

ADVENTure



Advent Lutheran Church

November/December 2018

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Advent and Christmas Worship

Advent begins on Sunday, December 2. We invite everyone to join us for worship on the Sundays in Advent to prepare for Christmas. The Sundays in Advent are December 2, 9, 16, and 23.

The service on December 23 will be a special service of Lessons and Carols without communion.

Christmas Eve

We will hold two services on Christmas Eve. The first one will be at 4:00 p.m. and the second service at 7:30 p.m. Both services will include Holy Communion. There will be no service on Christmas Day.

Advent
Prepare for Christ



Congregational Chair Update

We are coming close to the end of the church year (we begin the new year on December 2, the first Sunday of Advent, and we will begin using the Lectionary for Year C), and then our calendar year ends on December 31. Our books for 2018 will close on Sunday, December 30, and all donations must be received by then for 2018 tax credit.

At our September Council meeting we discussed whether our congregation is “at risk”. We agreed that we are. We are particularly concerned about the lack of volunteers, our reliance on facilities use for revenue, and our aging membership. We have not had any growth. How we turn it around, if we can, is another discussion. Where we are five years from now, if that long, is a big question. This conversation will continue. Please note Pastor Elaine’s comments in her column.

We are concerned about people on our membership list who have not been worshipping or contributing to the congregation. It sometimes feels we are a “Rite of Passage” or Christmas and Easter congregation as that is the only time some members worship. We want to keep in touch with, and see, everyone frequently.

Grandparents, we know you love to take your grandchildren to events and places. Why not bring them to church? and invite your children to attend as well?

In the meantime, we will need new people willing to serve on Congregational Council next year. Too many people say “no” when asked. We need volunteers to help maintain our aging building – general maintenance,

carpentry, electrical, plumbing, painting, administration, outdoor work, even washing windows and cleaning walls, etc. Many of the members who did these things are no longer with us and we need to contract out, and pay, for these services.

When asked, please give some prayerful consideration before saying “no”. We need more than breathing bodies – we need people willing to participate. This is all part of our stewardship and giving back in thanks for what we have received.

At our October Council meeting we heard a presentation from Chantel Espinola, director of the community garden. At the meeting Council agreed to provide space for 18 additional plots next year. We can use help in cleaning up our weed patch. We thank Michael Lenzner for all the clean-up work he has been doing, but more continuing help is needed. With more area going to community garden use, there will be less requirement for Advent to maintain the large area, but assistance is still needed.

Council approved a contract for installing two poles for outdoor parking lot lighting. This will be done as weather permits and coordination with installation of concrete foundation for the poles. Funding has been set aside for this project and no additional fundraising is required.

Lutherans Toronto Lunch & Learn

On October 27 I attended the second of a series of Lunch & Learn sessions on the “Missional” theme. We heard a presentation on “Missional Leadership”

and looked at the quote, “we can’t go on a mountain trip with a canoe”. “Transform” is a word that came up often. The church needs to respond to new challenges – and there are many. We need to look at what God is up to in our neighbourhoods and how we can join in. We must be a disciple first, then a leader. It is an ongoing journey, not an event or a program.

We discussed ways to identify, recruit and educate leaders within and outside our congregations. We received strategies to build relationships that support this process from the ministry area level.

Two more sessions are planned in this series – on January 26 and March 4. Everyone is invited to attend these sessions – they are not for the Council Chair, or Pastor, or Council members alone – they are for everyone. This is how we learn – remember “Lunch & Learn”. It is not useful if I am the only one who attends these sessions. We are also encouraged to spend some study time during our Council meetings.

I will complete my time as a Council member and Chair at our Annual Meeting in February. We need more of you to get involved so that those remaining on Council are not over-burdened. Many members are more than multi-tasking, and we need to spread the responsibilities among more people. Please say “yes”.

Judy Baribeau



Christmas Flowers

This Christmas the Worship and the Arts Committee has again arranged for Christmas flowers for the church. We invite you to donate the amount you would spend on a Christmas plant and designate your donation “In Memory of”, “In Honour of” or other. Please pick up a special donation envelope on Sundays December 2, 9, or 16 and place your completed envelope in the offering plate. Those donating plants will be listed in our Christmas bulletin. Those donating may take a plant home following the Christmas services. ♦

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Worship Services Sundays
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ADVENTURE... is produced for our
members and friends.

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Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Pastor Elaine Writes...

As I write this, we are well into fall and a return to our regularly scheduled activities that get put aside during the long lovely warm months of late spring and summer.

I will soon be celebrating my one-year anniversary of being your Pastor and the one-year anniversary of my ordination. The hours, days, weeks and months have flown by. Some things have changed – I am a little less nervous about getting lost (thank you Google maps). I am more confident presiding at the table and do not feel an “oh oh” gulp when asked to say grace or pray “on the spot”...in fact I enjoy it.

My home situation changed as we said goodbye to our international student Steffen in July and moved Leah to Trent University at the beginning of September. But many things are the same. I continue to feel so blessed to have been called by Advent and to be part of this community. I continue to spend my days off in Belleville (most of the time – sometimes Maud comes for a holiday). I continue to get to know our neighbourhood a bit better. I continue to meet with community partners and my Anglican and Lutheran colleagues.

Spiritual Renewal

I have spoken, written and preached on Spiritual renewal over the last few months. I am following Bishop Susan’s seven steps. Bishop Susan urges us to Pray, Read, Worship, Study, Serve, Give and Tell. To this end I have been offering a program on prayer and hope that it has been beneficial. The next program will be “Consumerism”...perhaps a fitting topic as we enter the shopping mania around the Christmas season.

One topic that consistently comes up in conversations, at our Council meetings and at our ministerial is “The Future”. There is some anxiety in our Lutheran world about the future of our congregations. The Synod now has a new policy for dealing with defunct and at risk congregations. Our ministerial has been

discussing who is at risk in our area. At our Synod Assembly a motion was carried regarding this. The hope is that there will be support for congregations at risk so that decisions can be made about the future before things come to a crisis point. Our ministry area would like to focus on renewal and resurrection not on the death of congregations. We do not know what the future looks like or what the future will hold for the congregations in our area. We do know that mission and ministry and pastoral care are important and that Lutherans have a lot to offer our society.

There is much bemoaning in our congregations about “where are all the young people?”, why do people not come to church anymore? Why are the evangelical churches bringing in the big numbers and the traditional churches are declining and dying?

But our work has not changed even as the society around us does. We are still called to care for the poor, the hungry, those on the margins of society. We are still called to share the good news. And that is what Bishop Susan is urging with Spiritual renewal – once we do these things – once we make these things a priority in our homes, churches and communities, then we will feel more positive about sharing our faith – sharing our Lutheran way of life – sharing the good news of God’s Grace freely given.

Advent at Risk?

Is Advent an “at risk” congregation? Yes. Perhaps not at immediate risk. But we are at risk. We have a declining number of volunteers, we rely financially on our renters (this puts us at risk if we were to lose rental income) and we have an aging congregation. We have lost members over this year and will continue to do so. It is time for us to have some conversations about what will the future of Advent look like? But it is also time to take stock of who and what we are, what we believe, what our role is in the community.



Perhaps our most urgent troubling problem or “risk” is our lack of volunteers, the fellowship of coffee hour has been reduced because there are just not enough people willing or able to put on the coffee hour.

We are quickly approaching our annual meeting and our election of members to Council. It is questionable whether we will be able to form a viable Council for the coming year. Will we have a Chair of Council? Advent cannot function without a full Council and a Chair. This puts us at risk. Please give some prayerful consideration of what you want for the future of Advent. Please give some prayerful consideration to the question what is God calling me to do in this community? What is God calling Advent and its people to do?

Advent is a very special place made up of very special people I am blessed to be part of this community and I look forward to what the future holds for us.

Peace be with you.

Pastor Elaine

Congratulations – First Anniversary

Congratulations to Pastor Elaine on her first anniversary as Pastor at Advent on December 1 and on her Ordination on December 9.

Financial Update

REVENUES	2018 Sept. YTD	2018 Budget	% to Bud.	2017 Sept. YTD
Current Envelopes	\$ 47,439	\$ 79,200	59.9	\$51,159
Other Current - Loose, Festivals, Other Charities	4,626	15,090	30.7	7,895
Sub Total Current	52,065	94,290	55.2	59,054
Benevolence	8,436	10,500	80.3	7,763
Facilities	64,108	105,100	61.0	59,233
Interest Revenue on GICs	1,230	1,640	75.0	1,230
SUB TOTAL REVENUE	\$125,839	\$211,530	59.5	\$127,280
Designated				
Parking Lot Fund/ Outdoor Lighting	3,945		8,854	
Memorials	3,170		5,971	
Other-Endowment, Stewardship, Carpet, Vanier	1,040		2,723	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$133,994	\$211,530		\$144,828
EXPENSES				
Payroll (Pastor)	61,764	82,820	74.6	11,775
Property	39,504	49,730	79.4	34,860
Music and Worship	7,352	10,643	69.1	6,493
General Admin	4,770	7,550	63.2	1,893
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$113,390	\$150,743	75.2	\$55,021

Trending continues to be the same from my previous report, although there have been some slight increases in Current Envelopes over the last couple of months. But as noted, we are still down about \$4,000 from last year in the same category.

Facilities continue to be our salvation. We actually had a \$7,000 cheque from Grace Communion on September 30, but that was for the fourth quarter payment and not included here.

Our memorial givings have increased. Over \$1,500 has been recently donated in memory of Alfred Schurr.

Expenses

Property is up in all areas – especially outdoor maintenance. But heating, supplies/indoor maintenance is also up. General administration is up mainly because our bookkeeper did not take any fees last year at this time as he felt that he was in training. Now have \$1,600 for this year. We did not have Convention expenses last year.

Bill Wesioy, Treasurer

GWA Projects

Shoeboxes for Shelters

GWA, for the third year, is working on The Shoebox Project for Shelters. These are “shoeboxes” for women in shelters and will contain a variety of toiletries, some small type of warm clothing, something sweet, a gift card for Tim Hortons or McDonald’s, subway ticket(s). If you are interested in participating, please speak with me for more details. The boxes have to be delivered to the drop-off centres by December 10.

Warm Winter Clothing Collection

We are also continuing the collection of warm winter clothing and shoes/boots for New Circles. Please bring your items to church and/or let me know they are there, and I will drop them off at the centre. There has been a very good response from Advent members – I have already brought two trunks full of items, but we will continue till the end of November, so look in your closets and see what you want to give away. The items must be

clean and in good shape, in other words, something you yourself would wear.

Annual Bake and Craft Sale

On December 2 our Annual Bake and Craft Sale will be, as usual, held in Fellowship Hall after the service. Please price your donations prior to the sale.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who made our Annual Anniversary Potluck Luncheon

an interesting, joyful occasion. And speaking of food; there are still paper bags in a box in the narthex, waiting to be filled with food for those who struggle to make ends meet. If you want to help, just bring some items to church. We will make sure they get to a food bank collection box.

Brit Missirlian



GWA Christmas gathering
Friday, December 14
6:30 p.m.

At Advent Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall

*The main meal will be provided (ham and potatoes).
So please bring a vegetable or a salad or a dessert.
And of course; bring a small wrapped gift for the gift exchange
and a donation to the North York Food Bank.*

Space is limited.

*It is very important that you sign up if you will be attending,
also that you indicate your food contribution*

Blessing of the Animals September 30



On September 30 Advent held its first Blessing of the Animals. From left to right are Harley Baribeau, Piper Harding and Bruccio Khan. Some cats were also blessed at an earlier time in the afternoon.

From the Loft

Special November Sundays

This year, 2018, we have the rarity of November 11 falling on a Sunday. November is usually home to two very special Sundays that I have always loved: All Saints and Christ the King. It just so happens that Remembrance Day (also known as Veterans Day in the US) fits seamlessly into divine worship the week after All Saints. This gives me, as your music director, interesting opportunities to include some special music, and it's the music for All Saints and Remembrance Day that I'd like to discuss here.

There is an interesting correlation between two pieces that will be heard: one, a choir anthem on All Saints and a solo on Remembrance Day. The correlation between them is that they were both written by me for secular purposes, that is, purposes outside of church. Both pieces will also be included on my upcoming album, "Soul of a Patriot."

The anthem on All Saints was never designed or intended to be sung by a choir. It was designed to be a song by myself over an orchestral accompaniment. It wasn't written as a hymn in the context of sacred music, but was written as a comforting hymn-like composition reflecting on the lives lost on 9/11. It is one of the songs that I wrote for a song cycle reflecting on 9/11.

Now, it doesn't mention 9/11 directly, nor does it have patriotic overtones, nor does it even mention the United States of America. So when I was looking for an All Saints anthem a few years ago, the choir learned it and we presented it. Little did I know that it would be popular among our choir and congregation, and so humbled did I feel as a composer that it was requested at some funeral services to be presented by our choir.

Along with this song on my upcoming album is my musical adaptation of "In Flanders Field," a poem that is synonymous with Remembrance Day in Canada. I wrote this musical setting of the well-loved poem while I was in high school for the Remembrance Day commemoration to be broadcast over the intercom. And it was also met with enthusiasm. Again, it was not written to be used in church, and yet I have sung it for a number of years on the Sunday closest to Remembrance Day.

Also on Remembrance Day, the choir will sing a beautiful song called "Requiem for a Soldier," a song that was included in the score for the HBO miniseries "Band of Brothers," a dramatic WWII mini-series. It was sung at the Memorial Day Concert I attended in Washington, DC this past May by the talented Cynthia Erivo, and it was when

I heard it there that a bell went off in my head that it would be appropriate for the Sunday closest to Remembrance Day. In addition, for the first time in a Remembrance Day service at Advent, we will include the traditional playing of *The Last Post* and *The Rouse* at the appropriate time of remembrance.

I don't write this article for self-promotion purposes. Quite the contrary. I wrote it because sometimes we get very preoccupied with what is church appropriate and what is not. Sometimes, music that is not intended for divine worship actually fits into the service brilliantly. Sometimes a song that was written to be sung in front of the Capitol is one that fits just as well inside the sacred house of God. Sometimes a song written for a television show speaks to a day in our national and religious traditions that it is almost sinful not to include it. Sometimes a song written to commemorate a tragic event takes on a wider meaning when it's sung by God's people as we remember God's people who have left us.

As we march towards the end of the church year, let us use our varied instruments of praise from varied backgrounds of music and unite them to the Glory of God.

Trevor Hicks, Music Director



Evelyn Arnett, a former member of Advent now living in Regina, visited us recently. It was good to see her again.



We welcomed Elizabeth Jean Bird through the sacrament of Holy Baptism on September 16. Her parents are Jessica Maga and Ryan Bird.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- November 14, 7:30 p.m., GWA. Pastor Elaine will lead a Bible study.
- November 19, 7:30 p.m., Congregational Council
- November 21, 2:00 p.m., Mutual Ministry
- December 2, Bake and Craft Sale after Worship
- December 10, 7:30 p.m., Congregational Council
- December 14, GWA Christmas Party

Confirmation Classes Begin

On October 28 the following Confirmation Class students were introduced to the congregation: Timothy Doak, Cee Jay Khan, Elizabeth Walther, Samantha Walther. We look forward to them participating in our worship services. Confirmation is scheduled for Pentecost 2019.



Volunteer Schedule

Please sign the sheet on the bulletin board for the Sundays you wish to usher.

	Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister Communion Assistant	Counters	Coffee
November 4	Carol Peck	Joe Hunt	Bill Wesioly Jim Doak	Adele Buckley Gabi Schickedanz	Coffee Only
November 11	Elizabeth Lancia	Yvonne Cumberbatch	Lester McLean Judy Baribeau	Carol Peck Brit Missirlian	No Coffee
November 18	Elias Yousefi	Indira Beekie	Nalini Beekie Indira Beekie	Nalini Beekie Michael Lenzner	Adele Buckley
November 25	Elizabeth Lancia	Elias Yousefi	Lester McLean Olga Cosburn	Judy Baribeau Nalini Beekie	No Coffee
December 2	Judy Baribeau	Elizabeth & Samantha Walther	Bill Wesioly Karen Doak	Adele Buckley Gabi Schickedanz	Bake Sale/ Coffee Only
December 9	Carol Peck	Cynthia Stewart	Gabi Schickedanz Olga Cosburn	Carol Peck Gabi Schickedanz	No Coffee
December 16	Elias Yousefi	Joan McLean	Lester McLean Judy Baribeau	Judy Baribeau Michael Lenzner	Coffee Only
December 23	Elizabeth Lancia	Adele Buckley	Bill Wesioly -	Nalini Beekie TBA	No Coffee
December 24 4:00 p.m.	Brit Missirlian		Erika Schurr TBA	Brit Missirlian Carol Peck	-
December 24 7:30 p.m.	Judy Baribeau		Erika Schurr Indira Beekie	Brit Missirlian Carol Peck	-
December 30	Brit Missirlian	Olga Cosburn	Gabi Schickedanz Sonita Dillon-Rhodium	Gabi Schickedanz Carol Peck	No Coffee