

good news

Riverdale Baptist Church



Rev Michelle Porco

December 2021/January 2022



The final Operation Christmas Child Shoebox count for RBC was 249, and for the Yukon it was 638!

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

November is my favourite month because it means it is time to fill, collect and ship Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes!

Rising COVID cases and restrictions led to the cancellation of the Shoebox Extravaganza originally planned for November 13th. Although I was incredibly disappointed, I know God has a reason and I look forward to planning an even bigger and more extravagant event for next year.

The Youth Group was able to shop and take items that were donated, and fill 35 boxes! A Small Group packed 27 boxes a few nights later. Boxes came in from outlying communities and I am incredibly grateful for the generosity of Yukoners.

Although we did not meet my goal of 1000 boxes for the Yukon, RBC collected 249 boxes which exceeded our goal! I am so thankful for all those from RBC who have contributed boxes, toys, volunteer hours, snacks, and encouragement!

Thank you for supporting this ministry of sending Gospel opportunities to children around the world. Please pray for the children who will be receiving these boxes, that they will come to know that Jesus loves them!

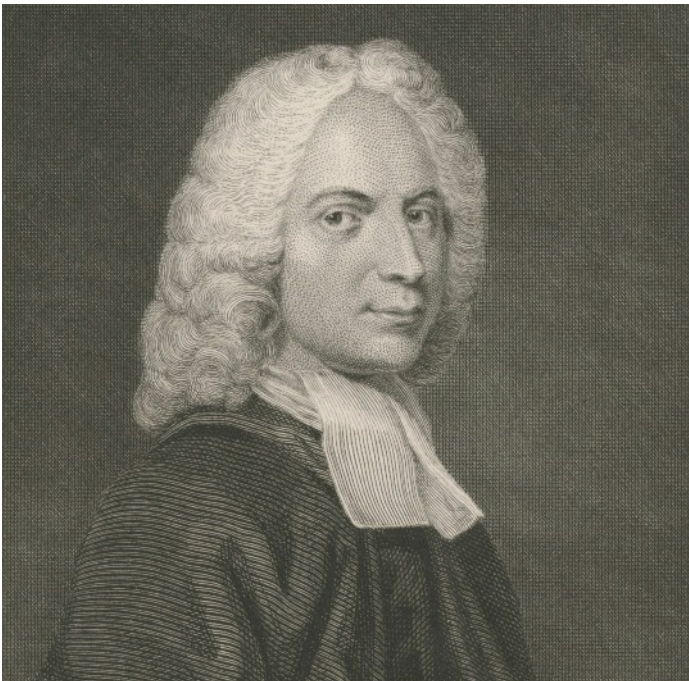
With a grateful heart,
Jenny Baker

Below: Prepping boxes and organizing items to be packed



The tower of Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes with a signpost indicating the countries that these boxes will be travelling to.





Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Watts wrote about 600 hymns during his life and is called the “Father of English Hymnody”. He led the movement of change from the Psalm singing of his youth to the “human composed hymns” in the years following. Such well-known hymns as “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”; “Jesus Shall Reign”; “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”; “I Sing the Mighty Power of God”; etc. are part of his output.

Watts grew up and lived in an age in which many geniuses were born: Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, to name a few musicians. George Frederick Handel was one musical genius who lived in

“*Joy to the World*’ is undoubtedly the most significant hymn we, as contemporary Christians, can sing. It encapsulates the heart and soul of our Christianity.”

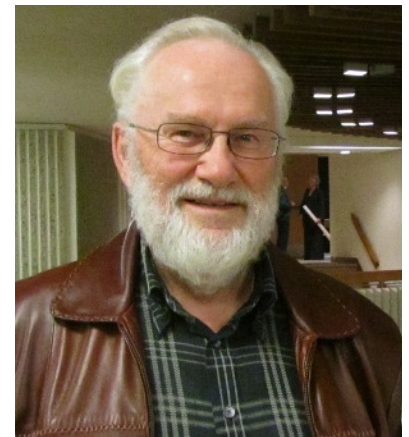
London at the same time as Isaac Watts. It is surmised they knew each other.

In any case, today’s tune attached to this wonderful hymn “Joy to the World” (written in 1719) is derived from some of the music of Handel’s “Messiah”. It was compiled by Lowell Mason at a much later date (1839) and the tune was given the name “Antioch”. Whatever tune was used in 1719 is not known.

Isaac Watts was a diminutive man, standing about 5 feet tall, and slight. His start into writing hymns came one Sunday, after a service when he complained to his father about the tediousness of the Psalm singing. His father then challenged him with: “Well then, young man, why don’t you give us something better to sing?” In this way, English Hymnody was born.

Through the combined talents of a frail English literary genius of the eighteenth century, a German-born, musical giant from the same period, and a nineteenth century American choir director and educator, another great hymn was born that has since found a permanent place in the pages of our hymnals for use during every Advent season!

Henry Klassen



4 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
5 Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.
7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together
9 Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

Psalm 98:4-9 KJV

Behind the Song: *Joy to the World*

Joy To The World

Isaac Watts; George Frederick Handel; Lowell Mason

For the past ten years, I have written background information to dozens upon dozens of hymns and hymn tunes. In all that time, I have not written about the one hymn that totally expresses the salvation story of all Christians, Today I do so.

"*Joy to the World*" is undoubtedly the most significant hymn we, as contemporary Christians, can sing. It encapsulates the heart and soul of our Christianity. It gives full expression to

the words of the angel, "*Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of Great Joy that will be for all the people*" (Luke 2:10), although Watts uses a different Scripture text for his background (Psalm 98, last part):

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise and rejoice and sing praise. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity." (Psalm 98 v.4-9, edited KJV).

It is interesting to note that it contains no references to shepherds, angelic choruses, or wise men and is totally focused on the Advent of Christ.

So often we think that the primary lesson of God's salvation is "love." However, a strong case can be made that the primary lesson is "joy". Watts originally, in 1719, entitled this hymn "*The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom*", expressing the joy contained in the angel's message. It speaks to the joy that is brought to humanity by proclaiming a Saviour, Who will bring salvation, available to all.

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, Hampshire, England in 1674 and was brought up in the home of a committed religious nonconformist; his father, also Isaac Watts, had been incarcerated twice for his views. Watts had a classical education at King Edward VI School, Southampton, learning Latin, Greek, French and Hebrew.

Watts displayed a propensity for rhyme from an early age. He was once asked why he had his eyes open during prayers, to which he responded:

A little mouse for want of stairs
ran up a rope to say its prayers.
He received corporal punishment for this,
to which he cried:
O father, father, pity take
And I will no more verses make.

Watts could not attend Oxford or Cambridge because he was a nonconformist and these universities were restricted to Anglicans—as were government positions at the time. He went to the Dissenting Academy at Stoke Newington in 1690. Much of the remainder of his life centred on that village, which is now part of Inner London.

Table Talk: *The Neighbourhood Project*



Have you longed to share the good news of Jesus and God's Kingdom with your neighbours but don't know how? Have you struggled to integrate your faith with your work and share your faith with your colleagues? Do you desire to find creative and purposeful ways to be the presence of Jesus in your neighbourhood?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then I invite you to join a team from RBC who will learn to discern what God is up to in our neighbourhoods and join Him in His work.

Our team will learn how to engage our neighbours with the good news of Jesus. Our team will learn how to discern the

presence and power of the Holy Spirit at work in our workplace and neighbourhoods. Our team will learn to identify God's activity around us.

Our team will meet from January to June. We will participate in practices and exercises that help us learn to be with our neighbours and God, listen to our neighbours, discern what God is doing, join God in His work in the neighbourhood, and reflect and make decisions. God is abundantly creative and good, and His work is also abundantly creative and good.

Since September, I have been participating in The Neighbourhood Project with a group of pastors from around Canada and USA. Cam Roxburgh and Alan Roxburgh have led this group of pastors in conversations about God's creativity and agency, relationships and risks, the incarnation and the Holy Spirit, the church and community.

During the Fall, I have practiced pausing so I can pay attention to the work of the Spirit. I have sat with a passage from Scripture together with my peers to listen to the Triune God. I have shared stories of God at work in Whitehorse and at Rivendale Baptist Church. I have listened to stories of God at work in urban centres, rural communities, farming families, and churches from all traditions. These practices have informed my understanding of how the church community joins God in His work of redeeming, restoring, and reconciling all things in Christ.

Please reach out to me (michelleporco@rbchurch.ca) for more information, or to join this team!

Pastor Michelle

NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT

Important Message From RBC Leadership

Format of Sunday Morning Service through December 31

After prayer and consideration, the Church leadership of Deacons and Elders has decided to continue holding our Sunday Services on Zoom until the end of December. Our decision is based on the following:

- RBC will adhere to the requirements as set out under the State of Emergency declared by the Yukon government on November 8th to December 3rd to limit the spread of COVID through mandatory masking, limits on gatherings, including checking proof of vaccination for those in attendance. *(Note: the latter restriction has been lifted)*
- The maximum number of vaccinated persons in the church building is 25 which is far less than the normal attending numbers each Sunday morning and we want to maximize opportunities for everyone to participate in worship services and other RBC activities. *(Note: this restriction has been lifted for faith gatherings)*
- Recommendations from RBC's COVID Committee include continuing the user log for everyone coming into the church building and having clear guidelines about masking and vaccine requirements.
- The current state of COVID in the Yukon is dynamic and we will need to be ready and adapt in the coming weeks.
- There are many recognized advantages of doing online (Zoom) services in the Advent Season.

Advantages of Zoom

- Ability to participate and interact during the online live service, and not only watch.
- Supports recent sermon series about the idea that we are all ministers, part of a participating community where everyone gives and the encourages everyone to be a worship leader.
- Offers countless possibilities to create a community of worshippers on Sunday mornings and beyond.
- We can:
 - see each other,
 - use the chat function to send notes of encouragement to each other or prayer requests, participate in communion together,
 - create Advent wreaths or nativity scenes in our homes together
 - bring our noisemakers and make noise together (muted!)
 - light candles together
 - break out into rooms to discuss questions during the sermon
 - join a breakout room for prayer after service
 - invite the congregation to respond corporately to questions (God, you are my hope because...)
- Everyone can be involved and engaged (even kids!).

The online approach may be new to you – if you need assistance to set it up or understand how it works, please let us know and we'll organize a call or a visit to make sure you can join in each week. Service leaders and the tech team will try to make it smoother and easier as we collectively gain experience having corporate worship in this way.

Direct Comments to Deacons and Elders

Comments or concerns about these measures should be directed to the Deacons Board or the Elders Board, and not to Pastor Michelle or RoseMarie, our Church Administrator.

Before the end of December, RBC leadership will re-evaluate the format and decide whether and for how long we want to continue our Sunday COVID in the Yukon. This decision will be based on:

- the state of COVID in the Yukon
- feedback from you on how the services have been on ZOOM.
- any new priorities and policies put in effect by the Government of the Yukon.
- any new priorities or policies put into effect by the RBC Leadership between now and the end of December 2021.

The practicalities of how each group and RBC activity will adapt to these changes are currently being discussed and will be emailed to members of the RBC Family as we clarify our responsibilities. During these next few weeks, we encourage you to not give up meeting together and adhere to the health guidelines to protect our most vulnerable in the community. We will continue to serve each other in every way we can find! We ask everyone in the RBC Family to pray about these changes and work together to adapt to the changes that COVID has brought to our territory.



We were asked to help out at a weekly Reading Program in a nearby village. Children need to learn how to read before they can pass Grade 1 here, but with schools closed for nearly 2 years due to COVID, the school system will be overwhelmed with kids who can't read, when it eventually does open, if we don't get a head start!



After 2 months, Peter is finally starting to make some new friends at the Nutrition program!



This 7-year-old boy weighs as much as a 2.5-year-old. Katie is connecting with him and his family bi-weekly for nutrition info.



This little girl has cleft lip/palate. She will hopefully be receiving surgery next year, and connecting with a neurologist..



Joining the ladies to learn how to make tortillas at the Nutrition Program. In Spanish, "tortillar" is a verb that literally means "to tortilla/to make tortillas".

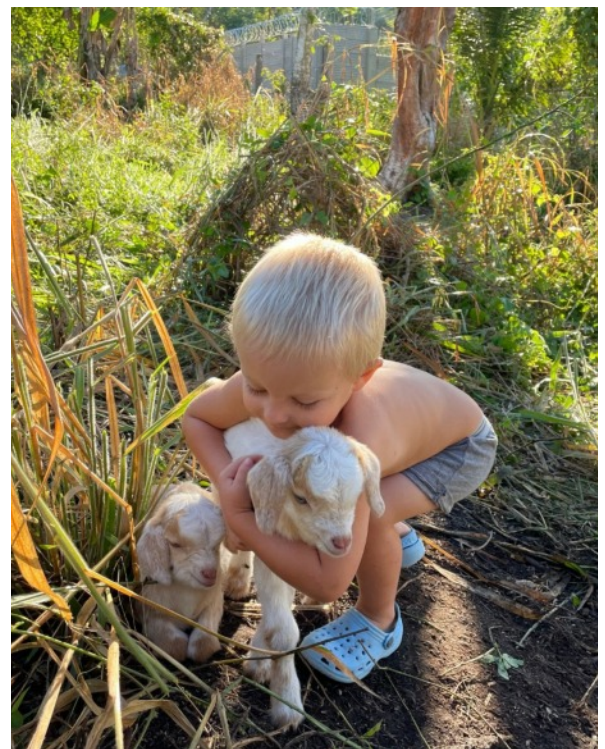
Kevin & Katie: Picture Life in Guatemala



We moved into our new home in mid-October. It is so lovely to have our own place to settle in!



We have welcomed Nala (family pet/security dog) into our home, as well as Tamale (the kitten) and Bob (the turtle).



We are currently goat-sitting for a friend (a favour for him and a way to de-jungle our backyard). On the first day, our herd increased from 14 to 16!

Church News

Let us
WORSHIP
Together
On Zoom

Sunday School and Worship Services will be held on Zoom until the end of December, due to the COVID restrictions and our desire to create a worshipping community.

You are encouraged to invite friends, family, neighbours and pass along the link to others in the church family who may not receive weekly emails. Contact church office for weekly link (contact@rbchurch.ca).

Zoom Worship Service

From now through to December 19th

10:20 am - Open for welcome and chatting

10:30 am - 12:00 pm - Worship Service

Zoom Sunday School

From now through to December 19th

9:45 - 10:15 am

If you are able to help in any way with the technical aspects of Zoom, please contact the church office at contact@rbchurch.ca



*Eilidh Hartshorne
is pleased to announce
the arrival of her little brother,
Colin James Hartshorne
on October 5, 2021
weighing 8 lbs 3 oz*

*Congratulations to proud parents,
Nicole and Brent Hartshorne*

Good News is a publication of Riverdale Baptist Church

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Contact: goodnewsrbc2021@gmail.com

Church Structure

RBC has adopted a new church structure. Under this structure are Elders and Directors (previously known as Deacons).

Elders are responsible to oversee ministries of the church, Benevolent Fund, and congregational care, among other things. Directors are responsible for building, money and administration, primarily.

There are also Ministry Leaders and Heads, overseeing various church ministries. They each have a team of ministry volunteers.

ELDERS

Our sermon series has been focusing on the 3 M's: ministers, ministry, and mission.

Like every believer, the Elders of the church are ministers. The Elders work in a team ministry. The ministry of the Elders is to oversee the whole church by shepherding and taking care of the congrega-

tion, praying with and for the congregation, equipping you in your ministry, overseeing the Benevolent Fund, and other matters.

Elders typically serve in this ministry for a minimum of 3 years. To serve as an Elder, a person doesn't need to be old – as the pastor, I am an Elder but I don't consider myself senior or old! According to Scripture, an Elder is above reproach, sober-minded, respectable, hospitable, gentle and not violent, not

quarrelsome, upright, and self-controlled.

The Elders are asking that the congregation provide nominations for more Elders. After having served several years, Esther will serve in a different ministry. As part of the transition, she would like to mentor a new Elder. You can either write your nomination on a piece of paper and give it to an Elder or you can email your nominations to: david@rbchurch.ca.



*Dave Anderson
Elder*



*Esther Austring
Elder*



*Darlene Dimsdale
Elder*



*Dave Wilkie
Elder*

“It's a blessing to hear and witness stories of how God is working through the ministries we are partnering with, even throughout the design and construction process.”

MTW has a church and outreach centre in a village in the province where children gather to learn English, play sports, and learn about Jesus. One of their students is Sreyheng, who is an engineering student and an intern at the EMI office. Sreyheng admits she first went to the church to learn English but then noticed the gentle and gracious nature of the Christians. She accepted Christ while still in highschool, received a scholarship for university in the city, and now lives in a dormitory that one of the MTW church plants oversees.

MTW supports these local churches and their pastors who are teaching and caring for young believers. I've been encouraged by her growing maturity and courage to talk about Jesus with her friends and classmates. We've also been able to partner with MTW by designing and helping them oversee the construction of two of their church plants with dormitories.

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6



Nivo

Nivo

A few years ago, we were introduced to Nivo, a Cambodian architect who runs his own construction company. Nivo grew up in an orphanage along the coast where he became a Christian. We see Nivo regularly as he's often building projects we've designed for other ministries/churches. Nivo has a heart to use his skills in leading construction crews to bless ministries by being a trustworthy, honest, and generous contractor while also caring for the souls of his construction crews.

Near the completion of one of the MTW churches we designed and Nivo built, he organized a little completion party and asked Reatrey (another Cambodian architect who works with EMI) to come share his testimony and the Gospel message with his crews.

It's a blessing to hear and witness stories of how God is working through the ministries we are partnering with, even throughout the design and construction process.

Colin & Kathleen Wassenaar



Partnering With Others in Cambodia

We love the opportunities God has provided for us to partner with other missionaries and organizations here in Cambodia. We would like to tell you about some of these people, what amazing work they are doing, and how we are able to support each other.

Jono and Brave Home

I (Colin) met Jono about 4 years ago at a men's breakfast. At that time, we were both still quite new to Cambodia and figuring out what our work would look like. I remember Jono saying that his desire was to help men coming out of rehab. God made his dream a reality, and now Jono leads the Brave Home here in Phnom Penh. It is a house for guys coming out of places like Teen Challenge to have a stable place to live, help finding a job, and encouragement in their walk with Christ.

Jono is the one who connected me to Phuen as an apprentice. Jono has been a huge source of encouragement for me as I work alongside my apprentices, and he pours his heart generously into the lives of the guys he serves at the Brave Home. Praise God for Jono!



Kathleen & Colin

Christian and Missionary Alliance

A few years ago, I was introduced to the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) here in Cambodia through the sale of a moto. I learned about their Bible School here in Phnom Penh called Antioch. Since then, we have partnered with each other in multiple ways.

My first apprentice, Saleh, came from a CMA rehab home just outside the city. The founders of that home, Jeff and Heather, have been a great source of wisdom and encouragement over the years! I have sold a number of motos to staff of the Antioch school.

Just a few days ago, Loukkru Sarom, one of the Cambodian teachers at Antioch, asked if Dai Ku Moto could come set up a mobile service station at the school to do maintenance on their motos. We ended up spending the whole morning there, servicing 8 different motos to keep them running and in good shape. I am so thankful to be able to serve the school with their moto repair needs, and I equally have been blessed by their encouragement for my ministry too!

Mission to the World

I (Kathleen) was first introduced to a ministry organization called Mission to the World (MTW) when I met my friend Emily in our first year in Cambodia. She and the team are focused on church planting.



Jono, Colin, Phuen

ELDERS

THE DIRECTORS

Directors are responsible for building, money and administration, primarily.



*Pastor Michelle Porco
Pastor, Elder*



*Katy Mead
Moderator*



*John-Eric Petersson
Vice-Moderator (6-month*



*Nathan Aasman
Church Clerk*

Ministry Leaders

Ministry Leaders oversee various church ministries. They each have a team of ministry volunteers.



*Gina Anderson
Children's Ministry*



*Hannah Harms
Youth Ministry*



*Risa Kennedy
Small Groups Ministry*



*Connie Penner
Music Ministry*

THANK YOU

A special thank you to David Eikelboom (Deacon of Admin), Dave and Gina Anderson (Deacons of Outreach), and John-Eric Petersson (Moderator), who have stepped down from their positions after serving more than one term. Your RBC family thanks you for your commitment and leadership.



WHY CHURCH MATTERS

This short series is in response to a September Sunday when the question was asked: Why Does Church Matter? It was cause for reflection and discussion for many. Some were interested in sharing their thoughts, and so this series began: Why Church Matters.

Why does church matter? I think I'm going to copy Pastor Michelle's strategy in summarizing her teaching recently.

To me, church matters because of 3 Rs: Remind, Renew, and Rejoice.

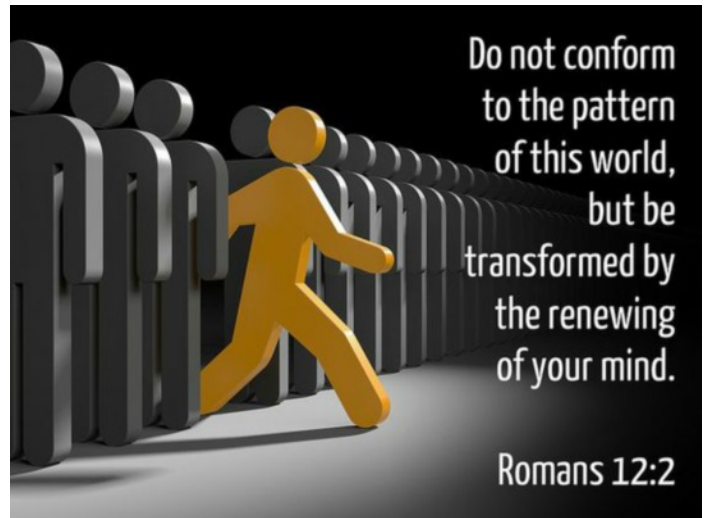
Remind

Being part of the church reminds me who I really am. We have different roles in our lives: leader, advocator, organizer, helper, teacher/student, doctor/patient, father/mother, son/daughter, grandpa/grandma, uncle/aunt, so on and so forth.

Roles are not identities though. From the time someone decides to follow Jesus and to give their life to Him, their core identity should be a child of God no matter what roles they have. I didn't realize this when I became a Christian. Yet now I gradually come to understand my identity, because my church keeps reminding me of that – thank God!

Church keeps reminding me that I am:

- a chosen people
- a royal priesthood
- a holy nation
- God's special possession
- able to declare the praises of Him who called me out of darkness into His wonderful light
- loved and precious regardless what others think I am in my roles
- called and chosen for a purpose which is above what I am after in this world.



I know I might still become lost or unsure about my core identity, depending on the circumstances around me, but the church will remind me who I am.

Renew

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

We have to admit that we are living in world full of brokenness and failures. Often, we are tempted to adopt all sorts of wrong ideas. It would be hard to realize whether or not we go astray unless we have a benchmark. Church is the benchmark. It prevents me from going the wrong direction or at the wrong speed. Whenever I am brought back to the right track, it's a renewal of my mind.

I do enjoy sermons most during a Sunday service, but it wasn't so at the beginning. Sermons seemed very long and dry and hard to follow in the early years for me; verses have become more and more attractive to me. I positively (if not naively) think that my mind was renewed a bit. It is adjusted



The transformation of RBC's basement into a pirate zone for Sunday School is amazing! Once COVID restrictions have lifted and Sunday School resumes in person, the theme will continue.



Sunday School Moves to Zoom Sessions



Sunday School started with a bang on October 4th. The theme for the month was SPACE, and Jody Eikelboom helped the kids learn that:

- they can spend time with God
- people can help their faith grow
- they can share God's story, and
- they can serve others.

We had about 12-16 kids in Sunday School each week. It was lovely to see so many young ones singing worship songs together and learning more about who God is.

November saw us leave SPACE behind and head to the tropics to sail the high seas with the PIRATES. Sarah Aasman taught a great lesson on how to be wise by not choosing sides, and the kids started on an epic Treasure Hunt that would teach them their monthly memory verse.

But, when COVID guidelines changed, we had to adjust our plans since we could no longer meet together. So we decided to pause the PIRATES theme and continue with it once we can meet in person again so as not to waste the fun decor/activities already set up downstairs.

For our 3 Sundays in November, we used Zoom to deliver the BIG and SMALL theme from Grow Curriculum. For the first week, we had 14 households log on to the Zoom call. We were able to split up into Jr. Youth and Sunday School for a portion of the time and then come back together for the lesson. Kids will learn that:

- they are small but God is big
- God listens to their big feelings, and
- God sees the big picture.

Continuing with Zoom in December, we'll do the Christmas unit called Joy to the World. Joanne Petersson will help teach the kids that Jesus came to bring great news, joy and peace to the world. We are also hoping to have the Sunday School

kids prepare a special gift for the congregation to help us celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour.

Since having to switch to Zoom, Margriet Aasman came up with lovely crafts to go into a craft kit for each Sunday School child. With the help of Dana, Esther, Jenny and Elizabeth, these craft kits were assembled and delivered to each kid's home.

Others have helped to make the return to Sunday School a success - Risa keeps it fun, Caleigh pitches in and Emily Baker had a cameo appearance as Captain Solly. We hope to be able to return to meeting together in the New Year.

We are in need of teachers to deliver the lessons via Zoom on December 12 and December 19. We're also looking for someone who can:

- help us create a video clip, and
- manage the Zoom sessions (no teaching, just screen sharing, doing breakout rooms, etc).

If you're available to help with any of these, please don't be shy – reach out anytime.

Gina Anderson
Ministry Leader, Sunday School



“Remind, renew, and rejoice.
Can we do it on our own with-
out church? I doubt it.”

and upgraded to absorb the truth and wisdom from God more easily than before.

Staying with church renews our minds, indefinitely.

Rejoice

Lastly, church matters to me because I know I can rejoice in it. Yes, at church we can be misunderstood, ignored, disrespected, maligned – have all sorts of hurts. Wherever human relationship exists, so do hurts. In another sense, the closer we get to each other, the more vulnerable we could be.

As the community that has a mix of our relationships with Jesus and our relationships with each other, church can produce positive as well as negative feelings. However, I believe that while we hold onto each other, we should not forget to turn our eyes to Jesus because He is our source of love and joy, and He tells us to rejoice again and again.

I know I can rejoice in church as long as Jesus is the head of it.

Remind, renew, and rejoice. Can we do it on our own without church? I doubt it. I am an only child because of the Only-Child policy in China back then (now they have lifted this restriction), but that’s not God’s policy for sure.

Even though God has Jesus as His only son, He also has all of us as His children. I don’t think He likes us to just do our own things without a close and loving relationship with His other children. God likes us to be sure that He loves us and to grow happily together. I know this because this is how I feel for my own children.

Ashley Pan



The Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign

The Salvation Army is looking for volunteers to help man our six kettle locations in Whitehorse this year.

Our kettles start **November 24th** and run until **December 24th**. We would ask that all volunteers be double vaccinated to help protect our community!

Please call or text 867-335-0571 or email Whitehorse.sa.kettles@gmail.com to book your kettle shift this year.

Thank you for helping us, help our community.





a legacy of giving



Carol Sundmark arrived in the Yukon in 1973, to work as an Adult Educator at Yukon Vocational Centre (now Yukon University). Other employers, including the Yukon Council of First Nations, kept her up here for more than 10 years.

She loved the North – camping, hiking, and collecting wild flowers (with which to make acrylic jewellery that was sold at craft sales) brought Carol in touch with many friends.

Carol was also a very active member of the Riverdale Baptist Church while in Whitehorse, filling roles such as Sunday School teacher and librarian, among others. She is remembered for the well-read Bible she would have with her, verses underlined and pages dog-eared. She knew and loved her Bible!

Carol's sense of adventure took her to other places, including Japan, until she eventually returned North to teach ESL at Yukon College (University). She left for Manitoba in 1996 to care for her ailing mother, but made many trips back to Whitehorse for as long as she was able to.

Quiet, unassuming by nature, but very well-read and knowledgeable, Carol lived a full life peppered with her generous nature and acts for others.

Upon her passing in November 2018, Carol left a generous legacy to Riverdale Baptist Church. Many of RBC's recent projects, improvements, and renovations have happened as a result of Carol's legacy.

RBC held a special place in Carol's heart, as she does in ours.

Carol Sundmark 1935-2018



Carving pumpkins



The Trunk or Treat Tower



Building the Shoebox Tower



Praying over OCC Shoeboxes



As I am writing this, we have 3 events tentatively planned, and one is going to be on Zoom because we only have two leaders available for that evening! We have had a lot of discussion around how to make the youth events follow the rules laid out by government and leadership, but also still be fun and accessible to all. The leaders are so diligent in making sure we don't overlook the students while we need to put so much into planning safe activities.

We have continued our fun doing Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes, led by the amazing Jenny Baker. We were able to do two evenings with this, one shopping at Walmart, always a highlight, and another evening packing and praying for each box.

We also carved pumpkins. It is so fun to see the skill and talent of the youth with this activity! We had a fun evening playing random games with balloons and Lego. Cards/board games nights have also been a favourite but this year was super fun! Jake and Dana brought some winning games that made a lot of us laugh! We also enjoyed some field games before the snow and cold settled in.

For Devo this Fall, we have introduced the youth to a new Life of Jesus series, called *The Chosen*. It follows each of the characters that cross Jesus' path during his life and gives them personalities and a background. We make sure to have a discussion afterward to clear any questions up that the youth may have.

The makers of the show have taken thoughtful artistic takes on each person. At the same time, we wanted to find out what they thought and felt about each episode, and whether they liked how *The Chosen* portrayed Jesus as a person yet also God. We may encourage continuing to watch this in their own time if we are unable to meet in person.

The leaders, along with the Elders, will do our best to be able to continue to meet in person, while keeping to the rules. We hope to meet at Shipyards to go sledding and meet by the fire as an outside event. We also hope to do an outside service event that would allow for everyone to attend.

Please continue to pray for the youth that come, and those that don't. They each have their own struggles. We can only pray that God will come alongside them to show them He is the only way.

Hannah Harms



2 Samuel 22:31

As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in Him.



Carol Sundmark Remembered as Faithful



Carol Sundmark

Late August 1976, our family of five drove through Riverdale assessing our brand new environment. We had moved to Whitehorse having never been here, and we were curious about our new home. Roy had accepted a position as English department head at F.H. Collins and we were all excited about our new adventure.

Since the school was in Riverdale and we had only one vehicle, we thought we should check out the houses for sale in Riverdale. By chance we drove by a small church with the sign "Riverdale Baptist Church". There was a car parked outside so I told Roy to stop, that I would go in and check out what type of church it was.

It was not the pastor that greeted me but Carol, who was organizing the books in the library. I totally grilled her about doctrine, practice, programs and more. She was patient, kind and honest. I didn't give her our names but told her Roy was a new teacher in town.

Apparently, Carol had looked out of the window and noted that we were in a Buick with Saskatchewan plates. She reported my visit and curiosity to Pastor Reid Fowler. A day or two later, our doorbell rang and we had a pastoral visit! Reid had known that new teachers were given temporary housing in Takhini duplexes so he drove up and down the alley until he found a Buick with Saskatchewan plates.

Pastor Reid was very convincing about the church's need for us and our service, and it was the beginning of our long history in the church.

“We came to know Carol as a faithful servant of God. She was the type of person who willingly worked hard at tasks that would never be acknowledged... She lived very frugally and expected nothing from others.”

We came to know Carol as a faithful servant of God. She was the type of person who willingly worked hard at tasks that would never be acknowledged. She also was willing to host and lead small Bible Study groups, and accepted responsibility humbly and cheerfully.

She lived very frugally and expected nothing from others. We can't recall that she asked for any financial support when she went to Japan to work with a church and teach English.

Carol was an outstanding example to us of someone who lived life for others in her Saviour's name.

Lydia Mathies



Thank You

FOR YOUR HELP

For several years, it has been known that there were many areas of the building that needed improvement. These projects were related to safety, efficiency, and overall function of the church. They were part of the church's long-term vision to create a more welcoming and functional space where the church would worship together.

After some initial fumbling around with this on my part, where I was prepared to spend oodles of church money for the sake of simplicity/efficiency, it was suggested to me that forming a committee may be a better approach to this. Somewhat grudgingly, I agreed, and the Building Committee of Christian, Warren, Mark, Rod, and Daniel was formed.

All of these individuals have contributed to the work that we now can see all around us. To recognize Mark, Rod, and Daniel is not to diminish the contributions of the others. Rather, it is to recognize a degree of service that was in many ways a step above what could be called "expected".

I have learned a lot in working with these individuals, and I am deeply grateful for them. Mark, Daniel, and Rod have each brought a unique skill set and used it to its fullest within our church. Painting, flooring, framing, electrical – all with professional level quality.

I recall growing up in the Christian Reformed tradition where discussions were had with my youth leaders about "finding God in the woodshop".

In the Psalms, it is written that, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of the wicked". There may be a more 'official' term for this, but the idea of it is that in any activity we do, whether simple or complicated, there is the opportunity to experience God and to further God's Kingdom.

The work of Daniel, Rod, and Mark demonstrates an understanding of this notion. Their work has been excellent. It is excellent in part because of its utility – our floor no longer presents a tripping hazard to everyone who walks on it, our stage functions more effectively, there is no longer a traffic jam at the sanctuary entrance at the end of every service.

Its excellence is also found in its quality – the stage is beautiful, the doors allow wonderful light to pass through, the colour scheme of the paint and floor is appealing. The Kingdom has been furthered not only by "why" the work is, but also "what", and "how" the work was done.

First, We Will Serve. This statement truly and fully reflects the selflessness which has been repeatedly demonstrated by these individuals. I have learned a great deal from them about the meaning of terms like "selflessness".

We are blessed to have them amongst our members and blessed to call them our friends.

Thank you, Rod. Thank you, Mark. Thank you, Daniel.

Dave Eikelboom



Daniel



Mark



Rod



C.S. Lewis

It was in his reading of Norse mythology that he first experienced joy, a joy total and inexplicable, something that galvanized him. He thought that by pursuing Norse mythology he could “capture” that joy, but it was elusive, to seek it was to lose it. It was this joy, glimpses of the eternal, a messenger of the Holy Spirit, that visited him from time to time in his intellectual pursuits and meditations, “like arrows from God” that birthed in him a longing for the eternal.

His biography describes a solitary intellectual journey that took him through classical and modern thought, all the while looking and longing for these surprises of joy. After finishing his college preparation studies, C.S. Lewis briefly studied at Oxford until he was old enough to enlist in the British Army. He was in the trenches of northern France for the last year of the war, wounded, recuperated, and eventually returned to Oxford and what became a lifetime in academia.

But in France, and on his return to Oxford, he was joined in his spiritual journey by several friends, like-minded young men, searching for truth, plumbing the current philosophical and psychological trends of the time. Thus, in time, C.S. Lewis became a materialist, an atheist, and later a theist as his journey to God unfolded. In the end he was strongly influenced by Christian friends and the writings of G.K. Chesterton (The Everlasting Man).

His conversion was anything but dramatic. It was, rather, a conclusion reached after much thought and study, after exploring many avenues and alternatives.

“You must picture me alone in that room in Magdalen (college), night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him who I so earnestly desired not to meet. That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all of England....”

I think all people develop their own personal cosmologies, their versions of reality, how all things fit together and where they fit in that order. Our circumstances, choices, characters and influences determine much of what we regard as reality and how we deal with those things that life throws at us.

I have often thought as we age we inexorably change to reflect those beliefs, a gravitational pull that slowly makes things into its image. We become Christians because we are convinced deeply in our souls that it is God that reigns on high and He has sent His son to save us and join Him in the Kingdom of heaven. For the Christian, the majesty and mercy of God has become reality because it is the true reality of things.

But what of those who are outside? The apostle Paul told the Ephesians to “remember what you were in the past. At that time you were apart from Christ. You were foreigners and did not belong to God's chosen people. You ... lived in this world without hope and without God.” Ay, I remember those days and I remember how difficult it was to communicate with someone whose concept of reality differed from mine. How does God reach the unsaved, those who live in a world which passively or actively denies the existence of God? Thanks be to God, the tenacity and persistence of the Holy Spirit can overcome this gulf. God can speak in any language that men create.

C.S. Lewis titled his autobiography “*Surprised by Joy*”. Each time these revelations of joy came, they came as a surprise and they left behind a yearning for more. These arrows of joy were “utter reality, a root in the Absolute”. They were the Holy Spirit's messengers, the knocking on the door of C.S. Lewis's heart.

Rod Fortune



C.S. Lewis's Biography "*Surprised by Joy*"

This is the first in a series of reviews of Christian biographies. In these I want us to consider the avenues the Holy Spirit uses to reach people who are "without hope and without God in this world." - Rod Fortune

How does God speak to you? How does He speak to us collectively? These are important questions to ponder.

At the beginning of the book of Hebrews, it says that God spoke to our fathers at different times and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days has spoken to us by His Son. Prayer, reading, meditation and contemplation, fellowship are all avenues for us to hear God's voice.

But how did it begin? That is, how did we learn to recognize that still, quiet voice? In Revelations 3:20, Christ says,

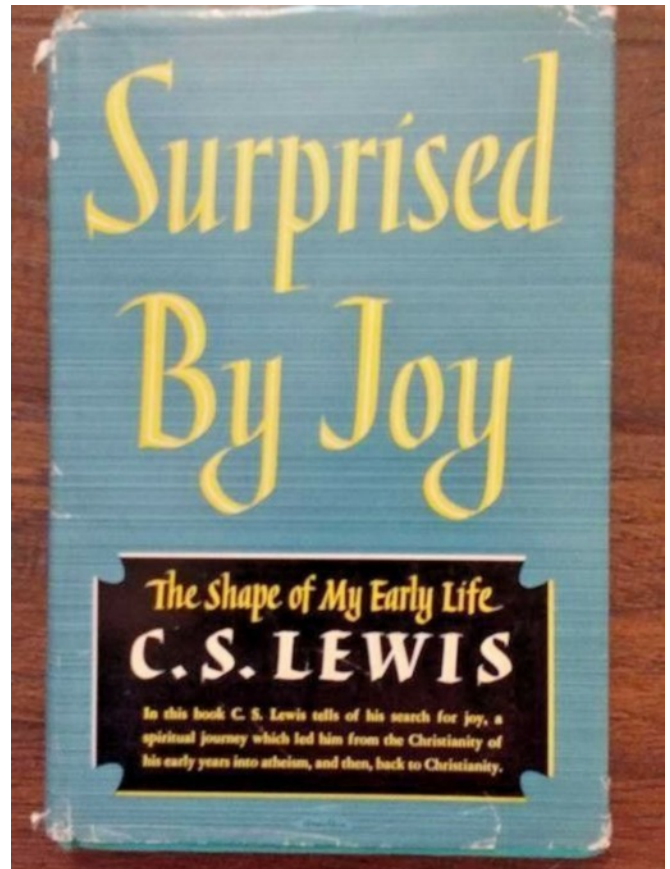
'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'

Hearing His voice and opening the door is where our Christian life begins, or more succinctly, where the life of God begins in us. But before we are believers, how do we know the voice of Christ?

C.S. Lewis was in his mid 50's when he published his spiritual autobiography "*Surprised by Joy*". It is a detailed account of his childhood, youth and early adulthood, taking the reader through his spiritual journey which culminated in his conversion to Christianity in his early 30's. He describes his childhood and youth in detail so that "when the explicitly spiritual crises arrives, the reader may understand what sort of person my childhood and adolescence had made me".

It is a fascinating journey he shares with the reader, recounting an upbringing in pre-First World War Ireland and England, a world long past. But that observation, that his circumstances, choices and influences had made him what he was, and should be grasped to understand his conversion, is to me, much of what this book is about.

"The two families from which I sprung were as different in temperament as in origin. My father's people were true Welshmen, sentimental, passionate, and rhetorical, easily moved both to anger and tenderness, men who laughed and cried a great deal and had not much talent for happiness. The Hamiltons were a cooler race, their minds were critical and ironic, and they



had a talent for happiness in a high degree...From my earliest years I was aware of the vivid contrast between my mother's cheerful and tranquil affections and the ups and downs of my father's emotional life and this bred in me long before I was old enough to give it a name a certain distrust or dislike of emotion as something uncomfortable and embarrassing and even dangerous."

C.S. Lewis's mother died when he was young, changing a happy home into a cold, lonely one, leaving Lewis to be raised by a father he could not relate to. At the age of 10, he was sent from Ireland to England to a boarding school, an experience he detested (he titled that chapter "*Concentration Camp*") and, as he grew, there followed a series of boarding schools and tutors.

Though he was, like his mother, critical and ironic with a high talent for happiness, the boarding schools were bullying environments, hostile to learning and intellectual development. All along C.S. Lewis, quiet, studious, and fiercely independent turned to the worlds of poetry, literature and philosophy.

Thank You

FOR YOUR HELP

COVID took the whole world by surprise, and no one was really prepared for the changes it would force us to make. In some ways, however, it has been even tougher on the Christian Church than on most other institutions.

The Church has always emphasized the importance of corporate worship - the fellowship of believers, the communion of the saints, gathering together as the Body of Christ, and these are the exact opposite of the "social distancing" that has been the norm in society for over a year and a half.

So when COVID came to Yukon, RBC had a problem. How do we maintain our community, worshipping together rather than just individually, sharing our successes and struggles and carrying one another's burdens, when we could no longer all be physically close at the same time?

Many of us rose to that challenge, but a few guys running our technical operations did the crucial work of adapting our system and our weekly processes to make our worship available even to folks who couldn't join us physically.

We also took the opportunity, along with Carol Sundmark's generous gift and the priority that you all put on enhancing our building, to purchase and install all the new sound and video equipment, and to relocate our sound booth to the central location at the back of the sanctuary.

Nathan Pullar did the lion's share of ordering the equipment, coordinating

with the vendor and installation crew, ensuring all the cables were in place to relocate the booth, and fine-tuning the entire system to our needs. He's also given freely of his time and expertise to troubleshoot the hiccups that arise from time to time.

The Kevins, Harms and Greenshields, spent countless hours figuring out an entire new software package to record video, integrate the audio from our new system, get a live feed in the basement so we could safely have more folks in the building, and host the service on-line so that it is available to those who could not join us Sunday morning.

On top of that, Kevin G and his boys have operated the system week after week as our tech crew ran out of other volunteers.

Gentlemen, your efforts helped meet a crucial demand at a time when everyone was scrambling to hold things together. In large part because of those efforts, many of us with RBC were able to participate in church at a distance. What a wonderful gift you've given us!

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you!

Dave Anderson



Kevin Harms



Kevin Greenshields



Nathan Pullar

RBC Family Reunion: Fellowship, Food & Fun

On Sunday, September 26th, RBC hosted a church Family Reunion with an invitation to reconnect through Fellowship, Food and Fun. A potluck lunch followed the morning service, and those interested in glow-in-the dark bowling met mid-afternoon. Here are some of the photos taken from that Sunday (special thanks to Xiu-Mei Zhang and Sharon Pullar).



RBC Choir, led by Connie Penner



Pastor Michelle with her son, Matteo



Lydia Mathies, remembering Carol Sundmark

MY TESTIMONY



Lucy Benson

I have a great news to share with you all! I'm just an ordinary girl following an extraordinary God, learning to seek God's possible in this world of impossible.

Waiting on God's timing is hard. His timeline is almost never aligned with the one we desire. Yet, His timing is always perfect – even though it can be hard to wait for.

Waiting on God's Timing is Hard, Yet God's Timing is Always Perfect

Waiting is hard. I know God has a plan for my life and I'm anxious to move to the next step. Yet, God takes His own time about it.

Two truths I've learned about waiting, though: I've had to learn the hard way that I can't manage my life the same way. God's had other plans for me. I've tried to make timelines and set deadlines but watched in disappointment as milestone after milestone fell by the wayside, unaccomplished.

#1: Waiting on God's plans requires patience and faith.

It's in the waiting that our faith is forged in the fires of trials. In the waiting, we discover that God's in charge and we're nothing on our own.

#2: Waiting is hard, but the wait has a purpose. God is never accidental. Everything He does has a purpose.

Sometimes the wait is for God to align other pieces of the plan. Sometimes the wait is for God to align the pieces of our own heart.

I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples. - Psalm 77:12-14

I got my PERMANENT RESIDENCE APPLICATION APPROVED! I am so excited to tell you all, and am looking forward to receiving my family by December in Whitehorse.

Please continue to pray for me and my family to arrival safely in Canada. Thank you all for your prayers, love, support and reaching out to me all. I'm glad to be part of this great family of God.

Warm regards,
Lucy Benson

UPDATE:

Lucy flew to Nigeria to meet her family, and travel back to Canada with them. They all arrived in Whitehorse late Sunday, November 28th.

They are still in need of some household items. If you have anything you can contribute, or to find out what's needed, please contact Pastor Michelle at 667-6620 or michelleporco@rbchurch.ca.

If you would like to support Lucy and her family with a love offering, you can send an e-transfer to offeringsecretarcy@rbchurch.ca (note: Lucy). These gifts will help Lucy and her family settle into Whitehorse.

Reflect: Recognize, Remember, Respond

As the rhythms of the school year have fallen into place, I have so enjoyed getting to regularly disciple students again. Walking one-on-one with growing Christians as they learn to step out in faith is my favourite part of my job!

Something I do often with these students is take the time to reflect on what God is doing in their lives, and seek to help them see where the Spirit is moving and how the gospel applies to their lives right now.

As I did this recently with one of my students, Hannah, she reminded me of how profound a help this can be. She told me that she had felt a bit blind to the Spirit's work in her over the past few weeks, but thinking and talking it through this way had made some themes clear to her. She could see the presence of God at work in her, and could sense his call to respond in faith. It was such a simple conversation, but I am thankful that God used it to show Himself to Hannah.

In light of that, I wanted to share the way I often have these conversations, because I have also found these questions helpful in recognizing the Spirit's work in my own life. I hope, if you choose to reflect on them also, it will be the same for you.

- **Recognize:** How has the Spirit been working in your life this past week?
 - **Conviction** - How did the Spirit show you that you're living in opposition to His truth, either in attitude, thought or action?
 - **Effectiveness** - How did God use your gifts or overcome your weaknesses for His kingdom purposes to glorify Christ?
 - **Leadership** - How did God lead, guide or help you?
 - **Life** - How did the Spirit give you His desires? (For example, love, joy, peace, patience, etc.)
 - **Relationship** - How did the Spirit help you to experience your relationship as a child of God or assure you of your salvation and place in His family?
- **Remember:** How has God been reminding you of the gospel and making the gospel true to you in your experience? What do you need to remember about the gospel right now?
 - Think through the story of the gospel
 - Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration
 - God, Sin, Jesus, Response
 - Think through the characteristics of God
 - Goodness, justice, holiness, patience, etc.
- **Respond:** How might the Spirit be inviting you to respond to Him in obedience? Is there anything He is leading you to start or stop?

Finally, I wanted to let you know that - pending pandemic restrictions continuing to allow it - I plan to (finally!) be in Whitehorse over Christmas. I look forward to seeing many of you then!

With love,
Alli Hidinger



Alli with her roommates, Grace and Essie, in front of their home





Worship Team Vocals



Parts of the service were in two languages, with translation by Ashley Pan



Fellowship Lunch



“Why the Church Matters”, shared by Michael Porco



Glow-in-the-dark bowling - afternoon fun!

Christmas

WORSHIP

Riverdale Baptist Church is a community of God's people that worships God together. During this Advent and Christmas season, we are moving our services online to Zoom. With the current state of emergency and restrictions, Zoom allows opportunity for all of us to gather together to worship.

Worship is about a community of people who each participate and contribute to worshipping the Triune God. To help foster a worshipping community, rather than a worship experience or consumers of worship, we have chosen a platform that allows us to see each other, communicate with each other, listen to one another in small groups, and pray together. Zoom helps foster community and fellowship as we share stories, prayer requests, ideas, and laments. I invite you to a time of strengthening and building up this community as we all wait for the coming of Christ.

During this Advent season, we will participate weekly in the lighting of the Advent candle and communion. All households are encouraged to create an Advent wreath with 5 candles. Each Sunday, we will all light a candle together. Each household is also encouraged to prepare bread and cup before the service. This is a great opportunity for parents to teach their children about Jesus, communion, and the church. We will together eat the bread and drink the cup during worship.

As you gather in your homes to worship, I encourage you to also think about the worship space. Moving to Zoom means that every person and every household is a Worship Leader! You can think about lighting, background, symbols and items that help you enter in to the presence of Christ in your home.

Finally, I encourage you to share the Zoom link and password with neighbours, coworkers, family and friends and invite them to this community of worshippers. If you are struggling to access Zoom, please reach out to the church office (contact@rbchurch.ca) and we will help!

Pastor Michelle





Advent Services (Zoom)

November 28 - First Advent: Hope

December 5 - Second Advent: Peace

December 12 - Third Advent: Joy

December 19 - Fourth Advent: Love

To help create a community of worshippers, our Advent services are on Zoom. For the link and password, please contact the church office at contact@rbchurch.ca.

At each Advent service, we will all light a candle together from our Advent wreath and participate in the Lord's Supper. Please come to worship prepared with your Advent wreath, and bread and cup.



Blue Christmas Service (in person)

December 21

7:00 pm

RBC

Christmas can be a time of joy and pain, a time of celebration and mourning, a time of hope and longing. Christmas is especially hard if we have lost loved ones.

This service offers space for loss, grief, healing, hope and wholeness. There will be singing, Scripture, prayer, candles and remembrance.

All are invited to come. Please share this with a friend who might be grieving or finding Christmas hard.



Christmas Eve Service (in person)

December 24

Time TBA

RBC

Christmas Eve Service will be live-streamed as well for those who would prefer to participate from home.

With the changing restrictions, there is a possibility that there may be two Christmas Eve services to accommodate everyone. This decision will be made closer to the date.



Boxing Day Sledding Party

December 26

Time TBA

Shipyards Park

Come play with us at Shipyards! Let's go sledding, drink hot chocolate, and connect with each other.

Bring your sled and skates; the rest will be provided around the firepit in the gazebo.

See you there!