

Advent 2023 Newsletter:



**“For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given,
And the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful
Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and peace,
There will be no end.
He will reign on David’s throne
And over his kingdom,
Establishing and upholding it
With justice and righteousness
From that time on and forever.”**

(Isaiah 89:6-7)

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Christmas season is here again and this gives us cause to ponder and give thanks for God’s abundant love through the birth of Jesus. Whether we are alone or sharing our blessings with family, friends and neighbours, the good news of Advent and Christmas is that God is with us and will never depart: “The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid”.

I continue to feel very blessed to serve in the Bothwell-Wabash Pastoral Charge. So many of you are faithfully working so that Jesus’ mission can be fulfilled in this community and in the world. I look forward to sharing the Christmas season with you.

I agree with the apostle Paul who wrote to the Romans: **“I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the land”**.

Since our last newsletter, Marlain Wolfe & I attended a 2 day Zoom conference for our region (which stretches from Wingham to Windsor to Woodstock).

The theme this year is **A Time of Renewal: Rebuild, Reconnect, Revitalize**. In her message to us, President Cheryl Bolton said, “I don’t know about you, but I am so tired of being tired and anxious all the time, for at least three years now. I’m tired of looking woefully around, not just at the church, but at the world and feeling helpless. So, what if we took a different approach by taking our inspiration from Romans 12:2, **“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.”**

So instead of, “conforming to the pattern of the world,” and being negative about everything that has been going wrong, what if we approach these challenges as an opportunity to build new relationships with another congregation, another denomination or another demographic that we never thought to reach out to before—when things were the “status quo”. Let us take the opportunity to shake up the status quo, to listen for God’s voice and do God’s “good, pleasing and perfect will”.

President Cheryl reminded us that we are much more than just a bunch of buildings. We need to look at our Spiritual Keystones. Together WE are the church. WE are the hands & feet of God.

“God has no body now but ours” (MV 171) Our faith and unity are the keystones upon which we need to revitalize our church. Let us work together, investing our time, resources, and prayers to ensure that our churches are a welcoming sanctuary.

God is always with us and God is always for us. Indeed, God sustains us and the sacred presence gives strength and direction.

Recently, we had 2 very spirit-filled anniversary services. At Wabash United, Rev. Bob Sinasac, brother of Dan Sinasac, led in worship and Ron Bollohan provided lively gospel tunes on the accordion. And at the sister church, Bothwell United, Rev. Wanda Burse gave a very meaningful message and we enjoyed the uplifting music of 20 Youth in the Lambton Youth Choir directed by Diane Odell.

In Bothwell, the Broasted Chicken Takeout was well supported with Patty Walter’s leadership. Our thanks to several family members & friends who volunteered to give of their time for that very needed fundraiser. We are grateful to those who sold tickets & supported in many ways “behind the scenes.” Our two churches will really benefit from this fundraiser.

Many participated in the 2 community friendship meals (Oct. 11 & Nov. 8) in Bothwell under the leadership of Kathy Shailer & her daughter Vanessa Benoit. Both events were so appreciated by those who attended.

“Come one, come all” to the next **Friendship Meal** which will be **December 13** in Bothwell church hall. There is **no cost** for this full course meal. The main goal is just to get together. Bring your family & friends & enjoy a supper out. If you wish to give a donation, there is a box for that too, for those who wish. :)

Since I last wrote to you, we have supported the families of Lois Weaver, Larry Saylor, Lorna Kneebone, Donna Charron, Bill Willmore & David Martin. Thank you for your prayers, food donations, cards, phone calls and remembrances. “The apostle Paul tells us: **“Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”** (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

One way to experience the real meaning of Christmas is to take part in the Gifts With Vision project. God is always encouraging us to look beyond ourselves to help those who are in need. You can show your love to family & friends by supporting the Gifts With Vision this Christmas. Pick up one of the Vision Books at the back of the church on Sunday or phone the office 519 695 2921 or my cell: 519 365 5511. We are happy to deliver a booklet. This kind of gift helps us to know the true meaning of giving during this Holy Season.

Thank you to Sharon Stevens who enriches and helps make our worship service a holy time.

Our thanks to Dan Sinasac, the Clerk of Session. There will be an important meeting Wed Nov 29 at 2:00 pm to discuss who will fill the various positions of leadership in our church. We do hope many of you can attend & bring your neighbours & friends as we plan for the future of Wabash United, our sacred place. We will pray and determine God’s will for us.

The four Sundays of Advent before Christmas will be special ones as we celebrate the coming birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

These special services along with other events at the church are listed below.

May the Peace of Christ be with you
and your loved-ones this Christmas
and in the New Year.

*Shalom,
Annalee*



**“A light is gleaming,
spreading its arms throughout the night,
Living in the light.
Come share its gladness,
God’s radiant love is burning bright,
Living in the light.**

**When night is round us
and every shadow grows,
A star is there to light our way.
It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:
God’s light will ever stay”. (VU 82)**



On a lighter note:

1. What did Winnie The Pooh pack for his vacation?
~ *the bear essentials*
2. Dad: Could you explain the **D** and **F** on your report card?
Son: No Problem. It stands for “**D**oing **F**ine.”
3. What goes up but never comes down?
~ *Your Age*

Upcoming Services & Events

November/December 2023

Nov 28—Bothwell-Wabash Bible Study 2pm

Nov 26—Giving Tree gifts-children & youth sock, mitts, hats

Dec 3— Advent 1 Hope; communion will be celebrated. Giving Tree gifts pajamas, cuddly toy, book or game

Dec 5, 12—Bible Study 2pm Bothwell UC

Dec 10— Advent 2—Peace; Giving Tree non-perishable food items

Dec 13— Friendship Meal 5-6pm Bothwell UC

Dec 17— Advent 3—Joy;

Dec 24— Advent 4—Love & Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service 4:00 pm at Bothwell UC

Dec 24—no morning service

Dec 26—church office closed—reopens Jan 2.

Dec 31—no service

Jan 7—guest speaker Rev Bruce Cook

We hope you can join us during this Advent Season. We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas & all the best for 2024.