

GRACE  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Session Snippets
- Mission Moment
- Hazelwood
- Kids Corner

ONLINE OR  
IN-PERSON

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP  
SUNDAYS AT 10:30AM

VISIT  
[WWW.GRACEORLEANS  
.CA](http://WWW.GRACEORLEANS.CA)



# Good Gracious Gracious December 2025

## Hope on the Journey

*He went there to register with Mary,  
who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child – Luke 2:5*

It didn't sound like good news. Didn't feel like good news. The decree from the occupying government: go to the town of your birth; register in the census. Joseph closes the shop. Losing time; losing business. Now he must take Mary on a long, difficult, dangerous walk, far from family and friends—right when the baby is due.

Do they ever think that, what with angel visits and reassurances about this pregnancy, God might have worked the timing better? Or pulled strings so they didn't have to go? Or *at least* made hotel reservations in Bethlehem?

But no. *There is risk and ache and inconvenience.* This is how Emmanuel—God with us—comes into the world. Our Saviour. He who loves the world.

There's fatigue. Grumpiness on occasion, no doubt. They walk. One step after another. What keeps them going? The promise:

“Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favour with God. You will give birth to a son. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. His kingdom will never end.” (Read it in Luke 1:28-35)

“Don't be afraid, Joseph. What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. Give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” (Read it in Matthew 1:18-23)

This bold, strong promise. Strange that it would unfold amid so much risk. So much ache. So much inconvenience. But is that not the point? God is on the move. God is coming into the trouble-fraught life of the people he loves. Moving into the neighbourhood.

His plans are greater than even Joseph and Mary can imagine. More gracious. More compassionate. More costly.

God's purpose unfolds in small steps through risk, and ache, and inconvenience. The trip to Bethlehem—King David's town? Caesar thought it was his idea, but guess again. The homeless birth? In raw humility and compassion, God comes to us.

At Grace Church we, too, are on a journey. Taking steps. Welcoming new Elders, and new companions in the family. The way forward is not really clear. We carry within us God's love for our neighbours—yet we're not sure when and how this will all bear fruit.

Sometimes hope looks like this: taking one step after another. There is risk and ache and inconvenience. There is joy and hope. Because God is faithful. He is working out his purpose.

And Jesus, Emmanuel, is with us.

Merry Christmas!

Denise Allen-Macartney & Meg Patterson, Interim Moderators



## Session Snippets – Linda Clarke

The Session of Grace Church is delighted to have had the induction of Margaret Bekor-Fatona and admission of Jim Richmond as elders on November 23, 2025. We thank Pastor Denise Allen-Macartney for leading the service and guiding us through the process.



The budget meeting on November 26 was well attended and engaging. The forecast for 2025 is encouraging. We passed a budget for 2026 of modest increase in the forecasted income. Please pray for our congregation that we would be generous in gratitude for what God has provided and achieved within our church family.

We are thankful for the lay preachers that continue to bless us each Sunday with Bible based messages and a deep desire to help us encounter and grow to love Jesus more.

Advent season is upon us. I pray that each of us would not lose focus of what is the real meaning of Christmas as we witness the shopping frenzy around us. May the Christmas story be even more personal for you this year. We will be welcoming Pastor Dan MacKinnon to the pulpit on Christmas Eve for our very special candlelight service at 7:00 p.m. We are so thankful to Maureen and her team of elves for decorating the church so beautifully.

The annual Christmas banquet will take place on Saturday and it appears there may be at least 70 people attending. Praise the Lord! After the meal, we will be led by Kim in singing our favorite Christmas carols.

As another year comes to a close I would like to wish you and your families the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ to remain with you into 2026. I leave you with this: Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.



## **Interserve**

Interserve has been bringing life and hope to the peoples of Asia and the Arab World since 1852. Interserve started when a few women decided to put their faith into action. They went to South Asia with their professional skills as nurses, to live and work among those with no access to the Gospel. These women inspired a movement of ordinary Christians stepping out in faith to live wholistically and make Jesus known.

Over 172 years later, this movement of Love in Action continues through Interserve. Now there are over 800 Partners from over 15 National Offices around the world. They live and work alongside the peoples of Asia and the Arab World, in their home countries and among the diaspora in Canada.

The **Vision** of Interserve is to see lives and communities transformed through encounter with Jesus Christ.

Their **Purpose** is to make Jesus Christ known to the peoples of Asia and the Arab World.

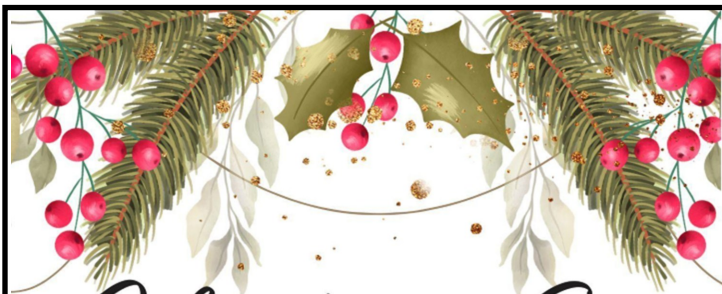
They are doctors, teachers, social workers, accountants, carpenters, nurses, entrepreneurs, community development workers and more; using their skills to serve and to train others.

They are equipping local pastors and leaders across North Africa, they are teachers in Central Asia, South Asia and the Gulf region, they are working on Bible translations into languages that don't yet have access, they are nurses in North Asia and Southeast Asia, they are developing thought-provoking online media that challenge young people to explore faith in the Arab world, they are empowering at-risk women and providing them with job training in Southeast Asia, they are constructing homes for widows in South Asia, they are working in refugee ministries in Toronto and in the Balkans, they are reaching newcomers in Montreal and Vancouver through sports, and more. They are motivated by Christ's heart of compassion.

They prioritize locally led projects and they believe that local Christians who put their faith into action can make the greatest change in their communities. Wherever possible, they partner with them – serving together, mentoring, training and encouraging.

Grace Church supports Richard and Kathy Konieczny in prayer and through our Mission budget. Richard and Kathy served in Indonesia for many years and now reside in Toronto where Richard serves as the National Director of Interserve Canada and Kathy is the National Prayer Coordinator and Third Culture Kid Advisor as well as being very active in their church. Richard travels quite a lot to visit Interserve missionaries. He has preached at Grace Church. They have children and grandchildren in Orlando (soon to be moving to Colorado Springs), in Miami Beach and in Toronto. May God lay His hand of protection over them all.





# Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

7:00pm

Join us for our traditional carol candlelight service on Dec. 24th at 7pm.

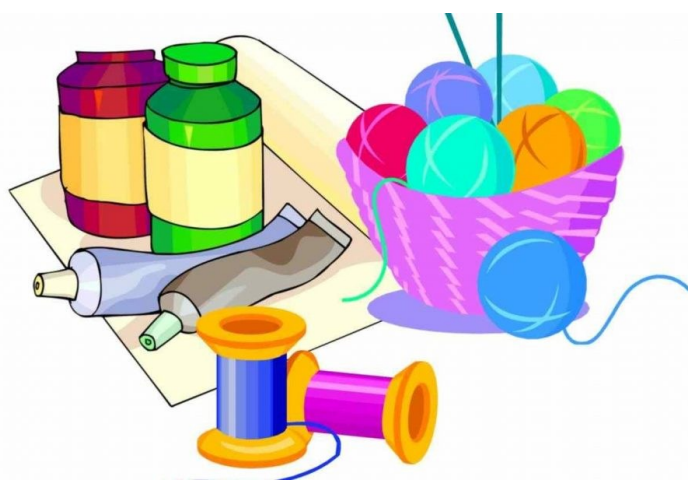
There will be special activity packets with candy cane craft for the kids and a supervised play area just outside the sanctuary for those who don't want to stay with their families.

This is a great opportunity to invite your friends and family! Invitations available at the Welcome Centre or online.

## Craft and Chat

**Tuesdays 9:30 to 11:30am**

Bring your project (knitting, sewing, scrapbooking, or other craft) and join us for a time of fellowship and coffee/tea. This is a great way to meet some of our Grace Family and get crafting done at the same time! Starting in new year, the group will also work on items for our table at the Cairine Wilson Craft Fair.



Miriam Centre

Reminder to save your stamps for the Miriam Centre. Make sure to leave at least an inch border around the stamp and drop them in the decorated bin under the communication folders (just outside the sanctuary doors)

## Hazelwood – All is Calm, All is Bright - by Donald Corbett (Living Faith)

Advent and Christmas bring with them a wide spectrum of emotions and expectations. Peace, love, hope and joy are seen as the watchwords of these seasons. I just love this time of year. Houses and shopping malls are bedecked with bright colours and lights; hosts of smiling people join in singing familiar and comforting carols and hymns; and the wonderful aromas of cookies coming to life in the oven, just itching to be enjoyed with a mug of hot chocolate.

Yes at Christmas, truly all is Calm, all is Bright!

Or is it?

For many, this “most wonderful time of the year” is more like something to be survived. Peace, love, hope and joy are concepts that just don’t seem to fit with what is happening around them. The kids are overloaded with sweets; the bank account is scraping rock bottom with the need to cover the special groceries and gifts; and schedules are bursting with the endless “must attend” events that all seem to be on the same day. The objective becomes to simply hold out until things calm down. I suspect that most of us experience a bit of these frustrating emotions during the season. We are energised but exhausted, hopeful yet harried; sore afraid that the beauty of Christmas will elude us.

**“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”** Luke 2:10-11 (KJV)

That is the beauty of the Season; that is what we are preparing for during Advent; and that is what we are celebrating at Christmas!

Perhaps you are feeling pulled in all directions. Perhaps “Peace on Earth” seems unattainable. Perhaps there is no “tumult of joy o’er the wonderful birth”. Perhaps the “hopes and fears of all the years” are not being met at all.

If there is any of that in your heart this season, know that you are loved. Christmas is just the beginning of the story, remember why Jesus was born – **“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”** John 3:16 (NIV) – and remember that **“...God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”** Romans 5:8 (NIV)

No matter how busy, worried, frustrated, anxious or helpless we might feel, Emmanuel came to reconcile us with the Father. He is with us every day in the Holy Spirit. He brings the gift of peace and all we need to do is accept it and unwrap it. As you bask in the glory of God’s gift, you will truly find that “All is Calm, All is Bright.”

Say yes to God’s peace; say yes to God’s love; say yes to the hope and joy that will accompany your decision.

**“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”** John 14:27 (NIV)

God Bless  
Donald

“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11

DECEMBER  
2025

# Kids Corner

We are already halfway through Advent! This Sunday Dec. 7th is the Second Sunday in Advent—Peace. Our annual Christmas dinner is this Saturday Dec. 6th and we will have 73 people plus 4 volunteer servers (my daughter, Zoe and her friends). The fridge is full of turkeys!

Kids Club had their Christmas party event Nov. 28th and had a record breaking 18 kids turn out! The group had to be divided with half of them working on the craft and the other half working on the nativity escape room puzzles as they helped the shepherds find the baby in the manger. Decorating homemade cookies with little piles of icing and

spinkles was a delicious hit. They all listened attentively to Leslie reading the Christmas story from the Bible. At the end of the night, kids took home little treat bags with the candy cane poem and beads to make their own candy cane ornaments as well as a Bible lesson and activity advent notebook.

New activity kids have been made and are available near the Welcome Centre. On Christmas Eve the activity kits will include the candy cane bookmark and craft as well.

Sunday School continues to be planned and covered by

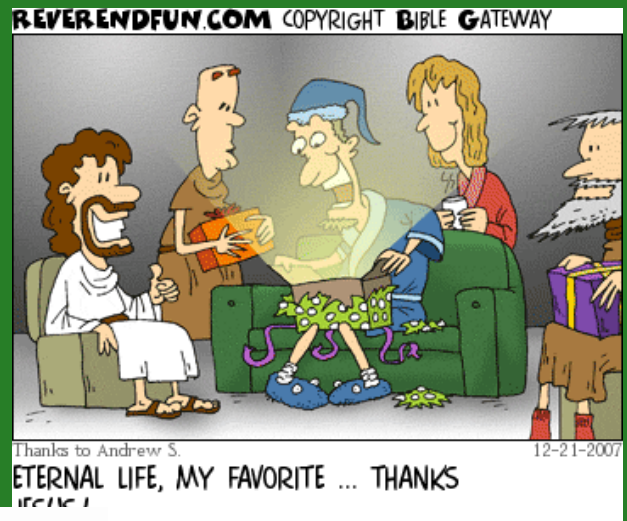
Majelle Guillemette. We are excited to have Majelle looking after the kids every Sunday. You will even see her here Christmas Eve! If you would like to help by being a second body (a position I like to call "crowd control" LOL), please speak to Majelle Sunday mornings or contact the office.

If you have any questions or wish to help in children's ministry, please contact me in the office at [admin@graceorleans.ca](mailto:admin@graceorleans.ca) or 613-824-9260.

*Arlene*



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Thanks to Andrew S.

12-21-2007



Tim

# Grace's Ministry Groups

The six functional groups and there leaders are:

1. Worship Coordination: Brian Wilson
2. Discipleship: Linda Clarke
3. Pastoral Care: Yohanna Kimoun
4. Faith Sharing: Linda Clarke
5. Temporal Support: Shirley Blank
6. Personnel Support: Linda Clarke



## Opportunities to Serve!

- **Fundraising Committee:** looking for people to help plan, setup, take down, cook, and participate! Talk to Linda, Shirley or Arlene for more info.
- **Want to be part of the meal ministry?** Contact the office or speak to an elder.

Contact the church office for more information on how you can help!  
[admin@graceorleans.ca](mailto:admin@graceorleans.ca) or by phone at 613-824-9260.