

**BERWICK TRINITY PASTORAL
CHARGE
of THE UNITED CHURCH
ADVENT CHRISTMAS
NEWSLETTER
2018**

Tom's Epistle

Lets be Clear... The Advent message is not the Christmas message! They are different and meant to be so! However, we like to confuse the two seasons, combine them and blur the lines as to their beginning and ending. The Christian season of Christmas actually begins on Christmas Eve and lasts for twelve days, ending on January 6. (No, the twelve-day season of Christmas did not start with the song. It was the other way around.) The time before Christmas is Advent, *a season of preparation for Christmas*. Christians prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jews for a Messiah. In Advent, we're reminded of how much we ourselves also need a Savior, and we look forward to our Savior's second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit." In the season with this name, we keep in mind both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.



Beginning Dec 2nd until midnight of Dec 24th (or until the stores close...right men) we will be in a constant state of preparation. Best way to prepare, continue doing what you've been doing: baking, decorating your homes, sending out cards, and of course shopping. (Although even this traditional activity has been taken over by the frenzied Black Friday mentality). I've always enjoyed an "advent calendar", as the kids revealed each day another part for the Christmas scene. Now I see an Advent Beer Calendar put out by the local craft beer store. (Cheers)

Maybe you'll like to take in an Advent group that will prepare together with scripture and hospitality. (Nov 28th, Dec 12th & 19th :12:15 pm @ Berwick United). If anytime of the year get yourself to church, listen to the scriptures of expectant voices. The carols and music that bring back a comforting memory. There's an added sense of expectation for us this year as we welcome the Matti and Altony families from Iraq/Lebanon to our community. It seems right to welcome the stranger, the refugee among us, so the Christmas story may come to life. May it be so for you this year. Blessings, Tom

Advent Unwrapped – a resource of material for the season for home or church

<http://adventurewrapped.ca>

Wednesday Advent

Adventure at 12:15pm : Lunch and Conversation on **28 Nov, 5 Dec, 12 Dec, 19 Dec** at the Berwick Church.



Advent Worship Schedule - 2018

Advent 1 - Sunday, **December 2** - Communion
9:30 A.M. - Trinity United -Waterville
11:00 A. M. - Berwick United - Berwick

To Ponder:

*What does it mean to be part of a community?
A community that lives hope and shows love?*

Advent 2 - Sunday, **December 9**

9:30 A.M. - Trinity United -Waterville
11:00 A. M. - Berwick United - Berwick

To Ponder:

*What part of your home, church, community, or faith needs some clearing out and cleaning up?
What would you like to cry out into the world today?*

Advent 3 - Sunday, **December 16**

9:30 A.M. - Trinity United -Waterville
11:00 A. M. - Berwick United - Berwick

To Ponder:

*How has music helped you express your emotions?
What songs help you praise God?*

Advent 4 - Sunday, **December 23**

9:30 A.M. - Trinity United -Waterville
11:00 A. M. - Berwick United - Berwick

To Ponder:

Who do we overlook as messengers of God's good news, considering them to be insignificant or unworthy?

Christmas Eve- Monday, December 24

4:00 P.M. - Berwick United - Berwick
5:30 P.M. - Trinity United -Waterville

To Ponder: *The Christmas characters were all open to the signs of God's arrival: stars, angels, dreams, and more. How or where in 2018 did we see signs of this child who was "born for us"?*

First Sunday after Christmas - Sunday, **December 30**

11:A.M. - Combined Service - Berwick United - **To Ponder:**

*It's still Christmas! So, keep the celebration going!
What does it mean to keep Christmas in your heart?*

Berwick UCW's Advent Events

3 Dec (Monday) 11:30 am - UCW Potluck luncheon at Andrea Hales. If interested please call Pat Layton 538-9594

5 Dec (Wednesday) 10am - 1pm Tea /Coffee Party at the Berwick Church - Free will donation.

17 Dec - Baskets for the Shut-ins - packing - Bring gifts to the church on Sunday or by 9:30am

Trinity UCW Events

Dec 1 – Trinity UCW table at Woodville Craft Fair – 10am – 2 pm

Dec 6 – Trinity UCW Annual visit to entertain at Fundy Villa – 1 to 3 pm.

Memorial Christmas Tree Lightings

December 5 - Berwick 5:15 pm and Trinity at 6:30 pm This includes a potluck - Main course at Berwick followed by desserts and hot cider at Trinity. Phone or email messages can be left at the church office – be sure to include name of person remembered or acknowledged, plus donor's name, envelope number, and church.

Good News Fund Information

Our congregations offers our Christmas Hamper Program in the larger community.-

if you know of a family that may need a little help at Christmas this year please email or call the charge office and leave your name and number.

The groceries gift cards included in these plus other items that may not be donated come from our Good News Fund. Throughout the year we also offer other assistance to families such as food, oil, medicine etc. As we enter the New Year we would appreciate any donations you are able to make to help in this outreach. All donations receive tax receipts. Envelopes can be found in the pews. Thank you.

Berwick & District Refugee Settlement Group

Christmas Comes Early for our Two Refugee Families

The waiting is over. 4 ½ years after fleeing their homes in Iraq and living as refugees in Lebanon, and 2 ½ years working through the process required by Immigration Canada, we are delighted to report that both the Matti and Altony families will soon be living in Berwick.

Raeed & Eleviya Matti and their four children, Aotavia (11 yrs), Malak (9 yrs), Ihab (6 yrs) & Maher (3yrs) were welcomed at the Halifax airport November 8th. They are currently living with Mike & Gloria Armstrong at Lake George until their house is available in Berwick in early December. Zuhair & Raghda Altony and their son Roberto (4 yrs) arrive November 29th. An apartment on Commercial Street is ready for them.

The Matti's have been busy since their arrival... the 3 oldest children started school in Berwick Nov. 12th; Mom & Dad begin English Language classes in Kentville Nov 26th. They are eager to learn and so happy to be in Canada!

As a community sponsoring group we have a commitment to support these newcomer families for one year after their arrival in our community -- financially, socially & emotionally with the hope that they will become independent active members of our community and want to stay in Berwick long after the first year has passed. We need your help and are asking that everyone do their part in making these young families feel welcome. If you'd like to help out in any way -- providing transportation, childcare, offer a meal, a friendly visit, or make a

financial donation, please contact Edith Menzies: ke.menzies@ns.sympatico.ca.

We are planning an afternoon "Open House" on Sunday, December 9th 2-4 pm at Berwick United Church for the broader community to welcome our two newcomer families, share a cup of tea/coffee and say hello. We hope many are able to take this opportunity to meet the Matti's and Altony's. They are delightful young people.

Message From the Pastoral Charge Council

As we approach the final few weeks of 2018, we can look back upon a calendar year that was at times challenging and ultimately fulfilling.

At this time last year we were awaiting Valley Presbytery's approval of our proposed new governance structure that had been carefully developed by our special ad hoc committee, and approved by what was then the Official Board in mid-2017. That approval was received in March, 2018 and soon afterwards we proceeded to implementation of the new model. Information sessions took place at both churches in early April, followed by a special time of celebration later that month during which responsibilities were transferred from the "old" committees to the "new" teams and the process of populating the teams began. By June the process was virtually complete and the first meeting of the new Berwick Trinity Pastoral Charge Council took place on June 10.

In late September a special meeting was held, following a fifth-Sunday combined service, to review progress to date. A convivial atmosphere prevailed as we acknowledged what seemed to be working well and addressed some areas that appeared to need adjustment. It was agreed that such sessions are beneficial and should continue periodically.

Which brings us to the present time. While the Council recognizes that further adjustments to the new structure would probably be useful, the work of the charge proceeds effectively and certainly on a more collaborative basis. Working together, we have come a long way.

Best wishes to all for a blessed Christmas and a safe and happy holiday season.

