

Dear Friends:

Advent is here and with it comes a call for calm, expectant patience ~ not an easy ask in these days of frenzied and demanding commercialism. The four Sundays of Advent, each with its own theme of hope, love, joy and peace provide us with guideposts as we anticipate the birth of our Saviour.

On the Reign of Christ (November 26, 2017) many of you received a mailing from Christ Church. Included in this mailing was a letter from Byron, an update from us, an interim copy of your Christ Church offerings (*January – September 2017*) and the minutes from Annual Vestry Meeting. Please note that the minutes are posted on our website under the tab entitled Media/Resources. While we will not repeat its message in its entirety, it is worth underscoring that we have seen an overall decline of \$32,000 in offerings in the last two years. Corporation made a commitment at Vestry to carefully manage our financial results including but not limited to making staff and program cuts in early 2018. To be certain, this is not a position that we wish Christ Church to be in.

That said, it is Advent and we choose to live in hope so we continue to plan for God's ministry in Brampton and want to take a few moments to highlight but a few:

Financial Results – Financial results to September 30th were included in our last letter. In February, we will provide the congregation with detailed financial results for the first six months of our fiscal year and any plans we might need to make to our programming and/or staff as a result of unfavourable results. Our offerings were up in the first quarter and we pray that this will be an ongoing trend.

Envelope Secretary – 2018 Envelope sets are available for pick-up in the Narthex. Tax receipts for 2017 will be available in February. At any point, should you wish to convert to Pre-Authorized Remittance ("PAR"), please contact the Church Office or our Envelope Secretary, Carolynne Atkinson. Close to 50% of our offering is received from PAR subscribers. Parishioners tell us that this method is most helpful for those who travel, have other Sunday commitments or relocate for summer and/or winter months.

Stewardship – Included in this mailing is a Christmas offering envelope. We live in hope that we have the resources collectively to fulfill the mission God has for us. However, some have not taken the time to review their financial commitment to Christ Church. In this season of giving, let's remember to give back to God from the abundance that He has entrusted to us. While support to other organizations (such as the orchestra, the local hospital, Cancer Society etc.) are indeed tax deductible and honourable, they would not be avenues of Christian stewardship. Please consider what God is calling you to do this Christmas.

Future Ministries Fund ("FMF") – In late October, we received a memorial gift designated to the FMF for which we are very grateful. Kindly remember that contributions to the FMF may be a result of bequests, memorials, grants or designated donations and are used only for ministry-related expenses.

Youth Ministries – Enclosed with this mailing, you will find a 2018 Winter/Spring Youth Group schedule for the next year. For years, this has been an area of intentional focus at Christ Church. We ask that you hold the staff and volunteers involved in these programs in your prayers. At the Easter Vigil (*Saturday, March 31st*), we will be celebrating the Confirmation of 13 young people and the Reception of 1 adult marking the conclusion of 7 months preparation! Please join us for this very special service.

Summer 2018 Day Camp – We have heard from our parents that summer planning for their children starts early in the New Year. Our 2018 Day Camp for children ages 4 - 12 is scheduled for Monday, August 13 to Friday, August 17. More information will be coming but parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, please mark your calendars now! Take a peek at the photos on our website under Parish Life/Recent Events to see what an awesome week it was in August 2017.

To conclude, we are again reminded that the Holy Season of Advent beckons us to focus on the gifts of hope, love, joy and peace that we receive through the coming of our Lord. We wish you and your family a peaceful Advent and a joyous Christmas.

Peter Harvey
Rector's Warden

Sonia Sobers
People's Warden

Shumaila Desrochers
Deputy Rector's Warden

Stephen Nilam
Deputy People's Warden