

SELBY PASTORAL CHARGE

Selby United Church and Empey Hill United Church

Advent Newsletter, 2019



...From the Minister's Desk

It seems winter has come early this year! With several good snowfalls under our belt in the month of November, somehow, I have found it a bit easier to get into the Christmas spirit.

In the coming days we will be decking the halls at home and at church, and it's a festive time of year to enjoy all that this season has to offer.

As always, we have a number of ways to enjoy the Christmas season at our two churches. On December 1st, I will be beginning a **Christmas sermon series** entitled, "God in a Manger," in which we will examine the history, the mystery and the divinity of the birth of the Christ child. The choir and our band are also working on several special Christmas offerings throughout the season of Advent.

We are looking forward to an **Advent Study** on Tuesday evenings entitled, "The Case for Christmas" by Lee Strobel. Lee is the subject of a famous book (later made into a movie) called *The Case for Christ*, which outlines his own reluctant journey to faith after using his journalistic and legal skills to evaluate the evidence for Jesus. In, *The Case for Christmas*, Lee examines some of the common objections to the believability of the Christmas Story, detailing some of the latest discoveries which show that the Christmas story is no fable or myth.

At 2:00 pm on Sunday December 8th, we will enjoy the Country Gospel

music of Vince Lasher's band called, "Three Chords and the Truth." We look forward to their Christmastime repertoire at this free-will-offering **concert** at Selby United Church. Thanks to Derk and Donna Jonkers for organizing it!

And then, on December 22nd, we look forward to our traditional joint service at Selby United Church, where The Rock Kids Program will put on their annual **Christmas pageant**. Any youngster that would like to participate is welcome!

This year, on **Christmas Eve**, we are adding an additional option for you and your family. At 4:30 pm we will have a special "family service" at Selby United Church. This 45-minute service will be engaging for the whole family.

And of course, at 7:30 pm we will have our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at Empey Hill.

An important part of the Christmas season is giving our time, treasure and talents to those organizations and causes we believe in. Included with this letter is a **Christmas offering** envelope, and I invite you to consider a special offering to help us continue to grow our important ministry together.

So, there you have it! Plenty of opportunities to thoughtfully enter this holy time of year and to celebrate the reason for the season – Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Christmas Blessings to you and your family this Christmas,

-Rev. Mike Putnam

Upcoming Events in our faith community...

- **November 26th, December 3rd, 10th, 17th** – "The Case for Christmas" Advent Study Group – 7:00 pm @ Selby
- **November 28th** – Selby and Empey Hill Men's Group Christmas Dinner
- **December 1st** – First Sunday of Advent 9:45 am at Selby and 11:15 am at Empey Hill.
- **December 18th** – Cornerstone Pageant at the Village Green Nursing Home.
- **December 22nd** – Kid's Pageant Service (No service at Empey Hill) 10:00 am
- **December 24th**
 - Christmas Eve Family Service 4:30 pm @ Selby
 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:30 pm @ Empey Hill.
- **December 29th** – Wassail Service at Empey Hill led by Rev. Frank Hamper. 10:30 am (No service at Selby)
- **January 5th** – New Year's Communion Service. 9:45 am at Selby and 11:15 am at Empey Hill.

Christmas Mitten Trees

One of our newest traditions at both churches is called a "mitten tree." The tree will be set-up in the sanctuary from late November to mid-December. Folks are invited to bring hats, mittens, gloves and scarves (handmade and store bought) to decorate our tree.

On December 15th we will take all of the items collected to local agencies who can distribute the items throughout the winter months to people who need them.

For Selby folks, please bring your items with you to worship, and our kids will collect them before the "Theme Time" during the service.

For Empey Hill folks, please bring your items with you to worship, and you can decorate the tree with your items before the service starts.



"3 Chords and the Truth"

An afternoon of
Country Gospel at
Christmastime!

Sunday December 8th
@ 2:00 pm



Christmas Eve Services

Do you know what a paradox is? It's okay if you don't - Highschool English class was a long time ago for some of us! A paradox is a logical statement that seems to contradict itself. For example, "Baby Jesus is almighty God." How can a baby be almighty?

Well, that is just what we celebrate at Christmas. That almighty God came to be Emmanuel – God with us. And He did it as a baby.

So, this year our Christmas Eve Services will focus on the paradox of Christmas.

This year, we will have a 4:30 pm service at Selby United Church. This 45-minute service will include upbeat carols led by our band, a drama brought to life by our young people, a special solo by Emma Perry and battery-operated candles for all.

At 7:30 pm we will enjoy our traditional service at Empey Hill. Featuring the classical music of Doug Handforth on violin and Marg Winter on organ. There will be drama and story too. Real candles for everyone as we conclude with the traditional singing of Silent night. We hope to see you there!

Longest Night Service



Sometimes the Christmas season can be especially hard. If this is a season of change or of grief, it can be hard to enter in to all the jingle bells and hark the heralding!

For this reason, a special service held on the longest and darkest night of the year, may be just the thing for you.

Hosted at Newburgh United Church, this short service of music, candle lighting and reflective readings, is designed to give voice to our deeper feelings.

Rev. Mike, Rev. Barb (Newburgh-Centreville United) and Rev. Nancy (Roblin United) work together to make this a special occasion.

Join us Saturday December 21st at 7:00 pm at Newburgh United Church.

Poinsettia Memorial

Starting on December 1st, we will have our Poinsettia Memorial in the sanctuary (at both Selby and Empey Hill churches). This memorial is a breathtaking display of beautiful Christmas flowers, that will brighten our sanctuaries through the season of Advent.

If you would like to contribute a poinsettia in memory of a saint who has gone before us, please bring your plant to church prior to, or on December 1st (Selby Office hours are Tuesday to Friday from 9:30-11:30).

Please include with your flower a note of the name(s) of the person(s) you are honouring and Jane Hughes will include them in the bulletin.

Poinsettias of all colours and sizes are welcome!

