

November 26, 2017

Dear Members and Friends of Chippawa Presbyterian Church,

On behalf of the Session, staff and leadership of the congregation, I want to wish you a beautiful and joy-filled Christmas season. This year, our Advent theme in worship is 'Angel Messengers'. Together we will 'hear the angels sing' with the message of hope, peace, joy, and love, all found in God's gift to us in Jesus. I invite you to be at worship that you might welcome Jesus into your life and into your homes.

There is a lot going on this Advent and Christmas!

First, thank you to all who filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Our congregation collected over 70 boxes at the writing of this letter. Thank you as well to those who volunteered time to help receive boxes from other organizations in Niagara.

We invite you to kick off your season by attending '**Home For the Holidays**' on **Fri. December 1st or Saturday December 2nd at 7:30 p.m.** This Christmas production will include choral numbers, Christmas readings, ensembles and solos, all from our church family. If you enjoyed our Cabaret night a few years ago, this evening will appeal to you. Word is the minister and his wife want to 'Let It Snow'. Tickets are free, and an offering will be taken to support the school in Los Cedros, Nicaragua.

Whenever we have Communion, it makes me think of gathering with family and friends for big holiday meals. On **Sunday, December 3rd** you are invited to be God's family at **the Lord's Table**. You are invited to bring a food donation for Project Share, or make a contribution to the benevolent as we are mindful to feed those who have less at their table.

Make a difference and get your Christmas shopping done at the same time on **Friday, December 8th at 7 p.m.** at the "Girls Night Out FUNd-raiser". Each year these fabulous vendors provide you unique gift ideas. A portion of the funds raised will be directed to the school in Nicaragua.

Our **Church Family Christmas Dinner is also December 10th**, starting with punch at **4:45 p.m.** Dinner will be turkey, potatoes, carrots and salads. Dessert is potluck and is amazing every year. A freewill offering will be taken to cover expenses. Any remaining funds will be directed to support the Nicaragua school. Contact the church to reserve your seats. After dinner we will move to the sanctuary to sing traditional Christmas carols together and decorate the sanctuary Christmas tree.

On Sunday, December 17th, our children will lead a portion of the worship service. Come and be uplifted as they share good news with you.

Our Christmas Eve services will be held on Sunday, December 24th. Our Family Service will be held at 7 p.m. At 10 p.m. we will hold our Christmas Eve Communion Service. A Healing Service will finish 2017 and start 2018 on Sunday, December 31st.

Thank you for all your volunteer support of on-going ministries, from nursery to Sunday School, from youth group to care team, from greeting and ushering, to praise and AVL and counting teams, women's groups, study groups, Board of Managers and Session, all of the many ways you volunteer help make us a warm and welcoming community of faith.

As we come to the end of 2017 and I look back, I continue to be in awe at the spiritual vitality and supportive generosity of our congregation. It's been quite a year! We welcomed Tracy, our new caretaker, Chris, our new Coordinator of Discipleship and Mary Ellen, Coordinator of Care Ministries. We celebrated Trish's ordination and move to her own ministry with the congregation in Fort Erie. We saw a team of 11 head to Nicaragua to build a church. We won most pledges raised for the 7th year in a row at the Project Share Grand Prix. We have come alongside Habitat for Humanity with lunches and builds, and supported ministries around the world with our endowment. All while showing love and care for one another. It's beautiful to see God at work in us and through us.

Our giving has shown a healthy increase from 2016. This is so encouraging and empowering. Thank you! As we come to the end of the year, let's make a strong final push of generosity to keep building on this strength.

As you consider what God is doing and has done through us, and as you are considering your Christmas charitable giving, I humbly ask you to prayerfully consider a generous gift of gratitude to God for our congregation. An envelope has been provided. You can also donate online from our church's website at www.chippawapc.ca.

May the grace of Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit bring you joy and peace this Christmas and in 2018.

Yours in Christ,



Doug Schonberg
MINISTER