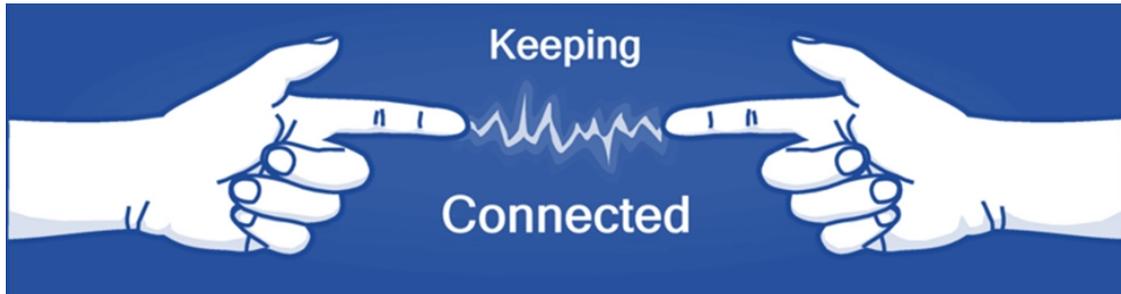


[View this email in your browser](#)



For Sunday December 6 2020
Advent 2

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



Rev Jonathon will be on vacation December 7-12. Please contact the wardens in an emergency. Wendy Shaw (613-256-3433) Katrina Ayling (819-665-4992)



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.

Sunday services continue at 9:30 a.m. each week throughout December.

Please pre-register by phone (613-256-1771) or email (office@stpaulsalmonte.ca) as space is limited.

Note that there will be **NO SINGING** at these services (including Christmas Eve) due to pandemic precautions



Angel Tree

Please call or email the office with the names of loved ones you are remembering this Christmas season.

All the names received **BY DECEMBER 11** will be transcribed on to tags and attached to glass bals containing a feather. A video recording of (physically distanced) volunteers hanging the tagged feather-filled balls will be available on our YouTube channel on December 13.

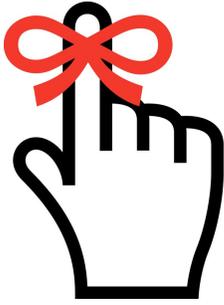
A virtual Angel Tree listing the names of those we want to remember this Christmas season will be published in Keeping Connected on Wednesday December 16.

Remember to Pre-register!

Sunday services (register each Friday by noon)

Be Still My Soul, service on Wednesday December 9 at 7:30 p.m. (register by December 9 at noon)

Christmas Eve, service on Thursday December 24 at 4:30 p.m. (register by December 21)



Christmas Day, service on Friday December 25 at 9:30 a.m. (register by December 21)

Please call (613-256-1771) or email (office@stpaulsalmonte.ca)

Karin Nakamura has asked us to share this sad news: Sadly Richard Lewis passed away last Thursday. A service of remembrance will be held on Sunday December 6 at 12:00 noon. The service will be livestreamed via Facebook and then uploaded to YouTube later. We will provide a link to view these services once they become available. You can view Richard's obituary [HERE](#).

A Message from Rev. Jonathon All About Advent - Part 2

This is the second in a four-part series of articles about Advent. This week, we explore the theological meaning of Advent.

As I mentioned in my newsletter article last week, the English word “Advent” comes from a Latin term meaning “coming, approach, or arrival.” The coming of Christ can be thought of as three distinct yet interrelated events.



The first coming of Christ is obvious. It’s what most people think of when they think of Advent. We are preparing ourselves for Christmas, when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity. But we also believe that He came to us as a human being, and lived as a historical figure. When we sing Christmas carols, give Christmas gifts, and set up Christmas nativity sets, that is what we are celebrating.

The second coming of Christ, and its association with Advent, is less obvious. It was not until the sixth century that Advent was associated with Christ’s second coming. Just as Christians believe that Jesus was an

historical figure, we also believe that He will come again at the end of time.

The second coming of Christ is more abstract. Unlike a historical event that we can point to, the second coming is something that will take place at an unknown time in the future. To many people, the second coming is something to look forward to. Jesus will return and all will be made well in the world. But to others, including many Christians, the second coming is associated with judgement and destruction. Images described in the Book of Revelation invoke fear in the imaginations of many. Rather than coming as an adorable baby, Jesus is coming as a judge and ruler. This is an unsettling concept for many. This is probably the reason why we display nativity sets and not "second coming sets", complete with nightmarish images from the Book of Revelation. (If you can find one in a store, please let me know – I'm asking for a friend).

Despite our reluctance to embrace it, the second coming is found throughout many of our Advent hymns and readings. Hymns like "Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending" and "When The King Shall Come Again" refer to this. And the Sunday Bible readings on the first two Sundays of Advent always look forward to the second coming.

But there is also a third, and even less talked about, coming of Christ that we prepare for at Advent –the coming of Christ to us as individuals. Each of us has the opportunity to have a personal encounter and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who was born in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago, the same Jesus who will come again at the end of time, and the same Jesus who is the second person of the Holy Trinity and lives in eternity, wants to come to us – to you and me – individually.

This third coming of Christ might not be something at the front of many people's minds as they run about buying Christmas presents and decorating Christmas trees. But it is referred to in the Bible and in our hymns. I think of Revelation 3:20, in which Jesus says "Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends." (from the New Living Translation). And I think of the line from the famous Christmas hymn Joy to the World by Rev. Isaac Watts, which says "Let every heart prepare Him room".

So we have three distinct yet interrelated events that we prepare for at Advent – Christ coming in the past (in history), Christ coming in the future (at the end of history), and Christ coming to us in the present (in our own life's history). May He come to all of us this Advent season.

Be Environmentally Friendly This Christmas!

Choose a Real Canadian Christmas Tree in 2020

Information from Ron Ayling (Media release from Forests Ontario)

Good for You and Good for the Planet

There's comfort in tradition. Twinkling lights on a bushy Christmas tree, the scent of the boughs filling the room, brings calm to the stress of living through a pandemic. This year, more than ever, only a real Christmas tree will make the season sparkle (but might be counter-indicated if you have a sensitivity).



A real Christmas tree in your living room, grown in Canada, represents employment for thousands of people from the farm, to the transportation, to your neighbourhood market. Over one million trees are sold in Canada every year.

After those trees are harvested, new seedlings are planted for future holiday seasons. These tree farms also provide continuous habitat for wildlife and retain soil and water, helping to prevent water runoff and flooding. Each acre of Christmas trees produces enough oxygen for 18 people a day and acts as a carbon dioxide sink, reducing CO2 emissions. Choosing a real Christmas tree is a commitment to sustainability.

By contrast, artificial Christmas trees are not kind to the earth. They generate pollution and waste - the ecological impact of plastics is posing a global challenge. Manufactured mainly in China, artificial trees require large amounts of fossil fuels in production and transportation to points of sale across the world.

Artificial trees are made of pvc plastic and lead (to stabilize the pvc). The lead breaks down and will form toxic lead dust after a few years. Lastly, most artificial trees end up in landfills, where they will remain for centuries.

Real Christmas trees are 100% biodegradable. They are mulched – some would say tree-cycled - for use in parks and gardens, and laid in streams to prevent erosion of the banks. In the water, they provide habitat for fish and wildlife. Large branches can be used for woodworking, small fences and raised garden beds. A real Christmas tree gives back to the planet.

YOU CAN GET YOUR LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE FROM THE ALMONTE SCOUTS



2nd Almonte Scouting



CHRISTMAS TREES FOR SALE

Fresh cut, local, Scotch Pine & Spruce

Choose your tree online

Pick it up on the Saturday of your choice



Only \$30 per Tree

Pickup Dates & Times at
Almonte Home Hardware Parking Lot

(Saturday Nov.28, 2020, 1 pm - 4 pm)

(Saturday Dec.05, 2020, 1 pm - 4 pm)

(Saturday Dec.12, 2020, 1 pm - 4 pm)

(Saturday Dec.19, 2020, 1pm - 4 pm)

To Order :

Message us (2nd Almonte Cub and Scouts)
telling us your name, email or telephone #,
choice(s) of tree and pick up date preferred.

For more information call
Kirby - 613-407-3074 Garland – 613-294-5621

Support the Scouts AND help the environment!

Trees can be viewed [HERE](#)

To place your order, please contact Christie Bindhardt by email
(cbindhardt@gmail.com) or phone ((613) 256-8057).

ACT NOW! They're going fast!

Parish Council - November Meeting Highlights

- Rev. Jonathon attended a meeting of local clergy with the Bishop present. The Bishop discussed pandemic impacts on the Diocese, reporting that revenue

is down about 20% across the parishes but assuring them that there is no cause for alarm as there is enough pooled money available to support shortfalls. If hardship continues, another jubilee may be announced. The Diocese has received funds from the federal government and will continue to do so where revenue is 30% less month over month than last year.

- **Treasurer's Report.** Although revenue is significantly down due to the pandemic, thanks to the 2-months of Diocesan jubilee, we are holding our own.
- **Annual Community Christmas Dinner.** This year's dinner will be take-out only, as long as the Diocese and the Leeds and Grenville Health Unit approve. Omar Rajab, owner of the Centennial Restaurant in Pakenham has offered to cook and package individual turkey dinners for a take-out/delivery for \$10 per meal. We will aim for 75 meals (25 to Interval House). People will be invited to register beforehand with the office.

Advent Traditions - The Advent Calendar

Like the Advent wreath which I wrote about last week, the Advent calendar is also a relatively recent addition to our Christian culture. The first reference to an Advent calendar dates to the nineteenth century. And like the Advent wreath, it also originated in Germany with Lutherans.

Both the Advent wreath and the Advent calendar are visual ways of representing time during Advent, as we await the arrival of Christmas. Although Advent as observed by the Anglican Church always has four Sundays, the number of days in Advent varies depending on which day of the week December 25 occurs. So unlike Lent (which has a fixed duration of forty days not including Sundays), Advent varies in length from year to year. And although Advent technically ends at sunset on Christmas Eve, most Advent calendars also include Christmas Day and sometimes even Boxing Day.

Some Advent calendars can be quite simple. They can look very similar to a regular calendar for the month of December and be numbered in sequential order. Other Advent calendars can be more complex. They can start in November and have numbers that are in non-sequential order or numbers that are not arranged neatly in rows or columns. Such calendars require some searching to find the correct date, much like following the numbers in a "connect-the-numbers" drawing that children often enjoy.

The three-dimensional structure of Advent calendars also varies considerably. Some calendars have small pockets or pouches for each day protruding from the front of the calendar. Others have a small folding flap that is opened on each day. And others have small doors that are opened for each day (much like on a doll house) to reveal a compartment.



Advent calendars often have a picture on them. The original Advent calendars depicted Christmas nativity scenes. But modern, more secular calendars often have images of Santa Claus or other Christmas symbols.

Many Advent calendars used by children (and some adults) have a small chocolate or piece of candy for each day. Other calendars may have a small Bible verse, sometimes written down on a mini scroll, for each day. Often the Bible verses in an Advent calendar summarize the story of the Bible leading up to Jesus, or they tell the story of Jesus' birth.

Another idea for an Advent calendar, which was included in this year's Advent Toolkit, is to provide a list of activities that people can do during Advent, and then ask people to pick a different activity to complete each day. These "good deeds" are a form of spiritual discipline, and are a way to prepare ourselves for Christmas.

Like the Advent wreath, an Advent calendar is something that you can easily make yourself with some imagination and a little help from the internet. In fact, making your own Advent calendar can be a contemplative and spiritual exercise in itself. If you have some time to make your own, Advent calendars can make easy and inexpensive gifts for your family and friends. Making an Advent calendar can even be a fun and creative craft for children of all ages.

Once you have an Advent calendar in your home, you can create a simple religious ritual for opening a new day on the calendar. This might include saying a prayer, reading a Bible passage or brief daily devotional, singing a Christmas carol, listening to music, lighting a candle, telling a favourite family Christmas story, or making a commitment to carry out a good deed that day. Advent calendars are one more way to help mark this holy season and make it special.

--Rev. Jonathon

READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

Advent 2

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

First reading: [Isaiah 40:1-11](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13](#)

Second reading: [2 Peter 3:8-15a](#)

Gospel: [Mark 1: 1-8](#)



Your prayers are requested for our country and for our political leaders as they grapple with how to bring us out of the oncoming economic crisis while still caring for the people who most need help.

In the World. Pray for the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain (Extra-Provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury). Pray for Casita Copán, a home away from home for at-risk children in Honduras.

In Canada. Pray for our Primate, Archbishop Linda Nicholls and the staff of the Primate's Office of the Anglican Church of Canada.

In our Diocese. Pray for the Rt. Rev. Shane Parker, our bishop and Michael Bird, our assisting bishop; for Cornerstone/Le Pilier (one of our Diocesan Community Ministries) and for their Acting Executive Director Martine Dore; for the residents, staff, and Chaplains of the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre; and for all vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

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 the volunteers and cents of our local satellite Food Cupboard and Pakenham pick-up point supporting food security in our area.

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 Cathy and Michael Gallagher, Cathy and Jeff Gayton, Sally Gentry, Helen Gilhooly, and Sarah and Richard Hall.

We remember our neighbors, especially Assad, Alsit, Lana and Elias.



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