



Wyman Memorial & Cote St. Charles
United Churches
Hudson Pastoral Charge

Advent - Christmas 2019
Newsletter

As we launch into our Advent season, the words of the prophet Isaiah come to mind. Speaking of the wilderness between Babylon (where the people were exiled) and home, he wrote “A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way...” Elsewhere we hear words about preparing that highway, and one gets an image of a smooth road to the place the people wanted to be:

back home. A smooth road, nary a bump, not even an orange traffic cone left behind.

But there are other images that crowd in as well. Before the Christmas story begins, I think Mary and Joseph had a plan. Pretty simple, stress-free plan. He and Mary, living in Nazareth, would get married. Joseph would continue in carpentry, and, if it was God’s will, they would have children. And then they would be happy, live to a good age, and come to the end of their days surrounded by children and grandchildren.

Absolutely nothing wrong with that plan. Except things don’t always go according to plan. For a start, an angel tells Mary that she is going to have a baby. The child of God. Before she and Joseph are married. Joseph gets a similar message. Both of them are super-stressed about this thing, asking “how can this be?” But God is with them. There in Nazareth, where they expect to pass their days.

Nothing wrong with that revised plan. Except things don’t always go according to plan. Because the next thing that happens is that a certain emperor by the name of Augustus wants to make sure he’s getting all the tax money that he thinks he should. So he declares that there is going to be a census, but that the census-takers are not going to go to the people, but that the people should go to their home towns, and that’s where they will be counted. Or else. So Joseph and Mary leave Nazareth to register in Bethlehem, probably expecting to be back in Nazareth soon – surely soon enough for the birth! And God would be with them.

Nothing wrong with that newly revised plan. Except.... Because the next thing that happens - not too surprising, is that Mary goes into labour. After all, it has been a journey. And Jesus is born right there in Bethlehem.

Nothing, it seems, has gone according to plan. Yet this young couple far from home discover that there has been one constant throughout. God is with them. God has been with them in Nazareth. God has been with them in the changes in plan, and on the road to Bethlehem. God has been with them as labour began, as birth came. God has been with them as strangers have come to praise and worship.

So, people ask – how are our plans coming along? Well, things are going just fine, excepting that things don’t always go according to plan! But as we meet surprises and the unexpecteds, we step forward knowing that we’re on the right track. We’re no longer in Nazareth. We’re heading to Bethlehem, and we’re not quite sure what we’ll do when we get there. But we do know one thing: God has been with us from our beginnings. God is with us as we journey to Bethlehem. And God will continue to be with us in the familiar and in the unfamiliar things of our future.

This is the truth for the congregation. And this is the truth for us each, in our own lives. God is with us. Emmanuel.

Kent Chown (Rev)



<u>Sunday Dec. 1</u>	1 st Sunday of Advent Sacrament of Holy Communion	10.30 a.m.
<u>Sunday Dec. 8</u>	2 nd Sunday of Advent.	10.30 a.m.
<u>Sunday Dec. 15</u>	3 rd Sunday of Advent. White Gift Sunday Choir Candlelight Service	10.30 a.m. 7.30 p.m.
<u>Saturday Dec. 21</u>	“Blue Christmas” Service at Wyman Church	7.30 p.m.
<u>Tuesday Dec. 24</u>	Christmas Eve Family Service - Wyman Church Christmas Eve Service - Wyman Church	7.30 p.m. 11.00 p.m.



Sunday December 29 Worship Service & Carol Singing 10.30 a.m.



Mitten Tree You will see the mitten tree on the table at the back of the sanctuary. We collect hats, mittens, scarves, socks which will be divided between St. Columba House and The Women’s Shelter and will get there in time for Christmas.

Lisa Van Egmond will be selling Poinsettias & Cyclamen on Sundays during Advent.

4.5" are \$5.00
6.5" are \$10.00

Poinsettias are available in Red, White or Pink (Please note that the white is not a pure white)

Cyclamen are available in Red, White, Light Pink, Dark Pink, Lavender, Two Tone

Samples will be available for purchase on December 1. You can place an order for pickup December 8, 15 or 22.or send an email to lisa-ve@hotmail.com

Pick-up dates will be December 8, 15 & 22.



December 15 - White Gift Sunday

For White Gift Sunday, we ask members to bring toys to be given to St. Columba House for distribution to the children there. Gifts don’t need to be wrapped as they set them out by appropriate age and therefore the wrapping is removed anyway.



The Wyman Choir presents...

For as long as any of us can remember, longer actually, the highlight of the Wyman Church year has always been the annual Christmas Choral Concert, presented by the Wyman Choir.

This year's rendition, entitled ***Christmas Reflections***, will be held on the evening of Sunday, December 15 at Wyman Church. You can be certain that the choir members are already doing everything they can to reach the glorious magic of the moment. Why, even the men's section has been putting in double time, determined to bring their standard fully up to scratch.

Our elegant and gifted Choir Director, Wanda Kaluzny, would expect nothing less. As with other years, she has stitched together a veritable Christmas quilt of seasonal carols and anthems, some old, some new - all sure to touch your hearts with the joy and deep meaning that only this season can bring.

We do urge you to attend if you possibly can. The 2019 Wyman Christmas Concert happens only once a year. It would be a shame to miss it.

And here's a tip. If you are pleased with the evening's music, feel free to applaud. In fact, doing so will just make the rest of us work even harder!

Merry Christmas.

Info: Sunday, **December 15, 2019; 7:30 PM**
Wyman United Church
513 Main Road, Hudson
450- 458-4912



Gifts With Vision **Give a gift that changes peoples' lives!**

This year we are once again contributing to Gifts with Vision. This is a program of the United Church of Canada. The idea is that you can "give a gift" in the name of someone, and then give that individual a certificate so they know of your thoughtfulness (without them having to find a place for more stuff!). The gifts are things like a safe home for those at risk for human trafficking (for the sex trade, indentured domestic labour, or harvesting of organs), or sending an youth to a joint indigenous and non-indigenous retreat centre, or food for those in Northern Canadian Communities. One could give directly by going to giftswithvision.ca, but we thought that we could all get together to see how much we could do as a congregation! A challenge to ourselves! You can donate in the special box at the back of the church, OR go to our donations page (on square) at <https://squareup.com/store/hudson-pastoral-charge> . Lets see how much we can give - to our family and friends... AND to the world!

Blue Christmas Service
Saturday December 21 - 7.30 p.m.
Wyman Church

We would like to invite you to our Blue Christmas service in the evening of Saturday, December 21st (7:30 p.m.) in Wyman Church.

December can be a difficult month for many. Partly because of the panic to be ready for Christmas, plus all the seasonal events that take place. And partly because stresses and griefs are often amplified in December.

For those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, especially a fresher loss, December is a time when one feels, or frequently dreads feeling, that empty space left by the person who is no longer with us. How many times do I hear "this will be my first Christmas without this person", or second, or fifth. The grief is very real as we approach the Christmas season.

But even for those who are not carrying a fresh grief, this season can be difficult. There are lots of stresses - the stresses of getting everything done, and fitting in all the events; the stresses of finances as we tend to spend more, and feel compelled to spend more, in this month than any other; as well as the real issues that are felt with the long hours of darkness and only short hours of light.

And so you are invited to join with us for a service, a quiet, reflective service, a moment apart from the frantic times of this month: and time to remember, a time to pause and be still, a time to seek strength, courage, peace..... and hope.

During this service, there will be a lighting of candles by those in attendance - candles of remembrance, candles of reflection, and candles of prayer.

So we invite you to join us at Wyman Church - Saturday, December 21st at 7:30 p.m. And everyone is welcome.



Stewardship Campaign

Many thanks to all those who returned their pledge forms. We have 41 contributors to PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance). Remember that contributing by PAR is a way to regularly support your church and avoids "catch-up" periods. As the church has ongoing commitments every week, the more people on PAR makes the programme more valuable and viable. There is still time to send your commitment in if you have not already done so or, if you prefer, a one-time donation would be appreciated. An added way to support your church is by using Fundscrip.....

Fundscrip

'TIS THE SEASON TO BUY GIFT CARDS...



Why Buy Fundscrip?

- Skip out on the madness of last minute holiday shopping – get the cards delivered to you instead of fighting for parking spots and waiting in long lines to pay in store.

- If you're still missing some gifts for people on your list, you can't go wrong with gift cards – it is convenient to get gift cards through FundScrip, but it also allows the recipient to choose what he or she really wants.
- Fundscrip Order Forms were emailed out for your convenience this year. These can be emailed back to the church or to Mona Van Egmond at mojoli@email.msn.com or left in the plate on Sundays.
- Use gift cards to purchase supplies and groceries for holiday meals or events – gift cards are great as presents, but don't forget that FundScrip carries gift cards from most major grocery stores in Canada so you can get everything you need to cook that perfect meal!
- Best reason of all is that you are help raise funds for our church at no extra cost to you!!

Villa Wyman Update

As this Newsletter goes to press, the Villa Wyman board is meeting. Progress has certainly been slower than hoped, but we need to be clear - the project is continuing. The AccesLogis program of the Québec government has reserved funding for Villa Wyman. Final architectural plans have taken longer as certain government regulations and expectations were adjusted – so that the Board now is working with the third iteration of plans for the residence. Once these plans are accepted, then there are modest steps to be taken before bidding for construction begins.

Cote St. Charles Update

It is already on the cusp of December, and the ad hoc committee created to manage the investigation and updates to the Côte St. Charles United Church continues our work. The Côte Church is almost empty, ready for work to begin. Engineering drawings continue in order to allow contractors to quote on the job. We should receive a building permit any day now - we'll send out a notice when that happens. St-Lazare is being very encouraging on this now. That would be a nice touch for Christmas!

The modifications to the church are focused on a number of factors. Adding insulation, all the way to the modern code, will make the church efficient to heat, and keep it cool in the summer. Accessibility to everyone with reduced mobility will also be key. This will make the building inclusive and welcoming to all. A modern audiovisual system, coupled with computer connectivity to the latest standard, will make the church flexible moving forward, opening up options both for worship and those who might want to rent the property for other purposes. We also want to develop the sanctuary for flexibility in seating with respect to the way we worship.

We also intend to work with the Town of St. Lazare to develop the Côte Church as an emergency shelter for those living in the west section of the town. This will be an asset to the community, and shine a positive and welcoming light. After all, if we are good neighbours, perhaps we will encourage more people to come, visit, and understand what we are all about.

We have just been informed by our Regional Council's Finance and Extension Board that they will allow us a line of credit to cover some of our initial costs that are being incurred before construction begins. This will relieve some of the extreme financial pressure on our general fund.

All in all, exciting times, and an opportunity for positive development. The committee will continue to update everyone throughout the work. Happy Christmas all, and look to the new year with the promise of positive news.

*Lots of love,
Martin Smith*

Annual Reports

Annual Reports must be submitted to the church office before the 20th of January 2020 in readiness for the Annual Meeting in February. It would be appreciated, if possible, that the reports be sent by email or disc.

Income Tax Receipts - Donations which you wish credited to 2019 must be received by December 31, 2019 .



Merry Christmas to all