



Today is the second Sunday of Advent. Advent is that time of year when we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ at Christmas. This Advent season we are focusing our attention on the most frequently repeated command in the Bible: "Do not be afraid!" As we face an uncertain winter ahead, this command takes on particular relevance. It is also repeated throughout the usual Christmas stories – to Zechariah, to Mary, to Joseph, and to the shepherds when they see angelic messengers. We can relate to the deep fears of the characters in these stories: the fear of disappointment, the fear of having to revision our lives, the fear of a ruined reputation, and the fear of bad news. The angels' command, "Do not fear," is an invitation for us to take comfort in the providential care of God which is most visible to us through the baby in the manger, Jesus Christ.

We will continue with the registration process in order to make sure we do not exceed our capacity of 100.

Wed, December 9: Blue Christmas

Sun, December 13: 9, 8, 6, 14

Wed December 16: Candlelight Service

Sun, December 20: 1,3,4,7

All attendees are required to wear a mask and maintain a 2-meter physical distancing both in the building and while outside. **Council has agreed to stop taking the temperature of attendees due to unreliable temperature readings due to the cold weather.** Following the government guidelines, seating goes by who you live with under the same roof NOT who is in your bubble.

Our services will continue to be live streamed, so those who are not comfortable returning or who are unable to return can continue to worship with us. If there are issues with the live stream a seamless video will be posted to the CCRC website (Vimeo) after the service on Sunday afternoon. Be sure to watch the video from the church website or YouTube.

Watch the worship service on Sunday morning for the story to be read by one of the Sunday School leaders. This week's story is "The Birth of John the Baptist".

10:00am Worship Service

Worship Participants this week:

Preacher: Pastor Betsy DeVries

GATHERING AND GREETING

- Gathering Song** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel
- Welcome and Announcements**
- * **Call to Worship**
(based on Psalm 130:5-7, 27:1)
- Leader: I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his Word I hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning.
- ALL: There is no darkness with you, O Lord.**
- Leader: The Lord is my light and my salvation –whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life –of whom shall I be afraid?
- ALL: There is no darkness with you, O Lord.**
- Leader: Hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love and redemption.
- ALL: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit**
- * **God's Greeting**
- * **Songs of Praise**
- "My Lighthouse"
""And Can it Be"

CANDLE LIGHTING

- Lighting of the Advent Candle**
- Song:** "Christ Be Our Light"
- Children's Worship Story**
- Children's Song** "Go Tell It On The Mountain"

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

- Song of Preparation** "Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)"
- Prayer for Illumination**
- Scripture Reading** Luke 1:5-25
- Sermon** "Do Not Fear the Silence"
- Prayer of Application**

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

- * **Song of Response** "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout"
- Offering Announcement**
- 1) Ministries of Community Christian Reformed Church
2) Calvin University
- Prayers of the People**
- * **God's Parting Blessing**
- * **Doxology** "Hark the Glad Sound"

COMMUNITY CRC CHURCH FAMILY

(The bracketed numbers indicate the Community to which these individuals belong)

Please keep **Catherine J** (11) in your prayers as she is waiting for final test results to confirm a diagnosis of chronic myeloid leukemia. We pray that Catherine may feel God's peace and presence in her life and that He might grant her, Vince and their family, strength during this difficult time.

A belated Congratulations to **Willem and Mariska V** (4) as they celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary on December 3, 2020. May the Lord continue to bless and strengthen their marriage for many years to come!

Matters for Prayer:

- Pray for guidance and wisdom for the Search Team as they make recommendations to Council and for the officebearers as they discern the way forward filling the Pastoral positions.
- Pray for our sister-church, The Journey, as they seek to call a pastor in the near future. May the Spirit lead them well and clearly in their discernment.
- Pray for those in Grade 12 as they are at the mid year mark of their final year and looking ahead to what next year brings.
- Pray for folks to step up as leaders into Impact ministry.
- Pray for our provincial and municipal leaders and front line workers as the case numbers of COVID are increasing across the country.
- Give thanks and praise that a vaccine is in the final stages of being approved and continue to pray for leaders as they plan for the rollout.
- Pray for those with ongoing health concerns and those undergoing cancer

treatments during a time when other illnesses seem to have taken a back seat to COVID-19.

- Pray for those experiencing the financial strain of the upcoming holidays and the stress this creates
- Pray for those experiencing loneliness, isolation, or disappointment at a time that is traditionally spent in Christmas celebrations or festivities
- Pray for those seeking employment or experiencing job loss.
- Pray for those dealing and struggling with mental health which can be exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Pray for **Anthony and Barbara P** with Daystar Ministries on Manitoulin Island, **Hank and Rosario S** volunteering in Guatemala, **Pastor Brian B** serving with Waterloo Campus Ministry and **Shannon C** serving as Chaplain at Forest Heights Long term care home.

Are you struggling with anxiety or depression?



shalem
Mental Health Network

Would it help to talk to someone? As a congregation, CCRC has committed to providing no-charge counselling sessions to all members through **Shalem Mental Health Network**. To book a counselling appt, call Shalem directly at 1-866-347-0041. And for more resource information check their website at <https://shalemnetwork.org/>.

UPCOMING SERVICES

Wed Dec 9	7 pm	Pastor Betsy DeVries Blue Christmas
Sun Dec 13	10 am	Pastor Amanda Bakale 3 rd Sunday of Advent Sacrament of Lord's Supper
Wed Dec 16	7 pm	Pastor Amanda Bakale and Pastor Betsy DeVries

		Candlelight Service
Sun Dec 20	10 am	Pastor Betsy DeVries 4 th Sunday of Advent
Wed Dec 23	7 pm	Pastor Amanda Bakale and Pastor Betsy DeVries Candlelight Service
Fri Dec 25	10 am	Christmas Day! Recorded Service Pastor Betsy DeVries

Next week we will be celebrating the sacrament of Lord's Supper online and in our homes. The Council of Community CRC invites believers of all ages to the table, following an age and ability appropriate public profession of faith. If you desire to come to the table but have not made profession of faith, please let a pastor or elder know so we can begin the conversation.

Administrative Council has amended our COVID Guidelines so that Lord's Supper can be served in the sanctuary in a way that complies with Public Health guidelines for the safe distribution of materials. Communion will be served in individually sealed portions set out ahead of time by deacons and available for worshipers to pick up as they enter the sanctuary at a table overseen by an elder. When the time comes to partake in the elements, worshipers will remain in their seats, briefly remove their masks to eat and drink the elements, and promptly replace their masks. The Waterloo Region face-covering by-law provides an exemption for "consuming food/drink as part of a religious activity within a place of worship." Each person who partakes will be responsible to remove their cups from the sanctuary and deposit them in a recycling bin at the sanctuary exit. If you have trouble drinking from a small communion cup, large covered cups will be available upon request.

If you are attending worship but are uncomfortable removing your mask to partake you may pass on the elements and spiritually fast from the Lord's Supper, or take your elements home with you to partake later. No

stigma or assumptions will be made about those who do not desire to partake in-person during this time.

OFFERING SCHEDULE

There are two offerings taken on a weekly basis at Community CRC. The first offering is for the Ministries of Community CRC and the second offering is for various causes that our church supports. For more details on how to donate to the church, please see the Resources section on the last page of the bulletin.

This week our offering is for Calvin University. Calvin University, formerly Calvin College, is an educational institution of the Christian Reformed Church and stands in the Reformed tradition of Protestantism. Calvin University equips students to think deeply, to act justly, and to live wholeheartedly as Christ's agents of renewal in the world.

Special Offerings: For the three Wednesday evening services in December (Dec 9, 16, and 23), the deacons have decided to hold a **special offering for Missionary Support.**

Next week, December 13, our offering is for Laurentian Hills Christian School (LHCS). Laurentian is an independent elementary school providing Christian education to students in grades JK-8. It is interdenominational, drawing students from over sixty different churches in the Kitchener- Waterloo area. This past September, LHCS once again opened its doors and welcomed students for in-person learning. However, the pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on the school's finances. If you are able to help the school financially please give online at <http://lhcs.net/donate/> or via the second offering next week.

Upcoming Offerings:

Dec 9 pm		Missionary Support
Dec 13		Laurentian Hills Christian School
Dec 16 pm		Missionary Support
Dec 20		House of Friendship

Offerings Received as at November 29, 2020:

November 29	\$	10,855
Year to Date	\$	654,015
Budgeted 2020 Total Contributions	\$	885,705
Second Offerings		
Benevolence	\$	5,522
CCRC Mission Fund	\$	875
Safe Church Ministry	\$	100
Resonate Global Mission	\$	100
World Renew – World Hunger	\$	50
Food Bank of Waterloo Region	\$	50
Ontario Christian Gleaners	\$	50
Chaplaincy and Care Ministry	\$	50
Disability Concerns	\$	50
Ray of Hope	\$	50
Waterloo Campus Ministry	\$	50
World Renew	\$	50
Calvin University	\$	25

COMMUNITY CRC NEWS

Administrative Council Meeting Highlights from November 24, 2020

- Received and reviewed various staff and ministry reports and meeting minutes.
- Council discussed and finalized plans to host the congregational meeting being held on Sunday November 29th.
- Council heard an update from the Calling Committee.
- The Mission Strategies Team is looking for new members to join.
- Council discussed the impacts of COVID restrictions.

- Council is looking to strike up a committee to maintain the CCRC handbook.
- Council is looking to strike up a committee to reevaluate how we participate in the Ministry Shares program since it has been revamped from the CRCNA.

Sermon Discussion | Next Sunday, December 13, there will be a sermon discussion for children in Grades 4-6 on Zoom at 11:30 am. Look for the link in the bulletin and email next Friday.

Calling all folks who love our kids and made baptismal vows: Impact needs you! Our very last youth leader is transitioning out this month, which means when we (hopefully) return in January for our physically distanced fireside chats, we are leader-less. Sign up for an evening or 2 a month. Enjoy the AMAZING company of our high-schoolers and be blessed by your experience. Contact a youth elder or Anita D to sign up and join the fun!

Human Resources Representative | Community CRC is currently looking for a volunteer who has Human Resource experience to be an HR advisor. This position is a resource to Administrative Council for HR matters (hiring, disciplinary action, review of job descriptions) and is responsible for facilitating staff reviews and presenting the results of the review to Admin Council.

The person serving in this position is not eligible to serve as an Elder or Deacon. This position starts in the spring and would serve a 3-year term. Please email Alesha H if you feel you could serve in this capacity.

Volunteers Needed | The Admin Council is looking for interested people to maintain CCRC's policy handbook. The staff at CCRC have worked hard to update and compile our policies. In order to keep these policies relevant, we are

looking for a few members (who have a knack for filing and sorting) who would meet 1-3 time/year to review the policies and keep this handbook up to date.

We are also looking for members to review our ministry shares. The CRCNA has recently changed how the ministry shares program works. In response, it seems prudent to review the changes and re-evaluate what our participating in the program could look like. If either of these tasks interests you and you would like to help out, please email **Alesha H.**

Urgent Need: We have an urgent need for accommodations for a 1-bedroom apartment in Kitchener/Waterloo. If you are able to help or know of a place that might be available please contact the Deacons or send an email to office@ccrc.on.ca.

Faith Formation Activity: This Advent we are happy to share two opportunities for faith formation. For families with kids through grade school, we have shared a devotional called "Do Not Be Afraid" which includes five devotions, coloring pages, crafts, and an Advent calendar of activities you can do together each day. Check your email to download and print these devotions - they were sent to the whole congregation earlier last week. For older families and individuals, we encourage you to sign-up for the daily devotional reflections on the book of Micah, called "He Will Be Our Peace". These devotions are put together by World Renew, Resonate Global Missions, and CRC Office of Social Justice, and include reflections from CRC ministries around the world! Head over to justice.crcna.org/advent to sign-up to have these devotions emailed directly to you.

Book Club | Didn't make it to book club but still interested in reading about the pandemic from a Christian perspective? **Free copies** are

available at the information desk of N.T. Wright's "God & the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath."

Coffee Break | Meets this week with the virtual small group meeting on Monday night via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. We are studying the book of Hebrews and the book *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin. In person meetings at the church have been temporarily suspended until further notice. If you have any questions, please connect Irene F or Kirstin B.

Consistory | meeting this week Tuesday at 7:30 pm via Zoom.

Impact | Gr 9-12 folks, come on out for Friday, December 11 at 7:00 pm to the church for some Christmas fun!

Knifty Knitters | will not be meeting for the remainder of the year.

Cadets | will not be meeting in the month of December.

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

Give Joy this Advent with World Renew | World Renew's 2020-2021 Gift Catalogue helps people, families, and communities experience more of the joy that God intends for them. Find a special gift that helps someone in need during the COVID-19 outbreak. View the online catalogue at worldrenew.ca/gifts or call the church office to set up a time to pick up a hard copy.

Devotions for a Blue Christmas - In the midst of hard times, find strength and encouragement through God's word. A set of fourteen encouraging Today devotions reassure you that even during the darkest of Christmas seasons, you're not alone. Receive this free email series

and ebook when you subscribe to Today at todaydevotional.com/bluechristmas

Talk is Cheap: Antiracism is Work | Free Webinar Event | Join the CRCNA Office of Race Relations and the Office of Social Justice for an engaging discussion on the work of Antiracism. We'll talk about the challenge of changing attitudes and moving antiracist talk into antiracism actions. Register here: <https://loom.ly/Rib3ozA>.

Calvin's Symposium on Worship 2021 | You are warmly invited to register now for a *free online learning experience* held January 6-26, 2021, on key topics and themes in worship and the Christian life at the Calvin Symposium on Worship. This online experience is designed for all kinds of learners: students, faculty, artists, musicians, pastors, preachers, scholars, teachers, worship leaders and planners, and all interested worshipers around the world. Go to <https://worship.calvin.edu/symposium/> to learn more and to register for this free online event!

January Series | Coming this January for the 34th year, Calvin University presents the 2021 January Series – the award winning free liberal arts education delivered in 15 weekly, lunchtime lectures. This year the series begins on January 6 and continues weekdays through January 26 from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. EST with topics ranging from the future of the Supreme Court, climate change, the era of intelligent technology, civil discourse, racial tensions, the arts as a healing balm and so much more by top experts in their fields. And access to the award-winning lecture series will be easier than ever. This year, due to the realities of COVID-19, the January Series will have a completely virtual audience. Attendees will be able to watch and listen to the 15 presentations on their own personal devices, in their own locations, or gather at small remote sites available across the

continent. For more information about the speakers, topics, remote sites and to register for personal viewing, visit our website at www.calvin.edu/january

MISCELLANEOUS

Can you help? | Since the global outbreak of the novel coronavirus, the Canadian Blood Services has welcomed greater than usual numbers of first-time blood donors in a very short period. Blood donors are needed every single day (Blood products have a shelf-life), and they would like to remind our those in K-W region about the importance blood donation have on patients in our community. Without blood donors, they would not be able to supply hospitals with the blood products they need to help patients undergoing cancer treatment, surgeries, people with blood disorders and many other reasons. Please contact <https://www.blood.ca/en> for locations and booking times.

RESOURCES

Instructions for giving to Community CRC

As we begin to meet again, the following donation methods are currently in place:

1. PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) – is the preferred method of giving.
2. You can mail your donations to the Church. Please do NOT mail cash. The mailbox is checked regularly.
3. **You can drop off your donation in our drop-off mailslot located on the outside of the kitchen door.**
4. If you are registered to attend the Church service, you may bring in your donation.

Notes:

- You may use your vouchers (only for second collections) - please mark clearly which cause they are intended for.
 - We are not issuing vouchers at this time.
5. ****NEW**** you can now donate using the Bridge App (or this link): <https://crc.etadvance.com/churches/communitiy-crc-kitchener/donate>
- You can self-direct your donations using your credit card (note there is a 3% admin fee taken by the processing company) or direct to your bank account (no admin fee). At this time, we offer opportunity to donate to the Church Budget, our Capital Fund, or the work of the Deacons locally (benevolence).
 - Note: if you use the link, the only payment option is credit card. The Bank account option is only available through the Bridge App.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy W.

