

Wild Rose United Church

Christmas

2016

Newsletter



Christmas

SERVICES

Christmas Eve Services

7:00 pm Candlelighting
10:00 pm Candlelighting
and Communion

Christmas Day Service

10:00 am



A Christmas Party for Families and all ages!

Sunday, December 4 after worship please stay for an intergenerational Christmas party; a party for all ages with a variety of activities to suit many interests and abilities. We start with a free pizza lunch and dessert in Centennial Hall and continue with crafts, a few games, carols and visiting. It is a relaxing, fun way to reclaim the spiritual reason for the upcoming holiday.

From the Desk of Pat and Geoffrey

In a local store, a stranger who was deliberating her purchase asked me what I thought of “chargers” (the extra-large, decorative plates for under your plates). She asked if I thought she should buy them. I openly told her I was not a very good one to ask about that, since I work at a church, and I was writing an article for our Christmas newsletter on non-consumerism. “Then, you are just the person I should ask!” she replied.

She openly described her indecision, explaining that she was happy with her family’s choice to buy a smaller home, and to purposely consume less even though they could afford considerably more... but when friends with much larger, impressive homes and fancier “things” come over, her feelings of inadequacy rise. So does her desire to buy the beautiful things she can afford. Even with a conscious decision to consume less, she still feels a need to “keep up”. We wondered together about our ability to collect relatively useless items that are seldom used. She did not buy any chargers.

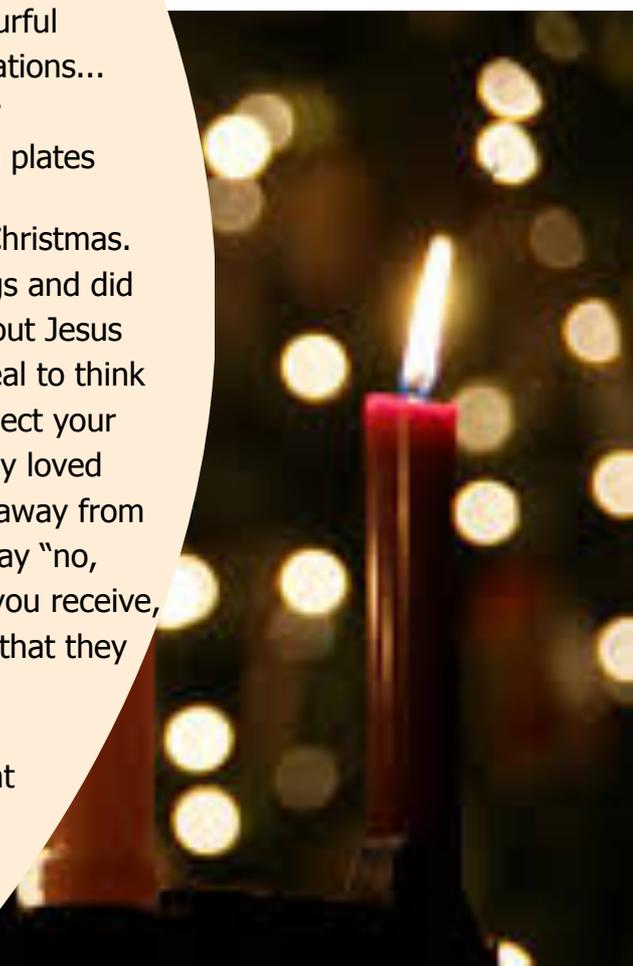
We can easily lose the focus of what Advent and Christmas are really about if we pay attention to the consumer world around us. TV and radio ads, sales flyers that land with a heavy thud on the doorstep, colourful Christmas lights, men in stuffed red suits, aisles of seasonal decorations... What is Christmas really all about? Another name checked off your shopping list? A fridge stuffed with food for entertaining? Heaping plates of delicious food served on a picturesque table? Advent is the time to prepare our hearts for the great mystery of Christmas. At Christmas we celebrate someone who said such wonderful things and did such amazing things that people followed him. People still talk about Jesus two thousand years later. His life and teachings give us a great deal to think about and honour. As December unfolds, include activities that reflect your values and faith. Most people say that spending time surrounded by loved ones means more to them than any present. If you want to move away from the hectic, consumer perspective, consider these ideas: Simplify. Say “no, thank you”. Spend less on people who have plenty. For every gift you receive, give something away to someone who needs it. Suggest to others that they can give to you by giving instead to a charity dear to your heart. Strengthen relationships with family and friends you cherish. Set aside time to read something spiritual each day and light an Advent wreath. Follow an inspirational Advent calendar. Slow down and prepare your heart.



Message from the Board

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Wild Rose family a joyous Advent and Christmas season.

Dora Di-Lullo and
Judy Bergeson, Co-Chairs of
the Official Board



Come Join the Choir this Christmas Season!

Advent and Christmas bring with them special music, both anticipating the arrival of Christ Jesus and celebrating His birth. It's a time when the choir presents well-loved and new anthems that inspire our congregational worship!

We can use some additional voices this year as we prepare for this joyous season. Wild Rose is also hosting the 12th Night service this season - an opportunity that comes to us only once every 4 or 5 years.

Choir rehearsals are in the Sanctuary on Thursdays from 7-9 pm. You don't need to read music - just have an appreciation of the special music of this season. We would love to have you join us - experience the best of Christmas music and fellowship with the Choir!



Wild Rose to host 12th Night Celebration

Be sure to put the evening of January 8 on your calendars!

Wild Rose United Church is hosting this year's 12th Night Celebration: an evening of anthems, readings and hymns from the Christmas season.

The congregations of Wild Rose, Parkdale, Symons Valley, St. Thomas and Hillhurst United Churches come together to listen to anthems from their choirs and sing congregational hymns rejoicing in the birth of Jesus! A social reception follows the service. It's a not-to-be missed event!

Wild Rose will be offering music from the Wild Rose Belles, Praise Band and Choir. Watch the bulletins for further information - and plan to be here - January 8 at 7 pm.

Blow the Winter Blahs Away!

In the bleak mid-winter, how would you like to have a warm congregational get together with good food (chili and buns?), good entertainment and good conversation?

Watch out for more information and date!

If you are interested in helping to organize a fellowship event, or can provide entertainment of any sort (readings, skit, music?) contact Carle carle.duguid@gmail.com.



Wild Rose Reaches Out

Cookies for Homebound

The Christmas season will soon be upon us. The faith community of Wild Rose United opens its hearts to others in many ways throughout the year but never more than at Christmas! The Pastoral Care Team is reaching out in three different ways. November 27 is the first Sunday of Advent and it is also "cookie" day at Wild Rose. An assortment of homemade Christmas favorites are packaged, along with Christmas candy and chocolates.

They are delivered to the Homebound members of our church family. They are also packaged and served at our Winter Teas at the Manors of Huntington Hills and Arbour Lake Seniors Residences.

Cookies also make their way to our former youth members who live in Calgary. If you would like to help with this project, please consider baking 2 or 3 dozen of your Christmas specialty and deliver them to Centennial Hall prior to worship on November 27.

Poinsettia Prayers

Christmas can be a fun, festive season, one filled with celebration, special traditions, and joy and laughter. But for some, this year will be different. For many reasons, this year may be difficult. Help us to offer a poinsettia, a symbol of hope and promise, to those who may find this Christmas season less than joyful. At the same time, you can offer your personal prayer in memory of a loved one or in honour of a celebration in your life. Poinsettias can be sponsored for \$15.00 each and they will be used to decorate our church on Sunday, December 11. A list of those people honoured by your remembrances will be printed in the bulletin on this same Sunday. The poinsettias will be delivered after the service along with Christmas greetings from Geoffrey and YOU, the congregation.

Wild Rose would also like to connect with our former youth who are away from home during this festive season. We want to hold them in the circle of our celebrations, even in their absence from us. Your contribution to the Poinsettia Prayer project will also allow us to purchase Tim Horton gift cards to serve as a "warm" reminder that we care.

Thank you for your continued support of our work.

The Pastoral Care Team



Outreach Updates

Christmas Hampers

The tradition of helping people in our community at Christmas continues. The congregation shares their gifts with people who are experiencing homelessness and poverty.

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them." Matthew 7:12

We never know who actually receives the gifts from the Wild Rose congregation, but we do know there is a need. There are students at Crescent Heights High School who have no home. They are staying at shelter or couch surfing. They are some of the young people who benefit from the compassion and generosity of the people in our congregation. In addition, our church helps families or singles who are experiencing poverty and need a helping hand.

The Wild Rose United Church Christmas Hamper program has changed over time.

We used to pick cards off the tree so church members could buy specific gifts based on the requests. However, you never really knew if the winter coat fit properly, or the shoes were comfortable, so we changed things up a bit.

We still pick cards off the tree, but now the congregation offers financial support. The Outreach Committee uses the donations to buy gift cards, presents, or in the case of the high school, give the school a lump sum to use to support its Christmas Giving program.

The method of how we support others in our community will continue to change, but the motivation behind it remains the same. We are sharing God's love.



Prairie Rose Refugee Update

In November we learned that our refugees from Syria would soon be arriving! Zohir Mohamad, 44, his wife Dalal Al Hseen, 33, and their children Marah, 11 and Omar, 9 had fled Syria and were living in Turkey. They are Muslims who speak Arabic and Turkish, no English.

Prairie Rose Refugee Support Group has spent a year waiting, planning, raising money, arranging drivers and translators, filling a garage and basement with donated beds and tables and household goods. By the time you read this our family should be settled into an apartment, had their injections and dental appointments and be in possession of the paperwork they need. Next comes schooling for the children and for the parents who need English to find employment. 43 people are on the volunteers list, but we would still happily accept drivers.

When they have had an opportunity to become accustomed to the ways and the weather we will introduce them to Wild Rose. In the meanwhile, we have their names so that we may include Zohir, Dalal, Marah and Omar in our prayers.

The Lydia Group uses the money they raise through quilting to give scholarships through Servants Anonymous to women leaving sex work. In January after church there will be a soup and bun lunch - eat in or takeout - to help The Lydia Group.



Our September Produce Giveaway handed out 120 grocery bags of produce and bread. The date hasn't been set for the next one, so watch the calendar.



The Calgary Women's Centre asked us to collect full size bottles of shampoo. Your donation can be left in the marked box in Wild Rose Hall until Nov. 28.

Reverse Advent Calendar

What is a reverse advent calendar? A reverse Advent calendar reminds kids (and adults) about helping others and seeing the bigger picture at Christmas. Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas. Most Advent calendars start on December 1 but Advent really starts on a different date each year. With Christmas falling on a Sunday, Advent starts on November 27. That adds a couple extra days of preparing your heart for Christmas.

Advent calendars typically have small numbered windows that are gradually opened to count down the days until Santa comes. Advent calendars usually give you a small treat each day. But a reverse advent calendar works by you putting something in them every day. Items of food or clothing are gradually added and then after December 24 are taken to a charity to give away or given directly to someone that needs it.

Living our faith means that we share part of what we are, and part of what we have. This Reverse Advent Calendar provides us with a good way of doing just that and will help the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank, which is struggling this year to help those in need. Find a box, and decorate it if you want it to feel like part of your Christmas decorations! Each day, add something to the box that The Calgary Food Bank would give to someone in need. Be mindful as you place the item in your Reverse Advent Calendar: pause to reflect and say a prayer of thankfulness for the good things in your life or pray for those who need. Our website www.wildroseunited.ca has a link to the Calgary Interfaith Foodbank's list of most urgent needs. Any time from December 25 to January 15, bring your Reverse Advent Calendar to Wild Rose United Church and place it in the Food Bank bins provided. Items will be brought to The Food Bank mid-January to help refill their shelves that are empty after the Christmas season.

Advent Calendar for Daily Devotion

Would you like to have a reading and devotional for each day of Advent? Rev. Thomas Mousin has created a simple yet thoughtful calendar that offers brief suggestions for each of the days of Advent. They are pithy, to say the least. For example, the suggestion for Dec. 20 is "Say Yes!" while the one for the Dec. 23 is "No Vacancy." Lots to think about in such a small amount of words. Perhaps reading the texts will help focus our reasons for giving. You will find a link to this Advent calendar on our website.



Reverse Advent Calendar
Each day you add an item to the box and on January 15 bring the box to the church.



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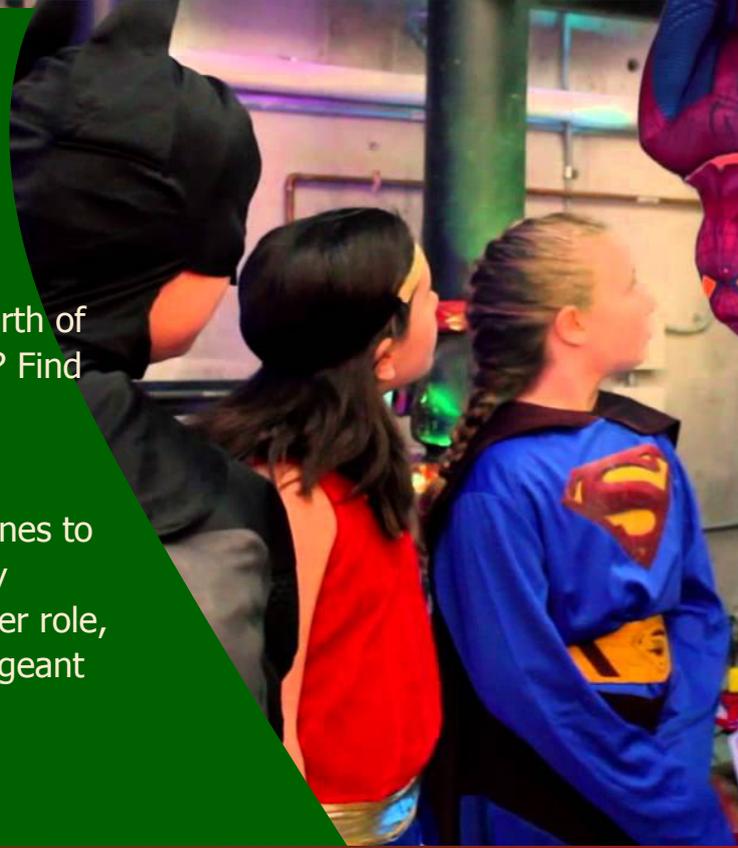


Superhero Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 11 during worship

Have you ever wondered what would happen if the birth of Jesus threatened the jobs of the world's superheroes? Find out as our youth and children present a Superhero Christmas pageant.

All youth and children are invited to participate with lines to memorize or without lines. Roles will be distributed by November 27 so if you prefer to have lines and a larger role, please speak to Pat Shier or Kim Holmes-Younger. Pageant practice is Saturday, Dec. 10 at 9:30 am.



Youth Christmas Bake/ Craft Sale

Help the youth raise money for their upcoming trips to Zambia and the United Church Youth Conference "Rendezvous" held in Montreal in August.

November 20th following the service.

Stock up on Christmas baking and Christmas presents.

Donations are welcome!



Wild Bunch Christmas Party

The annual pot-luck Wild Bunch Christmas Dinner will be Saturday December 10, 2016. All are invited! Please join us for an evening of delicious food, wonderful entertainment and great friendships. This year the Calgary Food Bank and Feed the Hungry will be the recipients of our free-will offering. Please contact David Augustine (davidaug@telusplanet.net or 403-284-6371) to let him know what kind of food you will be bringing. We look forward to seeing you, and Merry Christmas!



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2017

Women Connecting

Wednesday, January 25, 7-9 pm

Sunday mornings are a rush either to get to church or to somewhere else afterwards. Here is a chance for you to relax with no children, no meetings, and nowhere you need to be. It is a time for you. Spend an evening with other women and laugh, connect and go deeper than the normal Sunday morning pleasantries.



Annual Congregational Meeting

This year's ACM will take place after the service on Sunday February 12, 2017.



Volunteers Needed

Just a reminder, as has been mentioned in your Stewardship packages, we do need volunteers to help Wild Rose offer the best programs that we possibly can. The Finance Committee is looking for a Treasurer and a Chair, Congregational Life committee is seeking new members and we can always use greeters and ushers. Please consider helping in some way.