



## Parish of the Lower Laurentians Newsletter – Christmas 2016 – Vol. 9

December 2016

My dear friends in Christ,



I left the house the other night around 4:30pm and the sun was casting its last few rays of the day. It was one of those moments when the sky was all cloudy except on the Western horizon, so the clouds were lit up from below, as though the whole world had been flipped upside down and we were standing on the tallest mountain.

The late fall days are short and the hold of the darkness can sometimes seem overwhelming. It's no coincidence though that Christmas takes place on one of the longest nights of the year, at least in the Northern hemisphere. It's no coincidence that every year at Christmas we read the powerful words of John's gospel: "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1)

In the moments of deepest darkness, when the world seems overwhelming, we remind ourselves that the darkness is what makes the beauty of the light all the more resplendent. We light candles, we decorate trees, we sing familiar tunes, we gather around tables together, and we tell stories to remind ourselves of the great promise of God, Immanuel: God walks with us. It's in the darkness that the gospel of Christ takes the world and flips it upside down, enlightening a new kingdom, a new world, radiant with the love of Jesus.

Every blessing to you and your loved ones this Christmas season. Have a wonderful celebration and may the peace, hope, joy, and love of Christ guard you in all you do. Please remember in your prayers the work of the Laurentian Regional Ministry and the ministry of all those who are a part of this kingdom-building work.

Yours in Christ,  
Nick+

### PLL CHRISTMAS SERVICES

December 18, 2016: 11 AM – St. Aidan's, Louisa – Lessons & Carols

December 24, 2016 - Christmas Eve:

11 AM – Christ Church, Mille Isles – Holy Communion

4 PM – Holy Trinity, Lakefield – Holy Communion

4 PM – St. Paul's, Dunany – Family Service

7 PM – St. Aidan's, Louisa – Holy Communion

8 PM – St. Paul's, Dunany – Lessons & Carols

December 25, 2016 – Christmas Day:

10 AM –at the Rectory, – Holy Communion

715 Meikle, Lachute, QC



*Trinity Church, Morin Heights  
Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm*

*Blue Christmas  
a Service of Hope for the Holidays*

What is a **Blue Christmas** Service?

For many people, it is hard to feel the joy and happiness that others seem to be experiencing during the holidays. They may be facing a holiday following the death of a loved one or after a divorce. Perhaps they have been unable to have a child or have been through an emotional trauma. Perhaps they are alone or feel overwhelmed.

It becomes very difficult to be part of a Christmas service where joyous carols are sung and people are celebrating the season. In recent years many churches have begun to offer an alternative, often called a Blue Christmas Service, to honour the sense of loss or sadness. The tone is quieter and the scriptures, music and sermon focus on the comfort God offers.

Blue Christmas is usually observed on December 21<sup>st</sup>, the Longest Night in the year and in the Western Christian tradition. It acknowledges the long dark night, honouring our feelings, but also asking us to put our trust in the one who came to save mankind, the Prince of Peace, the Lamb of God, the Light of the world, to lead us out of the darkness and into the hope of a brighter tomorrow.

If this sounds appealing to you or to a friend this year, come and **join in the service at Trinity Church, Morin Heights at 7 PM on Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.**