

Advent 2017 Newsletter



Central United Church, 131 Main Street, Unionville
www.centralunitedchurch.com 905-474-0183

WORSHIP SERVICES FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

We do sincerely hope that many of you will be able to join us in our celebrations of the Advent and Christmas season as we mark the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord.



December 3rd marks the beginning of Advent with communion and the lighting of the advent wreath. Following the service, we will gather downstairs in the Main Hall for a **"soup lunch"** to mark the beginning of Advent and a celebration of the six week small group study. Everyone is welcome to join this special time of food and fellowship. (No sign up is required.)

Then on December 10th we celebrate with White Gift Sunday. You are encouraged to bring a **"White Gift"** to church that day (cash or unwrapped non-perishable food items). All proceeds will be delivered to our local Markham Food Bank.

On December 17th, we will be holding our special Christmas Musical service. This year the choir will perform **"Sing Joy to All the World"** and we expect this will once again be a highlight of our Christmas season.

Fourth Advent will be celebrated Sunday December 24th which will be full of favourite carols and readings. Communion will be part of the service.

And then later in the day on December 24th, our **Christmas Eve** services will be held as usual, all with lessons and carols. At 5:00 p.m. we will re-enact the nativity story with audience participation. At 7:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. our services will include communion and the candlelit **"Silent Night"**. The 7:00 p.m. service will also include a repeat performance of **"Sing Joy to All the World"**.



FROM YOUR MINISTER...

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (Mark 1:1)

It won't be long and will be in the sanctuary at Central United sharing together in Christmas Eve worship. There are things we do at Christmas that are so imbedded in our traditions it is hard to imagine Christmas without them. Maybe at your home it isn't Christmas unless the tree is up or that treasured nativity is on display. I find it hard to imagine Christmas Eve worship without singing the Christmas carol Silent Night—it just wouldn't be Christmas Eve without it.

In the third stanza of that carol we sing of the Son of God as “love's pure light.” In the sermons of the Advent season I have chosen this for a theme; “Love's pure light.” In Jesus Christ we see the love of God in all its purity. In him nothing obscures the light of this love; in Jesus we see the genuine love of God. When we look, for example, at the marvels of nature we may conclude that we see something of the grandeur of the Creator—but the glory of a sunset or the sun glistening off a blanket of freshly fallen snow do not necessarily lead us to conclude something about the Creator's love. Silent Night tells us where to look—“Son of God, love's pure light.”



The opening line of Mark's gospel tells us where to look-- *the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*. The carol Silent Night! Holy Night! was written in 1818 by Joseph Mohr, the assistant priest at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, not far from Salzburg, Austria. It was first sung at the 1818 Christmas Eve service at this church when the organist accompanied it on guitar because the organ had broken down. It is a beautiful carol whether by organ, guitar, piano or just with our voices.

I am not sure if the opening line in Mark's gospel, *the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*, was the inspiration for Joseph Mohr as he penned the line, *Son of God, love's pure light*. I could easily imagine it so. Whether it was or not, Jesus was the inspiration both for the Apostle Mark and Joseph Mohr. May Jesus be the inspiration for your Christmas.

Advent Blessings,

REV. DR. JAMES CLUBINE

YORK REGION FOSTER CHILDREN/YOUTH

For the past **15 years** Central United Church has helped the Children's Aid Society. We have now helped **1,215** children and youth in the care of the Children's Aid!

Just like last year, the Children's Aid is sending us the wish lists of the 10 neediest youth in care. To allow multiple people to purchase for the same youth, we will be breaking up the lists. The wish lists will be posted on the bulletin board beside the nursery. Along with the wish lists, you will find thank you notes from the kids and the caseworkers. Your efforts are very much appreciated!

As well as these youth in need, there are over 25 infants/toddlers ranging in age from newborn to three, who are being looked after by next of kin. Many of the caregivers are seniors on limited incomes. Therefore, diapers of all sizes are greatly appreciated!

To make a donation, please mark your envelope "**stuff a duffle**" and place it in the collection plate.



Please leave donations in the **outreach cupboards** by **December 3rd** and please make all monetary donations on or before **December 10th**.

If you have any questions, please call me at 416-706-6519 or email hekeeling3@gmail.com.

Thanks so much for your continued support of the youth in the care of the **York Region Children's Aid!**

HEATHER KEELING

ANNUAL COMFORT SERVICE



Our Comfort Service will be held on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH at 7:30 p.m. and is open to all in our church and community. This is a time for reflection and contemplation on the love of Christ; in this service we seek Christ's comfort acknowledging that for many our losses render the celebration of Christmas difficult. The service will include remembering those we miss, scripture reading, prayer, Christmas Carols and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. If you feel this service would be helpful

to you, please come and be sure to extend an invite to any you know (family, friends, neighbours, work associates) who would benefit.

“SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS” GIFT BAGS

The "Spirit of Christmas" is about helping others. If you are looking for a perfect gift for a hostess, something for the person who has everything, a teacher/coach/co-worker or a gift exchange present, consider a “Spirit of Christmas” gift bag. Each bag contains a Christmas Tree ornament and a message to the recipient - to hang the ornament on their Christmas Tree, as it symbolizes that a local family who relies on the Food Bank for food, will enjoy a turkey with their upcoming Christmas Dinner AND the Christmas Tree ornament was made by an artisan in a developing country and sourced from the fair trade organization, Ten Thousand Villages.



The "Gift of Christmas" gift bags will be for sale on Sunday, December 3rd; each sells for \$20 (cash or cheque) with the full amount going to the Markham Food Bank, and if desired, a tax receipt for \$20 per bag will be sent to the purchaser from the Markham Food Bank. Please think of your gift giving list and who you can buy these special gift bags for. If you'd like to pre-order or have any questions, please contact Ruth Duffield regduffield@gmail.com or 416 357 1861.

POINSETTIAS

Our dedicated decorating committee will again be beautifying the church sanctuary and narthex with adornments for the season. This will include the placement of poinsettias from December 10th onward. If you wish to buy a red or white poinsettia to place in the church in memory of a loved one, please pick up an envelope from the church and return same to Sally in the church office directly. You may also pre-order plants for your home – they will be available for pick up on Thursday, December 7th. Cost is \$10. Order deadline is December 3rd.





MITTEN TREE

Again this year we will be having the **Mitten Christmas Tree** in our Friendship Room and we'd be grateful for your donations of new hats, scarves, mittens and gloves for all ages to pass along to the local Salvation Army. Please bring in your items by **Sunday, December 17th** so that the recipients will have them in time for Christmas.

The 37th Annual Unionville Olde Tyme Christmas & Candlelight Parade



is on FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1st on Main Street Unionville and, although not entering a float this year, Central will continue the tradition of hosting the community to a carol sing and hot chocolate at the church after the parade. This is a great way to kick off the Christmas season and to let the community know about us. We need people to be at the church, say around 7 p.m., to serve as hosts and good-will ambassadors for Central. Please plan to attend and connect with some new friends (and possibly some old ones too!)

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Hi All:

As always, thank you to everyone for your continued financial support of our Church.



As you will see in the attached letter from your Stewardship & Finance Committee, the Invest in Your Faith campaign has once again been activated with a goal of \$10,000 - which is the estimated amount of additional local givings that we need to receive in order to avoid a deficit for 2017.

If you are unsure of your total contributions in 2017, and would like to receive a year to date statement, please contact Sally in the Church office, so she can arrange for a statement to be sent to you.

Thanks for your consideration.

YOUR STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

P.S. A note about year-end offerings.....Sunday, December 31st will be our last worship service in the year 2017 and thus will also be the final Sunday to make offerings to your church to be included in this year's charitable income tax receipt. If mailing in a donation, we ask that you mail it early (even if you wish to date your cheque to the 31st) so we can be sure to include it in our year-end deposit. (Please note that the church office will have limited hours between Christmas and year-end, however, the mailbox will be monitored.)

RIGHT NOW MEDIA – A FREE OPPORTUNITY!

Our church has a subscription to this media resource which is available free to all the congregation to use. Membership will give you instant access to biblical video content, for group study, kids, families, etc. A simple analogy is it is Netflix for the Bible. We encourage everyone with computer access to enrol. There is a very simple two-step process: first, send an email to sally@centralunitedchurch.com asking her to add your name to Right Now Media. Within a few days you will receive an email invitation from Sally to perform the second step: follow the link and accompanying instructions to open a user account. When you are setting up your profile, the gender, marital status and birth year questions are simply to help populate the interest icons that are below the profile. It also gives you access to the “Ephesians” videos used in this year’s small group Bible study – so you can revisit them anytime you like. Let Sally know if you have any problems - otherwise happy viewing!





SAVE THE DATE!

Be sure to mark your calendars for **Sunday, February 25th, 2018** when there will be a retirement celebration after the worship service for Sally Sandiford. (Sally’s last day with us will be February 28th!) Watch for further details in the coming months!

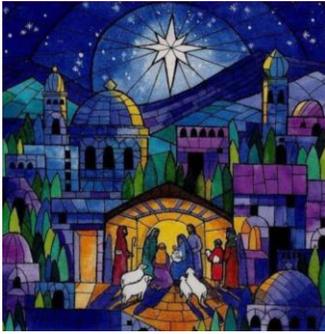
GO TO THE MOVIES!

In theatres in Canada one day only – Thursday, January 11, 2018! The film “Alien



Intrusion: Unmasking the Deception” from Creation Ministries International is a high quality film that draws viewers in until the final mind-blowing conclusion from the Gospel that turns this movie into a powerful evangelistic tool. This film will reach people with the Good News that Jesus Christ is our Saviour. For more information, go to www.AlienIntrusion.com

REV. KARL BURDEN



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH'S CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

Stuart Beaudoin, former organist at Central, will conduct a musical presentation at St. Paul's Anglican Church (59 Toronto Street South, Uxbridge) on Sunday, November 26th at 7:00 p.m. The three hour performance (in English) covers the Birth of Jesus to the adoration of the Magi, and is written for choir, soloists, and orchestra. Tickets are \$20 and will be available at the door.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING...

Our Annual General Meeting is an opportunity to celebrate and review our past year's successes and contemplate the year ahead and pass the budget for 2018. Please plan to attend – the meeting will take place on SUNDAY, JANUARY 28TH after church and a light lunch. Mark your calendars now and we hope to see you there!



“ABC” NEWS



Appreciation to Mary Cullen for hosting our annual Seniors' Luncheon in August. We had a good turn-out to enjoy Mary's home cooking and a fabulous travelogue by son Ben of his trip to Russia and China. Thank you Mary, Ben and helpers for a great day!

Blessings... Our sympathies to all who have lost loved ones in recent months, including Cheryl Neave for the death of her father Jim Neave, and Dan Tooley for the passing of his mother Bernice Tooley. We as a congregation also mourn the loss of two of our faithful and long-time members: Isabelle Adams and Cal Jones. They will be deeply missed.



Congratulations...to Lynn Cullen and René Seemann for the birth of son Conrad, a baby brother for Claudia; and to Brad & Meagan McQuirter for the safe arrival of Lauren, sister to Natalie (and grandchild for Don & Vicky McQuirter). Don and Vicky also celebrated two weddings this summer for each of their daughters Melanie and Megan – one in Quebec and the other in BC!

***Wishing all a blessed celebration of
Advent and Christmas!***



*Central News is published quarterly by the church office for the congregation of Central United Church. Our next issue will feature the Lent and Easter season to be circulated on or about February 15th. Written contributions are welcome. Please email sally@centralunitedchurch.com by **February 1st**. Thank you.*