

“Called to be Servants of Christ in Our Community”

Niagara United Mennonite Church

December 17th, 2017 ~ *Third Advent* ~

“Called to be Servants of Christ in Our Community” expresses our desire to share our faith and love of Jesus Christ with all we meet. We welcome you and hope that your time with us will be enjoyable and enlightening. Families with children are invited to worship together with us in the service. For children 3 years old or younger who are not able to sit through the church service, there is a nursery downstairs, or a glassed-in room behind the sanctuary where you may sit with your baby and still follow the service. If you feel a sense of belonging, you are most welcome to be with us. Talk to us about how you can participate.

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Our Lighthouse program, which is a time of fellowship and learning for those aged 4 years to Grade 6 is held each Sunday during the Worship Service. Those in Grade 7 and 8 are also welcome to attend. The children will be called to the front for the Children’s Moment and then released after that. Parents may pick up their children in the Education Wing at the end of the service.

### **Current Sermon Series: ‘iChristmas’**

We all come at Christmas from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, memories and perhaps, hang-ups. However, there is one reality about this season that cannot be ignored – we can’t get away from its grip. What is it that tugs so strongly? Through a look at the stories of those who actually saw Jesus, we get a glimpse of the compelling nature of the Christmas story and how ‘seeing’ Jesus as they did points to the Jesus that “I” can know. ‘iChristmas’ is a series of talks that will invite you to imagine the impact that living from the perspective of seeing, hearing and knowing Jesus will have on what draws you through this season and beyond.

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|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| December 3  | “Do you see what I see?”<br><i>John 1:1-14</i>                                        | Pastor David Lewis    |
| December 10 | “Do you hear what I hear?”<br><i>Luke 2:25 – 32</i>                                   | Pastor David Lewis    |
| December 17 | “A Simple Story of Profound Significance”<br><i>Matthew 1:18-21 &amp; Luke 2:8-12</i> | Pastor David Schrader |
| December 24 | “Listen to what I say”<br><i>Luke 2:8 – 14</i>                                        | Pastor David Lewis    |

**Worship Service – 10:45 a.m.**

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Gathering           | Will Friesen |
| Congregational Life | John Tiessen |
| Worship in Song     |              |
| Children’s Moment   | Kathy Rempel |

*Children exit for Lighthouse*

Offering

*Offering Focus – see financial section*

Proclamation

|                                            |                       |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Scripture Reading                          | Angela Redekopp       |
| “Do you hear what I hear?”                 | Pastor David Schrader |
| <i>(Matthew 1:18-21 &amp; Luke 2:8-12)</i> |                       |

|                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Sending</b> | Pastor David Schrader |
|----------------|-----------------------|

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**JOYS & CONCERNS:**

**Congratulations to newlyweds Bryan Neufeld and Catherine Rougoor,** who were married here in our church yesterday! We pray for God’s blessing on their marriage. May God’s love continue to fill their hearts & lives and may the Spirit continue to guide them according to his purpose.

**The family of John Harder is deeply saddened to share the news of his passing** on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Visitation will take place here at NUMC on **Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> from 2-4pm and 6-8 pm.** The funeral service will be on **Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am.** A funeral choir has been requested and all who are able to participate are encouraged to do so – gather for practice at 10am Tuesday morning in the choir room. Let our prayers be a comfort to the family during this season of profound loss and may our Healing Redeemer allow love, light and hope to shine even in the darkest of days.

**The family of Audrey and Joachmin Dau** are grieved by the loss of Audrey’s mother Elsie Siemens in Rosthern, Saskatchewan this past week. The family has travelled to Saskatchewan for the funeral. They ask for your prayers of support, especially for Audrey’s dad, Ambros.

**As prayers continue for Rosemary Marshall, Debbie Fast’s stepmom,** a medical testing has confirmed the family’s fears in that her condition is terminal, with approximately 30 days to live. Rhodie (as she’s better known by), has opted for chemotherapy treatments, and is now on round two, hoping to extend her life. Through all this, Rhodie continues to be in good spirits and has made peace, recognizing that she’s in God’s hands. May God bless her with supernatural peace and faith in these final days, and strength for the family.

**We praise God for Henry Riediger, father to Ron & Laury**, who has returned home from hospital, where he will slowly regain mobility as the hairline fracture in his hip continues to heal. They are all so thankful for our many prayers during his long stay in hospital.

**Please pray for Lena Wall's Aunt Anna, and family**. Anna is suffering from terminal cancer throughout her whole body, with a life expectancy of less than a year remaining, and is now grieving the loss of her husband Corny, who unexpectedly passed away on Monday, this past week. Two of their three children live in Manitoba and do not have financial means to travel to care for their mother, nor provide for her health issues as often as necessary. Their youngest son, who lives at home is doing his best to help provide for his mother, and is now devastated with the loss of his father so suddenly. The children are unable to provide financially for these unexpected funeral costs for their father, or their mother, when the time arises. This family is in deep need of help, and is asking for our prayers. And so, let us cover them with prayer, lifting these needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ in their time of grief, of need, of suffering, of pain to the Holy One who promises to ease our pain, wipe away our tears, provide us our every need, end all suffering and offer us eternal hope.

*\*If you would like to offer financial assistance to this family, please visit the GoFundMe webpage that the family has created to accept donations, which is located at the following URL link: <http://gofundme.com/medical-funds-and-financial-support>.*

**As we continue to pray for Vern Riediger in his fight against cancer**, we celebrate God's healing work as he reports progressing well after finishing his 5<sup>th</sup> chemo treatment! Following a 6<sup>th</sup> treatment in the next couple of weeks, he will get more tests and CT scans to determine the extent of which his cancer mass has shrunk/melted. Prayers for him continue to be requested, but his fight of this cancer is very positive now!

**Kenton & Sheryl Janzen** have requested their church memberships be transferred to Bethany Mennonite Church. We deeply thank them for their ministry and service to the NUMC congregation during their time of membership with us. We wish them God's blessing as they follow the Spirit's direction and call on their lives.

**Please continue to pray for** Audrey Epp and Ernie Pries, as well as those in our community who have not made public their prayer needs. May Christ minister to the needs of the ill, hurt, lonely and downtrodden in our community. May our hearts and spirits be ready and open to receive him this holiday season, and let us share the joy we have received with those around us and in our communities.

## **WITHIN NIAGARA UM CHURCH:**

**This morning we welcome Pastor David Schrader and his wife Betty to our worship service.** Pastor Schrader is our candidate for Lead Pastor. His bio has appeared in the bulletin the last two weeks and is also included in today's bulletin. He and Betty will be pleased to greet you in the foyer after the service. We wish Pastor Schrader God's blessing and the leading of the Holy Spirit as he brings us the message this morning.

**Candlelight Program This Evening** - Come and be filled with the Spirit of Christmas at our annual concert by candlelight. "Night of the Father's Love" begins at **7:00 pm**, with bell choir prelude at 6:45. A freewill offering will be taken.

**Calling all Bakers!** Please consider bringing cookies and/or squares to share with all who come to socialize after watching the Candlelight Service **this evening** at the reception in the gym afterwards. Please bring these baked goods- if not this morning, they will also be accepted before tonight's performance. Thank-you for your generosity!

**Keep Someone Warm** - Today is the last day that we will be collecting warm clothes to help keep our neighbours of all ages warm through this Community Care initiative. Donations of NEW hats, gloves coats, boots, slippers, PJs, socks, and long underwear for ALL ages are needed. Please leave donations in the Community Care barrel in the bottom foyer. Thank you for your generosity!

**Senior Youth ESCAPE ROOM** - Are you ready for an "unforgettable experience full of fun, adventure, and intrigue"? Think you can beat the odds and escape in under 60 minutes? Join us on **Friday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>** for our final youth event of 2017 - The Escape Room. **7:00PM SHARP**. Bring \$20 and be on time! :) See you there!

**Christmas Eve:** Our children in Lighthouse will be performing a play, "*The Cattle are Lowing*" in the evening on Christmas Eve. **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm**. All are welcome.

**Christmas Morning Worship Service-** Our Christmas Day Worship service will begin at **10:45 am on Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**. Please feel welcome to invite friends and family.

**ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE:** The deadline for submitting council, committee & ministry reports/financials for the Annual Report is **Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>**.

**Save the Date!!** Our Annual Membership Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm**.

## LIGHTHOUSE:

- There WILL be Lighthouse **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**.
- **Christmas Eve-- Lighthouse parents**: please have children at NUMC (3rd floor) **by 5:30 pm** for the play that starts at 6:00 pm.
- There WILL NOT be Lighthouse on **Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**.
- Lighthouse will resume **January 7, 2018**.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION WITHIN NIAGARA UM CHURCH:

**Thank you for all your generous donations!** God brings us together as a church community in such a way that each of us has something unique to contribute. By supporting our church financially, we are encouraged to grow in our faith, discover our gifts and share them with our community. We need approximately \$70,000 (\$23,333 per week) by the end of December to meet our budget of \$410,000. Please be generous so that we can meet all our obligations. Donations can be made conveniently online, by debit, by direct bank or internet transfer, and of course by cash or cheque.

| <b>Offering of December 10<sup>th</sup>: \$15,072.15</b> |              |                     |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| Budget                                                   | \$ 12,022.15 | MCC General         | \$ 1620.00 |
| Christian Witness                                        | \$ 150.00    | MCC Food            | \$ 90.00   |
| Deacon's Fund                                            | \$ 250.00    | MCC Scholl Kits     | \$ 40.00   |
| Menn Cntr Ukraine                                        | \$ 100.00    | MCC Haiti           | \$ 500.00  |
|                                                          |              | MCC Christmas Gifts | \$ 300.00  |

**Offering Focus** –In addition to your budget commitment, this month we encourage your support of MCC Christmas Gifts. Choose a gift that is a personal and meaningful expression of God's love. Give your swimming instructor the gift of water, your favourite chef the gift of an eco-stove, or your nephews and nieces a gift of rabbits and chickens. Any church donations not allocated to a specific cause will be directed to our budget.

**CANDIDATING WEEKEND**  
**Friday December 15<sup>th</sup> to Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017**  
**CANDIDATE: Pastor David Schrader**

After many years in the role of National Pastor, David Schrader feels called back to pastoral ministry. In early spring, he contacted MCEC to see if there might be ministry opportunities in the Mennonite Church. He learned that our church would have such a position opening up, and felt led to respond to our advertisement for a Leading Pastor.

David says "I came to Christ as a direct result of my grandmother and uncle's influence." He was baptized, and shortly after, received his call to the ministry.

He is originally from the Atlantic Provinces and has served in various ministerial roles from Youth Pastor, Hospital Chaplain, Associate Pastor to Senior Pastor. Currently, he serves as the National Pastor for the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada whose mission statement is "Proclaiming Jesus Christ, Making Disciples, Growing Healthy Churches".

The Search Committee reviewed and discussed David's MCEC documents and Ministerial Leadership Information and met with David and his wife Betty, on November 8<sup>th</sup>, following up with a formal interview held on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Several comments from the Search Committee members include "the candidate resonates with passion for the Christian faith"; "both the candidate and his wife have a warm and caring openness to them"; "from our conversations and his previous experiences he has a strong sense of calling to carry out God's work".

David Schrader and his wife Betty live in Brantford. They have four children and five grandchildren.

The Word of God is alive and powerful.  
---David Schrader

**Special Membership Meeting – Tuesday, Dec. 19, at 7:00 pm.**  
to vote on the Pastoral Candidate.

Advance voting is available for members who can't be there for the Membership Meeting. **Members can vote in advance** through the church office on December 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> during office hours (9am-3pm), by telephone, or by email. No proxy voting is permitted.

## Special Membership Meeting – December 19, 2017 at 7:00 pm

### Agenda:

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Acceptance of Agenda
- 3) Appointment of Tellers Committee
- 4) Discussion and vote\* to hire Pastoral Candidate David Schrader as Lead Pastor
- 5) Other Business
- 6) Close

\*There will be an advance vote for members that can't be at the membership meeting. Members can vote in advance through the church office **on Dec. 18 & 19<sup>th</sup> during office hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

### **OUR COMMUNITY AND BEYOND:**

**Fairview Community Church invites you to a Choral Christmas Concert** featuring guest soloists and musicians on **December 17 at 4:00pm** (455 Geneva St. St. Catharines). Light refreshments will be served following the program.

**Niagara Sings!** - Mark calendars for the next Niagara area Mennonite hymn sing on **Sunday, December 31, 3 pm** at Grace Mennonite Church [refreshments following]. An hour-long service of congregational singing and choirs. End the year in song!

**MENNONITE BURIAL SOCIETY** The Annual General Meeting of the Mennonite Burial Society will be held on **Saturday, January 13, 2018 at 2 pm** in the Auditorium at United Mennonite Home (Orchard View Apartments entrance) at [4020 Twenty Third Street](#) in Vineland. Discussions to include levy rates and sustainability of society, revisions to constitution (for Jan 2019 AGM vote) regarding dissolution processes (if it happens in the future) and expanded eligibility of new members, etc. Board and committee positions are available. For further information, please contact Barry Boese at [905-228-1850](tel:905-228-1850) or email [info@mennoniteburialsociety.com](mailto:info@mennoniteburialsociety.com)

**THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE (December 18<sup>th</sup> – December 24<sup>th</sup>)**

**Monday:** 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm visitation John Harder  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm visitation John Harder

**Tuesday:** 10:00 am Funeral choir practice  
10:30 am Celebration of Life Service for John Harder  
7:00 pm Special Membership Meeting

**Wednesday:** 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Play Rehearsal  
7:00 pm Spiritual Council Meeting

**Thursday:** 7:00 pm Praise & Worship Practice

**Friday:** 7:00 pm Sr. Youth – Escape Room

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Fourth Advent**

9:20 am German Choir Practice  
9:45 am Choir Practice  
9:50 am German Worship Service  
10:45 am Worship Service – Message by Pastoral David Lewis  
12:00 pm Children’s Program Dress Rehearsal  
6:00 pm Children’s Evening Program: “*The Cattle are Lowing*”

*\*For a complete listing of church events, please see our online calendar on our church website. \**

**NUMC Services & Sermons are available online.**

Individual Sermons or Sermon Series are available for purchase, formatted on CD or DVD. Please place your order through the church office.

**Online Filming Privacy Notice** – Our church services are recorded for streaming over the internet, capturing the stage and up to the front half of the church in the picture that is transmitted. We encourage all ages to sit towards the front of the church to showcase our lively and active congregation! Thanks for your support.