



Today is the last 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!" Today's children's worship story is "Jesus is Born". There is no children's worship story for the next two weeks.

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

Wed, Dec 23 – Candlelight Service

Fri, Dec 25 – Christmas Day (recorded service)

Sun, Dec 27 – Christmastide 11,13,5,2

Fri, Jan 1 – New Year's Day Service

The Candlelight service of December 23rd is full. 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.

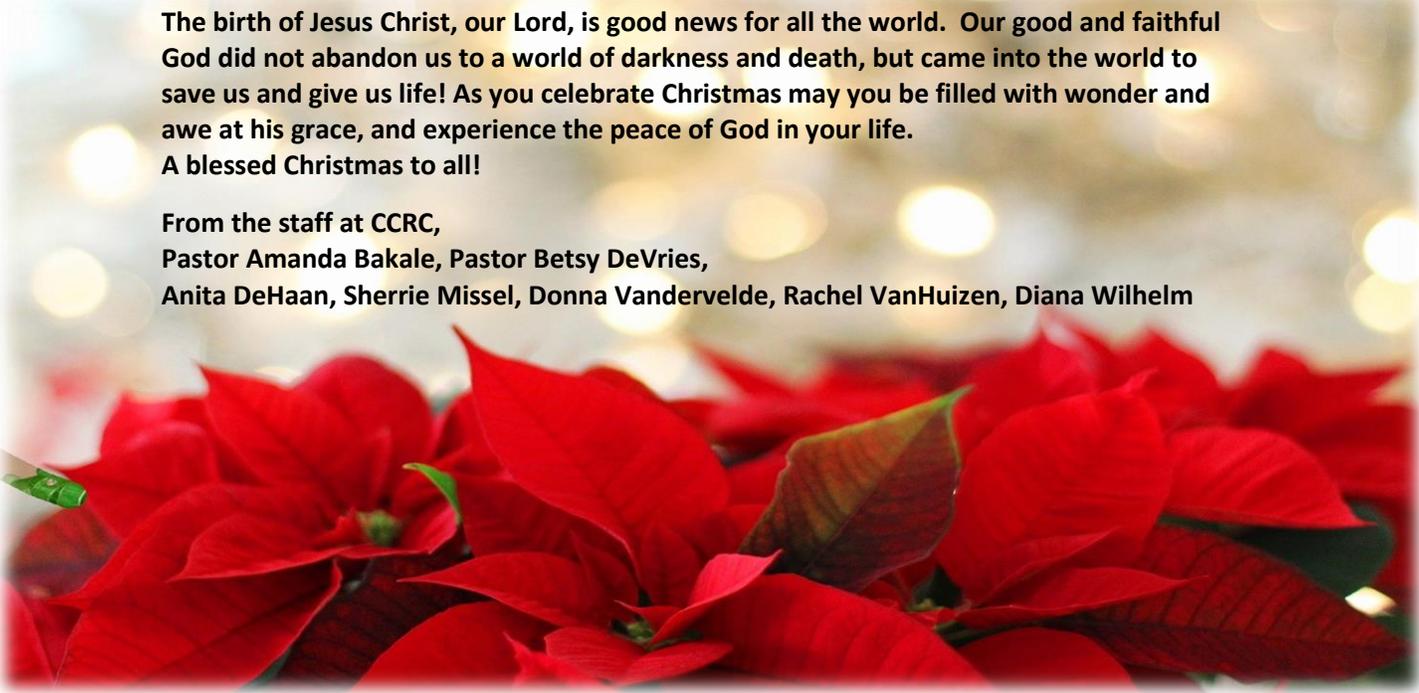
Our services will continue to be live streamed, so those who are not comfortable returning or who are unable to return can continue to worship with us. If there are issues with the live stream a seamless video will be posted to the CCRC website (Vimeo) after the service on Sunday afternoon. Be sure to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

Christmas Day | Our Christmas Day service will be pre-recorded and shared on our church website by 10 AM on Christmas morning (<https://www.ccrcc.on.ca/church-at-home>). You can watch the service at any time from your own home in the same way you would normally watch our Sunday services. This recorded service will feature some favorite Christmas hymns, a Candlelight reading, and a message on Isaiah 40. In a time when we have come to fear more and more bad news, this Christmas will be a proclamation of God's good news, "Here is your God!"

10:00am Worship Service
Worship Participants this week:
Preacher: Pastor Betsy DeVries

GATHERING AND GREETING

Gathering Song	"What a Glorious Night"
Welcome and Announcements	
* Call to Worship (based on Psalm 130:5-7, 27:1)	<u>Leader:</u> 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. <u>ALL:</u> There is no darkness with you, O Lord. <u>Leader:</u> 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? <u>ALL:</u> There is no darkness with you, O Lord. <u>Leader:</u> Hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love and redemption. <u>ALL:</u> Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
* God's Greeting	
* Songs of Praise	"Sing to the King", "Angels We Have Heard on High"
CANDLE LIGHTING	
Lighting of the Advent Candle	
Song:	"Christ Be Our Light"
Children's Worship Story	
Children's Song	"Away in a Manger"
PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD	
Song of Preparation	"Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)"
Prayer for Illumination	
Scripture Reading	Matthew 1: 18-25
Sermon	"The Fear of a Ruined Reputation"
Prayer of Application	
* Song of Response	"Immanuel (From the Squalor of a Borrowed Stable)"
Prayers of the People	
Offering Announcement	1) Ministries of Community Christian Reformed Church 2) House of Friendship
* God's Parting Blessing	
* Doxology	"Glory to God"



The birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord, is good news for all the world. Our good and faithful God did not abandon us to a world of darkness and death, but came into the world to save us and give us life! As you celebrate Christmas may you be filled with wonder and awe at his grace, and experience the peace of God in your life.
A blessed Christmas to all!

From the staff at CCRC,
Pastor Amanda Bakale, Pastor Betsy DeVries,
Anita DeHaan, Sherrie Missel, Donna Vandervelde, Rachel VanHuizen, Diana Wilhelm

COMMUNITY CRC CHURCH FAMILY

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

Please keep **Holland Christian Homes** in your prayers as they are dealing with a significant COVID outbreak in Faith Manor. Pray for residents, staff and their families as they deal with the realities this outbreak brings.

The Youth Ministries Team invites you all to join in a big "Thanks be to God!" for **Carita S** (4) and her many years of faithful service as an Impact leader. For over a decade, Carita has loved and served our youth with passion and a no-nonsense approach. As she steps away to pursue other ways of serving, we praise God for her and may God bless her with good memories of her time in Impact!

My dear brothers and sisters,
thank you so much for the ways you have taken care of me after the passing of my grandmother. Not being able to be with my family in Michigan was so hard, but being surrounded by my church

family was such a gift and a blessing. Thank you for the cards and calls and flowers.

With my love and appreciation,
Pastor Amanda (8)

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/>.



STAFF INFORMATION

The church office will be closed from December 24 – December 27. It will reopen for three days the following week (Mon, Dec 28 – Wed, Dec 30) but some work will be done from our homes. If you need to drop into the church for any reason, please call ahead to ensure there is someone is in the building.

Our Bookkeeper, **Diana W**, will be on vacation starting Thursday, December 24. She will be back in the office on Tuesday, January 5.

UPCOMING SERVICES

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
Sun Dec 27	10 am	Pastor Amanda Bakale Christmastide
Fri Jan 1	10 am	Pastor Amanda Bakale New Year's Day
Sun Jan 3	10 am	Pastor Betsy DeVries

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 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.

Special Offerings: This Wednesday's Candlelight Service is the final scheduled offering for Missionary Support this year. **This past week we received newsletters from both the Ps and the Ts. These updates were emailed out on Friday, December 18, 2020.** Please take some time to read through these newsletters so you can be informed about our missionaries and read their specific prayer requests.

The offering on Christmas Day is for World Renew. *"At World Renew, we join with the world's families to change the story of hunger, poverty, and illness. For nearly 60 years, hundreds of thousands of people have shared in this calling: staff, local partners, global communities, and people like you. Every day, people like you give in response to a disaster, offer monthly support to Free a Family™ from poverty, or travel with our volunteer teams to help renew hope firsthand. Together, we change stories, and those stories change the world."*
www.worldrenew.ca

Next Week our offering is for the Food Bank of Waterloo Region. *"There is no 'typical' food bank recipient and there is no single reason for people to need assistance. Food insecurity is a complex problem and the solutions are complicated. Thanks to a caring community, our network is able to provide nourishment and connection to other essential supports so those who need our help can move their lives forward."*

Upcoming Offerings:

Jan 1 am | Faith's Orphan's Fund
 Jan 3 am | Beginnings
 Jan 10 am | Therefore Go Ministries
 (Formerly Youth Unlimited)

Offerings Received as at December 13, 2020:

December 13	\$	22,663
Year to Date	\$	687,573
Budgeted 2020 Total Contributions	\$	885,705
Second Offerings		
Laurentian Hills Christian School	\$	682
Missionary Support	\$	529
World Renew	\$	905
Food Bank of Waterloo Region	\$	375
Calvin Seminary	\$	185
House of Friendship	\$	100
Benevolence Fund	\$	132
Chaplaincy and Care Ministry	\$	20
Woodland Christian High School	\$	20
Waterloo Campus Ministry	\$	20

COMMUNITY CRC NEWS

Important update regarding church emails:

This week's church bulletin was sent out using a new email program. There have been a few issues with the church email lately and this is an attempt to minimize some of the issues. Please let Anita or Donna know if you **do not receive an email with the bulletin this week.** Also, if there is a different email that you use please let us know so that we can keep you updated with news and announcements from the church. You can also update your information on The Bridge App. The office will be notified if a change is made and we will update your contact information on our end. Your patience is appreciated as changes are being made in the church office. Thank you!

Anita D and Donna V

Budget Envelopes | This year the Budget envelopes are being distributed via your Community Deacon. You should be contacted by your deacon within the next two weeks to receive them. If you have any questions or you would like envelopes and currently do not receive them, please contact Karen V.

Mission Challenge: Neighbourliness | What does hospitality look like during a global pandemic especially with the winter season approaching? How can we spread Christ's love to our neighbours while maintaining social-distancing measures? The Mission Strategy Team has been pondering these questions and would like to issue a challenge along with Consistory to the congregation and Communities for the month of January:

1. Each family pick one neighbour;
2. Commit to pray for that neighbour for the month of January;
3. Reach out to that neighbour via outdoor conversation or a simple note/card in their mailbox and see how you can be hospitable to them or simply letting them know you care;
4. Share your stories/ideas with your Communities.

Let's try to share the light of Christ through simple, everyday acts of being a good neighbour.

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 drop by this week for curbside pickup. The material will be set out from Monday – Wednesday (9:30 am -12 noon only).

Library materials | can be returned to the blue returns bin at the information desk on Sunday mornings. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Carling L.

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, please email **Alesha H.**

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

Groundwork: Focus On Jesus - There's no doubt Christmas comes with mixed feelings this year, but no matter what might be missing or different, focus on Jesus. Study Colossians 1:3-23 with Groundwork and listen as the Apostle Paul reminds us why our hope is strongest when we fix our gaze on Christ and the promises of reconciliation his birth brings. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Town Hall for Christian Reformed Canadians | The recording of the virtual Town Hall led by Chris B from Chisel Consulting, and Canadian Ministries Director Darren Roorda on November 21st is available for you to view at www.network.crcna.org/ministry-canada This recording is shared discussion and feedback about compliance with the Canadian Revenue Agency and the work of the Canadian Restructuring Team.

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

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/communty-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.