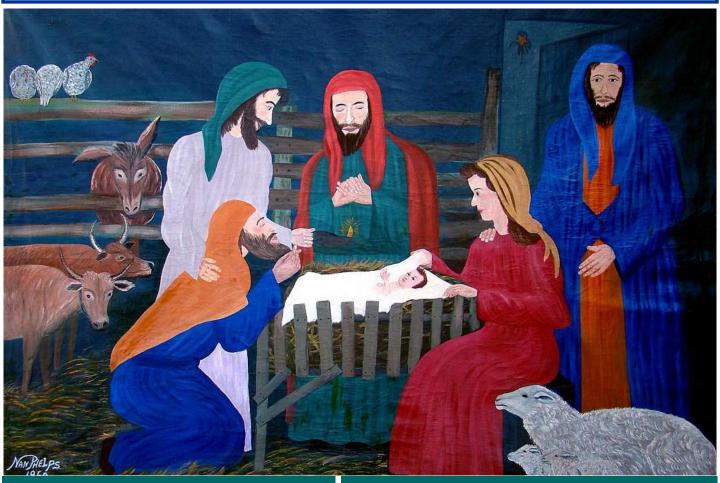


MESSIAH MESSENGER

December 2021 Volume 42 Issue 11



Worship Schedule Sunday 10:30 am

In-person worship: masking and physical distancing are required at this time.

Services are broadcast on YouTube, search for MessiahCamrose or find a link on our website messiahcamrose.ca.
We also broadcast on Eastlink TV channels 10, 310 and 610 on Sunday at 10:30 am

If you have any questions or concerns call the office at 780 672 3444 or email office@messiahcamrose.ca

Longest Night Service

December 17 at 6:30 pm For those struggling with loss (Service is in person at Messiah and online)

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9:00 am to Noon 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

(Closed for lunch from 12:00-1:00 pm)

Church Foyer Will be open during the noon hour and offerings can be placed through the mail slot on the inside office door.

<u>Christmas Services</u>
Christmas Eve, Dec 24, In person Services
4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
9:00 pm Candlelight &Communion

Christmas Day, Dec 25, 10:30 am (not in person)
Virtual Service of Lessons and Carols
Only On YouTube and on Eastlink

Boxing Day: Dec 26, 10:30 am Regular Worship

<u>Holiday Office Hours</u> Closed Dec. 27 to Dec 30 Open Dec 31 until noon

Minister's Message



This is the time of year we begin the journey through Advent and into Christmas. Strangely, a lot of the time we skip the most important part of the season... the waiting.

As soon as Halloween is over... the stores and pretty much our whole society jumps into the season full steam. But the most important part of this season is actually this waiting time.

Its one thing I think that the church and faith communities do right. We take a moment to be still and to wait and to meditate.

Advent is a time for stillness... a time to be present to what it is that we are waiting for; to what we would like the Lord to bring into our moments, our days.

We ask those we love, "what would you like for Christmas?" Brendyn, our son, has already announced that the Paw Patrol truck at the door of Walmart is just the thing... thankfully it's half off today as I write. He is of course waiting for the truck. honest, real places of longing... We will

But that's not all that this season is about is it? We have so many deep needs these days in our world, our churches, our families and in our souls... so very many. We are longing deep within, especially in these days where there is so much trauma and so much loss in our hearts, our lives, our world, our souls.

And so, as we enter into this Advent season, I am wondering... what is it that you are waiting for? What is at the depths of your soul crying out to God to be present to? For some, it is a deep grief beyond compare, for others of you it is a loss of a different

And We Wait ...

kind, for others of you it is a dissatisfaction with where you are at in your life, perhaps for you it is just a deep soul desire for God to touch you anew in your Spirit. Name for yourself this season where the longing is; and, open for God to come into that longing this Christmas. Let God reach you as we consider the coming of Jesus into your lives and your soul.

We struggle with emptiness because we don't want to feel it. We don't want to have to feel like we are just at a loss. But this is precisely the time when we can be the most open to the touch of God coming into our longing and our empty hearts.

And so, we wait... we wait for Christ to come anew into that empty place and we open in that waiting.

Isaiah 40:31 is the verse we are reflecting on together this season:

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Let's wait on the Lord together in our mount up with wings as eagles and we will be renewed as Christ comes anew into our lives.

But let's not be afraid to be in the empty waiting.

Waiting with you,

Pastor Bev Contact me at 780-678-7830 cell or email bev@breatheopenlove.com



Discerning God's Will Among Us

As you know we have been getting ready to join together in a process of praying, hearing scripture and listening to God's voice around where God might lead us as a church going forward. What we discern together will inform many parts of our life as a community of faith.

A discernment group has gathered to discern 4 questions that we will pray about and think about together. We will do this in small discernment groups, committees, as a council, a staff and individually. This process invites us into a place of being still and listening to the still small voice of the Spirit.

We will begin this process together as we enter into the New Year. Meantime, I invite you to prepare your hearts in this Advent Season for this intentional time of listening. As you are in this season of waiting I invite you to quiet yourself and hear God's voice. You might do this as you walk, sit quietly, pray, or listen to music.

Perhaps you might reflect on this verse in Isaiah 40:31 as you are in your quiet time during Advent along with any other scriptures that call to you...

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

As we begin to move into the Spirit of listening, we as a church, will hear God's voice in a powerful way among us.

I am looking forward to this time of discernment and prayer together.

Let us be a praying community of faith looking to the one who is our guide.

Pastor Bev



On Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 pm, we will be having an Advent devotional time lasting 20-30 minutes. The first half hour will be a time of listening and meditation that will include scripture and music and a brief meditation.

Those who wish to stay to discuss the topic for the night and connect with one another in conversation will be welcome to stay online. Others will be able to just come for the first part.

Our topics will be:

WAITING IN HOPE Tuesday, Nov 30 with Zoom link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89134084581pwd=c1pLeFAxVTZ2NWARoQ2tONkVSMjdQQT09

Meeting ID: 891 3408 4581

Passcode: 910797 Dial by your location +1 587 328 1099 Canada

WAITING IN PEACE Tuesday, Dec 7 with Zoom link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87690211016?pwd=c2llU2k3TXN2aE5RcXpsNnFSbTlhQT09

Meeting ID: 876 9021 1016

Passcode: 082618
Dial by your location
+1 587 328 1099 Canada

WAITING IN JOY Tuesday, Dec 14 with Zoom link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86774611569?pwd=K2djci9Nd1pDQ2NoczF2Y0NjZm13Zz09

Meeting ID: 867 7461 1569

Passcode: 558253
Dial by your location
+1 587 328 1099 Canada

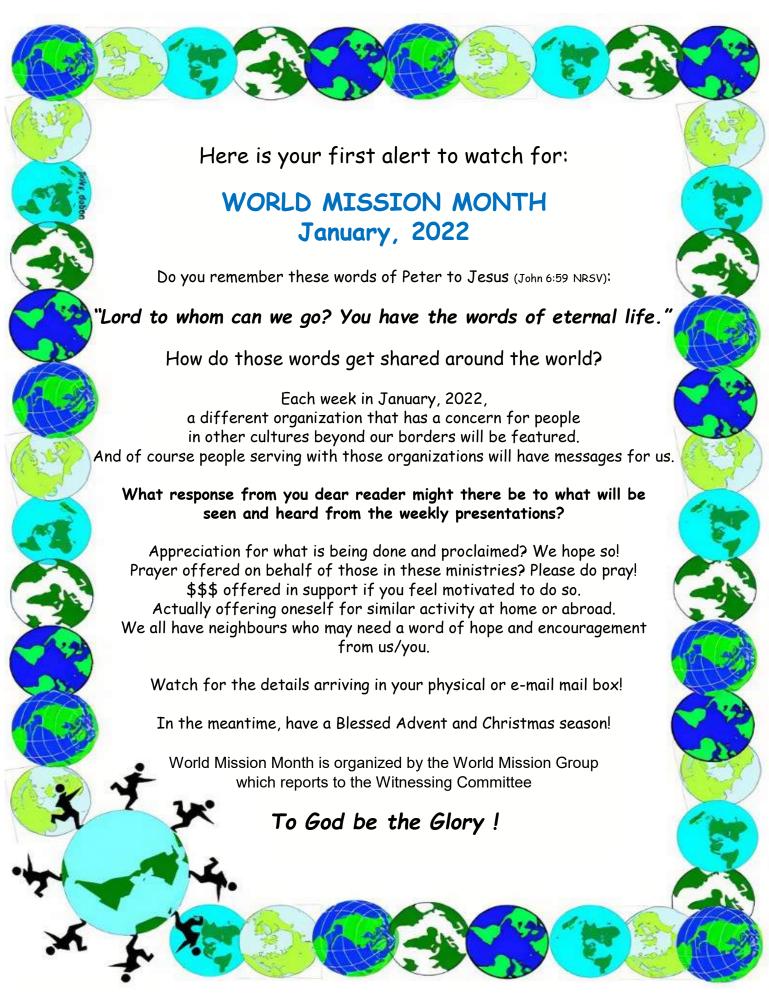
WAITING IN LOVE Tuesday, Dec 21 with Zoom link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89027073790?pwd=bHZyRTR2Z1k2VWs1L2VGcS81RjJBUT09

Meeting ID: 890 2707 3790

Passcode: 877867 Dial by your location +1 587 328 1099 Canada

Please join us as you are able.





Dear friends and family in in [†]Christ--

In the reading from Luke for the first Sunday in Advent, we are confronted with a portion of Luke's apocalypse. It is a reading where Jesus offers up images that we associate with the end. Perhaps it is the end as it pertained to the Jerusalem temple. Or maybe Christ's words were meant in a more far-reaching sense, pointing to the end of all things. We have often read these words in such a way. It is hard not to. These words speak of the Son of Man coming upon a cloud and of creation itself showing signs of the coming of the end. We can get so caught up looking for what is coming, at watching for the signs of this final time, that we don't hear the good news.

And, yes, there is good news, even though it seems overshadowed by these visions of rapture that dance through our heads. There is good news, even as Jesus warns us to hold fast against what is coming. The good news is this. The kingdom of God is near or in some translations, at hand. Now, that could be read as part of the foreboding nature of this text. The Kingdom of God is near? Yikes, I better shape up. God will be here soon. But it is also good news. The kingdom of God is near. God will soon usher in God's kingdom and will make everything right.

But I will offer to you another thought on the word "near". The word in this context is the Greek *eggus*, which can mean nearby, both in time and in position. The Kingdom of God

approaches and will soon be here. But another use of the word is to indicate nearness as a way of accessing God. The Jews, for example, were near to God. God was their



God, and they were God's people. The nearness wasn't about God soon arriving. It was about having God close at hand, able to be accessed. Israel saw their relationship with God in such a way. God wasn't distant. God wouldn't show up one day. God was with them already.

This understanding situates itself well with the story of the Israelites all through their history. God was not a distant God to them. God was a warrior, who fought for them. God was the one who helped Moses split open a sea or gave David the power to overcome Goliath. God brought the people together as a nation and God, they believed, abided in the temple. That was where God was to be found. That was the centre of all things.

Now, we might not agree with their cosmology, or the idea of God being limited to the temple in any way, but there is something so intriguing and beautiful about God being near like that, as near as a family member or friend. One to reach out to and take comfort in and gain strength from. We might not think of God that way but consider that this was the same God who came down in the person of Christ, God incarnate, to

walk amongst God's people. Jesus lived and ate and wept and laughed and healed and taught and slept and died right along with us. He was as near to his disciples as I am when I sit with my family at the end of the evening. He was near and he loved them, and they loved him.

The nearness of God does not stop there. Even after Jesus departed again from his disciples, he gifted the Holy Spirit to the disciples and to the world. That is the Spirit who sustains us and guides us and who knows us more than we know ourselves. That is the nearness of the Spirit. As near to us as our own flesh.

To say that God's kingdom is near is to say that God is present in our lives. To say the kingdom is near is to say that even as we struggle with the realities of a harsh world, that seem only to get darker with the passing of time, God's kingdom is still near. We may wonder what can stand against such anger and hate, and yet the answer is as close as the Spirit. God can. God's kingdom, which we are called to serve, is that light which represents the very best that we can be, inspired and empowered to be such by the Spirit. The kingdom, which stands for mercy and hope, love and forgiveness, service and community, stands firmly opposed to the darkness all around us and it is near. As close to us as our own skin. It just has not been fully realized yet. But what a hope we have, knowing it is there. By knowing that, we can stand strong, because God is with us. We can persevere because the Spirit sustains us.

The kingdom is near and so we can go on.

I can't think of a better way to start Advent. The Kingdom of God is near. God holds us fast. God, in Christ, came once to a manger in Bethlehem and the Holy was given flesh. The Christ will come again and then that which is near but not yet fully realized, will be in all its glory and the world, finally, will be made right.

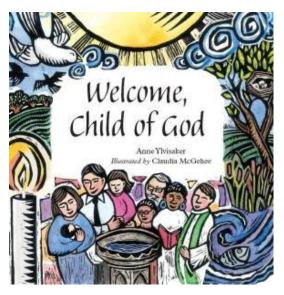
During this Advent, may you know the nearness of God, now and throughout your days. May it give you hope.

Blessing and Peace in [†]Christ,

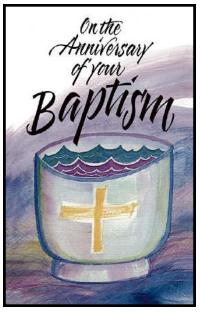
Rev. Prema Samuel

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.

1 John 3:1







We recognize the monthly Baptismal Anniversaries of the children in the *Splash* program:

Theodore Simms – December 22 Jemma Matthiessen – December 23 Abigail and Hannah Lindberg – December 29

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.







Pastoral Acts
(up to November 26)

New Member Glenys Smith

Special Gifts
In honor of Men's
Bible Study Group

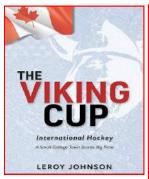
Canada Lutheran Subscription Renewal

Please contact the Church office 780-672-3444 or email office@messiahcamrose.ca if you would like to continue receiving the Canada Lutheran magazine or if you would like to start a new subscription.

We can still get you added.

The suggested donation is \$20.





Available for pre-order at Fox and Fable in Camrose by calling 587 386 009 or on their website. \$36 Softcover \$45 Hardcover Pickup after Dec 11 How does a small college in a rural Alberta city of just over 12,000 people become host to the finest hockey players in the world? Now called University of Alberta - Augustana Campus, Camrose Lutheran College and the community embraced the potential of the Viking Cup in 1980, opening their doors to the world of hockey through this unique international exchange program. Outside, the Cold War was raging but barriers seemed to melt as the love of hockey played on. By the time the Cup had its last hurrah in 2006, the NHL had drafted more than 400 players from its ranks.

The Viking Cup, memoirs and stories of the program's founder, is a joyful account of an important chapter of Canada's hockey history.

Samaritan's Purse

Operation Christmas Child



We collected 34
shoeboxes which were
prayed for, as well as all
those that packed or
donated online!

Thank you to everyone who participated.

Sunday School will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

This month it will be





Grateful Grannies 2021 Christmas Market

Farmers' Market, Duggan Mall Saturdays, 10:00-2:00 pm November 27th until December 18th

We will have a wonderful array of handcrafted items including Grinch trees, Scandinavian gnomes, quilted and knitted items, cards, jewelry, and of course our AIDS angels.



Thank you for continuing to support our cause as we seek temporary measures to ensure everyone's safety.



All proceeds will go to the **Grandmothers to Grandmothers** Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation in support of the AIDS/HIV crisis in Africa

News from the World Mission Scene

Support of Children's Education through Lutheran Schools in Colombia



Part of Messiah's active participation in responding to needs in other parts of the world is support of needy children attending Lutheran Schools in Colombia.

Thank you for your prayers on behalf of that Church and its schools.

Financially speaking, Messiah members have contributed \$1,500 so far in this financial year which started on May 1, 2020.

This is in addition to the money from interest on endowment funds which was voted upon at the last Annual Meeting, an amount of \$1,092.57.

Thank you for these offerings.
Further gifts may be dropped off at the Messiah Office or placed in the offering plate at Worship.
Cheques should have
"Lutheran Schools in Colombia" noted in the information space.

To God be the Glory.

Submitted by Ray Blacklock on behalf of the World Mission Group, and with the assistance of Sheila Becker, Messiah's Bookkeeper.



Senior High Girls Youth



Hello Everyone! We are a youth group for grades 10-12. In the past couple months we have been getting together for meals, baking, learning more about God's Word and spreading encouragement to the community. We meet Tuesdays from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Please contact us at (403) 415-5142 for additional information and meeting locations or if you are interested in joining us! We would love to see you there!

Boys Youth Group for Gr. 8-12

Boys youth events will take place Friday evening December 3 from

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm.

Come out for boys youth

nights of pizza and

hanging out playing games

and foosball.



Food Bank Sunday - December 12

Food Bank donations **are still needed** and can be left in the grocery cart **in the Church foyer during the week** or **at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings** or **dropped off directly** to the Neighbor Aid Food Bank located at

4524 54 Street in Camrose,

Monday to Friday from 9:00 am - Noon & Tuesday to Thursday 1:00-4:00 pm.

Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated and can be made online at <u>atbcares.com</u> by entering



in the Find A Cause search area.





We would like to fill the Church windows with Advent Pictures

Look on our website messiahcamrose.ca under the Worship tab for Sunday School Activity Pages to find some fun templates or use your own creativity.

Drop off your creations at the Church office!!





We are able to accept
E-transfers set up from your online
banking, that deposit directly, at the
following email address:

offering@messiahcamrose.ca



SNOW SHOVELLERS NEEDED



It's that time again!

If you are able to take a turn this winter please give us a call at the office.

780 672 3444



We are collecting mittens, scarves, toques and socks!
Please, generously donate until January 5. You will find a tree in the church office and a collection box in the Link.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP BY ZOOM

Wednesday at 10:00 am*

Phone the office for

the Zoom link

780 672 3444

* Will not take place on Dec. 29



Financial Report

At the end of October, we reached the halfway point of Messiah's financial year, and I am happy to report that we are making good progress towards eliminating the deficit. The deficit which was \$36,500 at the end of September has been reduced to \$28,360, and if offerings continue strong we should be in a balanced position by the end of our financial year on April 30. October was helped substantially by generous Thanksgiving offerings which by the end of the month totaled \$9,111. We have many good reasons to be thankful, including the faithful support of members for our congregation.

Please call me if you have any questions or concerns about Messiah's financial situation.

Dave Stolee, Treasurer



2021 Donations

Please note that if you wish a donation to be receipted in 2021, it must be in the offering or to the office by Noon on December 31. Alternatively, mail needs to be clearly postmarked 2021.

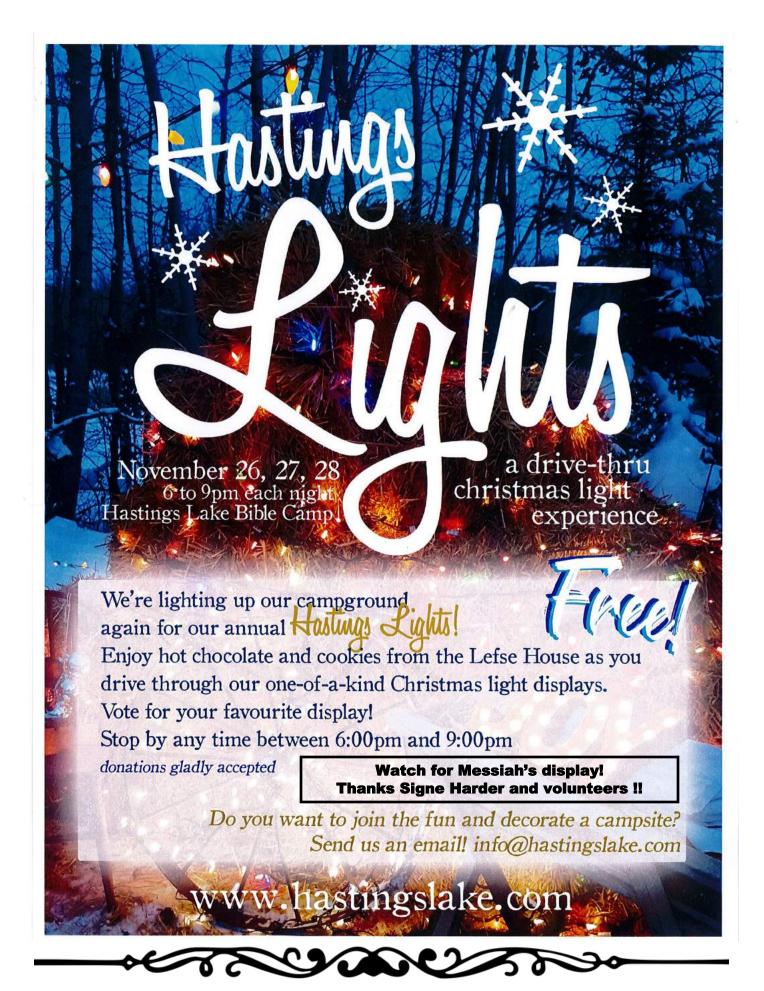


Christmas is the season for celebrating God's greatest gift to us. He gave the gift of His Son Jesus because of His great love for us. At this season, we also like to give gifts to demonstrate our love to family, friends and to others who have such great needs. One way to do this is to "buy" a gift from the CLWR GIFTS FROM THE HEART catalogue. The money goes for CLWR projects, but the honour can be directed to anyone you choose. Some of the gifts will be matched several times, so choose carefully. The new catalogues will be available in the church office. Gifts can be ordered on-line at www.clwr.org/GFTH, by calling

1-800-661-2597 or mailing cheques to CLWR, 600-177 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3B 0W5



Mass floods and landslides have devastated parts of British Columbia, destroying roads and leaving several mountain towns isolated. Some 18,000 people are displaced. CLWR invites you to pray for the people of B.C. and to consider a gift to support recovery efforts. CLWR is accepting donations on its website at www.clwr.org/BCfloods or designated gifts at above addresses.



MESSIAH'S AUDIO-VISUAL TEAM NEEDS HELPERS

We need help - please consider joining Messiah's Audio-Visual Team!

1) Screen Operators

Skills needed: concentration, mouse and keyboard operation.

2) Camera Operators

Skills needed: multi-window use, attention to visual detail, mouse and keyboard operation.

3) Sound Board Operators

Skills needed: attention for aural detail.

If you don't have the skills listed, really the main thing we need is someone with a strong desire to learn and serve.

We will provide training.

Please contact Rosanna if you are interested or have any questions: rosannas@telus.net.



CAN WE HELP?

There is a volunteer group of people at Messiah who are available to help you or do tasks for you...

To do small household tasks (e.g. move a heavy box, change a light bulb)

To run small errands for you around town, or Give you a ride to an appointment



If there is small job that you would like help with or would like done, please phone Messiah Lutheran Church at 780-672-3444 and leave a message with the receptionist. You will receive a call back to set up a time to get together & make a plan.

Council Highlights from November 17, 2021

Our president encouraged us from the words of Mark 13:9-23 to continue to live and love as Jesus' disciples despite these very difficult times.

In what may be the way of the future, a small sub-committee of Council has been tasked with making a report to Council in January on the practical implications of entering into a collaborative agreement with our sister churches in New Norway and Bashaw around calling a pastor. The current discussion would have Messiah issuing a call which would allow us to have one and a half pastors and each of the other congregations to have quarter-time access. The sub-committee will consider such things as the costs, means of support, sustainability, and roles and responsibilities. No decision can be made until all factors are examined and considered and a recommendation submitted to the congregation.

Council voted to commend the Service Committee on their Care Initiative which invites people with a need to contact the office. If you have a need, call 780-672-3444 and your request will be passed on to the Service Committee.

Pastor Bev and the Discernment Committee are excited about beginning the discernment process in the new year. More information will be coming as to how you can participate.

The Support Committee will be asked to review all fees and charges.

The Treasurer reports that we are whittling away at the deficit. Thanks everyone.

Council will not meet in December. (As provided in the by-laws, Council does not normally meet in July, August or December, although circumstances this year did have us meeting over the summer.)





Silent Santa 2021

Kinette Club of Camrose

November 3, 2021

For well over 60 years, the Kinette Club of Camrose, in conjunction with the Christmas Cheer Fund, has provided gifts for children in families facing economic hardship. This year, as you may expect, the need will be even greater than usual!

Each Christmas we ask our community to donate **new**, **unwrapped gifts** at various locations around town. In addition to the generous support we get in the form of gifts, we also require **monetary donations** to purchase toys, books, hat and mitts where there is a shortage. We write today to ask for your help, whether it be a monetary donation, a collection of toys or manpower for the project. We appreciate it all!!

Packing for this year's toy hampers must take place early to ensure delivery for Christmas! Please help us by ensure your gifts are in by Dec 10th!

Monetary donations may be left with Shuman Insurance Ltd, 4882 – 50 St, Camrose, AB T4V 1P7.

Feel free to contact any of the following Kinette Members if you have time to offer or to arrange toy pick up: Amanda Dyer 780-678-4496, Karen Cunningham 780-679-6860; Holly McLennan 780-781-6831; Cathy Pacholek 780-672-0976; Kathy Schwab 780-672-8073 or Chris Shuman 780-672-5522.

Thank you in advance for helping us to bring Christmas to children in our community!

Sincerely,

The Kinette Club of Camrose

Messiah Lutheran Church Sharing Jesus Christ with All People

4810-50 St. Camrose AB T4V 1P5
Phone: 780-672-3444 Fax: 780-672-3716
Website: messiahcamrose.ca
Email: office@messiahcamrose.ca

Acting Senior Pastor: Bev Swanson
Administrative Coordinator: Lori Mokry
Part-Time Administrative Assistant: Shirley McFall
Audio Visual Ministry Coordinator: Lowell Dahlman
Bookkeeper: Sheila Becker

Custodians: Carolyn & Lloyd Olson Music Ministry Coordinator: Tova Olson

Messiah Church Council

David Dahle, President

Agnes Hoveland, Vice-President

Gail Stolee, Secretary Dave Stolee, Treasurer

Mambara at Larga. Linisi

Members at Large: Liaising With:

Dena Grue Worship Committee

Donny Loewen Learning Committee

Dave Larson Support Committee

Carolyn Andersen Witnessing Committee

Vacant Service Committee

If you know someone who does not have access to Eastlink TV or the internet, but they have a DVD player, please contact the office at 780-672-3444 and we can make arrangements to deliver a DVD of any of the services to them!





We will continue to broadcast on Eastlink channels 10, 310 & 610.

Our services are on YouTube. Search for MessiahCamrose.
There is also a link for on our website messiahcamrose.ca.



Previous Sunday's services may also be found on YouTube or on our website at messiahcamrose.ca and under the Worship Service tab you will find "Worship Services Archived."

Messiah Messenger

Published 11 times a year
September to July
Also available online at: messiahcamrose.ca
under the Communications tab.
To request email delivery or to
submit articles by email,
Write to: office@messiahcamrose.ca
Messenger Editor: Dena Grue

Members, staff, committees and groups are encouraged to submit articles so that we are aware of what is happening in our congregation.

Next Issue: January Material due: December 21 Delivery date: January 4

DECEMBER 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:00 Wednesday Workers by Zoom WEDNESDAY WORKERS 10:00 Coffee Fellowship by Zoom	211:45 Staff Meeting 3:30 Learning Committee 6:45 Confirmation by Zoom	BOYS YOUTH GROUP 5:30 Boys Gr. 8-12 Youth Group	9:00 Men's Bible Study by Zoom
5 Advent 2 10:30 Sunday School Sunday School 10:30 Communion Service	6 10:30 Lectio Lectio divina 2:00 World Mission Group by Zoom	7 11:00 Service Committee by Zoom 4:00 Senior High Girls Youth 5:30 Witnessing Committee 7:00 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BY ZOOM	8 9:00 Wednesday Workers by Zoom WKDNKSDAY WORKERS 10:00 Coffee Fellowship by Zoom 7:00 Faith Circle by Zoom	9 11:45 Staff Meeting 6:45 Confirmation by Zoom	9:00 Worship Committee	9:00 Men's Bible Study by Zoom
12 Advent 3 Food Bank Sunday NO Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service	13 10:30 Lectio Lectio divina	4:00 Senior High Girls Youth 7:00 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BY ZOOM	15 9:00 Wednesday Workers by Zoom WEDNESDAY WORKERS 10:00 Coffee Fellowship by Zoom	11:45 Staff Meeting 6:45 Confirmation by Zoom	6:30 Longest Night Service	NO Men's Bible Study
19 Advent 4 10:30 Sunday School Sunday School 10:30 Communion Service	20 NO Lectio	Messenger Articles Due NO Senior High Girls Youth 7:00 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BY ZOOM	22 NO Wednesday Workers 10:00 Coffee Fellowship by Zoom	11:45 Staff Meeting NO Confirmation	24 Christmas Eve Office Open 9:00 am - Noon 4:00 Christmas Eve Service 9:00 Christmas Eve Service Candlelight and Communion	25 NO Men's Bible Study 10:30 Christmas Day Service Virtual Broadcast On our website, on YOUTUBE and on EASTLINK
26 Christmas 1 Boxing Day NO Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service	NO Lectio	OFFICE NO Senior High Girls Youth	CLOSED NO Wednesday Workers NO Coffee Fellowship	NO Staff Meeting NO Confirmation	Office open 9:00 am to Noon	Messenger Delivery will be January 4