

CHRISTMAS CHEST OF IDEAS

This Christmas, we have compiled a list of ideas for how you can both reach out and build community around the Christmas season. Many of these ideas are things people in our congregation are already doing.

Throw a Party:

- Host your own Little Christmas on December 23: Invite your friends and neighbours over to share a meal and to explain what Christmas means to you.
- Organize caroling with the neighbourhood kids and invite them and their parents over for hot chocolate and treats after, perhaps a Christmas story.
- Host an International Christmas Party for people new to the city. Make the event a potluck and invite people to contribute a local dish or food from their country of origin. This event could also include teaching Christmas carols and having table activities that introduce your Christmas traditions and the Christmas narrative.

Put it in Writing:

- Hand-write Christmas cards to neighbours and pray for the people as you sign the cards.
- Invite your friends to some of St. John's Christmas events and services: Expecting Emmanuel, First Noel, Nine Lessons and Carols, the Evening Service Carol Service, and our Christmas Eve Services.

Acts of Generosity:

- Bring Christmas baking to Christmas Eve Eats, our coffee house Christmas party between the 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm Christmas Eve services! If you are able to do please email donna@sjvan.org.
- Gift a gift or card to people who you are in regular contact with: bus drivers, shop keepers, parking attendants, dentists, newspaper delivery person, etc.
- Volunteer at an organization that needs extra help around Christmas.

Give a gift:

Books for Kids

- *Song of the Stars: A Christmas Story* by Sally Lloyd-Jones
- *My Merry Christmas* by Sally Lloyd-Jones
- *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* by Susan Wojciechowski
- *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis

Books for Adults

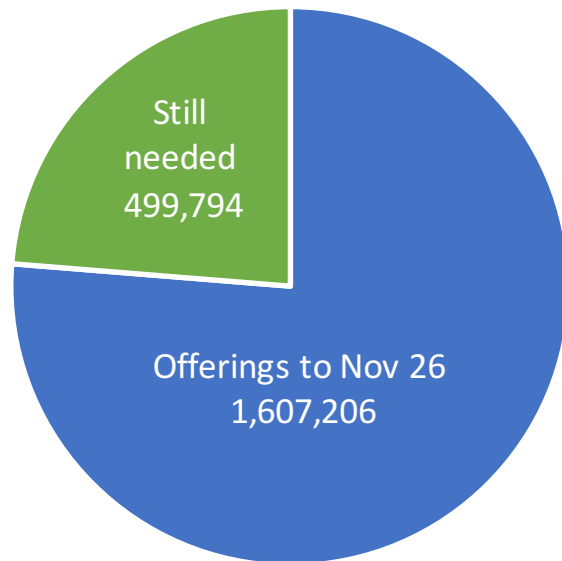
- *Hidden Christmas: The Surprising Truth Behind the Birth of Christ* by Tim Keller
- *The Problem of God: Answering a Skeptic's Challenges to Christianity* by Mark Clark
- *Jayber Crow* by Wendell Berry
- *Lila or Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson

CHECK OUT SJVAN.ORG/CHRISTMAS FOR MORE IDEAS.

OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL MALAWI PROJECT

During the summer visit to Malawi, St. John's members saw first hand the ways that micro-finance loans impact the women in some of the poorest villages of the Upper Shire. This in turn impacts the amount parishioners are able to contribute to the priests we have educated and sponsored through the Missions Committee. If you are considering ways to give this Christmas, you can go to <https://ca.opportunity.org/project/st-johns>.

OFFERING UPDATE TO NOV 30



We are grateful for the generosity of our donors who, by their offerings, participate in the flourishing of the gospel through the ministries of St. John's.

As you can see in the pie chart we are still in need of \$499,794 by December 31 in order to reach our budget.

You will have received a contribution report by email which details your offerings up to November 19. Please read it and prayerfully consider how you might give before the year end.

STAMP COLLECTION

Arctic Fellowship collects used stamps, and the proceeds from the stamps go towards the training of ministers in the north. If you have stamps to give, please leave them in the Parish Mail Box in the foyer. For more information on this ministry please speak to Grace Turner.

LEARNERS' EXCHANGE

Every Sunday in the Cafe Room at 9:00 am, Learners' Exchange offers stimulating speakers and engaging discussions. Please note that on Dec 3 and 10 we will meet for a slightly shortened session to allow people to attend the 10:00 am service.

Upcoming Speakers:

Dec 3: Jeanette Jones
Meeting Menno: An Introduction to the life, thought, and work of Menno Simons

Dec 10: Dr. J.I. Packer
Why We Need to Read the Bible

THE GIFT & THE GIVER | DEC 7

On Thursday, December 7 from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm all are welcome to come and celebrate the gift of Christmas.

Enjoy some Christmas treats and sweets, purchase handmade gifts in the marketplace, make a craft to take home with you, and hear and sing the story of Christmas through a presentation of O'Henry's "The Gifts of the Magi." Childcare will be provided.

Invitations to share with neighbours, friends, and family, are available on the welcome table.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

- 8:00 AM Holy Communion
- 9:00 AM Learner's Exchange (Room 220)
- 10:00 AM Holy Communion
- 10:00 AM Junior Youth (Grades 7-9)
- 11:30 AM Prayer for People in Authority (Room 123)
- 4:30 PM Advent Carol Service
- 6:00 PM Evening Service

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4

- 7:30 PM Quarterly Prayer Meeting

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 7:20 AM Men's Bible Study
- 6:30 PM Ekklesia (18-to-20 somethings) | 5375 University Blvd.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

- 9:30 AM Women @ 10 | The Gift & The Giver
- 7:00 PM Divorce Care

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

- 5:45 PM Men's Bible Study | 5659 Elizabeth St.
- 6:00 PM Youth Group (Grades 7-12)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 8:00 AM Holy Communion (**Matthew 2:1-23**)
- 9:00 AM Learner's Exchange (Room 220)
- 10:00 AM Morning Prayer (**Matthew 2:1-23**)
- 10:00 AM Junior Youth (Grades 7-9)
- 11:30 AM Prayer for People in Authority (Room 123)
- 6:00 PM Evening Carol Service (**Matthew 2:1-23**)

Learn more at sjvan.org/calendar & sjvan.org/events

QUARTERLY PRAYER | TOMORROW

Join us for our final Quarterly Prayer Meeting of 2017 tomorrow at 7:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. Marion Maxwell will be leading us through praying the Psalms.



first Noel

What do you do when you've received "Good News of Great Joy?" You share it!

On Saturday, December 16 we will be hosting First Noel at VanDusen Garden. This event is designed to share the good news of Jesus' birth in a warm and welcoming setting. Consider who you'd like to invite. Invitation cards are available and a digital invitation can be found on our website. The two programs are unique, so it's important to carefully read the descriptions below. We'd love for you to register online so we can gauge how many people to expect, but registration is not necessary to attend.

As with any large event, we need volunteers to make it happen! If you are interested in helping out on December 16 in any capacity please contact kimberley@sjvan.org.

Morning program: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Adults and the children in their lives are invited to join us for a special Christmas program with crafts to take home, songs, a story presentation, and Christmas treats! The morning is ideal for children up to age ten.

Afternoon program: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

The afternoon will include a make-your-own craft fair, Christmas sing-along, baking and treats, and a special presentation of "The Gifts of the Magi." Children are welcome, but this event is geared for adults and those over ten.

Festival of Lights

You can also purchase discount tickets to VanDusen Garden's Festival of Lights. Consider inviting someone to First Noel and then staying for a visit to the gardens afterwards. Your tickets are good for any of the remaining Festival nights. Tickets can be purchased online before December 7 and can be picked up at First Noel or at church on Sunday, December 17.

Visit stjohnsvancouver.org/events to register and purchase Festival of Lights tickets.

Please join us in praying for this exciting event. We hope to see you there!