

CENTENNIAL HOTSPOT

Centennial Presbyterian Church

103 Pinetown Place NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 5J1 403-285-7144

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Minister's Musings

Advent waiting

1	We are not very good at waiting. The late Henri Nouwen,
2	Dutch priest, and theologian was a very astute observer of
2	American culture. He wrote. "Waiting is not very popular. In
2	fact, most people consider waiting to be a waste of time. The
2	culture says, 'Get going! Do something! Don't just sit there and
3	wait.' For many people waiting is an awful desert between
3	where they are and where they want to be."
3	Our culture does not reward or applaud patient waiting.
3	Nouwen was right: culture celebrates action, results, instant
3	gratification. We want it all—now. We are entitled to it—not
4	years from now, but now. Someone said that the very best
4	advice anyone could give another person is not "Don't just sit
4	there, do something," which continues to get us in all kinds of
4	trouble, but the opposite, "Don't just do something; sit there."
5	Advent is the time when we begin serious waiting for Christ-
5	mas, for the birth of the child, but it is also when we think
5	about the future the child promised and embodied and taught
5	and lived, the kingdom of God he promised was coming but is

also when we think about the future the child promised and embodied and taught and lived, the kingdom of God he promised was coming but is already present in the world if you can wait and watch patiently enough to see it. Waiting for that promised time is not "waiting it out," sitting around whiling away the days and weeks and years of your life, killing time. No, Advent waiting is living into that future, working for the kingdom, supporting with your resources, advocating, arguing, fighting for the kingdom. It is active waiting, confident waiting, waiting in hope. William Sloane Coffin told his congregation at Riverside Church in Manhattan, "I don't want Riverside to be an institution for those interested in things religious. I want it to irrigate the community with hope" (Sermons, vol. 2, p. 337).

What a great image for the church: "irrigating the community with hope." Waiting for the kingdom by working for the values of the kingdom, joining in the work Jesus Christ is already doing in the world, working for his kingdom of justice and peace and kindness and generosity with a fierce hope that never dies. God comes in ways we do not expect—like the birth of a baby to a peasant couple in a remote outpost of the empire. And God comes with comfort through the kindness of a friend when we lose someone we love. God comes with healing through gentle touch, a nurse, a dear one. God comes with reassurance when we are afraid. God comes with an energizing spirit

when we are discouraged and life-giving love when we are depressed. And God comes in programs of churches, in people who understand a little of who Jesus Christ was and what he was about; people who love him and love the idea of his kingdom and a bit of that kingdom appearing right here in the life of the world when they share his love with someone who needs it.

The message of Advent is that God comes into the world—to lonely exiles centuries ago and to you and me. But you have to watch and wait in hope and do the good work of waiting and hoping. God comes quietly—in the birth of the child of Bethlehem long ago and in the birth of love **today**, now, in the world, in your life and mine. So where are your signs of hope to help with this Advent waiting? What do you see when you look around with new eyes, just waiting for that curtain to rise and the actors to take the stage? What blooms in your heart to prepare you for the coming dawn? How is God at work as you take a moment to breathe this Advent? Do you hear the whispers? Do you see the signs? Where do you find hope for the waiting?



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

December is usually full of our favourite Christmas carols, hymns and anthems. We will try to bring as much of that to the service as we can. Time, distance, weather—it all plays into the scheduling of recording.

This is the first year that we have had to miss the Advent Carol Festival. It is sad that we missed our Centennial and Anyuak Choirs, Massime, the Sudanese Choir, Corpus Christie Male Chorale and all the others that we manage to get to join us. That just means that next year will be bigger and better!

I can't think of a better arrangement of The Little Drummer Boy to start off our Advent Season. Enjoy.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKoXOLMNIwl>



Carla Zacharias, Music Team Leader

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 6 Communion via Zoom at 11:00 am
December 13, 20, 27 Virtual Coffee Hour

December 24

Christmas Eve service at 7:0 pm
Communion via Zoom at 8:00 pm

Meetings:

December 16, 7:00 pm FISH Network

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

I sometimes feel like a broken record repeating that we will be continuing with virtual worship. Unfortunately that means that we will not see one another face to face for some time to come. The latest casualty is the Epiphany Pot Luck Party. Please see below for details of our alternate plan. We continue to value your input on all matters pertaining to worship both virtual and physical. Please direct your comments to us at office@centennialchurch.ca or broad2well@shaw.ca

We will already have had our first virtual communion service. We will also be having Zoom live communion on December 6 at 11:00am and Christmas Eve at 8:00pm. You are encouraged to watch the related service videos one hour before the communion. We have recorded the Presbyterian World Service and Development Advent liturgies which will be presented in our virtual services beginning the first Sunday of Advent, November 29. Thanks Gwyn Crowe for coordinating this.

You still have time to participate in the Mitten Tree and White Gift traditions for Centennial. You can bring your mittens/toques/scarves/hats to the church when Rev. Kim or Carla is there. Please call before you come. Additional details are in our virtual announcements.

EPIPHANY NO LUCK PARTY

Sadly, we are having no luck hosting a pot luck party in 2021, however we would like you to record your fondest Christmas memories and send them to Jim Broadwell at broad2well@shaw.ca. He will assemble them all in a video and post for everyone's viewing. If you are uncomfortable recording a video of yourself an audio recording will work just as well. We will put it together with some Christmas photos that relate to the story you tell. Please have your video/audio recording to Jim by December 27. Please continue to let us know your upcoming family celebrations so that we can acknowledge them in the announcements. We continue with virtual coffee time at 11:00 am each Sunday. If you have difficulty with joining, please call Jim Broadwell at (403) 285-2976 for help.

Jim Broadwell
Chairman, Worship Committee

PEWS NEWS

Birthdays to celebrate in December!

Please join Reymond and Florian Arguilles in welcoming their second child - a girl - on November 6th 2020 - her name is Princess Reian, their older son is Princeton.

December 5, Godfrey Phillip; December 10, Shirley Watts; December 12, Carolyn Taylor; December 15, Fred Pauls; December 16, Heather Bonar and Princejayden Enyeawah; December 29, Florian Arguilles; December 30, Alenwi Ayongwa, Otto Bender, Simon DeVries

Anniversaries to celebrate in December!

December 27, John and Lynn Bradford, Doug and Marilyn Bonar

News from John and Jennifer Legge. Just a week or so ago, John was given the news that he is now in remission from his cancer! We celebrate with them in this fantastic news

Please continue to keep each other in prayer.

FROM THE SESSION:

Reopening possibilities have again been pushed back due to the rise in Covid-19 cases. This situation is reviewed each month at our Session meetings and congregational safety is the utmost concern.

Elder elections that were to be held early next year have been deferred until we are back at regular worship.

The Session is seeking Presbytery approval to be able to apply for a grant to cover the cost of the ongoing work to repair and strengthen the east wall of the sanctuary along with installing a required grease trap in the kitchen and an alarm system. The Board of Managers is looking after the projects with work underway on the wall repair and the alarm system already in place.

Communion services will be held live using the Zoom platform as before on Sunday, December 6th at 11:00 AM and on Christmas Eve at 8:00 PM which will be after the evening (recorded) worship service.

The Session agreed to a proposed date of Sunday, February 28, 2021 for our Annual General Meeting.

From the Presbytery it was reported that Rev. Dianne Ollerenshaw will be retiring in February. Our heartfelt thanks go out to her for all her support to our congregation over the years.

Doug Bonar
Clerk of Session

FROM THE OFFICE

The **Daily Bible Reading Guides for 2021 from the Canadian Bible Society** are in. If you would like to pick yours up, Carla will be in the office Tuesday and Thursday mornings 10:30-12:30 and Friday mornings from 9:30-12:00.

If your team is planning to hold a zoom meeting and you either need help, or would prefer the office to set it up, **please submit your zoom meeting information, including attendees, for the announcements and for setting up the call** to the office at office@centennialchurch.ca.

If you have **upcoming birthdays and anniversaries** you would like us to celebrate as we do every Sunday, please send the dates to office@centennialchurch.ca or call Carla Zacharias and we will get them in for celebrating.

Just a quick reminder, please remember to write **"Envelope Secretary"** on your envelope when mailing in your offerings.

VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR!

Our Virtual Coffee hour continues! It is an easy way to connect with others from the congregation. You can stay for five minutes, half an hour, an hour! Come say hi!

December 6 will be our Communion service. Please follow the same steps as for our coffee hour. The information is below.

The information you need is:

11:00 am on December 6, 13, 20, 27 (if the service goes long, or your coffee isn't quite ready, just jump on the call when you can!) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83259579765?pwd=Ri9JTUorNFRKeWNUUlpUK2xUQWREQT09>

Meeting ID: 832 5957 9765 Passcode: 369315 One tap mobile +1 647 374 4685 .. 83259579765#

If you have any difficulties, please contact Jim Broadwell and he can talk you through it.

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Random Acts of Kindness

As we are dealing with greater numbers of positive cases, many people are returning to limited shopping and excursions to do their part. This leads to greater moments of isolation.

When you are doing your Christmas baking, consider making an extra batch of small loaves or cookies that you could wrap up and bring (or have someone deliver) to another member of the congregation or a neighbour to brighten their day.

Dropping cards in the narthex mailboxes isn't going to be very effective this year, so consider mailing cards to various members of the congregation, or include one with your baked gift.

The FISH Network is also promoting Random Acts of Kindness. The Pastoral Care Team is here to help you out if there is a need for delivery, or even getting groceries to do your baking!

Carla Zacharias,
Pastoral Care Team Leader
centpastoralcareteam@gmail.com

PRAYER CALENDAR

If you have any prayer concerns that arise, please contact the office and we can include these in our prayer chain. If you would like to be part of our prayer chain, please contact the office and have your name added to the list. Updates will be given via text or email as is suitable for you.



The FISH Network

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

FISH Network mission, Ephesians 4:15-16

FISH Network: Friendship Inspiration Sharing Hospitality

Shirley Watts was welcomed to the **FISH Network** at our November meeting.

Our **FISH Network** meeting was opened with us sharing a favourite scripture. You are invited (**hospitality**) and encouraged to read and speak with others about what was **shared**: Proverbs 17:17; Romans 15:13; Psalms 46:10; Jeremiah 29:11, I Corinthians. We hope you find the joy, encouragement, hopefulness, comfort, and happiness that we found with these verses.

We are pleased to let you know the **FISH Network** pilot prayer partner program for Centennial Presbyterian Church has been a positive experience. The intent is for our group to carry on with the pilot program prior to offering it to the congregation in 2021. We look forward to letting you know about other initiatives as we come together to further develop the work of the church.

As we continue to connect with one another, we hope you will reach out to our **FISH Network** -- Annie Edie, Carla Zacharias, Jean Tupper, Jin Woo Kim, Phyllis Russell, Shirley Watts, Simon DeVries. If you are uncertain how to reach us, please call Centennial Presbyterian Church (403 285-7144) or reference your annual report church directory. We want to be a resource for you – one of **Friendship, Inspiration, Sharing, Hospitality**.

FISHing you all a very blessed and Merry Christmas!

Jean Tupper

CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP

CCWF have canceled all meetings for right now and will pick up again in the New Year, 2021

Phyllis Russell

FROM THE BOARD

Our thanks to all of you who have continued to support your church during this Pandemic. Our expenses continue, in fact some extra expenses have occurred such as the repairs to the south east sanctuary wall [it needed to be shored up to prevent the roof from collapsing]. Thanks to Board member John Bradford for managing this project.

There are 3 ways to submit your offerings:

1. by PAR, pre-authorized remittance,
2. e-transfer, be sure to put your envelope number in the instruction spot
3. envelope giving through the mail.

This third option requires counting which is being done the last Monday of each month by Sally Salonka and Gwyn Crowe. The last counting for this year will be December 28. If you want your December offering to be counted for 2020 income tax purposes, be sure to have your offering to the church before Christmas. Put your offering envelope inside a mailing envelope marked Envelope secretary. Do not send cash through the mail.

We are all praying for a safe and healthy return to worship soon,

Board of Managers

FROM THE MISSION TEAM

Centennial's sponsorship agreement of the Ogwok family will end on November 06/20. The church will not be obligated to provide financial and settlement support beyond this date.

At the beginning of month 9, some members of the mission team began preparing the Ogwok family for the end of the sponsorship period.

We have a month 13 Planning Checklist List, to use, to ensure the Ogwoks have the information they require. As well as necessary skills, knowledge and services for the post sponsorship period. Examples include, but are not limited to: Access to affordable housing, how to pay rent and other household bills, how to budget, transfer funds electronically etc., how to contact emergency services.

Ojulu has been working full-time at Amazon since the month of March. He has studied for and passed his driver's license. He has also purchased a car.

Ojunnie has been under Doctor's care for an injured knee for this past year. Doctor says his knee will heal. Ojunnie would like to go to school but needs to take an English equivalency test. He will meet with a school counsellor in the next while. As well, he will be starting a job with Amazon, this month.

Ojulu and Abuya welcomed a lovely baby girl named Bunglingo, in March. The older children are enjoying and doing well in school.

Our Ogwok family give thanks and praise to the congregation for the support and care we have given them.

Our second family are still in Kenya. We are waiting to hear from Rob Shropshire in Toronto regarding COVID-19.

We have put an application in for our third family.

Our love and best wishes to all.

Pat McKinnon and Okelo Aballa

As newsletters are being emailed at this time, for those who do not have email addresses or have not provided one a physical copy of the newsletter will be mailed.

January Newsletter submission deadline is December 29.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

We have all had trouble at one time or another pronouncing the gifts of the Wise Men

