive feast, and a special guest will ensure a wonderful evening is in store for all. Speak to Kim if you would like to come, or don't know what to bring!

Worship

Sunday November 29

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Jeremiah 33: 14-16, Luke 21: 25-36

Communion by intinction

Sunday December 6

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Malachi 3: 1-4, Luke 3: 1-6

Advent Messy Church 4:00 pm

Sunday December 13

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

White Gift Service

Isaiah 12: 2-6, Luke 3: 7-18

Candlelight service, 7:00 pm

Sunday December 20

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Micah 5: 2-5a, Luke 1: 39-45 (46-55)

Monday December 21

7:00 pm Rev. Sheila Murray

Reflection and prayers for the return of light

Thursday December 24

7:00 pm Family Service

10:00 pm Christmas Communion

Sunday December 27

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

1 Samuel 2: 18-20,26, Psalm 148, Luke 2: 41-52

Sunday January 3

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Jeremiah 31: 7-14, Psalm 147: 12-20, John 1: 1-18

Sunday January 10

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Isaiah 43: 1-7, Psalm 29, Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

Soup Lunch following worship

Sunday January 17

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Proverbs 4: 18-27, Matthew 5: 14-16

Cake Bake-off

Sunday January 24

10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Proverbs 30: 4-5, Matthew 5: 13

Christian Unity Worship, 7:00 pm

Weekly at St. John's

Tuesday:

Prayer Group, Terry Chapel 10:00 am

Thursday:

Henderson Bell Choir practice: 6:00 pm

Chancel Choir rehearsal: 7:00 pm

Youth Group: 7:30 pm

Faith and Fellowship

Breakfast At Dawn:

Friday mornings 7:00 am

December 4 & 18, January 8 & 22, February 5 & 19

Women's Fellowship Group:

Wednesday afternoons at 1:30 pm

December 2, January 6, February 3

Community Communion:

Delmanor: 2:00 pm-November 24

Kensington: 3:30pm-November 24

Churchhill Place: 2:30 pm-November 26

Trafalgar Lodge: 3:30 pm-November 26

Food and Fellowship

Youth Group Banquet - December 11, 4:00 pm

Soup Lunch - January 10 following worship

Community Dinners- Friday January 22 and March 4
6:00 pm, tickets in advance or at the door.

A+ Dinner - Wednesday December 9th, 6:00 pm

Pancake Supper - February 9, 6:00 pm

Events

Annual Christmas Bazaar-November 28, 9:00-1:30

Advent Messy Church - December 6, 4:00 pm

Board Meetings - November 25th, January 20, 7:30 pm

Power of One Cake Bake-Off January 17, 12 noon

Team Leaders - January 23 10.00am - Noon

Oakville Children's Choir Concerts - December 5 & 12

Musikay Concert - December 19 - 7:00 pm

Unity Worship & Hymn sing - January 24 - 7:00 pm

THE POWER OF ONE



Cob's Dough Raiser Fundraiser

For folks in our community who frequent Cob's Bakery on Lakeshore Road, please remember that if you mention St. John's United Church, a percentage of your purchase will be donated towards our chosen charity—Kerr St. Mission.

Syrian Refugee Fund

Thank you to all those who attended our amazing Paint Nite Fundraiser! We all had fun and raised \$705 towards our Syrian Refugee Fund. Volunteers are actively collecting items and setting up support for arrival. With the change in government our family could be here earlier than expected! Thank you to those who signed up to supply toiletries and cleaning products. Housing is turning out to be more expensive than originally thought so we are needing to stretch the original budget. Please consider making a donation to the Syrian Refugee Fund, perhaps in lieu of a gift for someone this Christmas who is hard to buy for. Every penny helps to build this fund which will assist this family to get on their feet for the next year.

Looking Ahead

Men's Cake Bake-Off

This annual event will be held on Jan. 17th 2016, after the morning service. It is time for the men to get their creativity in motion to dream up another spectacular entry for this auction. We have had such wonderful entries over the last few years! They are wonderful to look, as well as being delicious and many people go home with a treasure. For the past few years, this has proven to be a significant and most fun way to raise a considerable amount towards our First Nation's Bursary. The sign up sheets for bakers will be posted at the church at the beginning of January.

Modern Miracle Spaghetti Dinner

This year our dinner will be held at Maple Grove United Church on Sunday Feb. 21st 2016. We will be using their brand new kitchen! Mark your calendars for this event, and plan on excellent Italian food, and an opportunity to help prepare, serve, or clean up for a great cause. All proceeds go to The Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

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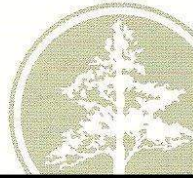


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10 am - 6 pm Mon-Fri
9 am - 1 pm Sat



For all your health care needs... We've got you covered.

Our new and improved website is due for release the week of November 22nd. Bookmark in your browser www.stjohnsunited.ca, and look for regular updates on events, worship services, links to recent sermons, readings and reflections. There is also an on-line calendar feature that will help you keep track of what's going on! We are also on Facebook – like us at [stjohnsunitedchurchoakville](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsunitedchurchoakville).

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH

262 Randall St., at Dunn St. - in beautiful downtown Oakville!
Lots of parking! (905-845-0551)

Annual Christmas Bazaar

Saturday November 28, 2015
9:00 a.m – 1:30 p.m.

Crèche displays from around the world in the Sanctuary -Angel Crafts
Home-Baking, Pies, Jams and Preserves
Sewing and Gifts-Unique Gift Baskets-Treasure Room - antiques and heirlooms



Your donations of treasures, linens, and items for the silent auction for this year's bazaar may be brought to the church and placed in the marked bins after November 22nd. Your donations of baked goods and preserves will be accepted Wednesday through Friday. If you are sharing a creche for display in the sanctuary, please label it with your name, and bring it to the church by November 26th. Thank you!

Please note: the Church office will be closed December 24–28 inclusive, and December 31–January 3.

262 Randall Street (at Dunn), downtown Oakville L6J 1P9

Reverend Sheila Murray - sheila@stjohnsunited.ca

Kim Belanger, DLM - kim@stjohnsunited.ca

Svetlana Kotliarenko, Director of Music

Ruth Staple, Administrator - office@stjohnsunited.ca

Ken Plante, Custodian.