

December 2019



From Barnabas' desk

It gives us a great joy that the beautiful season of Advent and Christmas is upon us. Advent means *Coming*. Christ coming in human history. It is not a past event but an event in which Christ is being born again and again. In this season we hear different kinds of sounds. In the midst of these sounds Advent brings Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The first sound of this season is music. Christmas carols play principle role in the celebration of this season. It lifts our hearts and inspires our spirits. The Christmas carols have a message and it directs our thoughts to one eternal God who loved the world so much that he came among us and embraced us in love. In this season we make joyful noise and come in the presence of God.

The second sound of this season is the sound of voices. In the market place we hear different kinds of sounds that attract the customers. The voices we hear in the church during Advent are those of children: Small Voices of Grace and Spirit of Grace and Chancel choir singing Christmas carols. We also hear voices speaking from the scripture. We hear the ancient prophets speak of the arrival of Messiah. We hear the laughter of Elizabeth and the joy of Mary. We hear the voices of the inn keeper and the shepherds and the cry of a baby born in a manger. These voices and sounds points to the faith women and men cherished in every age that at the appointed time God sent Jesus to express his love toward us.

The third sound of the season is silence. It is a time to ponder the significance of Christ's birth in our lives. "Behold a saviour is born". There is more reasons to consider silence as a sound to be

observed during advent. It is being silent we are able to hear the cry of the less fortunate ones. We hear the hurts of children, women and men, the victims of abuse, violence and war, crime, poverty and cruelty.

While these sounds of this season are a joyous preparation for the celebration of Christmas, it is a reminder to celebrate the coming of God in Jesus as a saving event. Christ event brings good will to all humanity and it must become the very spirit of our lives always. As we get ready for the celebration of Christmas, may this season bring joy and happiness in a very special way. Christ is coming to make himself at home with us. I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a blessed New Year

*Mohandas Barnabas*

### *Advent and Christmas Season Worship Services*

**Sunday, December 1 – 10:30 am, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent ~ "Hope"**

**Sunday, December 8 - 10:30 am, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent ~ "Peace"**

**Sunday, December 15 - 10:30 am the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent ~ "Joy"**

**Sunday, December 15 ~ Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata**

**Sunday, December 15 ~ White Gift Christmas Sunday**

**Wednesday, December 18 ~ 7:00 pm a Christmas Solace Service (A candle light service for those who grieve a loss)**

**Sunday, December 22 ~ 10:30 am, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent ~ "Love"**

**Tuesday, December 24 ~ 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candle Light family service/Holy Communion**

**Sunday, December 29 ~ 10:30 am - Regular Service**

**Sunday, January 5, 2020 ~ 10:30 am ~ Holy Communion Service**

## Quota International of Weyburn 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival of Carols

**Date:** Sunday, December 1, 2019

**Place:** Grace United Church, Weyburn

**Time:** Community Singing  
2:00 pm and 7:00 pm

- Collection taken at door

**The Ten Thousand Villages Fair Trade Craft and Christmas Sale** will be held on Saturday, December 7, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Grace United Church. Coffee, hot apple cider, and goodies will be available all day. Everyone is welcome. Volunteers are needed Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. to help unpack and set up the crafts, then again at 4:00 p.m. to pack up. Volunteers are also needed to serve refreshments. Please contact Margaret at 306-842-0189 or Rod at 306-848-0527 or the Church Office if you are able to help. Ten Thousand Villages supports Artisans from developing countries ~ *Thank you*

The **UCW Christmas Bake Sale** will be held on Saturday, December 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in conjunction with the Ten Thousand Villages Craft Sale. We are asking for your help in providing a variety of baking such as buns, pies, dainties, or cookies. We would appreciate having the baking placed on trays and wrapped but we will also be happy to accept baking in pans or containers. Trays will be available at the Church Office during the week. **Please bring baking to the Church between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>.** Your support is very much appreciated. All proceeds will go towards projects within the church. *Thank-you.*

### **CHANCEL CHOIR**

Having a great choir to lead our music each Sunday is truly a blessing! Each Thursday evening, Chancel Choir meets to practice and each Sunday they provide musical leadership within the service! Each week they rehearse the



hymns and prepare two anthems that they hope will add to the message of the morning. This is a very dedicated group of individuals who, all year, give selflessly of their time and talents! They are a family within a family and they care for and take care of each other and all those around them!

Chancel Choir will be singing at the Quota Carol Festival on December 1. They are the only adult church choir in the festival--Grace United Rocks! As well, this group is busy preparing a Christmas cantata entitled "What Child is This". It is a beautiful cantata by one of our favourite composers – Joel Raney. The choir will be presenting this Christmas story through song during the church service on December 15.

Thank you to all the dedicated members of Chancel Choir. Thank you for your music and for your commitment to Grace! Each of you is a blessing and we are so fortunate you chose to spend your time sharing the gift of song!

### **Small Voices of Grace**

This year's Small Voices group is made up of 25 enthusiastic singers. We get together every Thursday for 45 fun-filled minutes! We start with a story and snack and then we play a game that focuses on movement and interaction with each other. The rest of the time is spent singing and having more fun. The children range in age from 3 to 9 years old. The variety of ages means "older" kids get to help younger ones, and the younger kids learn from and look up to the older ones. We are really lucky to have helpers join us each week. These include Lila Anderson, Ryann Fleck, Pressley Barber, and Isabelle Cugnet. They are truly invaluable to the working of the group.

Small Voices have had a busy fall performing. They have sung at church once a month and they were a big hit on the Communion stage in October. They will be performing three songs in the Carol Festival on

December 1 and they will all be part of the Christmas play "Three Wee Kings" on December 22.

The dedication that has been evident in Small Voices this year is amazing! Thank you to all the parents and grandparents for your commitment to getting these young singers to practice every week. The children are such a valuable part of our Grace family and they absolutely shine every time they are able to share their music with others, They truly bring smiles to all!



### Spirit of Grace

This year's Spirit of Grace singers have had an exciting fall season! There are 12 girls in this group ranging in age from 9 to 12. They are continuing to improve their singing skills each week and they are once again enjoying the camaraderie that comes with being together and sharing the love of music.

These girls meet every Sunday afternoon. They all lead very busy lives but they remain committed to their music and to their group. They are doing some challenging choreography and are enjoying songs with 2 and 3 part harmonies.

Spirit of Grace had a fantastic showing at Communion. Each time they take to a stage, they show incredible energy and stage presence and audiences love them! They love to perform Broadway and Disney songs, but they also learn many contemporary Christian pieces. They have shared their music at Sunday services as well, and they are excited to be the leaders in the Christmas play "Three Wee Kings" which will be presented to the congregation on December 22. Also, Spirit of Grace will be performing at Quota Carol Festival on December 1 and will be sharing their music at some nursing homes during the Christmas Season.

Early in the New Year, watch for an announcement of

a musical which will be presented by Spirit of Grace!  
You won't want to miss it!

The girls are back together and are so excited! This group consists of 11 girls who just love to sing and perform. They meet once a week to make music and have fun together. Spirit of Grace performs a great deal outside of the church walls and they are getting quite a name for themselves. The girls have a lot of fun getting together to make memorable performances. This year, they are starting off with a Communion performance and will also be doing a musical in the New Year!



### **ADOPT A FAMILY**

Once again the Social Action and Outreach Committee have adopted a family from Salvation Army. We are shopping for three little girls, age 12, 10, 8 and their brother who is 7. We also need some presents for their mom. I have a special request this year in that if you want to buy something for the children could you do stocking stuffers or possibly a monetary gift that could be used to purchase what they have listed? This would help us ensure that they get some of what they requested.

For gifts of cash, please put it in an envelope. Mark the envelope with your name and "for Gifts" and leave it at the Church Office.

Of course the family will need Christmas dinner so there is a sign up sheet for items that you may want to donate. Please have all money, gifts and items, to the Church by Sunday, December 15, 2019.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your generosity.

Wishing you all the health and happiness that Christmas can bring.



**Salvation Army Kettle Campaign** is the major fundraiser of the year for all of the services that the Salvation Army offers to the

community of Weyburn. Please consider sharing just two hours of your time at a kettle! Call Helen Orsted at 306-842-6485 or 861-4599. Campaign runs from Friday, November 28<sup>th</sup> and runs through Tuesday, December 24.

### **White Gift Christmas Sunday, December 15**

Give your gift items wrapped in white tissue paper. *Food items are encouraged.* All donations will be delivered to the Salvation Army. You can also give a Wholesale Club or Co-op gift card in a white envelope written "White Gift" for Christmas hamper



**VARIATIONS** invites you to their Winter Concert .... **"Seasons of Song"**! The concert will follow the seasons and will feature the music of spring time, summer, fall, winter and of course ~ Christmas!

**Advance tickets are available at Old Fashion Foods** for \$10.00 or you can purchase at the door for \$12.00.

Performances are at Grace United Church: **Saturday, December 7** at 7:00 p.m. and **Sunday, December 8** at 2:00 p.m.

### **Happy Hour**

Grace United Church is taking one Sunday a month to volunteer to be a part of the **Community Hot Meal Happy Hour** that is held at Knox Fellowship Hall. Our Sunday is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month from November until March. **Volunteers are greatly appreciated!**



### **Memorial Christmas Tree**

Ornaments for the Memorial Christmas Tree may now be purchased through the Church Office until Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. For \$5.00, an ornament will

be placed on the tree in memory of a loved one. All proceeds will towards the Memorial Fund.

**Men's Breakfast** has started once again. Breakfast is the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 am.

Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Breakfast

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>



The **Fellowship Committee** was very active in hosting 8 Pot Luck dinners in 2019, plus a September Newcomers Welcome Lunch. We want to thank the Congregation for helping make this important social time such a success. The Turkey Supper enabled us to make a generous donation to the general coffers of the Church. Again this could not have been done without the support of the Congregation who helped work at the supper, donated delicious food and of course came and ate. We were able to use the leftover food too, as a donation to the Mental Health Association and also provided the Congregation with a "LeftOver Turkey" Potluck that was enjoyed by many in November. As chair, I would like to thank my Committee members who work so hard at making these events successful:

Financial Report Turkey Supper

Turkey Supper net-\$5670

Silent Action net-\$1288

Leftover Pot Luck-\$400

Total Donation to General Funds = \$7337
--

## “Twas the Night Before Christmas” A Fundraising Xmas Project



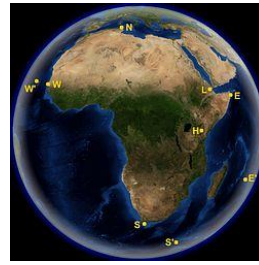
A sample of this brightly illustrated version of a classic Christmas tale, hard covered book, can be seen at the church office! **To place your order, contact the church office.** Books are priced at \$15.00 each (cost price \$6.00). Proceeds of the book sales will go towards our church funds. All orders must be in by noon Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>.  
*Thank you, Dave Rennie*

**The Pastoral Care Committee is in dire need of volunteers** to visit the residents in the care homes 1 to 2 hours a month from January to June and from September to November, any time you choose. For more information, please contact the Church Office at 306-842-5131 or Nancy Styles at 306-861-6784. If you are able to give your valuable time to this wonderful ministry it will be greatly appreciated.

### Yearend Donations

Anyone wishing to make a yearend donation for the 2019 taxation year **must** have their donations at the Church Office by Monday, December 30, 2019. **Deposits need to be made in 2019 to count for 2019!** All donations received **after** this date will go towards the **2020 taxation year**. Please contact the Church Office at 306-842-5131 if there are any questions. *Thank you*

**The Mission of Grace United Church is to help people discover and nurture their Christian Faith, within a loving and inclusive community, which serves God daily in the world.**



Please consider supporting the **Stephen Lewis Foundation** this Christmas. The Foundation continues the fight against AIDS in Africa. Cheques should be made payable to “Grace United Church” with a note on the memo line for the “Stephen Lewis Foundation”. You may place your donation in the offering plate using your offering envelopes, or drop it off at the Church Office. For more information please visit their website

# gifts with vision

**Gift Alternatives from the United Church of Canada:** If you would like to give or receive something different than the usual types of gifts, check out the **Gifts with Vision catalogue**. The funds go directly to the partners to avoid any potential shipping and handling. The catalogues can be found in the Gathering Place

**PAR:** Please consider giving to the church by Pre-Authorized Remittance (or PAR). It is convenient for the contributor as you don't need to write cheques every week, and no need to worry about donations while you are away. By providing regular donations means increased overall financial stability for your church. There are forms to fill out on the bulletin board. Please remember you need to provide a void cheque.



*Susan Lawrence,  
Co-ordinator*

