

November 20th, 2025

And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

~Luke 21:25-28~

Dear Chartwell family,

Christmas is coming!

I will confess, normally this statement would create a mild sense of anxiety in me. The Christmas season, for all its brightness and cheer, often leaves me feeling overwhelmed by the demands and responsibilities that accompany this time of year. I am sure many of you can identify with this. But this year, I feel a little differently. With my own unexpected health challenges last spring and the slow road to recovery I have been walking, I feel a deep sense of gratitude to be able to celebrate another Christmas with family and friends. It is my prayer that you too will be able to look back over the road you have walked this year, and whether it has been easy or difficult for your steps, you would experience the depth of gratitude that comes from knowing God and His faithfulness.

As the calendar year draws towards its close and the days grow darker and shorter, a new Church year begins, and we enter the Advent season looking ahead for the coming of the light. As you probably know, Advent is about waiting. We *wait* in anticipation for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas and we *wait* in hope for the day when Jesus comes again.

But this is *not passive waiting*, as this startling reading from Luke's Gospel [above] makes clear. Amidst chaos and distress, as people both near and far '*faint with fear*' in a world full of uncertainty, we are called to stand tall and lift up our heads. Rather than allowing fear and confusion to paralyse us as, we look up. We eagerly await and work for the coming of God's reign in our midst.

As we prepare for the Advent season let's join Saint Paul's prayer, asking God to increase our love for all people, so that we can bring hope and healing to all creation.

Without question, we depend on the wisdom, power, and grace that can only come from heaven. But at the same time, we recognize that it is *in us and through us*—God's people, that His kingdom comes and His will is done on earth. It comes when, by the Spirit, we *imitate and incarnate* the love, grace, and justice of Jesus to those around us.

This is why we enthusiastically launch our *Christmas Appeal* every year. This is one of the many ways we partner with God in the work of His kingdom. Each year, we select key ministries who are working in the name of Jesus for the sake of His kingdom. This year the funds raised will be distributed to the following ministries [see descriptions in brochure]— *Kerr Street Christmas Wonders & Beyond*, *Burning Stone [Mishkeegogamang]*, *Ukraine Emergency Relief*, *Camp Kwasind [Muskoka]*, and to *Christian Testimony Through the Arts [The Psalms Project]*.

In order to generously support these ministries, we have set an ambitious goal of **\$100,000**—and we need your participation to achieve it. Please carefully read the brochure [included] with the description of each ministry as well as instructions for the various platforms you can utilize to make your financial gift.

I invite you to prayerfully consider how you will respond this year, always remembering the gracious gift of God to all of us in Jesus Christ. "*Freely you have received, freely give.*" (Matt 10:8).

Peace and joy to you,



Pastor Kevin