

Chalmers' Spirit

*Built by FAITH,
strengthened through WORSHIP,
bringing HOPE to life's journey.*

December News!

Christmas is coming! Advent is here! Take time to enjoy the season and reflect on the reason! Enjoy the Carol Fest, the Christmas pageant, the Reachout service, the Christmas Eve services, the service of stories on the first Sunday after Christmas, the

anticipation of the New Year. We have so much to be thankful for!!

With so much to celebrate, what can we do to remember and include those less fortunate than ourselves? Can you volunteer at the kettle, sing

carols to those needing a boost, or be a listening ear for someone who is struggling with Christmas?

Let's keep Christ in Christmas not by using special words, but by treating others as Christ would, putting their needs first.

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From the Editor

Anyone who knows me, knows that I am a huge advocate for children & youth. I believe that children and youth are much more capable than we give them credit for and I believe that children & youth will live up to the expectations you set for them. Even so, I was blown away by some children this past month.

The school that Torry & Isla attend has a new principal this year. He has been making some great improvements to the school and doing a great job of getting parents involved and positive about their children's education. He has the whole school focus on a character trait each month and then holds an assembly at the end of the month to recognize all of the students who have exemplified that trait. In September then focused on respect, and I attended the assembly at the beginning of October to see many students receive the certificate for respect. In October they focused on kindness and so at the beginning of November I returned to see those certificates presented.

So by November 11th, I had already attended two assemblies at my daughters' school. The assemblies had been fun and respectful, but what I would typically expect behavior-wise from a couple of hundred children.

So on Remembrance Day, the new principal again invited parents to join the school for a special assembly and I again attended, knowing what the previous two assemblies had been like. Boy, was I in for a surprise! The entire assembly, including children from Junior Kindergarten (3&4 years old) up to grade 8s, was done in complete silent in a slightly dim gymnasium. The teacher who had coordinated the program, led the assembly with a PowerPoint presentation. When the slide came up that was the image connected to each reading, the student doing the reading simply stood up, did their part and sat back down. There was no master of ceremonies, there were no instructions, there was no guidance. The whole school was involved and not a single teacher moved throughout the entire assembly. At the end of the assembly, the entire school stood, in silence, and placed their poppies on the cross as they exited the gym.

I was in complete and utter disbelief. I think I set pretty high standards for what I expect children to be capable of, but I was blown away. I decided that this new principal must be some kind of superhero to be able to get all of these children to sit so quietly and be so respectful for so long. So I did what I do when something surprises or pleases me—I shared it on Facebook. And then I was even more surprised! I had several other friends post back that they had experienced the exact same thing at their schools! This was not a singular experience and although I still give much of the credit to our new principal and the new climate that he has brought to our school, he is not the only principal capable of this.

So even I, who always believes that kids are capable of great things, was reminded again that children (and youth) will indeed live up to the expectations set for them, no matter how high (or low) we set them. If you want children to be awesome, give them clear criteria for how to "be awesome" and then expect them to achieve it. You'll be amazed!

Come and Worship!

Advent & Christmas Worship

2014

Nov. 30	Advent 1	
Dec. 7	Advent 2	White Gifts
Dec. 14	Advent 3	Reachout sings
Dec. 21	Advent 4	Christmas pageant
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve	

- ✓ Celebrating Jesus' birth: Carols & lessons 7:00 p.m.
- ✓ Candlelight Communion service 10:00 p.m.

Dec. 28 1st Sunday after Christmas 10:00 a.m.
Worship for All Ages / Christmas carols & stories

Chalmers Presbyterian Church

342 Pond Mills Rd. at Commissioners Rd., London
519-681-7242 www.chalmerslondon.com

You are invited to worship God and celebrate the birth of Jesus.
A blessed Christmas to you.
Peace be with you and joy to the world!

Intergenerational Worship

We've all heard "Children and youth are the future of our church." We've probably also all heard, "They're not just the future, they're the present". I've heard these expressions so many times and for so many years now that they've started to lose meaning. They've become just trite statements people make when they want to show how important children and youth ministry is.

But let's pause and think about it for a moment. It's true, isn't it, that those who are children and youth today are indeed the future of the church. If they don't grow up to see the value of attending worship Sunday by Sunday, there will be no Church (and I don't just mean the physical building of Chalmers) twenty years from now. Never before has this been so real. Mainline churches (like Chalmers) are losing our children and youth at an astounding rate and they're not coming back as adults. If we don't do something to change this course, the church really will be gone in the near future.

Personally, this idea terrifies me. But, it also should excite us. Now is the time for change. Now is the time to embrace new ideas. And Chalmers has been doing that! Chalmers has been looking the future in the eye and saying, "We want to be a part of that!" I'm constantly thrilled to tell other Presbyterians what we're doing at Chalmers and seeing their looks of interest and intrigue. People are surprised to hear some of the things we've done and how our congregation has embraced new ideas.

Members of the Worship Committee, Christian Education & Faith Development Committee and the Youth Ministry Team have been meeting for several months to look at ways that we can help include children and youth in worship. We have read study after study and heard presentation after presentation about how having children and youth in worship and involved in worship is key to having them become worshipping adults. In the bulletin throughout December and January, we will be sharing some of this research with you so that we can all learn, as a congregation, how important this is.

The group that has been meeting also believes that Sunday School is a valuable experience for children. It is a place where they can learn about God's word with peers their own age and in ways that are age appropriate. They can explore God's word in active, creative ways and ask questions as they arise. This is not possible during a typical sermon.

We are exploring ways that allow children to become more included in worship, but also maintain that special time devoted to learning as children. As a trial, starting January 11th, we are going to invite the children back into worship after the sermon so that they can be part of worship at the beginning when we approach God together, then they can listen to God's word and explore it in Sunday School, and then they can return to worship for the last few minutes as we respond to God together as a whole Christian family.

Change can always be tricky and even uncomfortable at first, but we are hopeful that as we learn together as a congregation to embrace children in worship, this small adjustment will make a big difference in the lives of our children and in the future of our church.



CONGREGATIONAL BREAKFAST

Sunday, 18 January 2015

8 – 9:15 am

at

Chalmers Church

(342 Pond Mills Road, London)

\$7.00 per person

Speaker: Matt Robertson

Land Technician for Sifton Properties

Topic: Victoria on the River (Thames)



All are welcome!

Come and enjoy singing
Christmas carols
along with a time of fellowship
over some tasty treats.

at
Chalmers Presbyterian Church
(342 Pond Mills Rd, London)

www.chalmerslondon.com
519-681-7242

CAROL FEST: Sunday, 14 December 2014, 3:00 pm

THE CHEESE MOUSE HAS RETURNED!

Flyers for this Pine River Cheese fundraiser are
available on the info table or speak to Pat MacKay
for more information.



LOOK FOR THE MOUSE.

Youth News

Don't Miss:

- Surprise Activity—date to be announced
- Secret Santa Gifts
- Christmas Caroling—Sunday, December 21st @ 6:30pm
- Christmas Eve Caroling—December 25th at 6:30pm

Shh, it's a surprise!

The youth ministry team has planned a really fun event leading up to Christmas, but we haven't found a time that works yet! Very shortly you will receive a private message with details about this!!

Secret Santas

At our youth lunch, someone suggested that we should do secret santas this year! We agree that this would be a really fun idea. If you would like to be included, please let me know. Once we know who wants to participate, we will come up with a date and time that works for as many as possible. Gifts will need to be under \$10 or homemade (I mean, who wouldn't love to receive some homemade cookies?!?!)

Christmas Caroling

Each year, a few days before Christmas, members of Chalmers get together and visit some people from the congregation who may be having a tougher Christmas—either because of health issues, or because they've recently lost a loved one, or for another reason. Last year, we had so many youth & young adults come out to sing that we were able to have one whole van designated the Teens & Twenties van. We would love to do that again. Meet at the church at 6:30pm on Sunday, December 21st!

More Christmas Caroling

There was a great suggestion for something really special that we could do at Chalmers on Christmas eve and the Teens & Twenties were asked to take on the leadership. As people arrive for worship, wouldn't it be cool to have a little group of carolers greet them? So we need singers and musicians—particularly guitars! This group does not have to be limited exclusively to Teens & Twenties; all are welcome to join us!

And if you DO play an instrument, why not consider joining the Christmas Eve orchestra too?

"Hockey Day in Dorchester"

Hockey for all ages.

All are welcome!

Helmets are mandatory!



Friday, Dec 26th

@

Dorchester Arena/Thames Centre
(2066 Dorchester Rd., Dorchester)

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

\$5 per player

For more information contact Rev. John at 519-681-7242
or bannerman@sympatico.ca

December 2014 - Chalmers Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10a Reachout to Ridgetown  10a Worship 10:15a Sunday School 11:15a Coffee Time 11:15a Library Open 11:30a Children's Choir	1 1:30p Gospel Study 6:30p Mission Cmte 7p Stephen Ministry 7p Gospel Study	2 9:30a Pastoral Care 1p Care & Share 1p Seniors' Fitness 2p Session Executive 7:30p Policy & Planning 7:30p CE & Faith Development	3 2p Knitting Circle 7p Reachout to Kensington	4 6:25p Praise Team Rehearsal 7:30p Senior Choir Rehearsal	5 9a Seniors' Fitness 9a Seniors' Satellite 1p Seniors' Euchre	6
7 10a Reachout to Tilsonburg  10a Worship 10:15a Sunday School 11:15a Coffee Time 11:15a Library Open 11:30a Children's Choir	8 1:30p Gospel Study 7p Worship Committee 7p Gospel Study	9 1p Care & Share 1p Seniors' Fitness 7p Session 7:30p Social Committee	10 2p Knitting Circle 6p Stewardship Team 7p Reachout to Ashwood Manor	11 6:25p Praise Team Rehearsal 7:30p Senior Choir Rehearsal	12 9a Seniors' Fitness 9a Seniors' Satellite 1p Seniors' Euchre	13 10:45a Reachout at Hamilton Road Seniors' Centre
14  10a Worship - Reachout 10:15a Sunday School 11:15a Coffee Time 11:15a Library Open 11:30a Children's Choir 3p Carol Fest	15 1:30p Gospel Study 6:30p Outreach & Comm. 7p Gospel Study 7p Worship Planning Team	16 1p Care & Share 1p Seniors' Fitness	17 2p Knitting Circle 7p Reachout to Royal View	18 6:25p Praise Team Rehearsal 7:30p Senior Choir Rehearsal	19 9a Seniors' Fitness 9a Seniors' Satellite 1p Seniors' Euchre	20
21  10a Worship - All Ages, Children's Pageant 11:15a Coffee Time 11:15a Library Open 11:30a Children's Choir 6:30p Caroling	22	23 10a Y4C Sandwich preparation 1p Care & Share 1p Seniors' Fitness	24 7p Lessons & Carols 10p Candlelight Communion	25 Christmas Day	26 9a Seniors' Fitness 9a Seniors' Satellite 11:30a Hockey Day in Dorchester Click here for more info 1p Seniors' Euchre	27
28  10a Worship - All Ages 11:15a Coffee Time 11:15a Library Open	29	30	31	1	2	3

Last Laugh!

