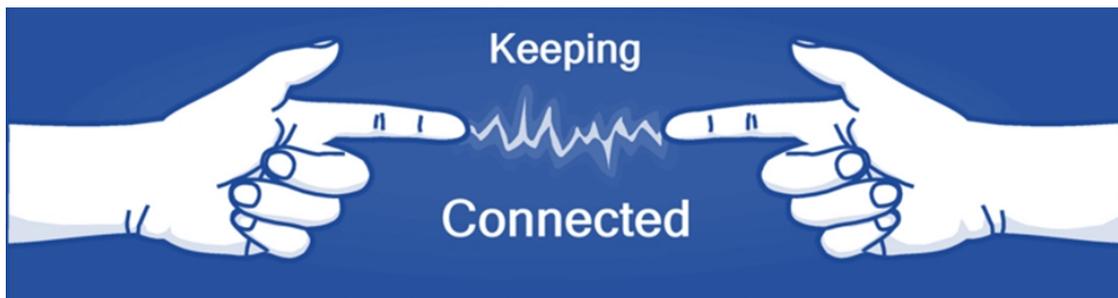


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**For Sunday December 13 2020**  
**Advent 3**

See us on the [WWW](#) - [Facebook](#) - [YouTube](#)



### **Angel Tree Update**

Names of our loved ones no longer with us were added to the Christmas Tree in the church Choir area this week. A video of the tree being decorated with the angel feather balls will be available on our You Tube channel on Sunday afternoon - you will be able to view it [HERE](#). Next week's newsletter will include a virtual Angel Tree featuring all the names submitted.

If you would still like to have a name added to the Angel Tree, contact Wendy (613-256-3433; [wendytrala@gmail.com](mailto:wendytrala@gmail.com))



### **Annual Community Christmas Dinner**

This year the Christmas dinner traditionally hosted by St Paul's at noon on Christmas Day will look rather different.



Instead of sitting down together in the church hall, people are invited to reserve a take-out Christmas meal, prepared by Omar Rajab and family at the Centennial Restaurant in Pakenham and picked up outside St Paul's on Christmas Day.

As is always the case, we hope to reach vulnerable people in our community: those in need and those living alone; and this year also people who would ordinarily gather with family and are prevented from doing so by pandemic restrictions.

This year, while St Paul's will host the event in terms of organizing and coordination, the Christmas Dinner Fund will not be used. Instead, the meal is sponsored by: Omar Rajab and the Centennial Restaurant in Pakenham, MM Together, the Almonte Lions Club, Stonebridge Haven, Carebridge and local churches. We are very excited to be working closely with community partners!

As usual there will be no cost for the meal.

**If you wish to order meals**, please call the Office (613-256-1771) and leave your name, phone number and number of people you will be feeding **BY DECEMBER 18 at 4 p.m.** We will call you to arrange a pick-up time for Christmas Day between 11 a.m and 1 p.m. Delivery can be arranged for special circumstances.

The Community Christmas Dinner has been approved by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Health Unit as well as the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa and will follow strict pandemic guidelines, including "no touch food transfer" – from the Stonebridge Haven Jeep, in a plastic carrier bag, directly to your car trunk.

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## Christmas 2020 at St Paul's

**Christmas Eve** (Thursday December 24): **4:30 p.m.**

**Christmas Day** (Friday, December 25): **9:30 a.m.**

**Pre-registration for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services closes at noon on December 21.**

**Please pre-register by phone (613-256-1771) or email ([office@stpaulsalmonte.ca](mailto:office@stpaulsalmonte.ca)) as SPACE IS LIMITED.**

Note that there will be **NO SINGING** at these services due to pandemic restrictions



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### A Message from Rev. Jonathon

#### All About Advent - Part 3

*This week's article explores the spiritual meaning of Advent.*

In my newsletter article last week, I explained that the coming of Christ which we prepare for during Advent has three distinct meanings. There is Christ's first coming as a human being at Bethlehem, Christ's second coming as ruler of the world at the end of time, and Christ's coming to each of us as Saviour and Lord when we invite Him into our lives.



Most Christians throughout history, including ourselves, have lived during this "in between" time - after Christ's life on earth but before His second coming. Because Advent is a time of expectant waiting and longing for the

coming of Christ, it could be said that our whole lives thus far have been a type of perpetual Advent season.

To some people, this belief seems like a logical contradiction. How could Christ have already come and yet we believe that we are still waiting for Him? Swiss theologian Karl Barth (who lived from 1886 to 1968) wrote that we are living between the already fulfilled promise of Christ's first coming and the yet-to-be fulfilled promise of Christ's second coming.

To illustrate this concept Barth used the analogy of the relationship between dawn and sunrise. At dawn, the first rays of daylight break through the darkness. This is a gradual process and may not be perceived by everyone. On the other hand, once the sun fully rises it is evident to everyone that a new day has begun.

At Christ's first coming some people recognized and accepted Jesus for who He really was. But not everyone did, and to this day many people do not accept Jesus Christ. Yet at Christ's second coming, everyone will recognize and accept Jesus for who He really is. The Apostle Paul writes in his Letter to the Philippians that eventually "...at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..." (Philippians 2: 10-11, from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible or NRSV).

Barth's analogy of dawn and sunrise is similar to other analogies that are used in the Bible to describe Christ's coming. The Gospel of John regularly uses the analogy of light and darkness to describe the human condition. John believed that before Jesus, people lived in a state of darkness (meaning both sin and ignorance). But Jesus, who calls Himself "The Light of the World" in John's Gospel, has the power to free us from our sin and enlighten us with the truth.

The analogy of dawn and sunrise is also used in the Gospel of Luke, in the prophecy of Zechariah (the father of John the Baptist). Zechariah used these words about Jesus: "By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1: 78-79, NRSV).

I do not believe it is a coincidence that the Church chose to celebrate

Advent and Christmas in December. This is the darkest time of the year in the Northern hemisphere (where the majority of the world's population lives). After December 21 the days begin to lengthen and the sunlight begins to return to a world which literally and often figuratively dwells in darkness. The spiritual dawn is truly breaking upon us and a new day will soon appear. The question is whether or not we can perceive it and whether or not we are ready for that new day.

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### **Memorial Service for Richard Lewis**

Richard's wife Karin Nakamura has asked us to let our members know about Richard's memorial service, which took place on Sunday December 6 at St. John's United Church in Oakville, Ontario. David McCreery gave a very moving eulogy at the service. The service is available for viewing on the St. John's YouTube channel, [HERE](#).

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## **The Gift**

**One Christmas**

**it was a surprise,  
not bidden, just given  
with knowing love,  
seeing more of me  
than I knew.**

**No strings attached,  
something to wonder about,  
something to ponder.**

**Why make lists?**

*-- by Sue Evans*

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## **What Wendy Did**

This year, getting ready for Christmas took on new meaning for Wendy Shaw - she decided to make angels!

Although you'd certainly never guess it, the main ingredients of these angels are:  
Tomatoes cages, old-fashioned metal clothes hangers, large plastic Christmas balls,

aluminum foil pie plates, silver tinsel, light white mesh fabric, mini-lights, tape and glue. And strong hands with a pair of pliers (thanks Len!)

What have **YOU** been doing to get ready for Christmas? Let us know so we can share with our community!



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## READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

### Advent 3

Click on a reading to see the text from the  
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) on the Bible Gateway

- **First reading:** [Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#)
- **Psalm:** [Psalm 126](#)
- **Second reading:** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-24](#)
- **Gospel:** [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)



**Your prayers are requested for people in need and people alone this Christmas season, that they will find joy and fellowship, perhaps through outreach programs.**

**We remember especially the Lions Club food hampers program and the Community Christmas Dinner hosted by St. Paul's.**

**In the World.** Pray for the Falkland Islands (Extra-Provincial to Canterbury). In our Companion Diocese, The Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, we pray for Redeemer Church, Amman, Jordan.

**In Canada.** Pray for the Venerable Alan Perry, General Secretary of the Anglican Church

of Canada, and the staff of the General Secretary's Office; Melanie Delva, Reconciliation Animator. Pray for the Pikangikum Water Project, working with our aboriginal neighbours to address the water needs of the 400+ homes without clean water or waste water removal in this northern Ontario community.

**In our Diocese.** Pray for the Rt. Rev. Shane Parker, our bishop and Michael Bird, our assisting bishop; for The Well, (a Diocesan Community Ministries) and for their Executive Director Rachel Robinson.

**In Our Community.** We ask God's blessing on local faith communities and on their ministries and, we pray for the people and leaders of this town of Almonte and the surrounding communities that the Lord will help us contribute to its well-being. We pray for leaders, staff volunteers and clients of our local hospice initiative, Home Hospice North Lanark.

**In Our Parish.** We pray for Jonathon, our priest, for ourselves and for each other. We ask for God's healing and comfort for Murray Pierce and for the grieving families of Ted MacDonald and Richard Lewis. We ask for God's blessing on our members Eric Hammond, David Hinks and Elizabeth Veninga, Sally Hortop, Louise Stevenson and Jim Hugesson, and Alex and Ellen Hughes. We remember our neighbors, especially Assad, Alsit, Lana and Elias.



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