Prairie Spirit United Church

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Weekly Update – Thursday 23 December 2021

Christmas Eve

24-December-2021 at 4:30pm on-line.
Rev. Susan McIlveen will lead us in worship.
Mike and Shirley Hill will be our advent readers and candle lighters.

"Arise and celebrate: God loves the world, a child is born.
The glow of the Divine lightens our hearts like an infant stepping to love."
(https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped the Candle Lighting Liturgy)

The Christmas Eve service of sharing the Biblical Christmas story, carols and light is being live streamed. The link can be found at https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=prairie+spirit+united+church and will be 'live' just prior to 4:30pm on Friday December 24th.
This also creates a recording of the service that can be viewed later at your convenience using the same link on YouTube.

For Christmas Eve this year, we will be hosting a variety of musical talent in our church. We will have the pleasure of hosting four singers, one who can play trumpet, another who can play guitar. Natalie Goodlet will also be joining us on cello. It will be a music-filled service you will not want to miss!

Reminder: Our next LiveStream Worship Service will be held on Sunday January 2nd, 2022 and no service will be held on Sunday December 26th, 2021.
May the light of Christ light up your lives with Love and Joy!!
The Worship Team

Oversight Council Decision – Livestreaming Only!

On December 18, due to the rising COVID-19 case numbers in Manitoba, new Public Health orders were issued. The Omicron variant is proving to be much more transmissible and as such is very worrying.

The Oversight Council and Reverend McIlveen have been watching these COVID developments carefully. Today, out of an abundance of caution, we have made the hard decision to move the Christmas Eve service on-line. No congregation will be present during recording.

This will be the second Christmas that we are unable to celebrate Christ's birth together with our church family in our sanctuary. However, we can be together virtually as we gather with our loved ones around our computers, tablets, or televisions, to enjoy a service of lessons and carols telling the Biblical Christmas story. Join Reverend McIlveen, Renate Rossol, and the wonderful musicians and singers for this special service, even if it can't be in-person. It will be a service you won't want to miss!

If you're unable to watch on Dec. 24 at 4:30 p.m., the service can be viewed later at your convenience using the same link on YouTube.

As well, the **January 2nd and January 9th services will be on-line only** through our PSUC YouTube channel.

Best wishes for a blessed Christmas

Year End Reminder

We are coming to the end of another year. Thank you to all the people who have faithfully been supporting PSUC during these unprecedented times. It is greatly appreciated.

If you would like your donations to be included on your 2021 income tax receipt, please ensure all donations for 2021 are received no later than December 31, 2021. Donations can be drop off at the church office or in the secure church mailbox. Donations can also be made to PSUC by e-transfer or through CanadaHelps.

Donations made to M&S, I Just City, Just A Warm Sleep, Manitoba Harvest, Christmas Cheer Board, Agape Table and all such charities are included on your income tax receipt.

If you are considering making a donation to the M&S fund in 2021, as of December 20, 2021 we are about $4,400 short of our 2021 goal of $30,000. Normally a significant amount of money comes in for M&S at the end of the year. Hopefully people who would usually donate to M&S at year end continue to do so. The M&S need is even greater in these COVID times.

Marilyn McCorrister
Treasurer

CHRISTMAS EVE DONATION - JUST A WARM SLEEP

The temperatures in Winnipeg are dropping again and it makes us realize that winter has arrived. In Winnipeg, there are many people who are unable to bundle up against the cold and don't have access to a warm, safe shelter. Our coldest temperatures in Winnipeg are still ahead of us, leaving those living on the streets at risk.

Just A Warm Sleep, housed at Augustine United Church, part of 1JustCity ensures a safe, warm place for community members to sleep each night. They have a harm reduction, barrier free approach meaning shopping carts or pets are allowed and if a person has been using substances they can stay as long as they are respectful of others.

As Prairie Spirit United Church, our Christmas Eve offering has been dedicated to Just a Warm Sleep. Last year your offerings financed two nights stay for 30 community members.
Due to Covid, we are worshipping remotely this year again….so there is no offering plate being passed.

1JustCity's former Executive Director, Tessa Blaikie Whitecloud, helped create Just A Warm Sleep because there was a clear call from our City's Indigenous leaders that churches should be opening up and offering sanctuary from the dangers of the cold night. **"People we knew and loved from our drop-ins were sleeping outside while churches sat empty at night".**
Tessa recently said, **"I am so grateful to Augustine United Church for their big hearts and brave decisions that made Just a Warm Sleep a reality."**

Please drop off donations to Just A Warm Sleep to the church office or secure mailbox marked for Just A Warm Sleep or by e-transfer by December 29. Tessa will personally match donations up to $3000 until Dec 31. Donations after that time will be gratefully accepted and forwarded.

You can give the gift of $25 and cover the stay of one guest, or give a gift of $275 and cover supplies and security for a whole night. Every dollar helps. This year, in Oak Table's new space, they are able to offer showers and laundry services **ALL BECAUSE OF YOU**!
Your gift will save a life this winter. **Despite the cold, that's heartwarming.**

HOPE
PEACE
JOY
LOVE
LIGHT of CHRIST

ADVENT: We look forward to gathering around the hitching posts (near the stable) on Christmas Eve, virtually and spiritually, to celebrate lighting of the Christ candle.
- Jeannie McAlpine

MANY THANKS from THE PORTAGE AVE FOOD BANK for all the mitts, hats scarves etc that were on the Mitten Tree. We distributed them during the 2 Food Banks this month.

Clients of the Food Bank were very appreciative of the gift. The few items that remain will be offered again in Jan. as we know these things get lost from time to time.

We also wish to acknowledge some of the anonymous knitting/crocheting ELVES in our midst. We received your creations, offer our thanks and distributed them to the Food Bank folks.

We give a heartful THANK YOU to those who have donated many gently used or new warm clothes and boots for those who attend activities at 1 Just City.

The need is still there as our winter with its cold weather continues for many months yet.

Donations can be placed in the box inside the south door. This will be monitored regularly and donations taken to the St Matthews Maryland drop off.

Many folks are warmer thanks to your generosity.

WANTED…PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS FOR FOOD BANK.

Please leave in bag in between south doors.

Thanks

The Portage Avenue Food Bank Co-Ordinators

Christmas Greetings from The National Indigenous Council

National Indigenous Council Chair John Thompson offers the church this Christmas reflection, finding connections between our pandemic time and experiences, and what Mary and Joseph experienced. “Could it be that out of this crucible of pain, injustice, racism… and now a pandemic that has swept the world, that God’s Truth will rise again to bring Hope, Restoration, Reconciliation and Healing—Newness of Life?”

[Photo Credit: Elenor and John Thompson]

Stories of Our Mission

Share Your Light

Did you know that Boxing Day was originally a day to give rather than receive? Before Boxing Day came to be associated with turkey sandwiches, football, and discounts, it was known as a day to serve those in need. This story calls us to return to the compassion-focused roots of Boxing Day and shine our light.

[Photo credit: Geoff Duncan on Lightstock]

PSUC Regular Office Hours are Tues-Fri 10am-2pm
Office will be closed on Fri 24 Dec and Mon 27 Dec.

Please call before planning a visit to the church.

How to Reach us by email:
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