

St. Andrew's Stittsville - Advent and Christmas 2020

The Session, the choir, the music Director, and the minister would like make Advent and Christmas 2020 meaningful, familiar and special for our church family. Since we are living in changing times you can expect to receive emails if things change in our plans, or you can check our website for updates, or you can call the church or your elder for more information. Many people have been asking about the different ministries we usually support at Christmas, and if we are going to be able to continue to support them. Session met on November 25 and approved this plan!

One challenge this year is not being in church each Sunday to drop off our various gifts. Another challenge is that many people are understandably uncomfortable with going out to do their usual shopping. All of these charities are more than happy to deal with money donations; and places like the food bank even have the ability to buy in bulk and make the money donation go farther. So, with all of those challenges and opportunities, here is a plan that might help.

In this package you will find a return envelope and a slip of paper with "St. Andrew's Stittsville Christmas Giving" on the top of it. In that list are all of the different Christmas Giving options we are looking at this year. If you like, you can write on that list the different amounts you would like to go to the different ministries, and then you can write one cheque to the church to cover the total amount.

In this package you will also find a Memory Tree envelope. You can either include your memory tree cheque or cash in the Memory Tree envelope or include it in your cheque for the other Christmas Giving options. We would ask you to write the "In Memory of..." or "In Honour of..." names on the Memory tree envelope and return that with your return envelope to the church.

How will we get these envelopes or other Christmas Giving Items to the church? Well, the envelopes are pretty easy. You can mail those. If you prefer you could also e-transfer the amount with an email to offering@standrews-stittsville.ca outlining the ministries you would like to contribute to so we can divide them appropriately. Geppy and Doug will also make sure that the church door is unlocked on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Saturdays from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. if you would like to drop off your envelope or items to the church. You will find a trolley to put your items on and a basket for your envelopes just inside the door.

Here are our Christmas Giving Opportunities: We realize some of these deadlines are very tight, so just do what you can. All of these organizations will be more than happy to receive money and items after their deadlines.

Memory Tree: Deadline December 19th – We are doing our Memory Tree again this year, and you will be able to see the names and decorations being added each week through Advent on our Sunday worship videos and our special online Christmas services. This year the proceeds will be split between Banting Alternative High School and the Stittsville Food Bank.

Operation Come Home: Deadline December 6th - This year they are not looking for the usual bags we put together. Here is a list of items they would like if you would prefer to go shopping yourself.

- back packs
- gift cards to various places (Tim Hortons, Shoppers Drug Mart, etc.)
- Full size shampoo bottles
- Full size conditioners
- cough drop packs
- snack bags (granola bars, juice boxes)
- full size toothpastes
- toothbrushes
- hairbrushes
- women's underwear (small-xl)
- men's underwear (small-xl)
- women's/men's thermal long johns

- boxes Kleenex
- chapstick
- hair tie sets
- New winter clothing for women (sweaters, sweatpants all sizes)
- New winter clothing for men (sweaters, sweatpants all sizes)
- New men's and women's winter boots (all sizes)

Gifts for Seniors at Granite Ridge: Deadline December 21st – This year Granite Ridge is trying to give a little gift to each resident due to the restrictions placed upon visitors during Covid-19. The little gifts will be little things associated with daily living such as: Body wash, Body lotion or cream, Hair brushes and combs, CHOCOLATES Absolutely NO Nuts. Marlene suggests chocolates with soft fillings not hard toffee or chewy Caramels.

Cookies for Food Bank baskets: Deadline December 13th – The Stittsville has said that they are doing some form of Christmas baskets this year and our cookies would be greatly appreciated. If you want to go out and buy them yourself and drop them off that is fine. If you make a donation towards it, we will buy them for you.

Food Bank donation drop off at the church - Deadline December 19th – The Stittsville Food Bank is definitely in need this year as all Food Banks seem to be with COVID -19; especially fewer groups able to do food drives this year. Again, if you make a money donation, we will forward it to them for purchasing, or you can drop off your items at the church at the designated times.

Christmas Worship Services – The Theme for this year is “Home for Christmas”

The Session has decided that we will not be gathering in person for worship until it is safe to do so some time in the new year. In the meantime, we will continue our online worship services and the choir, and many others are working hard to make this a meaningful, familiar and memorable Advent and Christmas Season. The Sanctuary is already being decorated, and we will have a tree in the windows in the gathering space for the community (and Geppy and Doug) to enjoy. We will have our usual Christmas services including Sunday Morning through Advent, Longest Night or “Blue Christmas” service for those who find Christmas difficult, child friendly shorter service with a story and carols, and our Candlelight Christmas Eve service with you doing the candles at home, but with our choir and possibly some other guest musicians. Stay tuned... things may evolve and change between now and Christmas!

Christmas Cookie Sale: Deadline for orders - December 11th – Pickup: December 19th

It's time again to start thinking about your Christmas baking. Some of you will need help getting your baking done while others will have more than enough. St Andrew's has a solution for all of you. On December 19th we will have a Covid style Christmas bake sale. Containers will be filled with a variety of homemade cookies or homemade squares to adorn your sweet trays or to give as gifts. Each container will have 12 cookies or 12 squares.

The cost for each order is a donation to the general church fund. Please contact St Andrew's church office at office@standrews-stittsville.ca /613-831-1256 or Geppy at 613-790-5019 to place your Christmas order no later than December 11th.

For our bakers we will need to know how many cookies and pieces of squares you are able donate. Please call or send an email to St Andrew's no later than Friday December 11th. Baked goods will be received Covid-19 style at the front door of the church on Friday December 18th from 10 am - 8pm.

Our purchasers will be contacted prior to Saturday December the 19th with time to pick up their orders Covid style. For those who need to have their sweets delivered/or picked up please let the church office know when you place your order.