

# Streetsville United Church Christmas Tidings 2020

## Oh Holy Night!

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### CALENDAR

#### Sunday Services (online)

#### Christmas Services

#### Advent Sundays (online)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 29<sup>th</sup>** Holy Communion  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 6<sup>th</sup>** White Gift Service  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 13<sup>th</sup>** Senior Choir Christmas Worship  
**4<sup>th</sup> Dec 20<sup>th</sup>** Christmas Celebration Service

#### Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve Celebration

**Online** Pageant Service

**Online** Communion Service

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Sat. Feb 20, 2021 – Annual Coldest Night of the Year Walk

The Streetsville United Faith in Action Team is planning to take to the streets and walk in support of The DAM.

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### MINISTER'S MESSAGE

#### O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Our Advent season has begun and it seems as though the entire world is waiting in desperate need for hope and joy. As we make our way through this difficult pandemic time it is such a blessing to have this church season to prepare our hearts for the inbreaking of God into our hurting world. It is my hope that this Advent you will be able to find moments to step back from the stress and anxiety brought from the uncertainty in which we find ourselves living, to reconnect with the hope and joy of this season. I hope that you will find time to remember that it was into a world filled with uncertainty and fear that Jesus was born, that God came to be among us in this new way. And Jesus will come again, into this uncertain time and into our anxious hearts.

Although we won't be gathering as we would like, in person with hugs and children's skits and singing, we will still gather as church family from the safety of our homes this season. Together, but apart, we will share communion, light the Advent candles, experience a virtual Christmas pageant and celebrate the birth of Jesus on a silent night. In our Bible Study we will look at other People Who Dream as we explore the Christmas story and compare themes with our own times, and we will share quiet space for worship.

Advent reminds us that change is not only possible, but coming. Advent reminds us that God has a dream for our world, that hope, peace, joy and love lift us into new life. Advent reminds us that no matter where the road ahead leads, we are not alone.

This year, let us make an effort to pause in these anxious days and listen for the stillness of God's Spirit waiting to be born into our lives. Let us prepare our hearts to welcome the Christ Child and rejoice that we are not alone!

May the blessings of this season be upon you and your family as we embark upon our journey to Bethlehem, together.

Rev. Jessica



## STREETSVILLE UNITED WOMEN (UCW)

As we all experience the unusual and very strange times of living in Covid we are also thankful for the ability to connect through technology. The Friendship Circle and Sunshine Circle Units both met by Zoom in November and will have to do the same again in December. Although we had hoped to gather and celebrate the Christmas story at the crèche, we will now do it safely from our own homes and think creatively to make the gathering festive as we celebrate the Christmas message. Our new unit has met for an outdoor walk and we look forward to hearing more of their activities as they connect and support each other.

The UCW supports two local charities each Christmas, **The Open Door** Christian Centre at Square One and the **Elizabeth Fry Society** in Brampton. Donations of gift cards (Presidents Choice, Tim Hortons, Shoppers Drug, Dollarama, and Walmart) will be accepted by December 6. Although this is an activity initiated by the UCW, we encourage any of our church family to donate if possible, especially in these pandemic times. Donations can be dropped off in the church mailbox.

Thank you for your support of all UCW activities through the year. We extend our best wishes to each of you for a safe and blessed Christmas season.

## Book Sale

We no longer have the book sale on the stage in the auditorium. As a result we no longer accept donations of books.

## Church Food Pantry

The food pantry at the Church is not operating any longer due to Covid-19 and limited volunteers. All existing food was distributed to The Open Door and other places in need. There is a new plan for helping those in need in Streetsville. More information to come involving a new partnered program early in 2021.



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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Sunday School Activities** - We are continuing to include Advent and Christmas activities for Sunday School students. Some will be in the weekly bulletins and others will be available by email request at [cechair@streetsvilleunited.ca](mailto:cechair@streetsvilleunited.ca). The information will be taken from the current Curriculum, the United Church of Canada and from Rev. Jessica. We hope that you and your family will try some of these activities and check out the website as well.



## White Gift Sunday

**White Gift Service Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020** - Due to the current circumstances, this year's White Gift Sunday will look very different. The Sunday School will be continuing to support the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal but it will be in the form of a gift card or cash. If you and your family are interested in contributing, please put a gift card or cash in an envelope, label what is inside and place it in the secure mail box at the front sliding doors. Please do this by Tuesday December 1st. Thank you in advance for your thoughtfulness. Rev. Jessica will give thanks for the gifts on Sunday December 6th, the second Sunday in Advent.

Cathy Hitchcock      Christian Education Chair



## Facebook Connections with Rev. Jessica

As we find ourselves in yet another lockdown I am trying to find new ways to reach out to you, so that we might get to know one another a little better. I have started a Facebook account where I will be posting videos with Facebook live and I invite you to take a look. You can find my account here <https://www.facebook.com/jessica.mccrae.169/>.



## Christmas Tithes and Offerings

Normally we attach a special Christmas Giving envelope to the Tidings, but nothing about this year is normal! Tidings is being sent electronically, so the next best thing is a link to our givings page:

**<https://www.streetsvilleunited.ca/2020/03/donation-options/>**

Whichever method of giving you choose, please make a note on the envelope, cheque or e-transfer comment that it is directed to Christmas. Thank you as always for your ongoing support.

**For donations directed to the Senior Choir**, please use the email [choir@streetsvilleunited.ca](mailto:choir@streetsvilleunited.ca) for an e-transfer or note on envelopes or cheques.

## Covenanting Service

I am so grateful for the beautiful covenanting service we had together on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. I want to extend my thank you to everyone who participated and everyone who tuned in to watch on line. I want to say thank you for the beautiful flowers and also a very big thank you to Wayne, Wally and Ken on our tech team for all their amazing work recording music, livestreaming the service and creating the slides (and everything else that goes on behind the scenes!). I'm very excited about our ministry together. And although the road ahead in these pandemic days is uncertain and it is harder to get to know one another right now, hope is ours. Because the God who created us, who chose to be among us is here with us still, and will guide us forward as we do this ministry together. Rev. Jessica



**Rev.  
Jessica in  
her new  
home  
sanctuary!**

**Beautiful  
flowers  
from the  
UCW!**



## Pastoral Care

Fear not! With the increased restrictions due to COVID, some of us are no longer able to get out for groceries and other essential items. Your church family can help!

If you need someone to shop for your groceries, please let Kelly at the church office, or Bev Mathew, know and arrangements can be made to match you up with one of our friendly volunteer shoppers.

## Coat Drive

Due to the success of our coat drive in February, we are planning to run another drive early next year so keep your warm, used coats for our next drive.

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## MN&P (Ministry, Nominating and Personnel)

As we come to the end of 2020, it's important to look back at some of our activities and accomplishments in what was a challenging year for sure. We have much to be thankful for.

The Ministry & Personnel Committee would like to start by thanking our church leadership. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that Streetsville United continues to provide worship and fellowship for our congregation and community during the pandemic. Thank you to the Re-opening Team for providing guidance and leadership when we re-opened the sanctuary to worship.

If we look back at just this summer, we are thankful for the many people who made it possible to provide weekly sermon recordings (including Communion!), weekly virtual coffee hours, and the lovely socially-distanced send-off party for Reverend John, Adelaide and Julie. Even Rev. John's last service was live-streamed from the sanctuary. Thank you to John Shillingberg and the Senior Choir for the amazing virtual anthems.

A huge thank you to Jim Courtney for leading the website update in 2019/2020. The new site has made it much easier to keep in touch during the pandemic. And, not too be forgotten, thank you to Kelly in the office for holding down the ship. We couldn't have done any of this without her.

As we look to 2021, Ministry & Personnel would like to thank Committee Chairs and members for agreeing to stay in place – to repeat this year of service – and treat 2020 as a transition year.

We have begun the search for a new Music Director. Thank you to the Search Team, made up of Karen Gravelsins, Dee Hopkins, Wayne Moss, and Kim Perrin. The job description is available from the website here:

<https://www.streetsvilleunited.ca/2020/11/director-of-music-job-description/>

John Shillingberg leaves behind large shoes to fill! Thank you to John for 20+ years of dedicated service, spent creatively leading the choir and uplifting the congregation. John's last day is December 27<sup>th</sup> and we wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

During these strange times, we will continue to find new and different ways to be Church. If you haven't already, please join us online for worship, virtual coffee, or a study group. Visit the SUC website for more information and if you'd like to get involved, please contact the church office.

From the Ministry & Personnel Committee, we wish you a very merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. We hope to see you online and in person in 2021.



*Happy New Year 2021  
with the hope for many  
blessings in the year to  
come!*





## Nativity Scene at the Church

Church services are back to being virtual for a while, but we felt that the community still needed to see more of our physical presence. As such Cathy & Doug Hitchcock, and Katie & I, have once again put up the Crèche on the front lawn. There was lots of interest from people walking by.



Most of the figures light up, and are on a timer, so drive by and see it day or night – a short outing for the kids.



Bill Powell



**Faith makes all things possible; Hope makes all things work and Love makes all things beautiful. May you have all the three for this Christmas.**

**Merry Christmas!**

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## Our First Ever Virtual Christmas Pageant!

I need your help! Covid has disrupted all of our usual routines and many of our traditions, but we are learning to adapt. This year I need your help to create the first ever Streetsville UC Virtual Christmas Pageant. This will be a safe and fun way to involve the whole family in the Christmas story and it will be available to view starting on Christmas Eve day from the safety and comfort of your own homes. And share the link with family far away!

I will narrate the story in a way that is accessible for all ages and I need your help to bring the story to life with your photos. Please dress up as your favourite characters in the Christmas story and take photos in your home, your yard, the park, at a farm (only if you know the farmer!), in the community, anywhere at all. Use your imagination and be creative!

We need photos of:

Mary alone

Mary with an Angel

Mary and Joseph

Someone standing with a sign saying "This Way to Bethlehem"

Innkeeper standing with a sign saying "No Room at the Inn"

Baby Jesus in the Manger (or in Mary's arms)

Animals (any animals you think were at, or would have liked to have been at, the manger)

Angels

Shepherds

Wise Men (and Women!)

So pull out your Bibles, read the Christmas story and let's get creative and have some fun! (Psst! Participation is not limited to children. Or to members of SUC. If you are new to our church via livestreaming we'd love to see you too!)

By submitting photos you agree to have the photos used in our Virtual Pageant and broadcast publicly. Names will not be included with any photos.

Please submit photos to [Jessica.mccrae@streetsvilleunitedchurch.ca](mailto:Jessica.mccrae@streetsvilleunitedchurch.ca) by Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>.



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S**  
**PAGEANT**

