

## **Greetings from Rideau Park**

As I looked back at the prior December congregational emails I was struck, more than usual, that I can't copy and paste or plagiarize any of the prior years' opening comments. They all mention how busy everything is and I'm sitting here in my office, alone in the building. So while things are quiet in the physical Rideau Park Church this year, it does not mean that nothing is happening at Rideau Park.

*We celebrate the life of the members of our Rideau Park family, holding their families and friends in prayer: Nora Christie (October 23), Eunice Dawson (October 23), Ronald Bedford (November 3) and Katherine McKennirey (November 8).*

**Wishing you a Merry Christmas video:** It's hard to be apart during this time of celebration. We invite you to send Christmas greetings to one another by video. Using phone or tablet, record a brief video Christmas greeting using whatever words you choose, and send it in to Steve at [sclifton@rideaupark.ca](mailto:sclifton@rideaupark.ca). We will take all the submissions and will make a big video to share in our worship webcast. It will be good to see one another! Please record video in landscape rather than in portrait orientation. Deadline for submission is December 14, 4pm.

**Special Christmas Celebration Events from Rideau Park – All events will be online at the designated times.**

**Sunday, November 29, 10am – Advent One, Communion service.** Share bread and cup from your home.

**Sunday, November 29, 7pm – Start your Christmas season with the "Ring in Christmas:" Handbell and Chimes Concert.** It is a reprise of the 2019 concert, with the five handbell and chimes choirs from Rideau Park: Touch of Brass, Grace Notes, La Bell Ensemble, Note-Able Sound, and Ringing Praise, playing the popular and sacred music of Christmas.

**Wednesday evenings: December 2, 9, 16 and 23, 7pm - To prepare ourselves for Christmas, a series of online Advent retreats will be held, leading up to Christmas. The Wednesday, December 16, retreat will be a Blue Christmas service:** loss, healing and hope.

**Sunday December 13, 10am - Twenty-first Annual Christmas Pageant at Rideau Park** will be presented by 61 young participants, of the story of Christmas through theatre, music and some humour, with a focus on what Christmas is really all about. Each participating family has videoed their part of the pageant at home, with the writer and director (for the 21st time), Andrea Laliberté, then producing the finished presentation as a webcast.

**Sunday December 20, 7pm - Listen to Rideau Park's Christmas Celebration Concert.** First presented for Christmas 2019, the concert features the Chancel Choir, Touch of Brass Bells, and organist Andrew Ager. Listen to the sacred music of Christmas and join in singing your favourite carols at home.

**Thursday, December 24, 8:30pm**, join us online for a live streamed **Christmas Eve**. The service will reflect on and celebrate Jesus' birth in readings, a message, and music. Happy Christmas to all. The service will be archived for later viewing.

**Sunday, December 27, 10am** – Webcast of the **2019 Christmas Pageant** as if live.

**Sunday, January 3, 10:00am** – **Epiphany: Our shared service** will be held at Rideau Park United Church, along with Emmanuel and Riverside United Church.

**Did you know?** The order of service is posted on the website under Resources/Documents/Bulletins.

**Christmas Cheer** was launched on November 2 and within a week we had reached the quota of 150 families. We are encouraged by the number of donations received towards the \$12,000 budget goal for gift cards for the families. You can donate to the program by clicking on the Donate tab at the top of the Home page, or the DONATE NOW, button to see the various options: e-transfer to [accounting@rideaupark.ca](mailto:accounting@rideaupark.ca), drop off a cheque at Rideau Park (mail box outside the Cunningham door) or mail to Rideau Park.

Does your family look forward to filling a **shoebox**? Well, like everything else, the shoebox project will go ahead but it won't be shoeboxes this year, it will be socks. Heidi Hopkin, coordinator of the shoebox project, and her family have volunteered to shop for and fill 150 Christmas socks for the children at Banff-Ledbury Avenue Community House. Gift cards will be given to the mothers at Minwaashin Lodge to purchase gifts for their children. The budget for this project is \$3,200 and donations have started to arrive. You can donate to the program by clicking on the Donate tab at the top of the Home page or the DONATE NOW button to see the various options: e-transfer to [accounting@rideaupark.ca](mailto:accounting@rideaupark.ca), drop off a cheque at Rideau Park (mail box outside the Cunningham door) or mail to Rideau Park.

A huge thank you to all who have returned their 2021 Pledge and Time and Talent forms. As of November 19 the **Stewardship campaign** has received a **pledge total** of **\$356,164**.

134 pledges have been received with:  
\$108,567 for the **Ministries and Programs Fund**  
\$26,644 for the **Mission and Service Fund**  
\$20,541 for the **Property Renewal Fund**  
\$200,412 for the **Greatest Need**

**Rideau Park continues to offer a number of church events and activities online for spiritual and social connection, and Christmas celebration.** For details, please contact us at 613-733-3156 ext. 228 or [www.rideaupark.ca](http://www.rideaupark.ca) . These activities include:

**Sunday 10am Worship Services** are live streamed at [www.rideaupark.ca](http://www.rideaupark.ca), with welcoming words, hymns, prayers, scripture, videos, and a thoughtful reflection.

**Children's and Youth Christian Education Classes** are happening online at Rideau Park on **Sundays**. There are four separate groups to join: JK/SK 10am; Grades 1-3 10am; Grades 4-6

10:30am; and our youth class 11:30am. Classes will happen on Nov. 29 & Dec. 6, and then start again on Jan. 10. All are through Zoom. Contact Rev Steve Clifton at [sclifton@rideaupark.ca](mailto:sclifton@rideaupark.ca) to receive a Zoom invitation.

**Need a peaceful, focused interlude in a busy week: An Online Group Meditation at Rideau Park is being shared together through Zoom every Thursday, 10am**, for 20 minutes of quiet, peace and mindfulness. The Meditation Group will continue into 2021. See [www.rideaupark.ca](http://www.rideaupark.ca) for information, and contact Rev Steve Clifton at [sclifton@rideaupark.ca](mailto:sclifton@rideaupark.ca) to receive the Zoom invitation. Several brief meditation guides that can be watched at any time are also available on the website.

**Healing Pathway Ministry at Rideau Park:** Practitioners are offering healing prayer over the phone since in-person sessions are not currently available. For more info, contact [healingpathway@rideaupark.ca](mailto:healingpathway@rideaupark.ca) or Rev. Steve Clifton at [sclifton@rideaupark.ca](mailto:sclifton@rideaupark.ca)

**Rideau Park United Church Facebook Group:** Connect with others for videos, community news, daily prayers, and sharing opportunities in the Christmas season. It is a public page. Consider joining the group if you wish to comment.

**The office will close** on December 24 and re-open on January 4<sup>th</sup>. If there is a pastoral emergency during this time, please contact one of the ministers' extensions for more information.