

ADVENTure



Advent Lutheran Church

January/February 2019



We thank Helen Kirkby, a friend of Advent, for providing this photo. She has also given us additional photos which we will share as appropriate.

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Congregational Chair Update

As 2018 ends and 2019 begins, I want to thank everyone for supporting Advent during the past year. I will be ending my term as a Council Chair and a member of Council at our Annual Meeting scheduled for February 17. As you are aware, Council appointed me to serve one additional year.

One of Council's continuing concerns is encouraging members to volunteer to assist with the various needs of the congregation as well as serving on Congregational Council. Congregations can be as great a risk for lack of volunteers as for financial reasons. Council members recently met with Pastor Ceconi, our Area Dean, to discuss the risk assessment study he is doing with congregations in the Toronto area.

Congregational Council

Recently I spoke to the congregation describing the Council's responsibilities. I am including a summary here.

Congregational Council is not a committee but a congregation's Board of Directors with specific responsibilities. To be a member of Council, one must be a confirmed member of the congregation.

To become a member of the congregation, as detailed in our Constitution, a person must be baptized in the congregation, received by letter of transfer from another congregation, or by affirming their baptism. One does not become a member because their spouse is a member, regularly worshipping, communing, or making financial contributions.

Specific Council responsibilities require filing annual information to the provincial and federal governments to maintain our charitable status. These reports include the members of Council and their terms. Council makes all business decisions for the congregation, files a parochial report annually to the ELCIC, prepares the Annual Report to the congregation, prepares and monitors the annual budget, ensures we have proper insurance coverage, ensures we have fire inspections, furnace inspections, outdoor maintenance contracts and maintain our cleaning staff. Council also needs to ensure we maintain our financial stability.

Building Security

One of Council's growing concerns is building security. Over the years many members and users received keys to the building who have not always returned them when no longer needed. This is also an insurance risk. In addition, we have noticed people using the building when not scheduled to be on the premises.

To help control this problem, Council has decided to replace the lock on our main entrance with a lock containing more security features. Keys for the new lock will only be duplicated by a Council-approved person or persons. These keys will be sequentially numbered and each person (users as well as members) receiving a key will be required to sign for it and make a \$25 deposit per key which will be refunded when the key is returned. Everyone will be notified as to

when the new keys will be available and when the lock will be changed. In addition, we are placing more security on some of our internal locks.

Council has also decided that occasional users will not be permitted to use the church for parties or other non-worship events on weekends. This decision is made because of the frequent garbage left and the areas used have not been properly cleaned after use.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas planning and worship a wonderful experience: Pastor Elaine for planning the Lessons and Carols Service and Christmas Eve services; Trevor Hicks for his music creations and special music; the choir for its anthems; the soloists (Gabi Schickedanz, Trevor Hicks, and Lester McLean for his Christmas Eve instrumental music); altar care; Gerard Baribeau and Walter Rothenburger for the Christmas tree work and decorations; the Confirmation Class students for their invitation sign on the lawn; the members who donated to purchase plants for the Christmas services; for everyone who attended our services and supported our volunteers.

And in closing, I thank all of you for your support during the past year.

Judy Baribeau

Annual Congregational Meeting

Congregational Council has set Sunday, February 17, as the date of our Annual Congregational Meeting. The meeting will be held immediately following the worship service. We need 20 voting members for a quorum, but our hope is that as many members as possible will attend. Annual Reports will be available by email (or in print for those without email) prior to the meeting. At the meeting we will review the work done during 2018, elect Council members, approve the 2019 budget and make any other decisions required for the ongoing work of the congregation. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting. ♦

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Worship Services Sundays
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members and friends.

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Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Pastor Elaine Writes...

Peace be with you. A lovely greeting and my New Year's wish for you. I hope and pray that over the past few weeks you were able to find some peace and feel some peace as the hectic days of December culminated in Christmas festivities and the dawning of a new year. Welcome 2019.

What do you get when you mix two historians, a librarian, a Pastor and two children? A friend of ours used to say that the librarian and the pastor sounded like a good name for a pub. Actually what

Books for every purpose

you get is a lot of books. A lot of books. We have boxed up books – we have given away books, we have used kobo readers to reduce the number of books on our shelves, we have used our library cards. We have moved books to my office at Advent and some are now sneaking into the space I rent. There are books on history, biography, classics, plays, crime novels, humour, theology, children's books that range from infant to an almost complete set of the original Nancy Drew's with the yellow spines – not to mention Harry Potter or the Rick Riordan books. There are even some that we have never read – might never read, but we are keeping them just in case we do. There are a lot of books.

Ross likes to look at people's bookshelves – nosy librarian I guess – but he is genuinely interested in what people read. And he is right – the books we keep

– the books we value tell us a lot about people – and a lot about ourselves.

I have one very small book that has become very dear to me over the last couple of years. It is just a small red bound book. It is my pastoral care book – an accompaniment to our *Lutheran Book of Worship* or my leader's edition (too heavy to cart around). My pastoral care book accompanies me on my visits to the hospital, to people's homes...in fact I have two. I leave one at the place

I am renting and one has been staying in my car. But the book has so much more to offer than only the service of communion – it holds services for funerals, weddings, baptisms. It has prayers for just about any situation...it has hymn and scripture references and recommendations.

But is also has some services that you might not expect – or that you might not know are available. There is a lovely service of blessing for a home. I had an opportunity to do this service last year. There is also a service that is a healing blessing...and one that is done in remembrance of someone that has died...this can be done anytime – but is particularly significant on an anniversary. And there is quite a large section that addresses illness, healing, and ministry to the dying and the grieving. My pastoral care book is a rich resource...perhaps there is a service or prayers inside that you might



find helpful. Perhaps this is the year that you would like a blessing for your home or to acknowledge a loss or remember or reaffirm your baptism? Perhaps you would like prayers for someone entering a long term care facility or a service of farewell or godspeed when someone is moving?

Worship and prayer are two of Bishop Susan Johnson's pillars of spiritual renewal...with my little red book of pastoral care we can share these together.

My new year's wish is that you will feel the peace that passes all understanding – that you will know and feel and experience the love of God...that peace is with you.

Pastor Elaine

Baptism



On December 16 we welcomed Marzieh Sabagh into God's family through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Our Sympathy

Joan Fox

Joan Fox died on November 12 and her funeral was held on November 24 at McDougall & Brown Funeral Home.

Eva Munro

Eva Munro died on December 10 and her funeral was held at Advent on December 17.

Congratulations



Congratulations to Dani Schickedanz who celebrated his 90th birthday on December 16.

Financial Update

Hello Friends. Here is our financial picture after 11 months of the year.

November Year to Date

Our November 2018 Year to Date Current Givings revenue is \$67,127. We are still running under last year's November Year to Date revenues of \$71,503 and the 11 month budget total of \$86,432. However, we are seeing large Advent and Christmas givings for this December and we should not be too far off 2017 and budgeted amounts.

The other key highlight from our year to date revenues is our Facilities Rental revenues. The 2018 November year to date amount of \$88,377 is well above

last year's November year to date Revenues of \$77,940.

Our total revenue of \$167,991 is tracking above last November's \$162,377 but below our budget of \$211,530. Relative to the budgeted amount, it should be noted that we had anticipated large rental income from ABA Academy, who were renting space at Advent during the weekdays, but as of May they are no longer with us.

On the expenses side, our expenses are higher than last year. The main reason for this was the hiring of a full time Pastor vs. the Interim Pastor in 2017 which was anticipated. For the "bottom line", overall we are anticipating a slight operating

income surplus. November YTD is \$12,859 – this compares with November 2017 YTD Operating Income surplus of \$86,982.

Summary

In summary, we still have challenges ahead – church attendance numbers are steady to trending downwards; we are nearing capacity for increasing rental income and our expenses are rising. But your Congregational Council continues to look at the most optimal ways to work positively through this challenging environment and retain a steady financial picture.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Bill Wesioly, Treasurer

From the Loft

Christmas Memories

The Christmas season is one of my favourite of all the seasons in our church and secular calendar. While Easter Sunday service is a close second in my list of favorite services to have the pleasure and the privilege of accompanying, Christmas Eve takes the top prize.

I remember perhaps almost every Christmas Eve service I've ever attended, be it as a parishioner as a child, or as a church musician.

Having had a very close relationship with my late grandmother, the candle-light singing of *Silent Night* is particularly special to me. It not only serves as a traditional and exquisitely beautiful way of commemorating the birth of Jesus, it also gives me peace in a way I can't describe: I can feel my grandmother's presence among the believers' chorus adding voice and feeling to the hymn, and to the moment. It's almost as if my grandmother is sitting in the church when we sing by candlelight.

On a more humorous note, I'll never forget not getting through one of many rehearsals of *O Holy Night* because I

couldn't stop laughing. My little Boston Terrier Nikita, who I was very sad to lose in October 2018, was howling, not being used to the sound of music – especially the loud voice of her daddy. I don't like to think of it as howling, but as her trying to sing along. Interesting enough, my family watched my live video of my presentation of *O Holy Night* from this past Christmas, and my sister's Dalmatian, Arson, had a similar reaction.

I remember the hymn *In the Bleak Midwinter* from years back, but my memories of it are now when I had the privilege of directing the choir in an arrangement of it as our anthem on my first Christmas Eve in my Advent home.

Christmas is a special time, full of memories that many times are from the earliest parts of our lives that we can remember. Besides it being a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, it connects us with those we've lost as we simultaneously make new memories with friends and family.

Oh yes, and the connection to this "From the Loft" instalment is about

more than my memories I associate with Christmas. Music is very often a vehicle by which we commemorate our loved ones and relive great memories. Just as there is never a time that *Silent Night*, *O Holy Night* and *In the Bleak Midwinter* fail to remind me of my grandmother, my beloved Nikita or my Advent family, I am certain that you have Christmas favourites that remind you of moments that you will cherish forever.

So my friends, do not be afraid or reluctant to sing Christmas carols throughout the year. When we have a congregation choice of hymns, no one will or should have any issue if you choose a carol that's important to you. After all, the song of the angels is part of our *Hymn of Praise* when we use *Glory to God*, so why can't we be reminded of the immaculate birth of Jesus in the summer, too?

Therefore, let the joyous memories of Christmases past bring you the comfort and joy that the Christmas season brings, only all year round.

Gloria in excelsis Deo

*Trevor Hicks
Music Director*

Christmas Eve at Advent



We thank our members for their donations to purchase Christmas poinsettias to decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas Eve.



On All Saints Sunday, November 4, we remembered those who have died. Many members brought photos of their loved ones and lit a candle in their memory.



Students in the Confirmation Class created this sign to invite people in the community to join Advent for its Christmas Eve services. We thank you for your work.



Program on Consumerism

In the New Year we will have an opportunity to do a program that looks critically at consumerism as a series in Faith and Ethics from Baylor University. The topics are:

1. "Stuff love" Scripture reading Luke 12:13-21.
2. Mastering Mammon Scripture reading Matthew 6:19-34.
3. Who are the meek? Scripture reading Matthew 5:1-12.
4. Discovering our true identity Scripture reading 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.
5. More like Mephibosheth Scripture reading 2 Samuel 4:4, 9:1-13, 16:1-4 and 19:24-30.
6. Beyond Candy Cane Lane Scripture reading Psalm 96.

This program will be offered on Wednesday mornings and directly after service on Sundays – dates to be announced. ♦



Volunteer Schedule

Please sign the sheet on the bulletin board for the Sundays you wish to usher. Please speak with Olga Cosburn if you would like to host a coffee hour.

	Altar Care	Assisting Minister Communion Assistant	Counters	Coffee
January 6	Brit Missirlian	TBA Jim Doak	Judy Baribeau Michael Lenzner	Olga Cosburn Carol Peck
January 13	Carol Peck	Erika Schurr Judy Baribeau	Adele Buckley Tracy McPherson	No Coffee
January 20	Judy Baribeau	Lester McLean Olga Cosburn	Brit Missirlian Nalini Beekie	Theresa Ajodhia
January 27	Brit Missirlian	Gabi Schickedanz Indira Beekie	Judy Baribeau Tracy McPherson	No Coffee
February 3	Judy Baribeau	TBA Martin Gangadeen	Adele Buckley Carol Peck	Coffee Only
February 10	Carol Peck	TBA Judy Baribeau	Tracy McPherson Michael Lenzner	No Coffee
February 17	Walter Rothenburger	TBA Karen Doak	Judy Baribeau Nalini Beekie	Coffee Only
February 24	Brit Missirlian	TBA Indira Beekie	Nalini Beekie Tracy McPherson	No Coffee