



Parish Update #29 – December and Christmas 2021

Hello to all our parish members and friends,

As I write this the first snow to actually stick to the ground for this year is falling. That would turn my thoughts to Christmas even if the calendar didn't (and it does). Included in this update are our plans for the Christmas season.

Parish Council has decided to move ahead with plans for **Christmas worship in our building this year**. We do this with a bit of trepidation as we watch case numbers in our local area rise and see some limited community spread in our schools. However, we forge ahead taking appropriate safety measures as we go. Note: **pre-registration is not required for any services during the Christmas season**.

Friday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve*

4:00 p.m. Children's Eucharist

8:00 p.m. Family Eucharist

*Due to the numbers we expect, Proof of Vaccination will be required for entry to worship on this night only. Masks are also required.

Sunday, Dec. 26, 1st Sunday after Christmas

10:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist with carols.

For this service, as on any Sunday morning, you will be required to mask and to provide your name and phone number for contact tracing.

Throughout the season of **Advent**, we are holding one service on a Sunday at 10:00 a.m. with the lighting of the Advent wreath each week. In the lead-up to Christmas, there is a special day to note:

This **Sunday, December 5th** is a day of thanksgiving and celebration for the ministry of the Rev. Gary Yetman and the Rev. Dorothy Tay in our midst. Both Rev. Gary and Rev. Dorothy have now retired from active ministry and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, we have not been able to celebrate their ministry in the way that we wanted with a gathering of the parish family. Now we can! We hope you will join us for the celebration in church and a cake and tea/coffee reception to follow. (Note: Proof of Vaccination is required for to attend the reception but not the worship!)

On Monday, Dec. 21 we will **decorate the church** for Christmas beginning at 6:30. p.m. Come out and help us if you can. Many hands make light work!

Christmas Memorials: Those wishing to place a memorial for Christmas are asked to contact Angela (902-897-0566 or stjohnstruro@ns.sympatico.ca) by Thursday, Dec. 16 with their bulletin dedications for poinsettias or monetary memorials. Drop off time for poinsettias will be during office hours (8:30-2:00) Dec. 20-22). Poinsettias will be placed in the church on Dec. 22.

Prayer Angels: Those wishing prayers for others during the Christmas season are asked to write the prayer or the name of the person to be prayed for on a prayer angel which will be placed on our

Christmas tree. These must be signed by Sunday, Dec. 19. They are in two baskets at the back of the church – one with blank angels and one to place the angels in after they have been signed.

Our **Sunday School** has been suspended until January due to the number of cases in local schools. Regretfully, this also means that our Christmas Pageant has also been cancelled.

Our next weekday service of **Morning Prayer** will be held on Friday, Dec. 17 at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary of the church. Come and join us for a quiet half hour of reflection.

Christmas Outreach: Our Christmas outreach projects are winding down, but there is still time to donate and be part of the joy of giving.

Christmas Index: Again this year, we are supporting 30 families in our community with Christmas dinner through Christmas Index and the Hospice Society. Our food collection is on-going and the list of needed items can be found on our parish website. We continue to receive donations on Sundays at church and again on Tuesdays from 1-3. The last day for donations is Sunday, Dec. 19. Delivery of our boxes is expected to be on Monday, Dec. 20.

Mission to Seafarer's Christmas Boxes: Again this year we are collecting boxes for small gifts for seafarers visiting the Port of Halifax. The desired items are: hat, scarf, mittens/gloves, socks, soap, deodorant, shampoo, body wash, shaving cream, disposable razors, toothbrush, tooth paste, hard candy (no chocolate), lip balm, playing cards, and a small memento of NS or PEI (optional). You may complete a full box (do not wrap it closed please) or donate several items in a bag for the Mission volunteers to compile. Our boxes will be delivered to the Mission early in December, so time is of the essence on this project!

Hub House: We are receiving your donations of \$5 Tim Horton gift cards for our neighbors at Hub House throughout Advent. No socks are needed this year!

British Columbia Flood Relief: We are all aware of the loss of lives, homes and economic security being suffered by our brothers and sisters in B.C. Besides our prayers, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund offers the following ways that we can help:

PWRDF has set up a B.C. disaster fund – the allocation of the funds to be determined when the mid and long range needs are better known: <https://pwrdf.org/pwrdf-accepting-donations-for-b-c/>

Sorrento Centre – is currently housing many of the evacuees from Merritt and the surrounding area. Government is covering housing costs but they need assistance with food costs. Here are three options for those who want to support the work with evacuees and people who are hungry:

- 1) Mail a cheque to Sorrento Centre, PO Box 99 Sorrento, B.C V0E 2W0.
- 2) Call our office at 250-675-2421 to arrange an e-transfer or with questions
- 3) Our safe and secure donation site online: www.sorrentocentre.ca/donate

I think that's all of the news for now. May your Advent season be blessed and your Christmas bright with the Lord's love.

Peace,
Rev. Lori

