



# St John's United Church, Fall River

## Advent & Christmas 2024

Christmas seems to have arrived a little early this year. The Christmas lights on our street, the displays in the stores, the Christmas songs on the radio all seem to have arrived a little earlier. In this year of war and hate and political uncertainty, it seems the world needs a little Christmas. And so, as the Advent season officially begins, I greet you with the joy and peace Christ brings to our hearts and homes at Christmas.

This time of year is a beautiful reminder of God's love made shown to us in the birth of Jesus Christ. In the quietness of a stable in Bethlehem, hope entered the world. The light of that first Christmas night continues to shine, calling us to share its warmth with all around us.

As your minister, I am deeply grateful for the ways you embody Christ's love throughout the year. Whether it's through acts of kindness, faithful service, or heartfelt prayer, you are a reflection of God's grace in this community. This year, our congregations have experienced both challenge and celebration, but through it all, the love of God has bound us together and now we will soon be one amalgamated congregation.

As we gather with family and friends during this holy season, let us remember those who may be struggling—whether through loss, loneliness, or hardship. May we be the hands and feet of Christ, reaching out to offer compassion, support, and hope.

I encourage you to take time to reflect on the meaning of Emmanuel—God with us. In the busyness of the season, pause to marvel at the gift of God's presence in our lives. Let the message of Christmas fill your hearts with renewed faith and inspire you to live out the good news every day.

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts and homes this Christmas, and may the New Year bring abundant blessings for you and your loved ones.

In Christ's love, Rev Sally

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<b>Financial Update</b>	Actual to Oct 31, 2024	Budgeted to Oct 31, 2024
INCOME-		
Donations- members	93,693	98,333
Donations- UCW	17,000	10,000
Other- rentals, funerals, memorial, etc	19,376	25,833
Fundraising	1,964	5,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>132,033</b>	<b>139,166</b>
TOTAL EXPENSES-	176,041	179,148
Includes all staff salaries and benefits, building expenses and program costs		
LOSS	-44,008	-39,982
CASH FROM RESTRICTED INVESTMENT	30,016	30,016
YEAR TO DATE NET LOSS	-13,992	-9,966

As you can see, our income is lower than expected so far this year. If you are a regular giver, thank you for your support! And if you are able, please prayerfully consider making a special Christmas donation to help us meet our expenses. If you are an occasional giver, thank you for your support! In addition to a special Christmas donation, we invite you to prayerfully consider becoming a regular donor through PAR, envelopes, or e-transfer. You will receive a charitable tax receipt which will reduce your income tax, as well as assist in the continuation of our church's amazing children and youth programming, outreach activities, and worship services. Dawn Myer, our incredible treasurer, can answer any questions you might have. She can be reached at [treasurer@sjucfr.ca](mailto:treasurer@sjucfr.ca). Thank you!

Here are some of our upcoming events. Please join us!

- Sun Dec 1     11 am Advent 1 Worship and Communion  
                  4-5:30 pm Family Advent Celebration
- Tues Dec 3     5:30 pm UCW Potluck and Candlelight Service
- Wed Dec 4     7:30 pm Celebration of Lights Tree Lighting
- Sun Dec 8     3-6 pm Walk Through Bethlehem: the (mostly) indoor edition
- Sun Dec 15    11 am Sunday School Christmas Pageant
- Tues Dec 24   4 pm Christmas Eve Worship for Young Children and their Families
- Tues Dec 24   8 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight and Carols Service
- Sun Jan 5     11 am Epiphany Sunday Worship and Communion
- Sun Jan 5     3 pm Youth and Seniors Epiphany Café

Christmas blessings and best wishes for health, harmony, and hope for the coming year, from the staff of St. John's United Church, now an affirming congregation. See you soon!