

Deseronto-Napanee Pastoral Charge

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Upcoming Events

November 28th

Christmas Prep – We will be decorating our sanctuary for the Advent Season beginning at 2:00 p.m. Please wear a mask and join us for an afternoon of fun and festive fellowship!

November 29th

Advent One – We will be kicking off our Advent Season with the **Sacrament of Holy Communion**. To maintain Covid protocols, there will be pre-packaged portions for pick-up at the door.

December 3rd

Poinsettia Pick-Up – If you have purchased a poinsettia or planter, and do not have a scheduled time to pick it up, please contact Leslie. When you arrive, please come to the back door. Once you have been buzzed in, please sign in and sanitize your hands. Leslie and your purchase will be waiting for you in the Board Room.

A year like no other.

As we come nearer to the end of the year 2020, it is clear that this has been a year like no other. The Covid-19 pandemic has upended the whole world. At this time last year, there were news reports of a new virus that was impacting life in China, but most of us did not predict that it was going to completely change our lives here, but here we are.

We have experienced the shut-down of our worship services for months on end, and worship is the core of what we do. All of our other activities were also put on hold. Kudos for the organizers of the Plant and Garden Sale for transitioning to a drive-by plant sale last spring. Thank you, also, to the Grace pandemic protocols team for figuring out what we need to do to worship safely. Thank you to those who have continued to look after the building, even in the midst of lack of activity. Thank you to all who are conscientious about following the procedures that we have put in place to allow us to gather safely.

As I look at the Advent and Christmas season Bible readings coming up, I am struck with how they resonate with our cries these days.

“O, that you would open the heavens and come down,” pleads Isaiah to God. (Isaiah 64: 1)

In another passage, Isaiah says, “Comfort, O comfort, my people; speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term.” (Isaiah 40: 1-2)

For those who are getting impatient about all the restrictions on our lives, Peter reminds us, “Do not ignore this one

fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day." (2 Peter 3: 8)

And then, there is the passage from Thessalonians which reminds us that compared to much of the world, we are blessed to have an abundance of resources available to us in dealing with the pandemic: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)

And then we sit beside Mary, and hear the good news that a Saviour will be born: "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High...Of his kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1: 32-33)

Taken together, these passages give us longing for justice, comfort from God, wisdom about the ways of God, acknowledging our blessings even in the midst of trouble, and the ultimate salvation. This is the Christian story. Thanks be to God.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find details about upcoming worship experiences. If things need to change with changing circumstances, we will do our best to let you know. Feel free to phone or e-mail the church office if you have questions or needs.

Rev. Elaine

Mitten Tree

On November 28th we will once again erect our Mitten Tree. The items that are donated to build and decorate our tree will be distributed to several local agencies that support individuals and families that are experiencing a difficult time accessing warm clothing. We are looking for new mittens/gloves, hats, scarves, socks, and pajamas to adorn our tree. If you feel that you are able to support this endeavor, please bring your article(s) with you to a worship service and place it/them on the tree on or before Sunday, December 13th, or contact Leslie in the office for pick up.



More Upcoming Events

December 6th

Advent Two – We will be welcoming two new little ones into our church family through **Holy Baptism**. Please join us in celebrating these beautiful souls and their families.

December 13th

Advent Three

December 20th

Advent Four – We continue our Advent lead up with our annual **Lessons and Carols Service**. Please join us for a special service featuring favourite Christmas scripture passages and music.

Reverse Advent Calendar

For the last several years, the Grace congregation has participated in the Reverse Advent calendar to help individuals and families in our community to have more food in their cupboards over the Christmas Season. Please consider participating in this endeavor to support our local Salvation Army. It is super easy and spirit lifting! Find a box big enough to hold a bunch of non-perishable food items, decorate/wrap the box in festive wrapping paper if you wish, each day of the Advent season, place a food item in the box, and bring the box to the church on or before Friday, December 18th for delivery to the Salvation Army. Below is a suggestion list to guide you in the process, but it is by no means mandatory to place each specific item in your box. If you are unable to bring your box to the church, please contact Leslie in the office for pick up.



**REVERSE
ADVENT CALENDAR**

**EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A
FOOD BANK.**

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- December 20 - tomato soup
- December 21 - can corn
- December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- December 23 - can carrots
- December 24 - can green beans

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Upcoming Events

December 24th

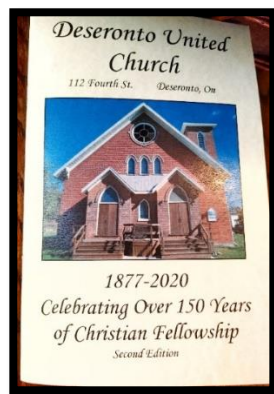
Christmas Eve – We will be hosting two Christmas Eve Services to help us abide by Covid attendance recommendations. The first service will be at 5:00 p.m. with the second at 8:00 p.m. This will allow our volunteers time to clean and sanitize the sanctuary in between services. Please contact Leslie in the office to let us know which service you would prefer to attend, and if you would be available to help with cleaning.

**Anyone that has purchased a poinsettia in memory or in honour of a loved one, may take their plant home with them following the Christmas Eve Service that they choose to attend.



Deseronto United Church History Booklet

Need a Christmas gift for the local history buff on your list? Look no further! To honour the closing of our Deseronto United Church building, we have updated our history booklet that was originally created to celebrate our 150th Anniversary. The new edition includes more information of congregational life, short biographies on some of our ministers, and information on individuals and families that have been remembered through the stained-glass windows and other sacred items. The booklets were available at the De-consecration Service held on Sunday, October 25th, and there are still a few remaining. If you would like a copy, please contact Leslie in the office. There is no cost for the booklet, but a donation towards the cost of printing would be gratefully appreciated.



Quin-Mo-Lac Fundraiser

Due to Covid-19, Quin-Mo-Lac Camp, in Tweed, was forced to close their doors, like many other camps, to campers this summer. As a result, Quin-Mo-Lac has had to undertake more fundraising endeavours to help cover their baseline expenses. The Quin-Mo-Lac Alumni Committee is currently running a "Magic Penny Challenge" Fundraiser with a goal of raising \$92,000.00. Individuals and teams sign-up at www.CanadaHelps.org/en/charities/camp-quin-mo-lac/p2p/magicpennychallenge and organize their own fundraising efforts to vie for the title of "Top Fundraiser(s)". Rev. Elaine is in the process of setting up a team to represent the Napanee area. If you are interested in joining her team or making a donation, please let her know and follow the link above.

"We are excited to see that QML spirit shine while we reconnect with old friends and support the place that holds a special spot in all of our hearts!"



Important Announcement

A BIG thank you to the newly combined Worship, Music, and Sacraments Committee for putting up the outdoor Christmas lights at the front of the church!! It has added a little bit of cheer to our building and community, and it has been appreciated by both young and 'young at heart' alike.

Looking Ahead to 2021

January 7th

Worship, Music, and Sacraments Committee Meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Hall.

January 18th

Joint Board Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Grace Hall.

January 25th

Grace Board Meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Hall.

A Poem-Prayer

The following is a poem-prayer written by United Church of Canada Moderator, Richard Bott. It is written for those who love to sing the hymns of our faith, and who cannot at this time.

If I cannot sing with others,
my God,
in the caution we need
during this pandemic,
then help me to sing
the hymns and the songs
that celebrate your presence,
that are prayer and praise and lament,
hymns and choruses,
with words or without,
by myself.
And,
when I am with others...
well...
help me to move (yes!)
help me to feel the music
shared by the musicians
deep in my body, and,
help me (oh, help me!)
to move to the rhythm
(even if it's only my eyes or my fingers)
help me to tap my toes,
or shuffle my feet,
or shake my... hands,
and move myself,
in the Rhythm that is You.
Let our dance be our song,
let our movements be melody,
harmony,
or cacaphony,
in praise and celebration.
Let us make a joyful
movement
unto our God!
Oh, help me to dance,
my God!

