



Around Glen Ayr

The newsletter of Glen Ayr United Church
Advent 2011



ADVENT

Advent Lunch
Sunday, December 4
After the service

The Ministry of Pastoral
Care invites you to join
them for a time of good
food, good fellowship and



History of White Gift Sunday

White Gift Sunday dates back to 1904 in Ohio. The wife of a Methodist minister and her two daughters came up with the idea of giving gifts wrapped in white paper at Christmas time to people in need.

Gifts are wrapped in white so that they will be anonymous and so that people who can only give a little will not be embarrassed. There is a Chinese tradition where all the people gave their king a gift wrapped in plain white paper so that every gift would look the same. Each person gave the king what they were able, and the king welcomed them all.

The White Gift shares in the spirit of Christ and the God of love at Christmas. We give gifts of love to people in need. These gifts are often nonperishable food items which are distributed to people in the community.

White Gift Sunday celebrates the stewardship of God's love and giving at the time of year when we remember the coming of the King of Kings



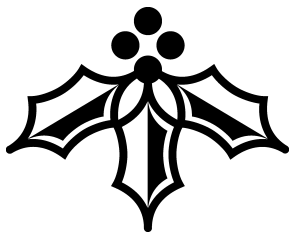
Ministry & Personnel

With the approval of our Joint Needs Assessment Report by the congregation and by the Presbytery, we can proceed with seeking an ordered minister for halftime supply appointment. A major change in the description of responsibilities and skills (see the Appendix to the JNAC report) is the absence from Sunday worship one week per month. Thus the minister will have 12 hours to apply to other ministerial tasks. The congregation, under the guidance of the ministry of Worship and Praise, will assume responsibility for a Sunday service once a month.

Come and Learn How to Use the Projector

Have you ever wanted to use the projector during a presentation but didn't know how? Well, now is the time to learn! Join us for a step by step instructional on how to use the projector in "easy" terms.

When: January 15, 2012
Time: 11:30
Place: Glen Ayr



Mission & Service Fund

Hope Is a Star

A letter from Deborah Elliot and Don Gibson, overseas personnel in Nicaragua, printed in Minutes for Mission 2011

In the Book of Luke, Mary's cousin Elizabeth learns that the impossible becomes possible. In Nicaragua you have to believe that the impossible is possible: How do we live out this constant hope?

Despite extreme poverty there is joy here. I witness the impossible every Sunday: people love their church, are fervent in their prayer, and value giving their time to the church.

The municipality rarely picks up garbage; an older gentleman comes with his trusty horse to collect it. The store has started getting glass Coke bottles instead of plastic . . . One step at a time . . . The impossible is possible.

During this season of giving, please consider an extra gift to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. Help to carry out the work done locally, nationally, and internationally through our unified fund.

The church Christmas tree is decorated. A star hangs from the ceiling. There are no ladders: How on earth did they hang the star? A young man climbed into the attic and lowered the star from a hole in the ceiling . . . The impossible is possible.

There was a young unmarried girl. An angel told her she would have a baby. The baby is sent from God and brings a revolutionary message. The impossible is possible. Advent: a season of joy and expectation. We prepare to believe the impossible is possible.

Christian Nurture and Development

During the four Sundays of November, CN & D sponsored a Bible Study with an average attendance of 10 people. Lunch was provided for the first session and participants brought their lunch thereafter. We studied "Biblical Families – Their Joys and Struggles." This was ably led by Bunny Judson and we discussed the stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Ruth and Naomi, Lazarus, Mary and Martha, and Jairus and his 12-year old daughter.

The participants found the study interesting, enjoyed the fellowship and look forward to our next study, which will take place in the Lenten season.

January 15, 2012 after church, a tutorial will be held to show us how to use the projector system. Mary Burton and Wendy Ashworth will facilitate and handouts will be available. We encourage all ministry members to attend and any of the congregation is most welcome.

Advent Message

Jesus will return!

It is hard to believe that a calendar year is almost complete. For Christians, Advent symbolizes the start of the Christian year. It's a time when we can respond to this great truth. For weeks we have been faced with "Christmastime" - shopping, office parties, and family get-togethers that seem to be driven by a life force of their own. Important? Yes, as all are part of Christmastime. It is, however, easy in the journey to Christmas for Advent to become part of this pre-Christmas ritual.

Advent is not a time of just contemplation; nor is it a time of just simplifying. It's a time to celebrate how Christ recreates all of creation. Do our thoughts drive us to the focus of the "babe in the manger"? Even this story is not the point but rather only one part of Christmastide. To be sure, the

birth matters, but it is the Incarnation of God in Jesus, starting here on earth with us, that is the real miracle of Christmas.

The journey of Advent is not about getting there. It's about the distinct celebration of Advent, the culmination of things in Jesus, Christmas and the mystery of the Incarnation of God in Jesus. The end and the beginning of Jesus' story matter.

Let us celebrate our Advent journey fully and completely, so that it is with anticipation, with awe and with extended joy and rejoicing from December 24 through January 6 we keep physically and spiritually the energy of Christmas.

Yours in Christ,
Brian Elcombe

Advent and Christmas Scriptures

Advent 1

Isaiah 64: 1-9
Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1: 3-9
Mark 13: 24-37

Advent 2

Isaiah 40: 1-11
Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13
Mark 1: 1-8

Advent 3

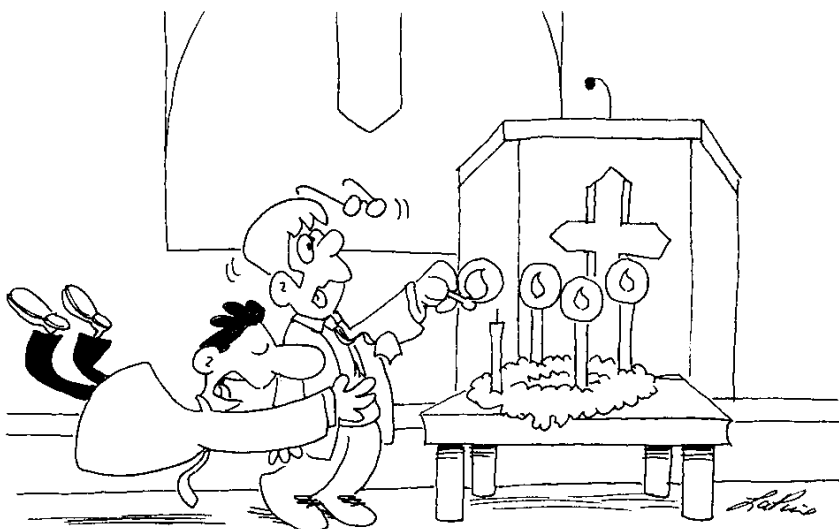
Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24
John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Advent 4

2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16
Luke 1: 47-55
Romans 16: 25-27
Luke 1: 26-38

Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9: 2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2: 11-14
Luke 2: 1-20



Pastor Howie saves the third Sunday of Advent.

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Sunday Worship, 10:30 am

Glen Ayr Saturday Nighters

January 21 6:00 p.m. - Pot luck dinner and games at Glen Ayr
February 18 2:00 p.m. - Scarborough Village Theatre Nunsense
March 17 Irish Theme - Details TBA
April Bus trip being organized - Details TBA
May 26 2:00 p.m. - Scarborough Village Theatre My Fair Lady
Followed by the "Progressive Dinner" to be held at Glen Ayr.

Everyone is Welcome!

Coffee. Tea or...?

It has jokingly been said that the United Church of Canada is famous for social justice and casseroles. Certainly, food and fellowship have been important elements in the life of Glen Ayr. Gathering after Sunday worship to enjoy cookies and beverages has been a longtime custom, and the Board is thankful for the volunteers who have faithfully prepared and served these refreshments over the years.

If you enjoy this weekly ministry of hospitality, will you consider volunteering to support it? You might offer to be the convenor for a month, ensuring that supplies are available. You might offer to come to the church at 10:00 am to put on the coffee and boil water for tea, and to set up the table at the rear of the sanctuary. You might offer to serve the beverages and wash the mugs. Teams of 3 (both genders are welcome) share the workload and give pleasure to everyone.

There is a green-covered binder on the refreshment trolley in the Fellowship Room that is always on display at Refreshment time. Why not sign up for a specific date and see how light the work can be with a team?

Bake Sale Advance Notice!

Celebrate Scouting Week, February 19, 2012
Cub Scout Bake Sale in the Fellowship Room
after church services

Glen Ayr's Women's Book Club

Join us on the last Monday of each month in the Fellowship Room of the church at 1:30 pm. We begin with refreshments, and at 2:00 pm discussion of the chosen book begins. We are usually finished at 3:30 pm.

On November 28, we'll be discussing The Help by Kathryn Stockett. Everyone is invited to bring a photo or item from the early 1960's, along with a favourite memory from that era. We will also choose books for discussion for January, February, and March, to enable everyone to order the books at the library.

Our December gathering will be a lunch at 1:00 pm on December 12, at the Canyon Creek Chophouse on Progress Avenue, across from the Scarborough Town Centre. The restaurant has agreed to give us separate bills. Please call the church office to let us know that you will join us.

Around Glen Ayr is usually published four times a year. Contributions are welcome, and may be edited for length and content. For information about any articles or **to contact anyone mentioned**, please call the church office, 416-438-9843.

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