



SouthWinds

DECEMBER 2021

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Patrick's Words of Wisdom!

"The secret of The Muppets is they're not very good at what they do. Kermit's not a great host, Fozzie's not a good comedian, Miss Piggy's not a great singer..... Like, none of them are actually good at it, but they love it. And they're like a family, and they like putting on the show. And they have joy. And because of the joy, it doesn't matter that they're not good at it. And that's like what we should all be. Muppets."

Brett Goldstein

I remember growing up I used to love the Muppets and the author is correct, they were not very good at what they did, but no matter what they did, they had fun. This had me thinking about our community here at Windsor Park United Church. In many ways we are like the Muppets, although we have been blessed with wonderful talent in our music ministry, we sometimes don't do things perfectly, sometimes we struggle, but we always come together in joy as a community.



We are slowly, and I am using this term very cautiously, coming out of this pandemic time. We have been separated, we have been isolated, and it will take each of us some time to get reacquainted with the world as a place where we can engage with each other, and I think that it is important that we offer grace to each other as we move through this time. It might be good that we are coming to this time during Advent. Advent when we speak of hope. It might be a time for us to look to our own hope for this community and its future. Advent when we speak of peace. May be a time for us to offer peace to each other knowing that so many are doing their best in these difficult situations. Advent a time of joy. The joy that might come for reconnecting with those whom we have not seen for so long. Advent a time of love. The love, for each other and for the world, that we are called to embody as a community of believers.

The challenge is that we are not emerging from this time alone, we are coming through this pandemic time as a community, together, in solidarity with all those who have been journeying with us these last, almost, two years. But we can't move forward without you. We need your wisdom, we need your talents, we need your time. The quote above about the Muppets speaks to the joy of being in a community that feels like family, but it also speaks to something more. It speaks to the fact that we need you, even if you don't think that you might be very good at something. We need you to help to move us forward, we need you to help us live into who we are called to be a community. We just need you all and know that even if you are a Kermit or a Fozzie, or a Gonzo (which I like to think that I am), you will be embraced with joy even though you might not think that you are very good at the task at hand. It is in helping each other to grow, to live into our work as a community of faith, that we are embraced in the joy that this community embodies. So, let's all be Muppets!



Rev. Patrick Woodbeck
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2021 Advent Calendar

Sunday, November 28, 2021 - Advent 1 - HOPE
Online and in-person service @10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 5, 2021 - Advent 2/Communion - PEACE
Online and in-person service @10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 12, 2021 - Advent 3 - LOVE
Online and in-person service @10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 19, 2021 - Advent 4 - JOY
Online and in-person service @10:30 a.m. featuring the Harmony Singers

Tuesday, December 21, 2021 - Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service
Online only

Friday, December 24, 2021 - Christmas Eve Service
Online only

Sunday, December 26, 2021 -No Service



Christmas Eve Memories

Patrick Woodbeck

I have so many lovely memories from Christmas as I was growing up. There are memories of us going, as a family, out into the bush to cut our own Christmas tree. There is the angel that always sat atop our Christmas tree, which I still own today, over 50 years later and when I look at it I am reminded of our afternoons decorating the tree as a family. All of these are wonderful memories of family and times spent together but I think that the most powerful memory of Christmas for me is how I remember our Christmas Eve traditions.

I say traditions because there are a number of parts to this memory and they all seemed to come together this one evening. It always began with a call from my parents, who worked most Christmas Eves until late afternoon, for us to be cleaned up and ready when they got home. It would be a very quick supper of light food and then everyone would be getting dressed for church. Living in a small town, whose priest also served a neighbouring larger community, our Christmas Eve service was usually around 8:30 p.m. that night. So off to church we would go.

It was not a traditional church building, but rather it was the auditorium of the high school where we worshipped. But that evening the lights were dimmed, candles were lit and it felt like someplace sacred. I don't remember much of the service, I was a child how many of us do remember, but I will always remember my mother standing by the organ singing "O Holy Night" solo on that night. I have always wondered if this experience is why music touches me so deeply because of listening to her sing, in the candlelight. I know that I am biased, but I always remember it as sacred, beautiful, moving, and it filled me with a sense of peace and awe. It was, for me, Christmas.

After church we would go home where there would be freshly baked buns, warm roasted ham, cheese, pickles, dainties, it was a feast that we all helped prepare. We would all sit together in the living room, with the Christmas tree light burning bright as we talked, laughed, and ate together. It was a perfect night.

It was our tradition, and it meant a lot to me as I was growing up. We are now working at creating our own traditions, and yes it does include warm roasted ham....and no, I don't sing like my mother but that is a whole other story.

Happy holidays. May you feel the warmth and love of this community in your lives this holiday season.

Thirteenth Day of Christmas

Patrick Woodbeck

On the thirteenth day of Christmas my true love.....phoned me!!!

Hello, well, I suppose I should be grateful, I mean you've obviously gone to a lot of trouble and expense – either that or you are just crazy!

Yes, I did like the birds – well, the small ones anyway, they were fun if a bit messy. But now the hens have roosted on my bed and the rest of them are nesting in my bedroom closet. It's hard to sleep with all that cooing, let alone those geese, now I understand why they call them 'cobra chickens,' they can be mean.

No, why should I mind? I can't get any peace anywhere-the living room is full of drummers thumping on their drums and the couch and chairs are filled with sprawling lords crashed out from the manic leaping. The kitchen is crammed with cows and milkmaids and there is enough milk for.....I don't even know what. The pipers? Oh, I'd forgotten

them—they were no trouble, I paid them, and they went away. But I can't get rid of these young ladies. They won't stop dancing or turn the music down and they're always in the bathroom, squealing as they skid across the flooded floor. A plumber? No, I don't need a plumber, it's just the swans—where else are they going to swim but in the bathtub? Poor things I think that they are going mad like me. When I went to wash my hands one ate the soap, another one swallowed those gold rings. And that pear tree, well it died. Too dry. So, thanks again for the gifts. Bye.

Remember this the next time you sing that song.....

Christmas Traditions

Carol Belsham

Our family has a few Christmas traditions. One is a family Christmas tree trimming party. We gather together on a suitable evening. I used to cook a meal for it but then I missed out on taking part. Now we order Chinese food. We play Christmas songs. It is a fun, relaxing evening.

Last year during the COVID shutdown our daughter, Gloria picked up the Chinese food and dropped ours off safely. Then she went home with theirs and we decorated our own trees.

Some years if we were away at Christmas we would go to our daughter and son-in-law, Gloria and Don's, and decorate their tree. Of course, we brought Chinese food!

Another tradition we have is a special ornament that we usually put on the tree last.

It is a hand-blown glass sheath of wheat made by a Saskatchewan artist. I found this special ornament the year Bill's Dad passed way in 1997. I brought one for Bill and I and one for each of our three children. It is a nice memory. His Dad farmed until he was 85.



A third tradition we have is Queen Anne chocolate covered cherries. These were my Mom's favorite. I always have a box wrapped up for us, our children, and my siblings.

Not everyone likes them, but my brother sure does. One year he ate the whole box on his hour drive home. They always remind us of our dear Mom.

Christmas Tree Saga

June Kaan

December 1964, the first Christmas after our marriage, in our very small apartment on Chestnut Street.

Growing up in Manitoba my family had always had a Manitoba spruce as the Christmas tree, and now I was looking forward to being able to buy something different: a Scotch Pine, for example!

Growing up in Hong Kong, David's family had always had a Scotch Pine as their Christmas tree and now he was looking forward to having a Manitoba Spruce to decorate!



We headed out to the tree lot to make our purchase and, as a new bride, I gave in to David's wish for a spruce. We made the choice, brought it back to the apartment and secured it in its stand in the corner of our tiny living room, giving the tree time to thaw out prior to our decorating it

the following day. I was a bit disappointed, but thought, oh well....

The following morning we looked forward to putting our recently purchased decorations on the spruce, and made our way into the living room with anticipation.....only to find that every single needle from the spruce was now on the floor.

Back to the tree lot we went, bringing home a Scotch Pine, which gradually unfolded to almost fill our living room completely.



Every Christmas I unpack a box of small gold balls from that first Christmas and remember the story of The Trees.



From the Chair of the Board

Gloria Saindon

As we slowly begin to get back to a new normal, and this Advent season is once again upon us, I wanted to reflect on what the past 20 months, but especially the last year has meant to me as Chair of the Board at WPUC.

I cannot believe how the time has flown by and what we have accomplished during the last year. It has definitely been a time of trial and tribulation but one that I could not have gotten through without the great support of the [staff](#), the [Executive Board](#), the [Reopening Committee](#) and so many others that I hope I don't leave anyone out.

First off, I would like to thank [Morag Fisher](#), [June Kaan](#), [Gina Grant](#), [Laura Steidl](#) and [Patrick Woodbeck](#) for all the meetings, protocols and deciphering of the Public Health Orders every week that they changed! The idea to "get back" to church was not lost as we worked out scenarios and added more protocols as the government changed them every week, day, and hour! I am sure if someone were to ask us what Order 2; 2 (1); 2 (2); 2 (3) meant we could all recite them by heart! Your dedication to getting us back into the church for Worship safely was and is greatly appreciated.

To the [Executive Board](#): [Patrick Woodbeck](#), [Sue Turley](#) (recording secretary), [Doug Waldron](#), [Bill Belsham](#), [Gwen Polak](#), [Melissa Davidson](#) and [Heather Karavas](#), your insight and patient as we worked via ZOOM throughout the year was invaluable. I had promised to keep the meetings under an hour if possible and I think I only went over twice during the year! Being able to pivot from in person to ZOOM at a moment's notice was greatly appreciated. Who doesn't like to grab a warm cup of coffee, slippers and not have to start the car to warm up to head to a

meeting? It does make things a lot easier for everyone.

To my fellow *Worship Team* contributors. What a year this has been! We have all grown, as we learnt quickly to speak to camera 1 or camera 2. Wait should it have been 1? Or the first in-person service and how nervous we were to speak in front of a "crowd". All the "retakes" we were able to do as we stumbled through some of the long readings and hard names Patrick threw at us! **Sarah, Heather, Trista, Amber, Courtney, Julia, Myrna, Laura** and of course **Patrick**, these evenings were a release of laughter we all so needed throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to thank the *staff*, **Gina, Myrna, Laura, Patrick, and Sue**. You have made the last year unbelievably easy, tolerable, and fun at times.

Sue, you have put up with my numerous emails on Monday morning as I suddenly had a few thoughts over the weekend that I just couldn't lose! You have been my sounding board for numerous tasks. So, thank you!

Myrna, thank you for all the Thursday night and now Monday night practices and recordings for the service. We share some good laughs that we all need from time to time.

Gina, from being a part of the reopening committee to being able to "chat" from time to time about anything and everything. It has been great knowing when I pull into the parking lot on a Thursday evening that its your car that's there and we can "catch up"!

Laura, no words can express how grateful I and everyone is for all you have done to make the online Worship and now the in-person services such a huge success. You have challenged me and given Monday evenings a whole new meaning. They have been full of laughter and positive energy even though we all face hard days. Just knowing that a group

of people can come together and be themselves and sometimes we even follow the music, is immeasurable! Your dedication to getting all the services together has been something no one will ever know looking from the outside in.

Patrick, thank you does not seem enough. You have definitely been my sounding board and mentor all wrapped up into one! You are there to listen and give an honest opinion when I need it most. I thoroughly enjoy listening to your sermons every week and sometimes twice!

Although the theme was "Traditions: Past and Present" for this edition of the Southwind's, I decided that I could put in my thank you to those that have kept the church going and continue to do so through online and in-person Worship services.

As you gather in your homes this holiday season, take a moment to remember all that you have, all that you've done and realize that time did not stand still during this pandemic, but maybe it gave us all a bit of more time to stop and smell the roses.

Merry Christmas everyone!

The Three Magi

Doug Waldron - Treasurer, Finance and Stewardship Council

This is the traditional Year End request for funds from the Finance and Stewardship Council originally made in 2013, but still rings true.



The Three Magi from the East sent me a knee-mail (prayer) when I made enquiries to their whereabouts and the gifts that are needed to bring balance back into our financial outlooks.

The reply:

- ★ *Our gold is cold, myrrh said "Brrr" and the frankincense says "Thee make no sense"; therefore our gifts will NOT be arriving in time.*
- ★ *But there is Hope, for among you are people who have been touched by Angels. 1 in 3 people have been touched by an Angel and may not even know it. Ask the congregation to look at the person to their left and their right to see if their neighbour is one. If not, then it must be them.*
- ★ *Remind these Angels that it will bring peace, joy and love to their life by providing an extra gift to WPUC at this special time of year. The congregation will thank them since the year will end with balance in their lives and in the financial books.*

*Yours Truly,
The Magi*

As was painfully displayed at the "Our Saints Day" on October 31st, we have lost many strong supporters of WPUC over the last 20 months and have been constrained on attracting new members and supporters. More information about Legacy Giving can be found here - <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/get-involved/ways-give/giving-through-your-estate>

On a practical note, please have all donations to church made no later than December 31st to be counted towards this year's tax receipt.

Christmas Cheer

Margo Baldwin

Jesus' Dad's Name

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?" One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?" A little kid said, "Verge."

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

The kid said, "Well, you know, they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

Kids In Church

3-year-old Reese:

"Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen."

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you."

One particular four-year-old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets..."

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime. She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail."

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."



A Note from the Editor

John Lwiwski

Thank you again to the many contributors who shared their articles with us throughout the year. You are the spirit in our SouthWinds !

Wishing you a safe and healthy Advent season.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Christmas Cheer (Continued)

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough.

"You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door?"

They're hushers."

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

A father was at the beach with his children when the four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand.

"Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked.

"He died and went to Heaven," the Dad replied.

The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"

"I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied.

"Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered.

The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

Advent Resources

The season of Advent is almost upon us, and [Advent Unwrapped](#) is here to support you with at-home activities, worship resources, blog posts, and lots more!



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Advent Unwrapped

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Get ready for Christmas! Advent—a holy, four-week countdown to Jesus' birthday—begins on **Sunday, November 28**. Get ready to make room for Christ and the radical, countercultural messages that Christ brings.



Throughout the season, videos, prayers, family resources, and reflections on this page will introduce and explore the Christmas story. For more worship resources visit our [Advent and Christmas worship pages](#). Follow our [Advent Unwrapped Facebook page](#) and subscribe to our newsletter for regular updates.