

Port Dover - Woodhouse Pastoral Charge Newsletter
December 2020



“For unto you is born this day in the City of David A Saviour who is Christ the Lord. “

“That is what Christmas is all about.”

From the minister...

As I write this, we are almost into the new Christian year. Advent begins November 29. So, early as it may seem, I wish to offer you Christmas greetings and prayers for the new year.

I needn't tell you that 2020 has been quite the challenging year. You know it already. You are living it. So this message will not focus on Covid-life. Instead, let me speak of the joys God continues to offer us.

We learned that those who can't come to church enjoy and appreciate joining our worship either by watching it online or receiving a written copy in the mail. So we have acquired the equipment to livestream the service. That means that those at home and in Seniors' residences can worship with us in real time instead of days later. However, if for some reason they cannot join us at 11 o'clock Sunday morning they can watch anytime later.

Choir members at both churches are taking turns soloing or joining another in a duet so that we may hear the words to our hymns rather than just listen to the music. Thank you so much for sharing your talent with us.

Volunteers have stepped forward to help with office tasks. This has been a great blessing. At Grace, volunteers have assumed the responsibilities of caretaking while Jeff is recovering from surgery. What a commitment! Volunteers have offered to help run the equipment for our livestreaming. Technology can be intimidating, so a big thank you.

Sock It To Me was a great success again this year. You donated 281 pairs of socks! On those cold wet days this winter I hope you think of those whom you have helped and feel the joy that comes with both the giving and the receiving.

At Grace, we are planning a Christmas concert to be livestreamed. Watch for the date when you will be able to sing along (from home) to those familiar and loved Christmas carols. At Woodhouse, we are hoping to tape the traditional candlelight service and put it on YouTube. Once again, you will be able to participate from home.

Mary and Joseph faced challenges too. An unplanned pregnancy, a journey to Bethlehem, no room at the inn, a flight to Egypt... Yet, through others, God kept them safe and provided for. Through their son, Jesus, we too are provided for. The provisions have nothing to do with material goods. They have no *retail value*. Jesus has brought us Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. During Advent, we celebrate those four gifts. And on Christmas Day we celebrate the personification of all four in the birth of Jesus.

Again this year, no matter how different your celebration is, feast on those gifts. Drink heartily from the well of Hope; fill yourself with Peace; stuff yourself with joy; and gorge yourself on love. Then take those gifts with you into 2021. Remember, the power of Jesus is greater than anything life can impose upon us.

Finally, I wish to thank you all for another blessed year with you in God's service. You have been kind, loving, and patient with me. I look forward to our relationship growing even closer in the year ahead. Together in Christ

Kathryn





My Memories of Early Christmas Candlelight Services at Woodhouse Church

Written By Dave Stone

In 1962 a HI-C Group (teenage youth) was organized under the leadership of Isabel Stone, counsellor and Rev. G A B Moore, minister. With a membership of 27 teenagers from the community. Some attended Woodhouse Church regularly with their families. The group held the first Christmas Candlelight Service at the church Christmas Sunday that year and the church has maintained the tradition for fifty-seven years so far.

Isabel, (my mother) was a gifted organizer and leader, with a natural way of making you want to participate and give you confidence to do things out of your comfort zone. Mom wanted to involve as many families as possible, and found Christmas Tide Service: Service of Ten Lessons and Carols leading to birth of Jesus. Adapted from King's College, Cambridge.

Ten lessons, read from ten families, carols, huge choir of youth along with choir members. Full family participation. It was brilliant, in my mind. Mom told my dad she would need candle holders in pews and window sills so dad made them out of pine. Dad didn't have power tools so I watched him use his well-used cross cut saw, mitre square, a wood measuring stick and brace and bit to drill the holes. He made a jig to get the angle right and each hole is tapered at fifteen degrees. We still use the pew ones today. Willie Moore made the iron ones at his garage shop for the walls some years later and he told me how precise my dad was in those humble candle holders. I thought of Joseph, a humble carpenter.

Pat Tiller, Jim Tiller, Marion Pepper, Willie Moore and others were there from the beginning along with many congregational members still. They had a lot of fun preparing and practicing music. Mom and Dad had many practices at our home over the years and that gelled the group as a fun-loving team. There was a lot of nervousness, anxiety on those evening services. Later on, my dad got back to playing the violin accompanied by Pat, and there were many solos sung, duets, quartets and always special music. It was hard work but so much enjoyment. The service itself is very meaningful to all and you get to sing carols and connect with God and in later years, I think about all those church friends who have passed on already.

I was six years old in 1962. What I remember was how bad the winter weather seemed to be most years. I remember one year digging out nine inches of fresh snow out, just to get out of our driveway. We never cancelled back then! We pushed each other's cars out of the church parking lot and everything! The washrooms were located outside and with the snow and wind howling beside the cemetery, my imagination would tell me, get er done because this is spooky out here! Wind and Snow added ambience and excitement. The choir entered from the back of the church, carrying candles, hymn books and music. The wind made it difficult to simultaneously have everyone ready at the back on cue from the organ at the front. The Processional Hymn is Hark the Glad Sound. The windows in the church were very drafty so you had to keep a keen eye on those drip candles. They'd burn down! There was a lot of excitement and energy and good music and fellowship going on. I had two wonderful parents, a great church family, and lots of good memories.

News from Pikangikum-Marjorie Dawson

Out of the blue, during the height of COVID this spring Joseph Sagaj, an Anishinaabe artist in Toronto, contacted Marjorie and Jim Dawson to say he had some art supplies he'd like to donate to a young artist in a first nation community as the lease on his storage unit was expiring. Jim and Marjorie know a young Anishinaabe woman Amberlee, in high school in Pikangikum struggling with the death of her father who despite her young age is already an excellent artist..

Despite Covid restrictions, including the shutdown of Pikangikum, the art supplies were delivered to Pikangikum this fall. Their journey included a 24 drive in the Dawsons' car to the end of the road in /Red Lake, help from the Red Lake OPP to store the supplies through the summer and deliver them to a school consultant and a trip on a chartered plane to land at EBS school in Pikangikum.. Once there some of the materials were destined for young high school artist Amberlee King, and, the rest of the materials were given to the high school art program.

The story doesn't end there either. Joseph Sagaj is known for his mural art which can be found in various buildings in southern Ontario. Amberlee has never had an opportunity to do a mural as opportunities to paint murals are few and far between in a remote fly in community. Then this fall, after having received the supplies and having been connected with Joseph Sagaj, she was asked to paint a mural for the Project Journey classroom!



Amberlee posted: 11 days ago I was asked if I could do a painting on a wall for Narcisse and I said okay right away! I hope to do more big murals!! This is going to be my history too MAYBE. There were many times where I wanted to breakdown because I thought about my dad. Like how would he react if I told him I'd be painting on the school's wall. I kept thinking about ways of telling him when he's not even here for that.

Here is what teacher Narcisse Kakegabon posted on facebook:
Amberlee did a great job painting in what I'm going to be teaching throughout the year. It's how the elders created a foundation for Pikangikum and how they developed it. Each student will have an opportunity to place their hand on the tree and think about how could they continue to make Pikangikum, their community, a healthy place to live and learn.

Even in this very difficult year of 2020 God is certainly still at work in our world.



A new year of giving through **Gifts with Vision** has begun!

There are lots of great new gifts for our partners in Canada and across the world, along with some of your favourite projects from previous catalogues.

The world has changed so much since this time last year. What hasn't changed, though, is the impact your Gifts with Vision make. Our Gifts with Vision show how our partners are responding to the pandemic and how they are continuing to ensure your gifts help those that need it most. You can make sure that children in Lebanon, whose families have been plunged into poverty because of an economic crisis made worse by COVID-19, receive help to stay in school.

You can help newcomers to Canada meet new friends, improve their English, develop networks, and feel truly welcome through a weekly sewing bee which has made over 1,000 cloth masks for people in the community.

You can support a food bank that provides staples for those in need, and delivers to people at risk during this pandemic so they can remain safe in their homes.

Giving a Gift with Vision shows that you care, not just for the people you know, but for the people whose lives have been changed because of COVID-19. Give a Gift with Vision now or anytime and help save and transform lives.



Joint Activities

"Sock It To Me" - together the churches donated **281 pairs of socks** to CMHA for distribution to those in need. Well Done (and a big thanks from CMHA staff)! Last year the count was 273.

November 29 First Sunday of Advent White Gift Sunday – Please bring an item for the Food Bank

Ecumenical Virtual Advent Walk - Sunday, November 29, 7:00pm Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there will not be a public walk this year. However you will be able to watch our ecumenical service on YouTube.

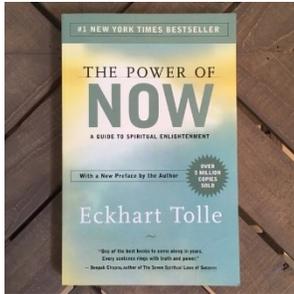
Living Faith Story - Our Living Faith Story has been posted to the web site

Live Streaming - We are now live streaming Sunday services and other special events - stay tuned

Bible Study - weekly, Tuesday 11:00am in the Grace Growing Place. We discuss the coming week's scripture

Christmas Concert and Sing Along Live Stream- Sunday Dec 6 2020 7:00 p.m.

Stained Glass Angel Tree Ornaments -Peter and Pam Annabelle are making and selling small angel ornaments. All monies raised will be donated to the Live Stream project.

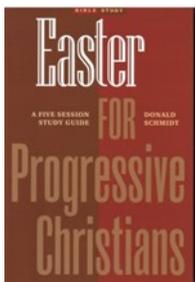


Eckhart Tolle Meditation and Study Group - weekly, Thursday 11:00am in the Grace Growing Place.

Eckhart Tolle is a spiritual teacher who lives in Vancouver. His first book "The Power of Now" leads you on a spiritual journey to finding "The peace that passes all understanding".

Everyone is welcome to join the group and realize Being through meditation and the words of Eckhart Tolle as we be Present and listen and discuss his teachings on YouTube.

The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment is a book by Eckhart Tolle. The book is intended to be a guide for day-to-day living and stresses the importance of living in the present moment and transcending thoughts of the past or future. Published in the late 1990s, the book was recommended by Oprah Winfrey and has been translated into 33 languages. As of 2009, it was estimated that three-million copies had been sold in North America. Source -Wikipedia



Looking ahead to Lenten Book Study, This year's book will be another in the series of Donald Schmidt.-Easter for Progressive Christians. It is a five week study Feb 18 to Mar 25. The book is \$14.95 plus tax and shipping.

Ministry and Outreach

Lakewood Christmas Program - M&O is again working with Lakewood School to support needy families this Christmas. We will be purchasing Walmart and Loblaws gift cards for the program in early December so families can meet their most critical needs. Please mark your donation for "Lakewood Christmas program " by Dec 1, 2020.



*Your generosity can really make a difference
for local families this Christmas*

Grace United Church



" FUNDSCRIP: Christmas is coming and once again Nancy Sherwin will be happy to take your orders for gift cards and shopping cards. This is a great way to solve your gift needs and help Grace United Church. Just contact Nancy at 519-583-3937 or e-mail her at nancysherwin@sympatico.ca. Deadline for orders will be Sunday November 29 so that we receive them in plenty of time."

What we've been up to.....

Four candles were lit during our Memorial Candle lighting on November 15.

Prayer group (every Tues 9am)

The following groups continue to meet at the church, TOPS, AA, Fitness Group

What's coming up.....

November 29 **First Sunday of Advent** - Communion

December 1 7:00pm Hand & Foot Cards 7-9pm in the hall

December 7 10:00am Worship & Music Committee

December 7 6:30pm Grace Council meeting - Zoom

December 14 7:00pm Hand & Foot Cards 7-9pm in the hall

December 20 **Memorial Candle Lighting** - Candles will be lit for: Shirley Blake, Bill Jaques, David Kilpatrick, Betty McKenzie, Robert Morrison, Ernest Quanbury, Bill Ramp, Ruth Ramp, Esther Stephens, Lola Thompson, Wayne Wilson

***December 24** 7:00pm & 9:00pm Christmas Eve Service

11:00pm Christmas Eve Service **with communion**

****Due to Covid-19 restrictions, anyone wishing to attend the services must call or email the office by December 23rd to reserve a seat. Seating is limited to 58 worshippers per service so register early to avoid disappointment.***

Woodhouse United Church

What we've been up to.....

Two candles were light during our Memorial Candle Lighting Nov 15, 2020

What's coming up.....

November 29 First Sunday of Advent - Communion

December 20 Memorial Candle Lighting

We will be remembering: Willie David Moore, George Ernest Shoff, Marlene Simpson,
and David Scott Stephens

Our Annual Candlelight Service—To be determined

Lectionary Readings for November 29 to December 27

November 29

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

December 6

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 13

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20

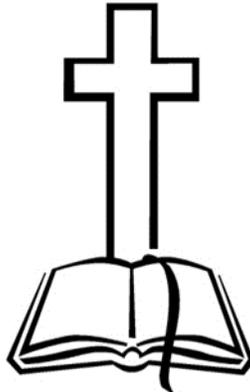
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24

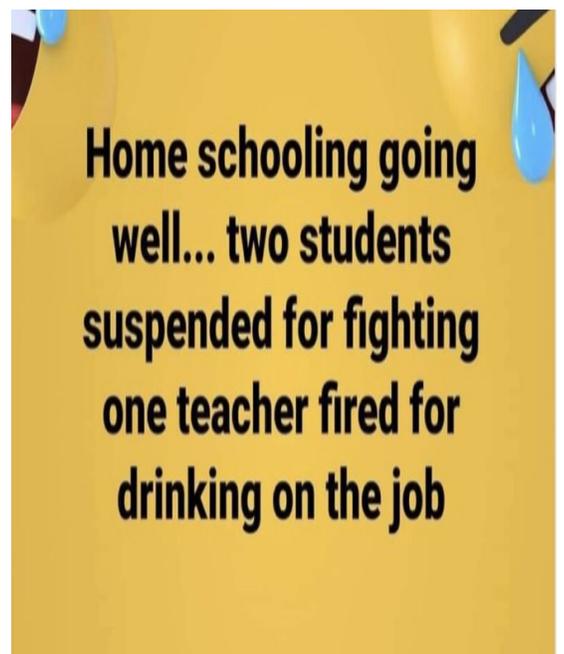
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

December 27

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40



Some COVID Humour



Christmas jokes

What did one snowman say to the other snowman?

Can you smell carrots?



What do you call an old snowman?

Water!



What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month??

The letter D!



What do you call Santa Claus when he doesn't move?

Santa Pause!



How does a snowman lose weight?

He waits for the weather to get warmer!



What often falls at the North Pole but never gets hurt?

Snow!



What do monkeys sing at Christmas?



Jungle bells, jungle bells!

What goes: now you see me, now you don't?

A snowman on a zebra crossing!



Which Christmas carol do parents like best?



Silent Night!

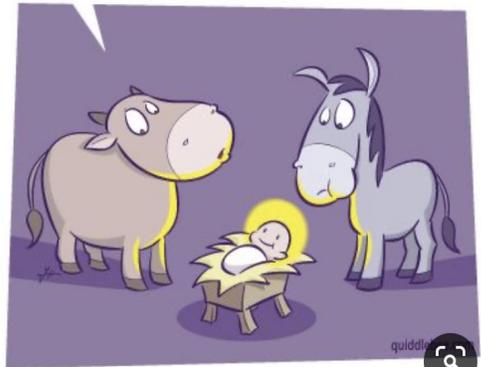
What's white and goes up?



A confused snowflake!



Dude, there's a **baby** in the salad...



Studies show that laughter can help to, relieve pain, lower blood pressure, bring greater happiness, and increase immunity.

