

December 2025

| Sunday  | Monday | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday                      | Saturday               |
|---|--------|--|---|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 30 – 1 <sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT<br>10am Worship – Dr. Neil Craton (“ <i>When the Soul Felt Its Worth</i> ”)<br>11:15am Faith Formation: <i>Local Missionaries: Caleb &amp; Cheyenne (YFC)/Tim Nielsen (Naomi House)</i><br>12pm BBYOL | 1      | 2<br>8am Men’s Prayer Meeting<br><br>7pm Neighbourhood Caroling (meet at the church) | 3<br>6:30pm English Conversation Class<br>6:30pm Bible Study: <i>Parables</i><br>7:00pm Prayer Meeting  | 4  | 5<br>7pm Youth (Games)      | 6<br>1-4pm Baking Club |
| 7 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT<br>10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (“ <i>Fall on Your Knees</i> ”)<br>11:15am Faith Formation – Ed & Joy Loewen (“ <i>Sharing Christmas...pt. 1</i> ”)<br>12pm BBYOL<br>5pm C&C Xmas Party!                 | 8      | 9<br>8am Men’s Prayer Meeting<br><br>7pm Neighbourhood Caroling (meet at the church) | 10<br>6:30pm English Conversation Class<br>6:30pm Bible Study: <i>Parables</i><br>7:00pm Prayer Meeting | 11   | 12<br>7pm Youth Xmas Party! | 13                     |
| 14 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT<br>10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (“ <i>His Law is Love</i> ”)<br>11:15am Faith Formation – Ed & Joy Loewen (“ <i>Sharing Christmas...pt. 2</i> ”)<br>12pm BBYOL<br>6pm An Evening of Carols              | 15     | 16<br>8am Men’s Prayer Meeting   | 17<br>6:30pm English Conversation Class<br>6:30pm Bible Study: <i>Parables</i><br>7:00pm Prayer Meeting | 18   | 19                          | 20<br>7:30pm UGM       |
| 21– 4 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT<br>Communion Sunday<br>10am Worship – <i>The Jesse Tree: Family Presentation</i> ; Pastor Yuri (“ <i>His Glory Proclaim</i> ”)<br>11:15am Faith Formation<br>12pm BBYOL                                | 22     | 23<br>8am Men’s Prayer Meeting   | 24<br>CHRISTMAS EVE<br>6pm Worship – Pastor Yuri ( <i>O Holy Night</i> )                                | 25<br>CHRISTMAS DAY<br> | 26                          | 27                     |
| 28<br>10am Worship<br>11:15am Faith Formation<br>12pm BBYOL   | 29     | 30<br>8am Men’s Prayer Meeting   | 31<br>NEW YEAR’S EVE  | 1<br>NEW YEAR’S DAY  | 2                           | 3<br>1-4pm Baking Club |



**Bethesda Church Office Information**  
**Hours: Tuesday-Friday 10:00am-2:30pm**  
**Phone: 204-987-2890 (main office)**  
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# Bethesda Church

## Newsletter



### Congregational letter

December 2025

**The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. –Isaiah 9:2**

Nearly 3000 years ago, Isaiah lamented that many of his people had lost touch with the truth, with ultimate reality. Living in a world of endless disappointment, of wars, famines, and plagues, they were disheartened that their God seemed so distant. Why didn’t he answer their prayers? Plus, compared to the nations around them, they felt irrelevant and inconsequential. That’s why, instead of seeking God more earnestly when he seemed far off, they sought “enlightenment” from oracles who were closer to hand and gave the kinds of answers they liked. Instead of depending on their God more completely in times of hunger and war, they sourced security and sustenance from down-to-earth outlets: those same rich, powerful neighbours...and their gods.

In Isaiah 8, the prophet calls out people’s tendency to “consult mediums and spiritists”, whose “chirping and muttering” gives the misleading impression of accessing—maybe even manipulating—the strange, dark forces that seem to control destiny. In forty years of preaching (which his book documents) Isaiah never let up: he was ever at work indicting our dependence on the familiar idols we worship knowingly and unknowingly: “Should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! [Without] this word, they have no light of dawn...” (8:19-20) None of this made Isaiah popular. Of course, none of the true prophets were. In every age, only a small number are willing to stand in the uncomfortable light of God’s truth.

People nowadays smirk at how backwards those pre-modern people seem, yet many of us are still convinced that by harnessing mysterious powers we can dispense with life’s mysteries, such as: *Why is existence so painful? If God cares about me, why can’t I feel him near me? Am I not better off on my own?* When it comes down to it most of the time most people are in a muddle. They go through life in a kind of haze. Especially now. With all our knowledge we are more uncertain than ever. With all our life altering technology few find contentment. Our own chirping, muttering oracles (AI, phones, TV’s, consoles, etc.) stream endless content but produce scarcity of purpose. Our omnipresent idols (health, wealth, identity, education, security, politics, etc.) demand attention but yield scanty confidence.

We Christians are often tempted to fret about disconnection, we’re shocked at how detached people are from basic reality, let alone ultimate reality. But really, there is no difference from before: abandoning God has always left people in the dark.

Still, God specializes in breaking through, breaking into the night, into times and places where it seems there can be “no light of dawn”, reaching people full of “distress, darkness and fearful gloom”. (8:22) There is a reason that so much of the Christmas story happens at night. Night stands for fear, for confusion, for despair. But God took it back by setting one night apart, making it holy. One special—oh, so holy—night, he broke in.



Each Sunday this month, we will be contemplating the words of that most beautiful Christmas carol.

*O Holy Night* is itself a kind of emblem of the modern muddle and of God’s ability to break into it despite our best efforts to keep him out. None of the men who had a hand in its popularity could be considered orthodox Christians, not the original French poet who was a wine merchant and attended church infrequently nor the composer who was best known for his theatrical work; not the Unitarian minister who didn’t so much translate as completely rework the original nor the Canadian inventor who made the first ever transatlantic radio broadcast in which he played it on his violin! Nevertheless, despite the understandable controversy its origins generated, God’s truth shines through the darkness.

To my mind, this makes it the perfect vehicle to speak to our postmodern age which longs for transcendent truth but has stopped believing it is

possible to discover. The miracle of Christmas is that by coming down into our muddle, in the person of Jesus Christ God’s pure, unadulterated light pierces benighted despair.

He didn’t stop there, of course. Advent is not only a time to remember he came—the extraordinary circumstances surrounding his birth—but also the even more extraordinary reason *why* he came: our sin which made us night stalkers, slaves to the darkness. Even at Christmas his death which freed us, and his resurrection which raised us to new life, should be at the front of our minds. Most of all, Advent is a time to long for the day when he will come again!

Won’t you join us in sharing *O Holy Night*, the Good News it contains, with our neighbours? And with your friends and family? There will be so many good opportunities to bear the light into the darkness this season! Make sure you don’t miss any of them!

—YH

December 2025

Bible Reading Plan

- Ezek 40:1-16
- 2 Kings 1
- \*2 John
- Ezek 40:17-27
- 2 Kings 2:1-22
- 3 John
- 2 Kings 2:23-3:27
- Ezek 40:28-47
- Psalm 76
- Ezek 40:48-41:7
- 2 Kings 4
- 2 Kings 5
- Ezek 41:8-26
- 1 Timothy 1:1-11
- Ezek 42
- 1 Tim 1:12-20
- 2 Kings 6:1-23
- 2 Kings 6:24-7:20
- \*1 Tim 2
- Ezek 43:1-12
- 2 Kings 8
- Ezek 43:13-27
- 1 Tim 3
- 2 Kings 9
- Ezek 44

- 2 Kings 10
- Ezek 45:1-12
- 1 Tim 4
- 2 Kings 11-12
- Ezek 45:13-25
- 1 Tim 5:1-16
- 2 Kings 13:1-14:22
- Ezek 46:1-12
- 1 Tim 5:17-25
- 2 Ki 14:23-15:38
- Ezek 46:13-24
- 1 Tim 6:1-10
- 2 Ki 16:1-17:6
- Hosea 1
- Ezek 47:1-12
- 1 Tim 6:11-21
- 2 Ki 17:7-41
- Hos 2-3
- Hos 4
- Ezek 47:13-23
- 2 Ki 18
- Hos 5
- Ezek 48:1-7
- 2 Ki 19
- 2 Ki 20-21
- Ezek 48:8-14
- \*Hos 6-7

- Hos 8-10
- Ezek 48:15-22
- 2 Ki 22
- Hos 11-12
- Ezek 48:23-29
- 2 Ki 23:1-30
- 2 Ki 23:31-25:21
- Ezek 48:30-35
- Psalm 128
- 2 Ki 25:22-30
- Hosea 13-14
- Philemon
- Nahum 1-3
- 2 Timothy 1:1-14
- Habbakuk 1-2
- 2 Tim 1:15-2:26
- Hab 3
- 2 Tim 3-4
- Psalm 150

CONGRATULATIONS!  
YOU’VE  
FINISHED  
READING THE  
WHOLE BIBLE!  
My apologies for  
needing 25 days  
instead of the usual  
20 to finish up...

\*Memory Verses:

- #1. 2 John 1:5-6  
*And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.*
- #2. 1 Tim 2:1-2  
*I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.*

- #3. Hosea 6:1  
*“Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds.”*
- #4. 2 Tim 3:16  
*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, [...]*



HYMN FOR THE NATIVITY

— BY CHARLES WESLEY

Light of those whose dreary dwelling  
Borders on the shades of death,  
Come, and by thy love’s revealing,  
Dissipate the clouds beneath:  
The new heav’n and earth’s Creator,  
In our deepest darkness rise,  
Scatt’ring all the night of nature,  
Pouring eye-sight on our eyes.

Still we wait for thy appearing,  
Life and joy thy beams impart,  
Chafing\* all our fears and cheering  
Every poor benighted heart.  
Come, and manifest the favour  
God hath for our ransom’d race;  
Come thou universal Saviour,  
Come and bring the Gospel grace.

Save us in thy great compassion,  
O Thou mild pacific\*\* prince,  
Give the knowledge of salvation,  
Give the pardon of our sins;  
By thine all-redeeming merit  
Every burden’d soul release,  
Every weary wand’ring spirit  
Guide into thy perfect peace.

\*warming    \*\*peaceful

O HOLY NIGHT

— ENGLISH TEXT BY JOHN SULLIVAN DWIGHT; MUSIC BY ADOLPHE ADAM

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;  
It is the night of the dear Savior’s birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!  
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine! O night when Christ was born!  
O night divine! O night, O night divine!

Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and His gospel is peace.  
Chains shall He break,  
for the slave is our brother,  
And in His name all oppression shall cease.  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,  
Let all within us praise His holy name.  
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!  
His pow’r and glory evermore proclaim!

CHRISTMAS  
SPECIAL EVENTS:

December 2 & 9 @ 7pm:

Neighbourhood Christmas Caroling

December 7 & 14 @ 11:15am:

“SHARING CHRISTMAS WITH THE  
UNCHURCHED/UNREACHED”

Ed & Joy Loewen (Faith Formation)

December 14 @ 6pm:

“AN EVENING OF CAROLS”

December 21 @ 10am:

“THE JESSE TREE”

Family Christmas Presentation

Dec 24 @ 6pm:

“O HOLY NIGHT”

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

INVITE YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS!