



The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council
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Advent Message from the President of Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council November, 2021



"Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you. ..."
Luke 2:11

As I sit here writing this Advent Message, the sky is clearing from a rainy, foggy, yet warm morning on Prince Edward Island. Picturing a snow-covered ground with snowflakes gently falling, covering the colored lights on trees and buildings, the feeling of peace falls over me, like a cozy soft warm blanket. Just for a while, the worries of the world fade away.

Alors que je suis assis ici en train d'écrire un message de l'Avent, le ciel se dégage d'un matin pluvieux, brumeux mais chaud sur l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. En imaginant un sol enneigé avec des flocons de neige tombant doucement couvrant les lumières colorées des arbres et des bâtiments, le sentiment de paix m'envahit comme une couverture douce et chaude. L'espace d'un instant, les soucis du monde s'évanouissent.

We had a lot to contend with this year from housing crises, food shortages, drought, guaranteed income voices, overabundance of crops in some areas and shortages in others, shortage of workers in all sectors, the Pandemic and the loss of life from COVID-19, and the long haulers as they continue to struggle with the after-effects. We heard, and continue to hear, the stories of residential school survivors, and finding of unmarked graves of those who did not return home from residential schools.

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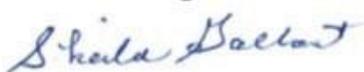
The Advent Season brings a time of reflection, anticipation, and waiting. Through Advent we light the candles of hope, of peace, of joy, and of love. On Christmas Eve, the Christ Candle is lit, and the carols we sing throughout the season celebrate the birth of a special child. For many, they help us reflect on our inner thoughts and raise us up in hope for a better tomorrow; peace within ourselves and for our neighbours and those we have not met yet; of joy and love for all and for each other. We celebrate with our families and look forward to getting together with acquaintances over the holidays. For some, it's a time to help in soup kitchens to ensure all have a holiday meal. Some will gather to fill and deliver food baskets to families, perhaps with special gifts for children included for those who do not have the means to purchase extras at Christmas.

Yet, for this season some find no hope, peace, joy or love. For them, there is a sense of loss, of inability to find a suitable living space or to feed their families, to purchase gifts, of feeling inadequate to cope with the circumstances where life has led them. We remember them, not only during Advent but throughout the year, and lookout for our neighbours who are struggling. We become more aware of peoples' struggles during this time of year – perhaps because of the reminders around us. Help is not always accepted when it is offered, but we should offer it graciously anyway. You may be the spark, the light that the person needs to walk forward on their journey to a brighter, better place.

As we gather within our communities of faith this year, let us remember all that has come to pass this past year as we look forward with hope for the future; pray for peace within ourselves, our communities, and the world; let joy well up within us for what we have been given, and the life we live in Canadian democracy with the rule of law at its center; and the love we show to all people as we try to live in the way the Creator has shown us. May it be so. Amen.

Alors que nous nous rassemblons au sein de nos communautés de foi cette année, souvenons-nous de tout ce qui s'est passé l'année dernière alors que nous regardons vers l'avenir avec espoir pour l'avenir; priez pour la paix en nous-mêmes, dans nos communautés et dans le monde; que la joie monte en nous pour ce qui nous a été donné et la vie que nous vivons dans la démocratie canadienne avec la primauté du droit en son centre; et l'amour que nous montrons à tous alors que nous essayons de vivre de la manière dont le Créateur nous l'a montré. Qu'il en soit ainsi. Amen.

Peace and blessings to all for a blessed and Merry Christmas. May the warmth of the season be with you always. Miigwech.



Sheila Gallant
President