

WALKING IN THE WAY

AT CCSJ

Welcome Issue
Volume 12
Issue 4

Jesus

The Hope
of the World

Pastor's Ponderings

As I reflect on my first 2.5 months with you as your new Incumbent and Pastor, I am deeply grateful. It has been a very full time with lots of meetings and getting to know the various ministries at CCSJ and all of you, which has been wonderful! Our time together on Sundays and Thursdays as a worshipping community is encouraging and I am giving thanks to God for all who have visited and those who call this place their spiritual home. It is a great joy to look out at the congregation and see such a beautifully diverse group of people committed to being together, supporting one another, and learning the ways of Jesus.

As I look ahead to the season of Advent and Christmas, I am excited. Advent is the start of a new church year and unlike the world around us, in the life of the church we don't jump right into the "merriment of Christmas"* , rather we embrace the holy season of Advent with yearning as we wait and pray for Christ to come. That's where the season gets its name: Advent means 'coming' or 'arrival'. It's that time where we prepare ourselves and look forward to the coming/arrival of Christ.

We do, of course, believe that Christ has already come, that's what we read about each week in the Gospels. We believe that when Jesus came to earth He brought the kingdom of God near to all of us. We believe that He has already died on the cross and defeated Death and Sin thereby giving us eternal life. Also, we believe that we have already been given the Holy Spirit to be with us. So what exactly are we waiting for?!?

I'm so glad you asked! As followers of Jesus, we believe in not just one coming of Christ, but actually there are three: Jesus coming to us in the Incarnation (God born as a human to live among us); there is also the coming of Christ in the present through the scriptures we read and the sacraments (primarily Baptism and The Lord's Supper) we receive every time we meet together; then there is the coming of Christ at the last days (as we confess in the creed each week). It is "a deeply paradoxical season"*: *Christ has come to us, Christ does come to us, and Christ will come again to us.*

Advent is beautiful in that as we enter the season, it is always in the dark and as we move through the season and closer to Jesus' birth, the light increases. We see this happen physically each week as we light one more candle on the Advent wreath on Sundays. We begin Advent with our sisters and brothers in the Old Testament as they faithfully waited in the dark for the Messiah (Jesus) to come.

We know already when Christ will come on Christmas, but in Advent we enter into the high drama of scripture where for those people (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Rahab, Moses, Miriam, Isaiah, Ruth, etc) it was dark and they had been waiting and yearning for the light, the Messiah, to come for years. We reenact that with them as we wait for Jesus' birth throughout the season. Thankfully, we don't have to wait as long as them!

As we get ready for the celebration of Jesus' birth (the Incarnation), we often get so caught up in the festive

celebrations before Christmas that we fail to remember what it was actually like in the time before His birth. By singing songs like "O Come, O Come

Emmanuel" and other Advent hymns we enter into that time with our sisters and brothers and we leave the hustle, bustle and consumerism of the world around us. In that song and many others we hear of the darkness in the world before Jesus came, as well as the longing and yearning for the Light of God to come and to save us all!

Advent gives us an opportunity to both look back and to look ahead. We say it often in our liturgy on Sundays, "Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again." In fact, throughout church history it is Christ's coming at the last days that has been the primary focus of the season. Throughout Advent we join with the whole church in waiting and yearning for Christ to come and make all things new. You'll notice that our readings on Sundays will focus more on this than on Christ's coming birth in a manger.

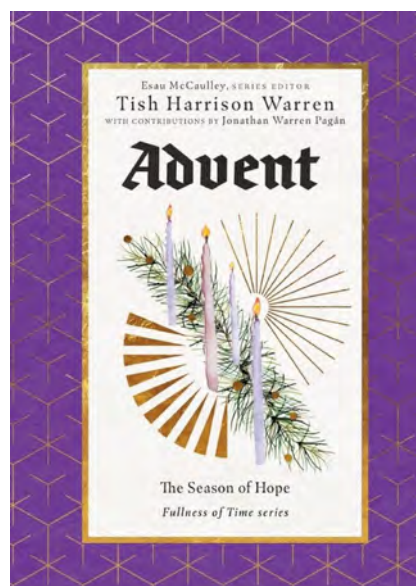
We are looking ahead to Jesus coming again and this time not as a weak and vulnerable babe, but as our powerful, conquering, and reigning King who will rule with justice and mercy. When He does come again, death and sin, pain and tears will be no more: injustice will cease and all things will be made right. The themes (hope, peace, joy, and love) that we focus on as we light the candles in the Advent wreath, will all come in their fullness when Christ

returns. It is then that "all of our longings will meet their end."* This is what we look forward to in Advent, the end. What a good day that will be!

So at the beginning of the church year, we look ahead, with longing, for the end to come. In the beautiful, holy, and paradoxical season of Advent our sense of time collapses: we join with those in the past in waiting for Christ to come, we meet together in the present for Christ to come to us in the scriptures and through the sacraments, and we look to the future for Christ to come again. I look forward to marking Advent with you all and to joyously celebrating Christ's Incarnation during Christmas.

Blessings dear friends in Christ,
Brian+

*The thoughts on Advent that I've shared with you have been heavily influenced by a great, short book that I recommend to you all. It's called *Advent: The Season of Hope* by Tish Harrison Warren, an Anglican priest in the US. Many of the thoughts, concepts, and a few direct quotes (noted by an asterisk) I have shared were borrowed from her work and I want to acknowledge that and give thanks to God for this influential work in my own understanding and appreciation for the season of Advent. I pray it will bless you too.



CHRIST IS KING!

Hello Youth & Families,

This season, we joyfully celebrate Christ the King, honoring Jesus as the Lord of our lives and the ruler of all creation. Jesus reigns with love, justice, and mercy. As we reflect on His kingship, let's ask ourselves: how can we reflect His light in our daily lives?



"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." - Daniel 7:13-14

We're also on the brink of Advent, a season of joyful anticipation! It's a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. Stay tuned for special events and activities to deepen our faith and help us enter this holy season together. Let's make this time one of worship, hope, and joyful expectation! Let's celebrate, prepare, and grow in faith as we journey closer to Christmas!

Upcoming Activities

Sunday Mornings

In the next few weeks, the youth will be taking a break from our regular Sunday routine to delve into advent lessons and activities. Join us for the next few Sundays as we count down to Christmas and celebrating the birth of Christ. Our time together will feature engaging lessons and fun activities that will deepen our understanding of the season and prepare our hearts for the joy of Christmas and its significance to our faith.



We are currently rehearsing for a presentation for the Church's First Sunday in Advent Celebration Café, Let's come together to reflect, grow, and celebrate this season of hope, love, joy, and peace. Don't miss out—invite a friend to join the journey!

Bread Tuesdays

Dear Youth, your helping hands are wanted!

Join us for our monthly Bread Tuesdays for a time of serving and fellowship. We have dinner, fellowship, games, and sort/bag breads for the CCSJ Foodbank.

Our next Bread Tuesday is on December 18. Stayed tuned for upcoming Bread Tuesday events in early 2025.

The Bread Tuesdays is an excellent opportunity for our youths to serve, while forming friendships. Remember to bring a friend.



Messy Church

We're excited to invite you to our next **Messy Church** gathering, where our December theme is *Christmas Around the World!* ☐ The December Messy Church is scheduled for December 1, from 4PM to 6PM. For this month, our theme is called Christmas Around the World. We will feature crafts and potluck meals from around the world (or the countries represented in our Church). Our youths will be having their own segment, giving you the chance to dive into global Christmas traditions, connect with friends, and explore how we all celebrate the birth of Christ in diverse ways.

Everyone is welcome, whether families or individuals; young or old. Families who are not able to make it to Church every Sunday morning with their little ones are welcome.

For more information on the Family and Youth program at CCSJ, contact: Maureen, Youth Pastor, at maureen@christchurchstjames.ca or 416-994-7375

Follow us on Facebook CCSJ Youth Group and **Instagram** @ccsj_youth_group to stay in touch.

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A QUICK LOOK AT FALL AT CCSJ....

“The church that isn’t a missionary church is a church of fossilized saints” ...we believe it is safe to say, by God’s kindness and grace, that there’s nothing fossilized at CCSJ. Why? Because of the heartbeat we share. We are a community that gathers to worship; we prioritize discipleship; we treasure our fellowship; we focus on mission; and we continue to discover our various ministries. These photos are only a glimpse of that heartbeat in recent weeks. All praise to our Lord.



Messy Church...no generation gap when it comes to sharing tin the good news



Café church...'where everybody knows your name' and warmly welcome new friends who often walk right in off the street.

A QUICK LOOK AT FALL AT CCSJ (cont'd)....



TNT....our monthly “Thursday Night Together”, where we enjoy fellowship, worship, and grow in discipleship as we pray and learn more about the mission on our doorstep.



A QUICK LOOK AT FALL AT CCSJ (cont'd)....

Restorative Justice conference at CCSJ....what a privilege we had to welcome over 90 people for a weekend focused on 'a justice that transforms'.





M2K (Monthly Meal to the Keele Correctional Center)it's all about relationships: sharing, listening, caring, and praying as we bring a meal from outside to those inside the walls. CCSJ is blessed to be 'joy and light bringers' . .



A QUICK LOOK AT FALL AT CCSJ (cont'd)....

The Dale, where we not only provide sandwiches, muffins, clothing essentials and more, but are invited to 'get in the mix' on the street in extending the hand of friendship with The Dale Ministries.





Men's Breakfast, where friendships grow deeper and faith stronger.



Foodbank Volunteer Supper, where we were thrilled to honor Gord and Judy Glandfield for their many years of dedicated and inspirational service



A QUICK LOOK AT FALL AT CCSJ (cont'd)....



Alderwood Food drive...what a blessing to have Alderwood United Church 'on team' with us in our efforts to provide groceries for hundreds of families and friends.

March for Justice.

...among the many ways CCSJ aligns with others in 'blowing the trumpet and beating the drum' toward a more just society.



The 2nd Annual Hobby Show, - a 'huge hit' again, thanks to the leadership of Dave Sproule and Jamie Gerecke and their dedicated team.





Summer and Winter, Springtime and Harvest....great is Thy faithfulness”



These seed pods from an Autumn walk this morning remind me that although the seasons are changing, new life will burst forth in the Spring, just as we are constantly renewed to new life through Christ our Lord, regardless of the season!

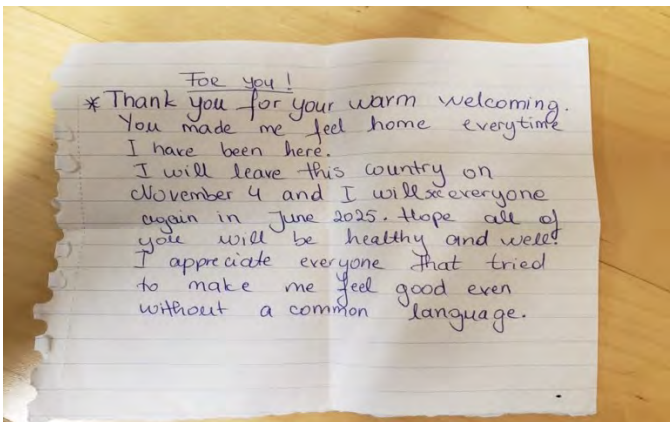
More than Words

As most of us know, for the last few months we were blessed to have a gent from Albania join us for Sunday worship. He also came to the Restorative Justice event,and even popped into a weekly staff meeting.

The amazing thing: he didn't know a word of English (aside from 'Hi' and 'Thank You'). We struggled to find ways to communicate with him, but he seemed quite content to simply welcome a heartfelt smile and handshake.

His name is Franny (my spelling could be off on this). He often sat near the front of the worship area alongside Arthur and others. His worship to God was visible. While he didn't understand the words being said or sung, he clearly knew the One in Who's name we gathered.

Below is a little note he had a family member prepare for a number of our parishioners.



There is something about Jesus, bringing together people from all cultures and languages as one. No words required. Just a shared love for our Saviour.

RIGHT NOW MEDIA: Free Bible Study Videos & Resources!

Many of our newest friends at CCSJ may not be aware of an amazing resource CCSJ is pleased to provide for each and every one of us, young and old.

It is basically a “Christian Netflix”, of 25,000 videos. - the world's largest streaming library of video Bible study resources.



This extensive library includes teachers such as NT Wright, Tim Mackie (The Bible Project), Tim Keller, Francis Chan, as well as top-notch videos for children and youth.

These Bible study videos can be used as part of a group study or for personal devotions, and many series include free discussion guides and handouts.

RightNow Media is a tool that can help us live out our faith in every area of life -at home, at work, and in your community. In addition to series on books of the Bible, RightNow Media has videos for everyone on a variety of topics like marriage, parenting, personal finances, mental health, and more.

The library for kids has over 2,000 safe, entertaining videos.

RightNow Media has a free app that's available on all major streaming devices so you can access content anywhere, anytime.

“How can I get this?” Jeff Coatsworth has made a clear and simple way:

- a. Go to our website (christchurchstjames.ca)
- b. Click on “Outreach and Programs”
- c. Click on “Digital Media Resources”
- d. And there you will see these words: To create your own curated account under our partnership with RightNow Media, use this link – <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/ChristChurchStJames> or click the Get Access button.

We pray that RightNow Media will be a huge blessing to you! Enjoy!

p.s. if you have any questions, contact the church office and we will be delighted to help you set up your own account. Again, this is absolutely free, as is it one way CCSJ can help you grow in your own personal faith as a follower of Jesus.



Scan the QR code to create your free account and start browsing.

Slow and Costly in a World of Fast and Cheap

by our friend, Darryl Dash (now at Grace Baptist Church, Don Mills Road)



First, the algorithms took over.

Some algorithms are beneficial. I enjoy seeing Amazon's recommendations based on the purchases I've made. Sometimes I discover new accounts I want to follow. The algorithms are a serendipity machine, sometimes allowing me to discover things I wouldn't have on my own.

However, we have lost something valuable within the algorithms. We're not seeing what we've chosen to see. We're seeing what social media wants us to see, and it's not always beneficial.

Now, A.I. is taking over. Again, A.I. has its uses. It's easier now to create new words, images, videos, books, and sermons that are well-written but lack depth and emotion. I'm worried about a world in which A.I. and algorithms are in control, and we're reduced to passive consumers.

There's a solution.

People are seeking things that are rare and valuable right now. In a world of cheap and fast, people desire slow and well-crafted."

Pastor: aim to preach a well-crafted sermon. Bring a manuscript to the pulpit that's been stained with tears. Plead with God for your people. Love those God has called you to serve. Labor inefficiently for your people and for the good work God has given you to do. Go for long walks without headphones and pray through the issues that your church faces. Refuse to take shortcuts so you can become a workman who doesn't need to be ashamed of his work ([2 Timothy 2:15](#)).

Christians: look for people to love. They don't need more screens. They need faces. Scan those who haven't talked to a soul in days and give them your full attention. Don't look over their shoulders for someone more important. Be all there and care.

Young Christian: cultivate offline habits. Read books. Ask people, not algorithms, for what to read next. Read old books. Strive to be an old soul by staying grounded and not getting caught up in current trends. Think in decades. Work your way slowly through Scripture. Meditate on it. Cultivate the kind of life that will bear fruit for decades. Pray in private where nobody can take notice. Memorize Scripture. Turn off the screens and work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Cultivate a close walk with God.

Writers: write slowly. Refuse to become a content machine. Play at it. Work at it. Enjoy it. Care about it. Learn the craft of writing over time, and surprise us with insights that delight and help. **Readers:** don't let the algorithm tell you what to read. Learn how to use RSS to follow the best blogs and stop following the rest. Read hard things without A.I. simplifying them for you. Read books, not just posts. Find a few favorite authors and read everything they write.

In a world of fast and cheap, choose slow and costly. You won't see the payoff immediately, but the results, I'm convinced, will be worth it.

One of the greatest attacks of the enemy is to make you busy, to make you hurried, to make you noisy, to make you distracted, to fill the people of God and the Church of God with so much noise and activity that there is no room for prayer. There is no room for being alone with God. There is no room for silence. There is no room for meditation. –Paul Washer



DARRYL DASH is the author of 8 Habits for Growth and How to Grow. He serves as pastor of Grace Fellowship Church East Toronto. He has a Doctor of Ministry degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and has over 30 years of ministry experience. Darryl is married to Charlene and has two adult children and one grandchild. You can find Darryl online at DashHouse.com.

Need help to get started on being alone with God...Don't forget Arrow Prayers

Examples:

- Thank you God!
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner
- Praise you, Lord Jesus Christ
- Lord have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.
- I Love you Lord!
- Your will be done, Lord!

Brian will introduce one each Sunday that we can all focus on for that week.

Look for it in the Order of Service, the screen during 'Prepare for Worship time- or the sign out front.

A Testimony from a November Café Church Gathering

shared by Bruce Smith

It's a treat to share some lovely news, especially when we hear so much that is deeply concerning.

Last evening while unpacking the car for Cafe Church, a young man stopped on the sidewalk and asked "is there a jam session going on in the coffee shop tonight?"

I explained to him about our weekly gathering and what goes on inside, to which he replied "I think I'll come".

Well, he did. His name is D. He is staying in the hotel on the corner of Lakeshore and 4th while he begins his work with Metro Links. He is here from Ottawa.

Our focus for the last 6 weeks has been "friendship with God", and last night was specifically about how the Spirit of God gets through to us (*John 14 and John 16*).

D spoke up, in front of everyone to say *"I really needed this tonight. It is no accident that I am here. I have been giving in to sin for quite a while lately. Enough is enough. I really needed this. Thank you all for welcoming me, being so kind to me. I loved all the singing. When I get back to Toronto, I'm definitely coming back here"*.

Kind of lovely, eh? Another gent also walked in off the street as he peered through the window...also a youngest man. He was just out for a walk, but he was curious. It was neat to have him stay for awhile as we sang, shared, laughed. He was in a time crunch, but even those few moments with him were meaningful ones.



With you I give God praise. We never know who might be drawn inside. As it happened, it was one of our member's 84th birthday (Trudy, from Germany). Her husband Bill made a birthday cake so we had a bit of an unplanned party....a real treat for our visiting friends too. They heard Trudy share her testimony of being born in Nazi Germany, of the bombing in her neighborhood as a child, of her coming to Christ in 1956 through the ministry of Billy Graham in Berlin.

What an amazing kind God we serve.

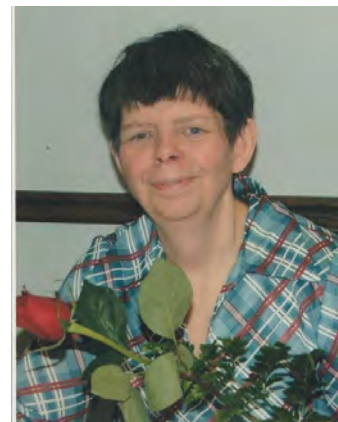
In Honor of Kathy Hunt:

We all remember Kathy as the faithful, hardworking volunteer at the CCSJ Food pantry,

She loved her family here at CCSJ and had a special place in her heart for the ladies in the Stonegate group 'Circle of Friends'

One of those special ladies Jean Gural, their resident poet, wrote a poem for Kathy which I was honoured to read at Kathy's Celebration of Life.

Sandra M.



Kathy Hunt

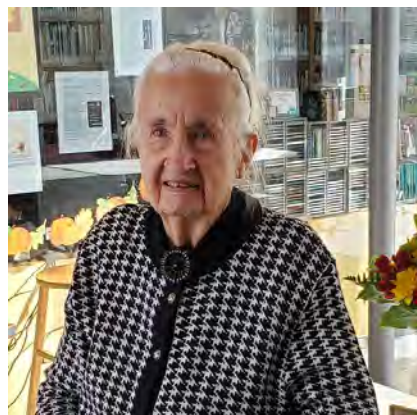
We bid farewell, remember her well,
When Kathy Hunt was in our Group
Patient and kind, best one can find.
Shared pasta, sandwiches and soup.

We saw her bloom in Food bank room.
Provided food, hungry felt good.
Our Flower here, silent, sincere,
Blended into our neighbourhood

Flowers don't last, dry out too fast,
Petals soon fall, colourful pall,
At Heaven's Gate we all must wait
Until we hear God's final call.

Kathy farewell....with God you dwell.

Written by Jean Gural



Library Report Advent 2024

Advent begins the church year. It is a period of waiting and watching and preparing ourselves for celebrating the coming of Jesus as a baby into our world. This period reminds us of the period of Lent where we wait and watch as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. In Advent for many of us, this time is also a time to prepare our home with decorations and mementos that remind us of the season of waiting and of the celebration that is to come. One of these might be a Nativity Scene awaiting the Child. This first part of the Walking in the Way from the library looks into the beginnings of this tradition with some lovely children's books.



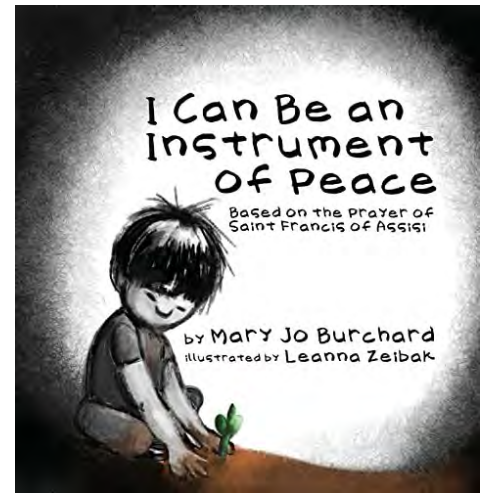
Did you ever wonder where the tradition of Nativity scenes at Christmas came from? These have now been a part of Christmas preparations for 801 years and was set up for the first time by Saint Francis of Assisi in a cave in Greccio Italy for Christmas 1223. Christians have used Nativity displays of many kinds from a variety of cultures as part of celebrating the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem ever since. We have often displayed Nativity sets or Creches in our church at Christmas time.

Sometimes people have them in their homes at this time of year. Saint Francis apparently actually had live animals, an ox and a donkey, at his nativity scene.

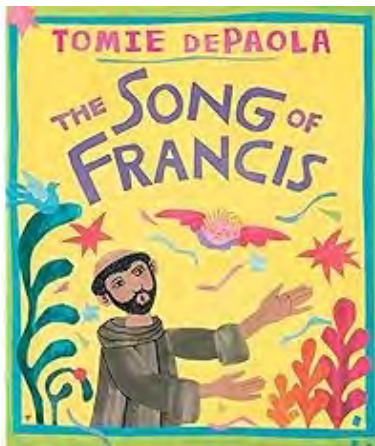
Tomie de Paola, as a young American Artist, dreamed of bringing the story of St. Francis of Assisi to as many people of all ages as possible. Eventually in 1982, for the 800th Anniversary of the birth of St. Francis, Tomie created **FRANCIS, the POOR MAN of ASSISI** fulfilling his age-old dream. Using beautiful, simple, colourful illustrations in medieval style, the book is simple enough to be read to young children, but detailed enough to be enjoyed by teens and adults alike.

Saint Francis was born in 1182 to a wealthy Italian couple who lived in Assisi, Umbria. He lived a life of privilege and grew up to be a wild, irresponsible young man. Eventually, following a serious illness, he felt called to live a simple life of prayer and would have become a hermit, but friends persuaded him that he should sing his songs of the joy of God's love as a preacher. He did this even by preaching to the birds and plants as he considered them to be God's creatures. By the age of 23 he had decided to live a life of poverty, choosing to wear only an old gardener's robe with a cross drawn on the back with chalk. His life became one of prayer, peace and good works. Others joined him to form a brotherhood living a life of poverty close to nature, later becoming The Franciscan Order of the Catholic Church.

Saint Francis of Assisi, is still very much in our world today, with his name on hundreds of churches, schools and universities and through many other ways of commemorating his life. The Prayer of Peace which is attributed to him is familiar to most of us: "...make me an instrument of your peace...". In 1228 he was proclaimed a Saint with his feast day designated October 4. The event of Blessing of the Animals, often held outdoors occurs on this day or close to it. In 1928 he was proclaimed Patron of Italy and in 1980 Pope John Paul II proclaimed Francis Patron of Ecology.

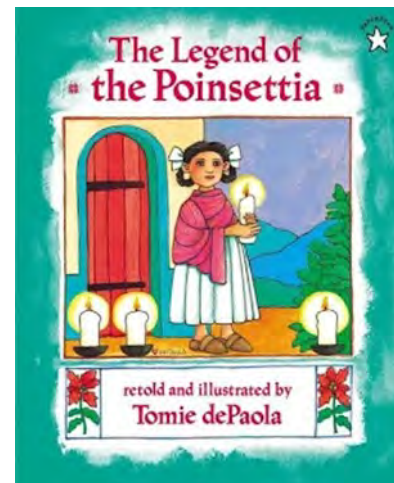


We have several beautiful books about St. Francis of Assisi for children by Author Tomie de Paola and some for adults to help you learn more about his love for animals, singing Praise to God and some of the legends about this well known Catholic Saint.

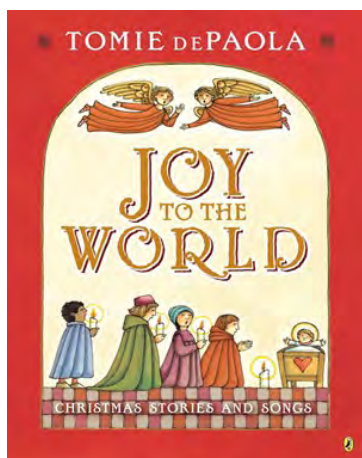


In The Song of Francis published in 2009, we have another tribute by Tomie de Paola to Saint Francis of Assisi (for ages 2-7). It is full of vibrant, bold, hot colours and spills over with the joy of knowing God's love. It is a book of jubilation full of brilliant birds and flowers. The book is mostly contemporary Illustrations with limited text. It truly celebrates the joy of life.

Do you know the story of how the lovely Mexican wildflower, the poinsettia, became a Christmas flower for thousands of people in other faraway lands? The Legend of the Poinsettia is a little book with vibrant colours and lovely illustrations introduces you to Lucinda and her story. Poinsettias often become part of our Advent preparations today

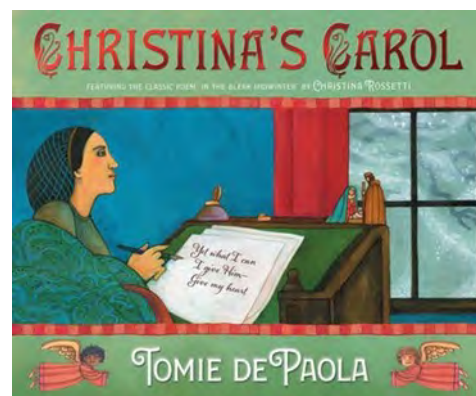


We have 2 more Childrens's books from Tomie de Paola centered around Christmas legends and Carols. Also there's a third from another author Lara Hawthorne. These books lead us on to the end of Advent—the Christmas season



JOY to the WORLD by Tomie de Paola. Meet the characters in three familiar Christmas stories illustrated in the lovely drawings and living colours created by Tomie de Paola in JOY to the WORLD. Come to our library to meet Sister Angie, The Three Wise Kings and Lucinda and hear their stories unfold just for you. Your whole family will enjoy this book.

CHRISTINA'S CAROL was Tomie de Paola's last book. He imagines the famous poet, Christina Rossetti, writing her poem that became "In the Bleak Midwinter", a favourite Christmas carol for many people. The art work is splendid with vivid colours and fascinating characters in medieval clothing. The nativity scene has a sweet donkey and quiet sheep along with the amazed shepherds and the stately royal wisemen.



Do you know what the most famous Christmas carol in the world is? Do you know what a little mouse had to do with its beginnings? Drop by the library and check out Silent Night, a book by Lara Hawthorne. Her colourful illustrations bring this much-loved carol to life. See the quaking shepherds and the star-filled night sky. Join the animals and the birds at the manger. You can re-live the Christmas story in a special way and find out about a mouse and a famous Christmas carol.

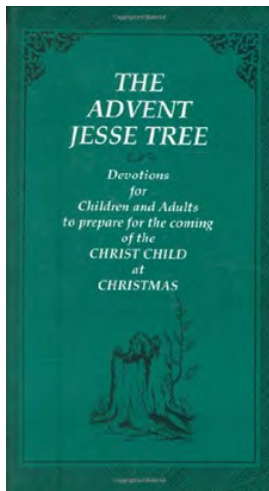
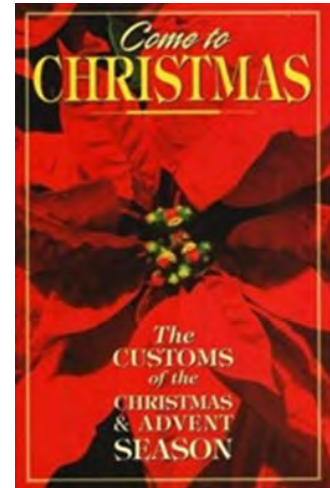


Thanks to Grace Hunter for much of the above information and searching out books.

Suggestions for Family Advent Preparation and Activities

Christmas is centered in the new hope brought by the Christ child; Advent is the season of preparation leading up to the Event. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. Advent means "Coming." We celebrate these days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival. (From on line review)

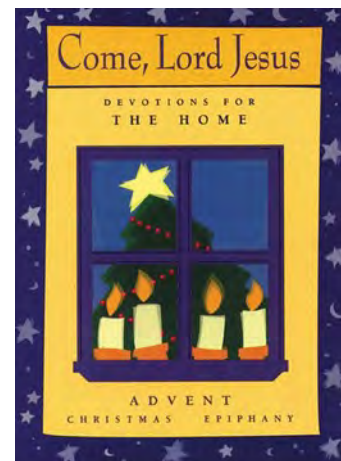
Come to Christmas: the Customs of the Christmas and Advent Season by Pat Floyd From Advent wreaths to Christmas Trees, from Mistletoe to Luminarias, from Hanging of the Greens to Epiphany, Come to Christmas provides families, with a treasury of information and worship ideas for the season. (Back cover)



The Advent Jesse Tree by Dean Lambert Smith enables individuals and families to engage in a more meaningful celebration of the Christmas season. Bring Christ back to Christmas by giving your children a devotional experience that adorns your tree with Christian symbols. This book offers 25 devotions for each day from December 1st to December 25th, Christmas Day... the day Christians celebrate that God's purpose was finally revealed in the coming of the saviour, Jesus Christ. Each devotion traces the heritage of Jesus through the stories and prophecies of the Old Testament.

Come Lord Jesus: Devotions for the Home, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany by Susan Briehl

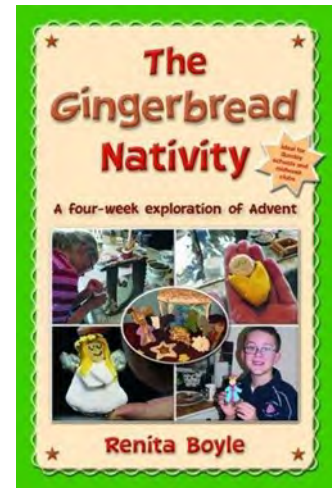
Scripture readings and brief meditations serve as the backdrop for poetry, new seasonal blessings, mealtime prayers, songs and activities that prepare the home for the celebration of the Savior's birth. Simple blessings enable children to participate in prayer at the Advent wreath, around the Christmas tree, and by the manger. Seasonal customs from around the world expand the possibilities for celebrating the advent and nativity of the Lord





Designed to bring families closer together during the Advent Season, **Family Devotions for the Advent Season by James L. Evans** features a devotional and family activity for each of the 28 days before Christmas. Each devotional corresponds to the candles and themes for the Advent wreath.

The perfect recipe for a memorable and tasty exploration of Advent and Christmas! **The Gingerbread Nativity by Renita Boyle** uses the popular tradition of making and decorating gingerbread houses and biscuits to explore the themes of Advent and the story of the first Christmas. It includes instructions, diagrammatic illustrations, recipes and top tips for making, baking and decorating, as well as fake or no bake and allergy-free alternatives. It also includes Advent reflection and discussion starters for each session; 25 'taste-a-day' family activities; ideas for a gingerbread themed family service and 'choose and use' ideas for adapting the material for use in other settings.

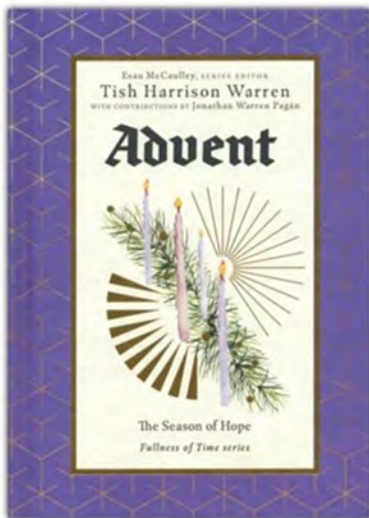
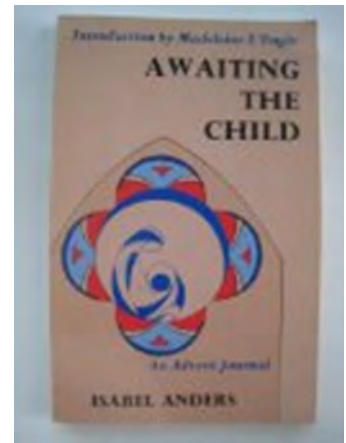


For anyone yearning for the childlike wonder of the Christmas season to arise in them once more, **Miracle on 10th Street by Madeleine L'Engle** is a rich and delightful read. This will appeal to adults as well as older children. For more than fifty years, Madeleine L'Engle has delighted and inspired readers with her warm, eloquent prose and inspirational poetry. She continues this tradition with *Miracle on 10th Street*, a collection of poignant writings and reflections that give readers a glimpse of how the wonder of Christmas resonates in her personal life, which deeply involves her family and faith: "I think back to that Christmas when my husband and I did not know whether our little girl would live to grow up," she writes. "Between that Christmas and this, there have been many times when I have been in the fiery furnace, but I am beginning to understand who is in there with me and that when I need it, I am given courage I never knew I had. (from the online review)



Next are some Advent books best for adult readers

Awaiting the Child by Isabel Anders speaks to us on multiple levels, probing deeply into Advent's rich tapestry of paradox and splendour while showing the spiritual way through this secularly dominated season of the year. (from the online review) This book also has features of a memoir

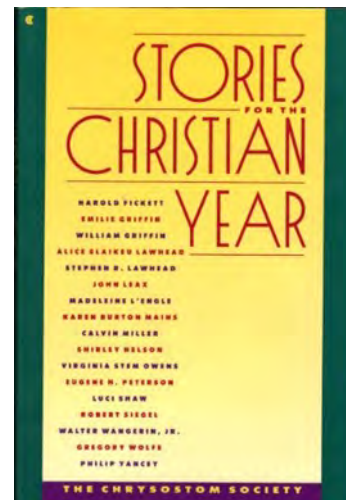


Advent: the Season of Hope from the fullness of time series is **by Tish Harrison Warren**

There's a reason our hearts overflow with gratitude as Christmas approaches. We're celebrating not just one coming of Christ---but three! In this powerful message, priest and writer Tish Harrison Warren explains that Advent commemorates not only our Lord's first coming (the incarnation) but his prophesied return---and his presence with us today.

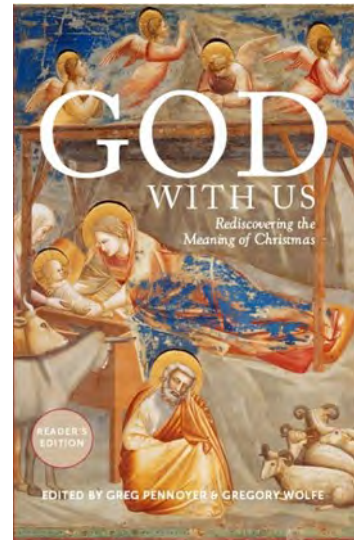
Now some books that bring reflection from a variety of well-known authors.

Stories of the Christian Year features contributions from **Madeline L'Engle, William Griffin, Calvin Miller**, and many other writers offer contemporary retellings of events in the life of Jesus to mark the year's progress and the passing of Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas, and other important days and seasons of the church year.

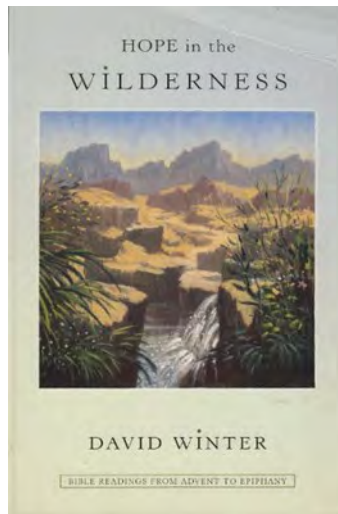


Christmas is the season most difficult to grasp and understand in all its spiritual richness. The sentimentality and commercialism that dominate the season tend to obscure the profound mystery at its heart: the Incarnation.

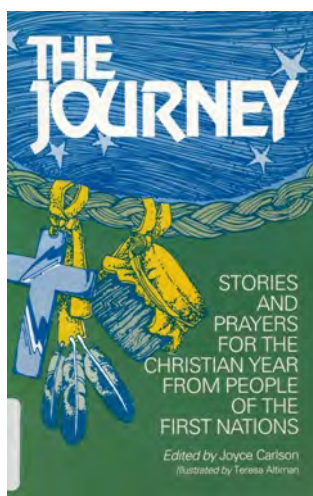
God with Us: Rediscovering the Meaning of Christmas by Greg Pennoyer provides the perfect way to slow down and reconnect with the liturgical and sacramental traditions that illuminate the meaning of Christmas and the Incarnation. In daily meditations for the complete seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, the contributors offer a tapestry of reflection, Scripture, prayer, and history.



Some books on Particular Topics



Retelling the story of the Exodus in daily Bible readings with commentary, **Hope in the Wilderness by David Winter** shows how we can also be guided by God through a "wilderness time" to the "promised" land. It interweaves some of the author's experiences of "wilderness time" through bereavement and contains readings and points for reflection from Advent Sunday to Epiphany. (from Abe Books)



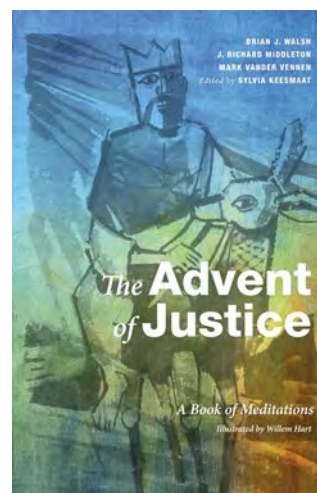
The Journey: Stories and Prayers for the Christian Year From People of The First Nations ed Joyce Carlson ill Teresa Altman From the high Arctic to the lush forests of southern Ontario, the spiritual journey of a people emerges. These stories from an oral literary tradition are a gift from people of the First Nations who seek to share their stories more widely with each other and within the context of the larger Christian community. Stories have been chosen to accompany the theme and lections for each Sunday, and may be used creatively in public worship or for private meditation. (From back Cover)

The Advent of Justice In this book of reflections, four friends come together to lead us more deeply into Advent as a time of profound hope for the coming of God's good kingdom of shalom while also a time of lament and anguish in the face of injustice.

By Sylvia Keesmaat, Brian J. Walsh, J. Richard Middleton, and Mark Vander Vennen; illustrated by Willem Hart

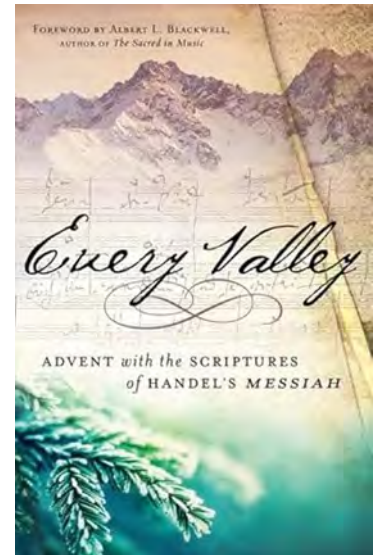
The Advent of Justice was first published in 1993 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the CJL Foundation and Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ). Responding to God's call for love, justice, and stewardship, the CJL Foundation and CPJ have been at the forefront of research and advocacy in areas such as poverty and unemployment, economics, and social justice, aboriginal rights, refugees, energy policy and the environment.

The republication of The Advent of Justice celebrates more than 50 years of faithful witness for justice by CJL and CPJ. In this book of reflections, four friends come together to lead us more deeply into Advent as a time of profound hope for the coming of God's good kingdom of shalom while also a time of lament and anguish in the face of injustice.



Advent: the Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ says **Fleming Rutledge**, is not for the faint of heart. As the midnight of the Christian year, the season of Advent is rife with dark, gritty realities. In this book, with her trademark wit and wisdom, Rutledge explores Advent as a time of rich paradoxes, a season celebrating at once Christ's incarnation and his second coming, and she masterfully unfolds the ethical and future-oriented significance of Advent for the church. (From the back cover)

Every Valley: Advent with the Scriptures of Handel's Messiah Ed. Jessica Kelley Miller Handel's Messiah is one of the most beloved musical works of the western world, playing an especially sentimental role in many people's Christmas traditions. The libretto of the work, taken directly from the King James text of fourteen books of the Bible, has turned many otherwise forgettable phrases into memorable, singable, cherished lines of Scripture.



This gift-worthy book will delight and inspire classical music fans and those for whom the Messiah is a beloved Christmas tradition with essays exploring the theological, historical, and pastoral implications of the Scriptures that make up Handel's Messiah.

Forty reflections journey in order through the oratorio, taking the reader deeper into less-often studied texts like Malachi 3:3 and bringing new light to oft-recited passages like Luke 2:9-14. Each reflection offers the libretto from the Messiah, the same passage in NRSV, and a brief commentary on the text, written by a respected scholar or pastor. Readers can peruse the book at leisure or examine one reflection per day throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. (From Book Flaps)

Keep an eye out for other titles in the library displays and watch for one of these reviewed in each of the four Advent Sunday blurbs from the library.

Our World God's World: reflections for Advent and the Christmas season On The Environment by **Barbara Wood**

Candles for Advent by **Pauline M. Webb**

A Light has Dawned: Meditations on Advent and Christmas (Best of Christianity today)

Waiting on the Word by **Malcolm Guite**: A Poem day For Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany compiled by Malcolm Guite

Advent in Narnia: Reflections for the season by **Heidi Haverkamp** Miracle on 10th Street

There are a good number of other Children's Christmas books available in the library

Muriel Henderson

Comic Relief

A police officer stopped me and said "I'm looking for a man with one eye".

I replied "You'll probably find him quicker if you use both eyes".

On Getting Old:

I went into an Antique Store...
they wouldn't let me leave"

"I'm officially an old man...
I give unwanted advice to total
strangers".

"I went to the doctor because I thought I
had arthritis...
What a relief when he told me I
don't have arthritis....
it's just early onset rigor mortis".

I joined a dating site for people my
age...

it's called Carbon Dating.

Age 60 might be the new 40,
but 9pm is the new midnight.

The older I get
the earlier it gets late

I remember being able to get up
without making sound effects.

I had my patience tested:
I'm negative.



"...AND TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, 'CAUSE IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO YOU, WE'RE IN A LOT OF TROUBLE."



Life's 2 key unwritten rules:

1)

2)

Funny Truths

I used to be a heavy smoker. I even smoked when I went jogging, which was really stupid..... So I quick jogging.

I understand about being a responsible adult...but every day? Every single day? This seems a little excessive.

We all know that Albert Einstein was a genius...but his brother Frank was a monster!

I named my dog Rolex...he's my watchdog.

If you're sitting in public and a stranger takes a seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say "did you bring the money?"

I finally got 8 hours sleep....it took me 3 days, but whatever.

I hate it when a couple argues in public and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.

My luck is like the bald guy who just won a comb.

Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. But spend 30 seconds in my head...that will freak you right out!

Since there is only one of me, does that make me an endangered species?



It's called **reading**.
It's how people install new software into their brains.

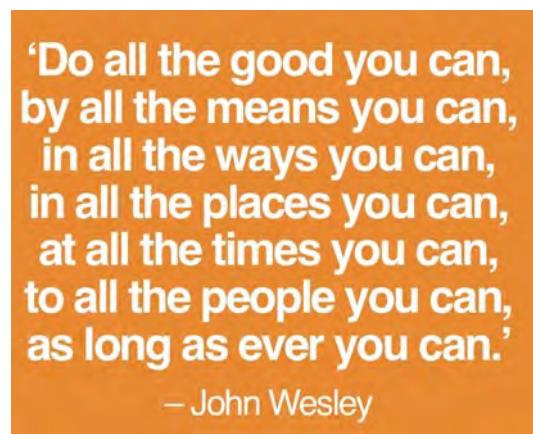
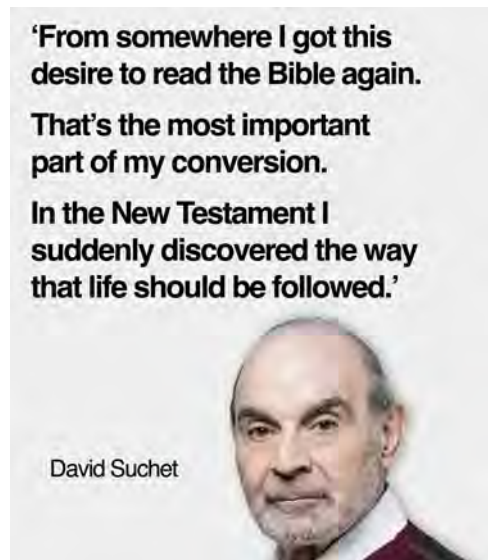
At Sunday School they were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.

Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?"

Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Wise Words Worth Considering

- Your life as a Christian should make non-believers question their disbelief in God”
Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
-
- The chart In the End it won't matter...
- I don't know much, but 3 things I DO know: prayer has power, faith moves mountains, God's love never fails.
- Churches are not museums that display perfect people. They are hospitals where the wounded, hurt, injured and broken find healing.
- I do not need to be anything other than what I am. We are salt. When we are who God made us to be, we bring out the uniqueness of those around us, our presence might slow decay, we might even cleanse a wound, our presence might be a truth that brings a little pain, and in all of it there is life. In a world where it feels like only power and violence are winning, maybe this reminder that we are salt is more revolutionary than we think



Always pray to have
eyes that see the
best in people,
A heart that forgives
the worst,
A mind that forgets
the bad,
And a soul that never
Loses faith in God.

I NEED
~~to make MORE MONEY~~
~~to have MORE BUSINESS~~
~~to get MORE FOLLOWERS~~
~~to be happier~~
~~to get things done~~
~~to be the BEST~~
~~to BE PERFECT~~
Jesus.

Today's To-Do List

- #1 Practice kindness.
- #2 Let go of what I can't control.
- #3 Count my blessings.
- #4 Listen to the Holy Spirit.
- #5 Walk with God.
- #6 Live like Jesus.
- #7 Pass this on to encourage someone else.

iBelieve.

“Count me in” for our November.....

**THURSDAY NIGHT
TOGETHER (TNT)**

When: Thursday November 28th
6pm

Where: here

What: enjoy a **shared meal** together, (aka potluck/BBQ) and a time of **Prayer & Praise**.

Why? You kidding?? 😊

Word of Hope: Corbin Andrews

**The
Church
that
prays
together
stays
together.**

Keen to come?

Then *sign up, show up*. If you'd like to bring something to share at the table, that would be lovely. But most importantly, just bring an appetite for the Very Best. 😊



Sunday, December 1st, 10am

...gathering to celebrate our faith while inviting others to 'the party'.

Theme: Keep Watch!

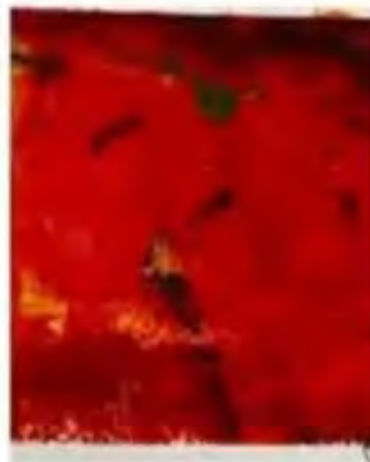
Muffins, Music and Much Much More!

Come and enjoy

*.....and invite a friend or two, just for
fun. 😊*

THE DALE COMMUNITY
ART GALLERY

**SAVE THE
DATE!**



GALLERY 1313

**1313 QUEEN ST W,
TORONTO, ON M6K 1L8**

DECEMBER 4-8, 2024

**OPENING RECEPTION:
DEC 5TH
6:30PM-9:00PM**

**GALLERY HOURS:
WED-SAT 1PM - 5PM,
SUN 1PM-4PM**

December 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Celebration Café 10:00am Messy Church 4—6pm	2 Prayer Time on Zoom 9:00- 9:30am Prayer Chain mtg 12:30pm	3 God, Coffee and Me	4 Dale Run	5 HE Service Bible Study Café Church 7pm	6 Luke Study	7 Men's Break- fast 8:15am Queensway Bistro
8 Advent 2 HE 10:00am	9 Prayer Time on Zoom 9:00- 9:30am Choir 7:00pm	10 God, Coffee and Me	11 Carolling with the Dale 7:00pm	12 HE Service Bible Study 11am Café Church 7pm	13	14 Foodbank/ Toy Mountain 10am -2:30
15 Lessons and Carols Service 10:00am Celebration of New Ministry 4:00pm	16 Prayer Time on Zoom 9:00- 9:30am Choir 7:00pm Meal 2 Keele	17 Good Food Box 1-4 God, Coffee and Me	18 Dale Run Food Bank 1-5:30pm	19 HE Service Bible Study Café Church Carolling 3:00pm	20	21
22 Advent 4 HE 10:00am	23	24 Family Service 4:00pm HE 8:00pm	25 HE 10:00am	26 NO Thurs. Service	27	28 Food Bank
29 HE 10:00am	30	31 NYE Party Café Church 6pm				

January 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Community Meal 12pm CCSJ	2 He 10am Bible Study 11am	3	4 Mens Breakfast 8:15am
5 HE 10:00am NO Messy Church	6 Prayer Time on Zoom 9:00-9:30am Choir7:00pm	7	8 Dale Run	9 He 10am Bible Study 11am	10	11 Foodbank
12 HE 10:00am	13 Prayer Time on Zoom 9:00-9:30am Choir7:00pm Choir7:00pm	14 God, Coffee & Me (G,C&M) 2:30pm	15	16 He 10am Bible Study 11am Café Church 7:00pm	17	18
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