

## Upcoming Services

### Third Sunday of Advent

#### Mid-Week Eucharist

Wednesday, December 16th at 10:00 a.m.

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>

- *Lessons and Carols* at 10:00 a.m.
- *Tree Lighting Event* at 4:30 and 5:30 p.m.

### Blue Christmas

Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

*Live Streamed on Facebook*

*A quiet, contemplative service as an alternative to more traditional gatherings to care for those who are sad or struggling at this time of year.*

### Mid-Week Eucharist

Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

### Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 & 7:00 p.m.

*The 4:00 p.m. service will be livestreamed on Facebook.*

### Christmas Day

Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup> - No In-Person Service

*Morning Prayer Live via Facebook at 9:30 a.m.*

### Christmas 1

Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

*Live Streamed on Facebook at 10:00 a.m.*

### No Mid-Week Eucharist

Wednesday December 30<sup>th</sup>

### Epiphany

Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

*In-Person and Livestreamed on Facebook*

### Mid - Week Eucharist

Wednesday, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

# Christmas Messages 2020



St. Mark's Anglican Church  
155 Memorial Drive  
Brantford, Ontario

## From the Interim Minister's Desk

*Isaiah 9:6 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour as I humbly offer these words to you as we near Christmas Day. One of my favourite modern Christmas songs is *Mary, Did You Know?* I don't know if it is because it captures my long ago personal wonder at the miracle of my babies. When babies are born, we don't know who are they or who they will be. We are given the honour to raise them and walk along side them in this life - through good times and challenging times (remember the terrible twos and teenaged years?). Particularly I remember my first born son being born wide eyed and alert - a serious baby who could display a big smile. I wondered what his life would be like. I wondered if he would be happy. I wondered if I had the wherewithal to be a good mother. Imagine that young maid Mary - who said yes to God - who agreed to be the Theotokos - the Bearer of God. Did she wonder then or as Jesus grew any of the things we hear in the song?

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?  
This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will calm the storm with his hand?  
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?  
When you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God  
Mary, did you know?  
The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the lamb!  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy is Heaven's perfect Lamb?  
That sleeping child you're holding is the great I AM.*

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The wonder of this song haunts me every time I hear it. I pray that this Christmas, this very strange Christmas in the middle of a pandemic, can be a time that we wonder anew at the miracle of the birth of Christ. May it be a time of renewing our faith and finding blessings of light in the darkness. May it be a time that we remember that we also are called in a sense to be the Bearer of Christ out there in the world as our God calls us again and again.

My husband +Barry and I wish you and yours a beautiful, unique, faith filled, healthy Christmas.

Many blessings,

**Janet+**

## Christmas Offering Envelopes

In this mail out, you will find an envelope for a special Christmas offering. Envelopes can be given as a part of collection during worship, or for those who wish the envelopes can be left in the locked mailbox on the front of the building. Also, be aware that if you wish to donate to the Brantford Food Bank, the Rector's Discretionary fund or the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, you may do so through your church envelope simply by indicating on the front.



*Please Note: As per pandemic regulations, those planning to attend church services on Wednesdays and Sundays must register through the church office. Registration for Christmas Eve services will begin on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.*

## From Our Wardens

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord"*  
*Luke 2:10*

It is interesting and worth noting that in the Christmas story the angel is sent four times to tell someone, "Do not be afraid". Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and finally the shepherds, all listen to an angel proclaim to them, "Fear not!" 2020 has been a fearful year for all of us. After a normal, start we had to shut our doors to worship for the very first time. We were able to switch to an online worship along with thousands of fellow Christians across the country. Summer brought the hope of reopening and the joy of being able to see one another, although in a somewhat limited way. As Covid numbers surge, we are again faced with the possibility of not worshipping in person.

As well this year, we said good-bye Rev. Tim after nearly seven years. While we grieve this loss, we welcome the talents and calm strength of Janet Griffith-Clarke, our interim.

Many people have asked us in the past several months, "How are we doing financially"? The support received throughout

the year has meant we have been able to maintain our staff and the building. Our receipts are down but within our budget for the year. Your continued generosity is a testament to God working in you to fulfill needs. Our monthly food drive is also evidence of this. Your response to the food bank and assorted other charities, has been overwhelming. St. Mark's truly is a giving congregation and we look forward to 2021.

This Christmas season, with so much to possibly fear, we can take strength and hope from the realization that God loves us, He is with us and He will never leave us or forsake us. As the year draws to a close, the Wardens would like to thank all of you and wish you a very blessed Christmas holiday.

Yours in Christ,

**Christine, Neil and Sharon**

### Christmas Angels

Although many of us will not be attending Christmas Eve services, our angel tradition will continue. Angels will be available outside the church by the back door on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:30 - 11:30 or by contacting Anne Walker (walker.anne@rogers.com or 519-756-3685) to arrange for pick up or delivery. Those attending the tree lighting will receive one at that time.