



Riverside United Church

Advent - Christmas Prayer (From Rev. Phil)

O come, O come Emmanuel. Come into our lives this Advent, a season of new beginnings, precious traditions, and the longing deep in our hearts for what we have learned to call the Day of our Lord, your day; a day when you come with love and power and justice and mercy, a day when we stand up and become all that you have created us to be.

So come to us, Emmanuel, this day and this Christmas season. May this day be the day in which swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. When cold hearts melt and relationships warm and the hungry are fed, and there is peace...in our hearts, our homes, our communities, our nation, and our world. In the name of the Prince of Peace we pray. Amen.

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Calendar

- *3rd Sunday of Advent
December 12*
- *4th Sunday of Advent
December 19*
- *Christmas Celebrations
December 24*
- *Communion Feb. 27*
- *Baptism March 6*

Reverend's Ruminations



If we read the clues in our culture – Hollywood Christmas stories, casual comments, Christmas cards, even some sermons – it becomes apparent that the "true meaning of Christmas" is the celebration of love, generosity, benevolence, and kindness. The true meaning of Christmas – according to this way of thinking – is a kind of Hallmark sentimentality about a world where there is no strife, no anger, no hatred in any of its forms.

Is that, in fact, the true meaning of Christmas? I say no. The true meaning of Christmas is not about human loving human. The true meaning of Christmas is about God loving all of creation. It is about God giving the most amazing and spectacular gift to the world. It is about the Sacred wrapping us in promise, birthing the possibility of Kingdom-living and deeply transformed hearts that desire it.

Parson's Pen

by Gordon R. Geiger

The fact that many congregations in the mainline churches are dwindling and some are closing concerns me. It would seem that many persons consider the church and organized religion irrelevant. Yet it has been shown that the vast majority have a deep spiritual hunger that needs to be fed. Traditionally, the church or religion has been the place to look to satisfy this hunger. Unfortunately the message given is no longer heard or understood. What is needed now is the ability and courage to look at old truths and show how they are relevant to the questions now being asked. This must be done by word and by example, both by the church as an institution and by individuals.

Jesus' basic message is that God is a God of love. It is our privilege to share love wherever and however we can.

Monday, December 13th
London City Lights Bus Tour -
\$5 - see Marion Dewbury

Peace Candles

Our peace candles have reached out into the world and are producing great results. A letter from King of Peace Metropolitan Community Church in St. Petersburg Florida was received after they were given a candle. Rev. Dr. Candace Shultis wrote "What a terrific and lovely idea! I plan on start work on having them available with an accompanying explanation telling everyone we received one from you and are passing them and the gift of peace to other congregations. I pray they will eventually go around the world!! Thank you for carrying on the beginning of a wonderful tradition. We will find a special place for it here at King of Peace MCC."

Upcoming Events

Holy Communion - February 27th.

Baptism - March 6th with the Baptism Seminar scheduled for February 20th.

Consecration Sunday by *Ann McEwan-Castellan*

On Sunday October 31, 2010, Riverside United Church held it's 6th Consecration Sunday. The Rev. Dr. David McKane was the guest speaker and presented the topic of giving well and with humour. After the service over 190 people sat down to lunch of soup, sandwiches, veggies and pickles all prepared by members of our Riverside Family. Of course there was cake and ice cream. This was the largest crowd ever for the celebration luncheon. There was a great spirit in the air during worship and the celebration lunch.

There were 140 estimates of givings cards returned during the service and from the mail out. Based on an estimate of givings for 2010 there is a projected 2011givings increase of 7%.

Family News

Jodi Lynn Morris (McQueen) completed and graduated on Oct 29, 2010 with her Master of Social Work from Wilfrid Laurier University, in Waterloo, ON.

U.C.W. Christmas Celebration - Dec. 11—12 noon

A catered turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Get your \$15 tickets during coffee hour or from Lois Peters. Special program and candlelight service. **ALL WOMEN AND MEN OF RIVERSIDE ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.** If you wish, please bring something along for those in need. 1) Limberlost Chaplaincy and My Sister's Place is in need of paper products and/or non-perishable food. 2) Knitted items for our Woollen Tree. 3) Mental health gifts (unscented). Join us for this special event.

CHURCH EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12th - 3rd Sunday of Advent - 10 a.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19th - 4th Sunday of Advent - 10 a.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24th -

4:00 pm - The Christmas Story celebrated in a simple fashion for children and young families.

7:00 pm - A family service of scripture, song and nativity drama retells the story of God's special gift of a baby to the world.

9:00 pm - A quiet, intimate service of personal prayer, reflection, silence and blessing with Celtic Harpist, Jennifer White. An excellent retreat from the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations. Not your usual Christmas Eve worship!

11:00 pm - A candlelight service of scripture, carols, the music of our senior choir and Celtic Harpist, Jennifer White, and message set in the warmth and mystery of the Holy Child and Holy Communion.

The Christmas Eve offerings will go to Riverside's S.A.L.T. (Summer Adventure Leadership Team) which reaches out to children in Senior Kindergarten through grade 8 in Oakridge and across London through summer day camps experience with the help of 8 trained youth and young adult staff.

Mission Impossible Bible Study (MIBS) *by Gary Alan Price*

The Men of MIBS recently achieved their goal of identifying the 'top 100' scripture passages in the Bible. Each of those passages was selected, studied, presented, discussed and inducted into the MIBS Scripture Hall of Fame, which hangs on the wall in the auditorium. The mission took two years to complete and involved about 20 men.

Now the Men of MIBS have begun a new mission. Called a 'high-five' study, the men are watching a DVD lecture series presented by Professor Bart Ehrman from the University of North Carolina. In these lec-

tures the professor discusses the New Testament as an historical document. It's a fascinating, unique and sometimes provocative approach to the single most important work in the history of Western civilization. Such an approach serves to stretch our understanding of the New Testament writings with a view to deepening our spiritual faith.

Sessions will begin again after the New Year on a date to be determined. All Riverside men are welcome to be part of a mission, which promises to be both enriching and fun.



MIBS—2010

In Memorium

Ross Imrie
Roy Loree
(father of Brenda Benson)

Weddings

Emily Cairncross and Andie DaPorte - May 15.
Mark Durnin and Emily Duncan - June 19.
David Welbourn and Carla Schell - July 17.
Matthew Lipskey and Chelsea Cocks - Sept. 25.

From Marilyn Arthur

Last night when we turned on the Christmas lights outside for the first time, my two-year-old son's eyes lit up with amazement. He exclaimed, "Wow" and quickly went over to one of the lights to examine it more closely.

As we make our preparations during Advent for the amazing season of Christmas, my prayer is that we all act like children at least once a day; that we quickly stop and say

"Wow" as we examine whatever it is we are grateful for. So often our life is overwhelming in preparing for the Christmas season that we forget to say "Wow". We forget to just breathe and pause for a moment. One of the simplest but deeply profound lines in my favourite song, 'Just Breathe' by Pearl Jam states "Stay with me, let's just breathe". Take the time to breathe and feel God this season. Merry Christmas.

Riverside Christmas Dinner

Good food and good friends is what makes the Riverside Christmas dinner such a wonderful time. The mood was set by the showing of Rudolph the Red-Nosed reindeer, followed by a lovely dinner of turkey and all the trimmings. After dinner we were entertained by stories of special past Christmases, a carol sing and the traditional 12 Days of Christmas – Riverside style.



Silent Night *by Neila Lawson*

This summer I flew to Holland and with my sister in law flew to Munich and then drove to Salzburg, Austria. The Music Festival was on, so the city was alive with all different kinds of music, not just Mozart. We saw a church that had 5 pipe organs. Unfortunately we missed the concert of the 5 organs by an hour... Sigh!

On our trek to Oberammergau, I knew the village of the famous musician, Franz Gruber, of Silent Night fame was nearby. The village was off the beaten track and we had an uphill climb to the Silent Night Museum in part of the church grounds. The museum was the house that Franz Gruber lived in for many years as the organist of the church. He was even buried on

the grounds. The church next door is undergoing a massive organ-rebuilding program sponsored by Placido Domingo. It was an interesting experience to think that this church was where Silent Night was first performed on that Christmas Eve, so many years ago, without organ accompaniment because the mice had destroyed the organ bellows. The acoustics in that church were lovely and as I sang Silent Night I thought of all the lives that have been touched by that simple carol.



Gruber Church



Empowered Spirituality 2010

Notices from Jan

- Givings Envelopes are available to be picked up in the narthex.
- Observer subscriptions renewals are due by January 2, 2011. Cost is \$20 per year.
- Contact Jan in the office.



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CHURCH**

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Our Mission Statement

Riverside United Church is a diverse and inclusive Christian community. We are a mix of age and experience sharing our faith journey in a supportive and respectful environment, empowering us to be at work in the world.

Your District Visitor is _____

Phone number _____

“The Current” has gone electronic and now you have options! The Current will now be available both in printed form and on the web. You can choose to view The Current on line and not receive a printed copy. Simply contact Susan O’Hara 519-472-3310 or paohara@rogers.com or Jan in the church office and tell us you do not want a printed copy. You will still be on a district visitors list and they will still contact you with a phone call or quick hello in church. Print copies of The Current will still be available for those who wish a copy and there will always be a few extras in the office. **Be green and view online!**

Baptism

- Jaiden Peter Look-Hong and Xavier Maxwell Look-Hong - parents Peter Look-Hong and Zia Rahman.
- Juliette Mackenzie Murphy - parents Sean Murphy and Kathryn Wood.
- Abbigale Mackenzie McGowan - parents Edward McGowan and Rosalie Poole.
- Madeleine Ruth Morton - parents Matthew Morton and Margaret Sharpe.
- Lawson Alexander Huggett - parents Ryan Huggett and Deanna Dowling.
- Charlotte Victoria Johnson - parents Douglas Johnson and Susan Hull.