

Olivet New Church

Chatterbox

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The Lord's Advent in Winter

We, as Canadians, love to share jokes about winter, snow, and coldness. This well represents the general feeling shared during our long and impressive winter. Cold and harsh weather may not be so much fun, though we try to enjoy the season as much as we can. Our activities are mostly confined to the indoors, and sunshine and greenness are missed a lot. Yet, the Lord came to us in this desolate season. We celebrate the birth of baby Jesus.

We read, "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" (Isaiah 9:6). Joy and festivity of the Lord's Advent may compensate for most of our wintery qualms. Though we celebrate the Lord's Nativity on the 25th of December, we are not quite sure whether the Lord actually was born on this day; the Gospels do not give the exact date.

Scholars agree that this day might not be as the day of Jesus' birth. According to *Britannica*, December 25 was first identified as the Nativity date by Sextus Julius Africanus in 221 and later became the universally accepted date." It, further, reads, "Most likely the day was the Christianizing of the dies solis invicti nati ('day of the birth of the unconquered sun'), a popular holiday in the Roman Empire that celebrated the winter solstice as a symbol of the resurgence of the sun, the casting away of winter and the heralding of the rebirth of spring and summer."

Although the Heavenly Doctrines do not provide the clear date of the Nativity, they gave us two different accounts regarding the Nativity season. First, "times in the world are spring, summer, autumn; and the fulness of them is winter...This is meant by the Lord's coming being in 'the fulness of time' or of 'times'; that is, when there is no longer any truth of faith and good of charity remaining (Inv. 10, AR 478:2, cf. AC 2905). The various passages refer to winter for the season of the Nativity. In contrast, the *True Christian Religion* says that "the coming of the Lord may be likened to the coming of heat, which takes place in spring" (TCR 774; cf. Inv. 34).

Are you confused? Winter and spring seem to be mentioned as the Nativity season. We may understand these two different accounts, such as that the Lord's

Advent was the turning point and junction; He came in the world's winter state where no good and truth remained, but His Advent completely changed the world's dark and hopeless state into a bright and vibrant spring state.

The seasons discussed regarding the Nativity are all symbolic expressions; these symbolic seasons do not necessarily coincide with the seasons in this natural world. Thus, we are not sure whether the Lord came in winter or spring. But it gives us an uplifting idea, which is more important, that while we are suffering from being stuck in mental or spiritual winter, the Lord's Coming into us could change our general state from its winter to spring. The good news is that inviting the Lord into our state is not difficult, because the Lord teaches us, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door. I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Rev. Jon Lee

From the Pastor

Christmas is known as a season or celebration of Light. "Arise, shine, for thy Light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee... Nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (Isaiah 60:1,3)

Good light at this time of year is so needed. All of a sudden the daylight "savings" is spent in one lump sum. And with the continuing global tilt away from the sun, we in the north advance more each day into deeper darkness.

There is a such good reason to celebrate the Lord's light during this time of the year. Three days after "the darkest evening of the year" we probably don't even notice that the days are beginning to get longer. But on our calendar, we mark that third day as Christmas and celebrate the birth of Jesus. There are ancient reasons the old Celtic holiday of Yule was taken over by the Christians for their own sacred uses. And, we can reflect on the meaning of the Lord choosing a time six months later to send out His 12 disciples, three days before the brightest evening of the year, to announce His Second Coming.

OLIVET REOPENING—PHASE ONE (DECEMBER TO JANUARY)

Shifting times and shifting brightness—on that note, I am certainly rejoicing to announce the opening of the Olivet Church for gathering for in person worship. We still have many restrictions to work with including no singing and some attendance limits. But there is "light at the end of the tunnel" as they say. A "Reopening Team" has been working for months and months to present an acceptable plan given the diverse needs of the Olivet congregation. We thank you for filling out the survey to help guide our deliberations. We can't come up with any one solution which will serve all the concerns of all the members and

friends. But we will make a start that will at least allow everyone to attend at least some of the time. Lets call this PHASE ONE.

More will be revealed, and we will continue to modify and adjust as we learn our way and as conditions change through the winter into the spring. We will start with alternating services between individuals who elect to share proof of their vaccination and those, vaccinated or not, who will not be asked to provide any information. Provincial and regional regulations will be strictly adhered to for both services, and we hope that everyone who feels safe to come to church will do so. You will be kept updated weekly with phone and email messages concerning the upcoming services and the way you will need to "save a seat" at church in order to attend.

We are trusting in the Lord as we go forward and know we will all need patience to work through the reopening process. Let's keep an eye on the hope and the day when all restrictions will be lifted. Let's pray we can gather again as we once did, but in the meantime make the best of the situation we all face.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Alternating services begin in December, but there will be NO "IN-PERSON" WORSHIP CHRISTMAS EVE OR CHRISTMAS DAY and NO CHURCH Boxing Day Sunday.

Sunday school will not be held in person in the first phase of our reopening plan.

See you in church!
Michael

From the Assistant to the Pastor

The pastor's office has resumed sending sermon manuscripts, mainly via email. If you want to receive Olivet's Sunday sermons, please contact the office.

You might remember I came with 172 boxes. I have opened all of them, which means I have many empty moving boxes now. They are sturdy and coated and are **free!** If you need any, please let me know!

Jon Lee



**Registration is Open
for the Next School Year!**

Students registered by November 30th (forms submitted and registration fees paid) will receive a **\$200** early-bird discount off the tuition! Contact the office for a registration form (office@olivetschool.ca or 416-239-3054).

From the Principal

In an effort to bring some hope and help to families who are struggling to make ends meet in the Greater Toronto Area, Olivet School is holding a toy drive to collect new toys or teen gifts (unwrapped) from November 30 to December 14.

Most in need of toys/gifts:

Babies
Tweens (10-13)*
Teens (14-17)*



(*digital music players, hair dryers, curling irons, hair kits, makeup kits, jewelry, electronics, books, hoodies, sporting goods, backpacks, school supplies, board games, scarves, gloves, gift cards)

You can visit <http://www.salvationarmy.ca/ontariocentraleast/toy-mountain/> for more information about the Toy Mountain campaign.

Job Opportunity

Washington New Church School is seeking a full-time 5th & 6th grade teacher! See posting at: <http://www.ncpeoplevision.org/>
Questions? Contact Brian Smith: 301-850-3029
brian.smith@washnewchurch.org

Call for Volunteers

The position of Assistant Treasurer needs to be filled. This is a two-year position leading to the position of Treasurer. It takes about two years to learn about the whole Olivet financial cycle and processes, but it is not as onerous as in the past. Olivet now has a bookkeeper, payroll company, and a comptroller to assist the Treasurer. Ideally, the total commitment would be for seven years, two as Assistant Treasurer and five as Treasurer. Our current Treasurer would like to be able to retire in about two years' time. This role cannot be hired out. Without a Treasurer, it is very difficult to pay employees. Please contact Jerry Jutras for more information.

The position of property manager needs to be filled to monitor and alert the board about property issues and projects. This role cannot be hired out. The day-to-day process is handled by our property management company, Stonegate. See the 2020 annual report for more information or contact Lynn Starkey.

Spring Marriage Retreat

In the past, the Carmel New Church has held a marriage retreat in the spring. This year, I extend the invitation to all married couples of the General Church in Canada.

With this event, there will be worships, doctrinal classes, and discussions, all related to the subject of marriage. We also hope this can be an opportunity for a variety of married couples to come together and enjoy the wonderful gift of marriage that the Lord has given us. We hope this will be something fun and revitalizing!

Where is it? This year, the marriage retreat will be held at a new location in the Blue Mountains. The chalets are called the Tyrolean and are a little over two hours from both Kitchener and Toronto! Here is a link: [- Tyrolean, Blue Mountains –](#)

When is it? We have booked this retreat for Friday, April 29, to Sunday, May 1, 2022.

How much does it cost? Each couple is to pay \$250 for housing accommodations. The GCIC has agreed to cover the rest of the rental costs. Couples are responsible for their own food and transportation there.

How many couples are invited? We have currently opened this event to 12 couples. There is room enough for 14, and if there is enough interest, we will open it further to accommodate them.

Whom do I pay? Please make sure that cheques are written out to the “General Church of the New Jerusalem in Canada.” You can submit the cheque to me personally or you can mail it to the Carmel New Church:
40 Chapel Hill Drive
Kitchener, ON N2R 1N2

If you choose to mail the cheque to the church, please let me know!

How do I sign up? Email me at asstpastor@carmelnewchurch.org or text/call at 266-899-4746 and let me know that you’re interested. To guarantee a spot, please have the cheque written and submitted to me (or mailed to the Carmel New Church address) by April 1st. Your cheque submission demonstrates that you are committed to coming and it secures your room. Early submissions are welcome and if there is still availability after April 1st then couples who missed the initial deadline are still welcome.

We are looking forward to getting this underway and if you have any questions or comments don’t hesitate to ask!

All the best,
Justin Schorran (assistant to the pastor at Carmel New Church)

New Book by Rev. Michael Gladish

A new book on *Prayer and Providence* is now available. This is a compilation of sermons written by Mike Gladish over several decades. It includes an introduction on prayer in general, a specific treatment of the Lord's Prayer, a whole section on Providence, and another section with mostly expository sermons illustrating the principles discussed earlier. In all, it's about a 285 page paperback. There are a few copies available in the church lobby. When Olivet has reopened for in-person church, people may pick up a copy and send payment to Mike directly (\$18.50 CDN). He can accept payment by PayPal or by a cheque sent to him at 3039 Huntingdon Pike, Box 550, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009. All the money from the sale of the book will go to the General Church for future publication work. Anyone without access to the Olivet building should contact Mike directly to purchase a copy. There will be a review in the *New Church Life* coming out this month.

December Anniversaries

Adri and Mieke Braam: December 1, 52 years
Denis and Sharene Young: December 4, 39 years
Dr. Basil (and Marnie) Orchard: December 15, 60 years
Andrew and Claire Hurd: December 30, 10 years

Know ye, that the delights of conjugal love ascend to the highest heaven, and conjoin themselves on the way, and there, with the delights of all heavenly loves, and thus they enter into their felicity which endures to eternity. — CL 294-8

December Calendar

~ December 2021 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Progress Reports Distribution (Fall Term)	4
5 10:30a Worship (JUL) In-Person, Vaccinated Only	6 7:30p Pastors' Council	7	8	9 10a Arcana (Zoom)	10	11
12 10:30a Worship (MKC Tableaux) In-Person, Open to All	13 7p Board Meeting	14	15 Christmas Concert 7:30p Doctrinal Class (MKC)	16	17 Chatterbox Deadline PA 1/2 Day (12:15 pm Dismissal)	18
19 10:30a Worship (JUL) In-Person, Vaccinated Only	20 Christmas & New Year Break	21 Christmas & New Year Break	22 Christmas & New Year Break	23 Christmas & New Year Break 10a Arcana (Zoom)	24 Christmas & New Year Break 5p Christmas Eve Worship - Virtual (MKC)	25 Christmas Christmas & New Year Break 10:30a Christmas Day Worship - Virtual (JUL)
26 Boxing Day Christmas & New Year Break 10:30a No Church Worship	27 Christmas & New Year Break	28 Christmas & New Year Break	29 Christmas & New Year Break	30 Christmas & New Year Break	31 Christmas & New Year Break	

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