

Dear Friend of the Cathedral,

This week is bookended by two special lunches. Last Sunday Carlos, Spes and George organized a wonderful intercultural potluck lunch attended by 100 people who brought dishes from countries around the world. This Sunday the Social Service Society will be hosting lunch for 100 hungry people down on their luck and in need of a delicious warm meal. Students of Lower Canada College is sponsoring the lunch. Adrian will welcome extra help from Cathedral members.

This coming Saturday and Sunday we can show our support for farmers and artisans around the world, who are often struggling with injustice and poverty, by visiting the Fair-Trade Christmas sale in the Cathedral between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm Saturday. Dix Mille Villages will bring a selection of articles which could make excellent Christmas gifts. The Fair-Trade kiosk will be open as usual on Sunday selling Fair Trade tea, coffee, chocolate and other products.

We are so lucky to have food and shelter. Starting on Advent Sunday, (December 1) we can share our abundance with less fortunate Montrealers. The Cathedral will be collecting non-perishable food items for St. Michael's mission during the month of December. Deborah asks us to place items in the basket at the back of the church, and please be generous.

Even more important than food for the body is food for the soul, and that we have in abundance in the coming weeks.

This Sunday **QueerSpace@CCC** will gather at 12:15 pm in the Undercroft. This is a great opportunity to join the LGBTQ+ community at the cathedral for discussion, prayer and support. Contact Noah Hermes for more information.

Pain, partage et prière will meet at 10:00 am in the Undercroft. This is the French Bible study and prayer group.

The next meeting of the **English bible study group** will be on Wednesday January 22 at 7:30 pm in Greta Helmer's house in NDG. We will talk about parables and ask participants to come with a description of their favourite parable and why it's meaningful to them. I'll send Greta's address in January to people who express an interest.

Above all there will be some wonderful **liturgical and musical events in the Cathedral during December**. Please whip out your calendars and make a note:

1. Sunday, December 1 at 4 pm, Music and Readings for Advent which will proclaim the mystery of the coming of Jesus, our Messiah. Poetry, readings from the prophets proclaiming God's promises leading to the climax of the Annunciation will be interspersed with music from the choir and congregational hymns. It is a magical, deeply spiritual service, a perfect way to start the Christmas season with worship.
2. Saturday December 14 Sing Along Messiah. More magic! Jonathan sends this message:
Come and support your music program and choir at this year's Christmas Messiah at Christ Church Cathedral. With an expected choir of several hundred, this is a great way to kick off the build-up to Christmas and is one of our key outreach events to the Montreal Diocese.
This year the concert will also be raising funds specifically to support the ongoing work and growth of our music program, one of the finest in the city, so make sure you're there to help. Can't sing? We welcome both singers and non-singers to what promises to be an unforgettable experience.
The afternoon will commence with an optional pre-concert talk by our Director of Religious Music, Dr Jonathan White. Following a short performance by the Cathedral Choir, join with them and our soloists for a massed performance of the 'Christmas' section of the Messiah, accompanied by our very own prize-winning Assistant Organist, Nicholas Capozzoli.
Admission is by donation and all proceeds will go directly to support the cathedral music program. Donations can be made in advance on the cathedral website or by contacting the office, or on the door on the day. For more details contact the Cathedral Office on 514-843-6577 or music.director@montrealcathedral.ca
3. The next joyful event is the celebration of **Carols and Readings for Christmas** by candlelight December 22, 4:00 pm. More about this event later.
4. To help you **plan Christmas**, please note the following **services**.
 - a) Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm Family Service (bilingual), 7:00 pm Christmas Mass in French, 11:00 pm Midnight Mass (bilingual)
 - b) Christmas Day: Services at 8:00 am, 9:00 am and 10:30 am

Rejoicing is not always easy or appropriate so there will also be two very different quieter services. One is a **Blue Christmas service** at 6:00 pm on December 18 especially for people who find Christmas hard. The other is a service of prayers, at noon on December 6, for the day of **Remembrance of Violence Against Women**, thinking especially of the victims of the massacre at the Montreal Polytechnique 30 years ago.

Perhaps you've noticed that clean crisp **linens** grace the altar at all our services. Did you know that this is due to a group of volunteers who take home a small pile of used linens and bring them back freshly laundered? More helpers are urgently needed. This is not an onerous task when lots of people are involved, but one that's essential to the smooth running of the services. Please speak to Deborah if you would like to join the rota. We are also looking for **stewards** to help welcome people to the services listed above and to perform simple duties like taking the collection and counting the congregation. Bob King has created a sign up list for the back of the church.

In view of all that is happening in December there will be **no Cathedral Forum** that month. The next meeting will be January 21.

Canadian Church Calendars for 2020 are now available. They cost \$5 each. Please contact Ann Elbourne if you want one. They will be available at coffee hour Dec 1 onwards.

Can you decode this cryptic announcement - **EY's RII at Pd'A**? It's a terrific piece of news. Edward Yankie, a Cathedral parishioner, (EY) will be reprising his one-man rendition of Shakespeare's play Richard II (R II) in the Salle Claude-Léveillé at Place des Arts on Saturday December 14 at 8:00 pm. One Actor - 22 000 words - 24 characters. It's a tour de force!

I was moved by a poem **Walking on Thorns**, by Allan Boesak which starts

*It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to destruction and loss—
This is true: For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life;*

*It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction—
This is true: I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly.*

You can read the whole poem with its Advent message affirming the power of the Incarnation
<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/poemsandprayers/477-allan-boesak-advent-credo>

Ann Elbourne
November 22, 2019