



Today is the third 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 Dec 16: Candlelight Service

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

Fri, Dec 25 – Christmas Day (recorded service)

Sun, Dec 27 – 11,13,5,2

The Candlelight service of December 23rd is full. There is still some room on the 16th but sign up soon to avoid disappointment! Households who are planning to attend our Candlelight services should **bring their own lighter to light their candles** so we can continue to maintain physical distancing throughout the service. Please do not bring matchbooks and ensure that the lighter is only handled by adults.

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 Angel's Message to Mary"

10:00am Worship Service
Worship Participants this week:
Preacher: Pastor Amanda Bakale

GATHERING AND GREETING

- Gathering Song** "Majesty In a Manger"
- 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** "Glory (Let There Be Peace)"

CANDLE LIGHTING

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Song:

Offering Announcement

"Christ Be Our Light"

- 1) Ministries of Community Christian Reformed Church
- 2) Laurentian Hills Christian School

Prayers of the People

Children's Worship Story

Children's Song

"Joy to the World"

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Song of Preparation

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

Sermon

Prayer of Application

"Saviour of the Nations Come"

Luke 1:26-45

"The Fear of The Unexpected"

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- * **Song of Response** "Comfort, Comfort, Now My People"
- The Teaching**
- The Institution**
- The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**
- The Invitation**
- The Distribution of the Elements**
- Instrumental Music** "Eat this Bread"

Song of Response:

“Hark the Glad Sound” vs. 1,2,3

* **God’s Parting Blessing**

* **Doxology**

"Hark the Glad Sound” vs. 4

COMMUNITY CRC CHURCH FAMILY

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

Our condolences are extended to **Heidi V and her family** (2) with the passing away of her step-mother, **Clara K** this past Wednesday, December 9, 2020 from cancer. Clara was also a younger sister to **Ralph W** (14), an aunt to **Jacque WB** (1) and great-aunt to **Megan W** (11) and **Amy F** (11).

Please continue to keep **Catherine J** (11) in your prayers as test results confirmed 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.

Last Wednesday we gathered for a Blue Christmas service of remembrance and prayer. Many people who attended shared prayers of remembrance and lament. Please continue to pray for all those who grieve during this season.

A Note of Thanks |

Dear Congregation,

Thank you for the love and support you have shown to us by way of a well-worded card or by attending the funeral for Gine. We have felt surrounded by our church community even during this time of physical distancing. We have read and re-read your cards and appreciated the kind words of remembrance spoken to us about Gine. We are very thankful that we were able to have a meaningful celebration of life for her.

Henk (1), **Alyanne, David, and Willem** (2)

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?



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 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

Today 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.

Upcoming Baptism Sundays: Are you looking to be baptized or to have your child baptized? Baptism Sundays are scheduled for January 24, 2021 and February 28, 2021. If you are interested in one of these dates, please contact Pastor Amanda or Pastor Betsy.

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 **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.

Special Offerings: For the two remaining Wednesday evening services in December (Dec 16, and 23), the deacons have decided to hold a **special offering for Missionary Support**. This will allow CCRC to fulfill our financial commitment to the Ps and the Ts for this year.

Next week our offering is for the House of Friendship. House of Friendship is a Waterloo Region-based non-profit organization that provides food, housing, addiction treatment and neighbourhood support to individuals and families.

Upcoming Offerings:

Dec 23 pm | Missionary Support
Dec 25 am | World Renew
Dec 27 am | Food Bank of Waterloo Region

Offerings Received as at December 6, 2020:

December 6	\$	10,895
Year to Date	\$	664,910
Budgeted 2020 Total Contributions	\$	885,705
Second Offerings		
Calvin University	\$	224
Food Bank of Waterloo Region	\$	510
Ray of Hope	\$	500
Benevolence	\$	199
House of Friendship	\$	135
Chaplaincy and Care Ministry	\$	60
Laurentian Hills Christian School	\$	63
Daystar Ministries – Ps	\$	50
Missionary Support	\$	50
Waterloo Campus Ministry	\$	50
Disability Concerns	\$	50
World Renew – World Hunger	\$	20

COMMUNITY CRC NEWS

Sermon Discussion TODAY | All students in Grades 4-6 are invited to join a virtual sermon discussion on Zoom today, December 13, 2020 at 11:30 am. We will talk about the sermon and questions about faith and life that you have been wondering about.

Join a Deepening Faith Cluster | Sign up by Sunday, January 3. What's a deepening faith cluster? It is a small group for folks new to CCRC, thinking about profession of faith, recently made profession of faith, or who simply have some questions about God, faith, and church. Each cluster will be made up of 4-6 people, led by Pastor Amanda or Pastor Betsy, and will meet 5-6 times in January/February at a time and place (Zoom or in-person) that works best for the group. Interested? Let Pastor Amanda know by Sunday, January 3.

TODAY Devotional and THE BANNER | The January/February 2021 Today Devotionals and the December 2020 Banner are available! Pick up a copy at the Information Centre if you are attending a worship service on Sunday or you can drop by this week for curbside pickup. Material will be set out from 9:30 – 3:00 pm from Monday-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!

Administrative Council will meet this Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at **7:00 pm** via Zoom.

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 the office.

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.

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.

At-home Faith Formation Tip | The Practice of Hospitality: Ponder this quote from Mother Teresa: “This Christmas when Christ comes, will he find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God’s own concern.” How might you and your family love and serve others during this season?

(For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit crcna.org/FaithFormation/Practices.)

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> for December 15, 2020 from 12-1 pm.

Online Worship Learning | You are warmly invited to register for a free online learning experience held January 6-26, 2021, on key themes in worship and the Christian life. Register for free at worship.calvin.edu/symposium. This experience is designed for all kinds of learners: students, artists, musicians, pastors, scholars, teachers, worship leaders and planners, and all worshipers around the globe. Sponsored by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and the Center for Excellence in Preaching

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/community-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.