The Spirit of St John's United Church

Advent 2017

Christmas Eve Worship at St. John's.

Christmas Eve this year falls on a Sunday – and St. John's will open our doors for worship at our usual time of 10:30 am, as well as in the evening for our early family service at 7:00 pm, with an all ages presentation of "What, No Angels?" At 10:00 pm, we will celebrate the birth of Christ with a candlelit Communion service, You will be welcomed on this holiest night of the year.

Between the services on Christmas eve, you are invited to stop into Lusk Hall to enjoy a cup of hot apple cider and some cookies. We are looking forward to seeing families reunited for the holidays, and warmly wishing you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas season.

How can you make a difference this Christmas Season? Our White Gift family this year is Samantha, a single mom with 4 children; Mellony 11, Tristan 6, Marcus 4, and Isabella aged 1. Samantha's mother Michelle has moved in to help with the work and worry of raising 4 children. Their Christmas wish lists are posted on the family ministries board in the lobby – if you can help make this family's Christmas a little brighter, you can sign up, and bring your unwrapped gift to the church on **White Gift Sunday, December 10th. The Malhem's, from Syria,** are settling well into their new lives in Canada – but their income is still limited. You might consider donating gift cards for grocery stores or fuel – enabling them to stretch their own resources a little further. **Kerr St. Ministries Christmas Wonders and Beyond** program helps bring comfort and joy to Oakville families in need this Christmas. You can visit kerrstreet.com for more information, and to see how your donation can make a difference to another local family in need. St. John's also holds a small **Benevolent fund** that you many wish to consider making a donation to. From time to time, our Ministers become aware of specific instances of financial hardship within our community, and our benevolent fund allows us as a church community to assist in those who may be in need in a time of crisis. Please speak to Sheila or Kim, or mark your donation "Benevolent Funds".

United Church of Canada Remit Update

In August 2015, the 42ndGeneral Council approved a number of remits or questions to be voted on by pastoral charges and presbyteries.The results of these remits will make significant changes to both the organizational and financial structure of the United Church of Canada.

Remits 1, 2, 3 and 4 were carried at the St. John's Official Board Meetings in November, January, March, and May. These remits were also approved by the majority of presbyteries and pastoral charges and will be taken to the 43rd General Council for approval when it meets in July 2018. Details results of the voting can be found at www.gc42.ca/remits

Remit 6 – One order of Ministry – was voted on at the St. John's Official Board Meeting on November 22 and unanimously not supported. The voting deadline for Remit 6 is February 28, 2018 and results will be posted at www.gc42.ca/remits

A Remit Implementation Task Force is currently laying the ground work for a smooth transition to these new structures and processes. Further information on the implementation can be found at www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/remit-implementation

LIFE & WORK OF ST. JOHN'S

Ladies Day at St. John's on November 4 was another great day of ministry! The parable of the vine and branches was a great way to reconnect with God and connect with one another. Almost 45 women gathered to worship, learn and make some interesting crafts . Thanks to all who supported and made this day so memorable.

Christmas Cantata Service: This year the chancel choir and guests present a Gospel Christmas Celebration – JOY! on Sunday December 17th at 10:30 am, as part of Sunday morning worship. Please join us, as we celebrate the season, and the birth of our Lord in a new and entertaining way!

Food & Fellowship: Wednesday December 13 at 6:00 pm will be another A+ Dinner, with great food and a caroling sing-a-long for seniors and guests.

Friday night Community Dinners are served at 6:30 pm on January 26, punch and fellowship begins at 6:00 pm. Full course home cooking with dessert and treats for only $15, children under 12 eat free.

Faith & Fellowship: On Thursday December 21st at 6:00pm 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. 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 1st & 15th, and resumes in January on the 12th. Deep discussion on spiritual questions and timely topics is a wonderful way to share breakfast with others.

Advent Messy Church & Pot Luck Dinner!

Sunday December 3rd 5:00 p.m. "The King's Birthday"

All ages and sizes of families are invited to join in as we prepare our hearts once again for the Christ Child to enter. We will share in a potluck meal, enjoy some fabulous music, and share in the Christmas story with a birthday party feel! This is a fabulous event for all to begin Advent and to get in the Spirit of the season! Hope to see you there....be sure to email Kim with any questions at kim@stjohnsunited.ca.

Worship

Sunday December 3
Advent 1 - Communion
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Mark 13: 24-37
Oakville Children's Choir
5:00 pm - Messy Church & Potluck Dinner

Sunday December 10
Advent 2 - White Gift Service
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13, Isaiah 40: 1-11, Mark 1: 1-8
Henderson Bell Choir

Sunday December 17
Advent 3 - Choir Cantata: Joy!
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray

Thursday December 21
6:00 pm Rev. Sheila Murray
Reflection and prayers for the return of light.

Sunday December 24
Advent 4 - Christmas Eve
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Luke 1: 26-38, Luke 1: 46b-35
7:00 pm Family Service "What, no Angels?"
10:00 pm Christmas Communion

Sunday December 31
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Psalm 148, Luke 2: 22-40

Sunday January 7
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Psalm 29, Mark 1: 4-11
Soup Lunch following worship

Sunday January 14
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Psalm 139, John 1: 43-51

Sunday January 21
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
1 Samuel 3: 1-10 (11-20) Mark 1: 14-20
Men's Cake Bake-Off following worship

Sunday January 28
10:30 am Rev. Sheila Murray
Psalm 147; Mark 1: 29-39

Weekly at St. John's

Tuesdays:
Prayer Group, Terry Chapel 10:00 am

Thursdays:
Henderson Bell Choir practice 5:00 pm
Chancel Choir rehearsal 7:30 pm
Youth Group 7:30 pm

Faith and Fellowship

Breakfast At Dawn:
Friday mornings 7:00 am
December 1, 15, January 12 & 26, February 9 & 23

Women's Fellowship Group:
First Wednesday of the month at 1:30 pm
December 6, January 3, February 7

Euchre Events - Tuesday, December 12th, and Tuesday, January 9th. Euchre, prizes and refreshments for only $6 per person starting at 7:30 pm. Everyone is welcome, no matter your skill level.

Community Communion:
Tuesday, December 26, Delmanor at 2.15pm
Tuesday, January 23, Delmanor time TBD

Food and Fellowship

A+ Dinner - Wednesday, December 14, 6:00 pm

Youth Group Banquet - Sunday, December 17, 5:00 pm

Soup Lunch - Sunday, January 7, following worship

Community Dinner - Friday, January 26. 6:00 pm, tickets in advance or at the door. Only $15!

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! February 13, 6:00 pm

Events

Oakville Children's Choir Community Carol Concerts - Saturday, December 9, 1:30 & 4:00 pm

Staff Open House - Tuesday, December 19, 10 am

Power of One Cake Bake-Off Sunday, January 21, 12pm

Board Meeting - Thursday, January 24, 7:30 pm

Messy Church - Friday, February 9, 6:00 pm

Annual General Meeting - February 11, after worship

THE POWER OF ONE

Malhem family update. Over the last month the Malhem's have made some significant improvements in their life in Canada. They have increased their independence by purchasing their own car and are so excited to cut down their travel time to work and school by over an hour! There are lots of costs involved such as daily parking at their apartment as well as upkeep but it makes life so much easier! Lina is now working half time at the Accountant's office where she was doing a placement and has applied to both Sheridan and Humber colleges to start in January. Jouma is continuing his studies for Lab Technician. The children are growing and learning to become Canadians!

Men's Cake Bake-Off! This popular event will be held on January 21st 2018, 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. Over the past few years, a competitive spirit of sorts has developed among a few of the men who try to outdo each other on the creativity front! As well as being beautiful, the cakes are delicious and many people go home with a treasure. For the past few years, the cake auction has proven to be a significant and most fun way to raise a considerable amount towards our **First Nation's Bursary**. Watch for the sign up sheets for bakers that will be posted at the church at the beginning of January.

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