



*Advent & Christmas 2020
Newsletter*

Thinking about Advent

“Come, O Lord and set us free” – an Advent hymn

Free from what?

At one time church people would have had a ready answer: from sin and despair.

Sin has rather fallen out of our society’s vocabulary. There are churches that never mention sin because it is off-putting, the whole idea gets in the way of entertainment, getting younger folks to come and stay. And yet we don’t have to look very far to see what sin looks like in our modern world: “Adult entertainment” is a billion dollar industry; girls and boys, young women are sold as sex slaves having been bought from their families or kidnapped or received false promises of work. The daily news offers example after example of sin: greed, violence, and apathy. The prophets of old would have no difficulty recognizing the kind of evil that they warned Israel and Judah was happening: “they did not do what was right in the sight of God”. Obviously we need a saviour because we cannot do what is right on our own.

We could despair of making any change in our society or in our own lives, give up and let the world “go to hell in a hand basket”. And some churches do just that. There is no need to work for justice because the end of time and judgment day are near and the more depraved the society gets the closer we are. We need a saviour to give us hope.

There is no reason for despair, The Saviour has come.

We believe that God entered human reality to bridge the gap between God and us, a reality regardless of how that occurred. We believe that in the relationship we have with Jesus, God becomes a part of our lives. And, yes, we believe that Christ will come again.

Each Advent season is a reminder of what we are supposed to be doing: expecting a new experience of Jesus in Christmas and actively waiting for his return by preparing the way through acts of love, justice and peace.



Wardens Update

As we continue with the COVID-19 protocols, our Church has been adapting to every changing situation with the Wardens monitoring the Church finances to ensure that the Church continues to fulfil all its financial obligations: payments of monthly Church bills, staff salaries; providing adequate cleaning supplies, etc.

Our parish benefited from the **Jubilee Program** set up by the Diocese to provide financial support to parishes during the COVID-19 period. The assistance from the Diocese waived over \$18,000 of our financial obligations for this year. With the approval of the Diocese, we also received financial support from the Government of Canada through the **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)** for April and May 2020, based on eligibility of our affiliated group. The Diocese continues to evaluate our eligibility for the government program month-by-month and we continue to monitor the process. These supports have been of great help to augment our Church revenue that declined as a result of service restrictions during this unprecedented period.

On behalf of your beloved Church, the Wardens thank you very much for your commitment and generous donations, through **PAR, INTERACT e-transfer** and **Offering envelopes**. In addition, your generous support of Christmas Hampers program in spite of the current restrictions is deeply appreciated. We are thankful to God for His provision in diverse ways. Your Church counts on your continual support to meet our ongoing obligations.

2021 envelopes will be available December 1 in an outside bin. Please drop by to pick up your box.

2020 Christmas Hamper Program

The Christmas Hamper Program is an outreach program that has been run by St. Paul's On-the-Hill for 25+ years. Working with the St. Paul's On-the-Hill Community Food

Bank we support their clients with donations of extra food and gifts at Christmas time. Sponsors for the program, include individuals, families, friends, schools, organizations, and corporations. For years they have given generously to our community through the Christmas Hamper Program.

With Covid-19 upon us, the needs of families in our community, and the demand on the Food Bank, have grown substantially. However, health and safety protocols required that we make changes to this year's Christmas Hamper Program. This year we will be supporting about 180 families through gifts of gift cards. These can be distributed safely to the clients and then used by them to purchase necessities and gifts at Walmart and/or Loblaws/Shoppers stores. Our aim is to focus on supporting as many families as is financially feasible.

When we first met with our counterparts in the Foodbank, we agreed on the number of weeks for recipient to be able to register. And being uncertain how many of your existing donors would be able to join us this year with COVID negatively impacting many of those around us, we instructed the Foodbank to start out with supporting 150 families.

Then the Lord knocks on many doors and people start sending in donations. Many have been with us for years, but even more heard of us for the first time and decided to respond. So off we go to the foodbank and instructed them to increase our support to 160 families. Then the weeks move along and we now feel comfortable with supporting 180 families all the while praying that we can make it up to 190 as the need keeps expanding. The recipients have another week to register and each day we become more optimistic that 190 families could be achievable.

Distribution will take on a very different format as we cannot successfully use the church as our distribution point. We have no ability to keep our volunteers or recipient families safe in the tight quarters of the church. However, the Foodbank has generously offered us the Foodbank itself as they are already set up with the necessary PPE and safety protocols to protect both.

Elaine Phipps & Caroline Honsberger

Food Bank

Thank you for your regular food donations and financial support of your food bank and the community. Since the Covid pandemic began in early March the St Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank has seen a client increase of 20% as people in our community are facing food insecurity due to lost jobs or a drop in salary as work hours have been reduced. Your continued support is greatly appreciated. We cannot meet the needs of our neighbours without your help.

Margaret Jocz

Food for Thought

The Mystery, The Gift

It could all fall apart—
The sun, dimming to darkness,
The moon drifting off into space,
The world itself sucked into a cosmic hole
Where everything would be lost:
The Grand Canyon and the Mona Lisa,
Bach's Passions and Shakespeare's sonnets,
The whispering wind in tall pines,
The elegy of the faithful tides,
The scent of morning coffee,
The mystery of a baby's heartbeat.
But these still hold together,
Bound to us and to each other
By something like gravity,
Shining and durable as a promise.
What is it
That makes the sun rise, the earth turn?
What is it that makes
The blood pulse through limb and brain,
The child cling to mother,
The lovers dance,
The dying sing at death?
It is the infinite mystery,
The force indwelling all creation,
The gift within all gifts.
It is love

Timothy Haut, January, 2007

Coming Events

Women's Fellowship

Friendship Coffee
Thursdays @10am

For information email Joanne Karram
women@stpaulsonthehill.com

Men's Group

Continues to meet Tuesdays by ZOOM
For more information email David
Karram dksurfer7@gmail.com

Wednesday Eucharist in Advent

November 25 – December 16
@10am

For information call Rev Fran 905-839-7909

Women's Christmas Service

December 11 With guest speaker:
Monica Romig-Green

It will be uploaded to the YouTube channel St Paul's on-the-Hill TV and go live on December 11 at 7:30pm. You will be able to access the video on or after December 11 by using the same link on the church website that takes you to the live Sunday e-services. If you subscribe to St Paul's on-the-Hill TV you will receive an email notification of the video going live.

*Email: women@stpaulsonthehill.com
pre recorded & online*

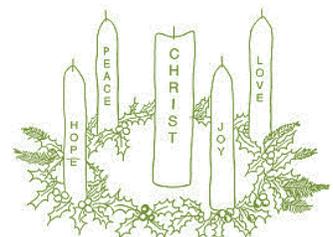
Festival of Lessons & Carols

December 20 10am
In person and live-streamed

Upcoming Services

November 29

Advent 1 Hope
10am Lighting of
the Advent Wreath
& Holy Eucharist



December 6 Advent 2 Peace
10am Lighting of the Advent Wreath &
Holy Eucharist
Guest Preacher: The Rev Stephanie Douglas

December 13 Advent 3 Joy
10am Lighting of the Advent Wreath &
Holy Eucharist
Guest Celebrant: The Rev Dr Paul Scuse

December 20 Advent 4 Love
10am Lighting of the Advent Wreath &
Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

December 24
Christmas Eve
Carols &
the Christmas
story
*Pre recorded and
online only*



December 25 Christmas Day
Music, Reading, & Christmas message
Pre recorded and online only

December 27 Christmas 1
10am Your favourite Carols & Holy Eucharist
Please call the office with your requests

January 6, 2021 Epiphany
10am Celebration of the coming of the Magi
Holy Eucharist



*Except for the Christmas services we expect
to have both in-person and live
streamed services, pending any new
restrictions.*