



**oak park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST



Volume 7 Issue 8 November 2020

## Season of Advent

I am not a particularly good speller – the dreaded front-of-the-class spelling bee still gives me stress dreams. Good thing I’m married to a whiz kid, last-one-standing, speller! Which is exactly who I had to double-check with... are you sure I spelled it right?

### Four-Storey Manger

That’s right, it’s not a typo, not an autocorrect, not an extra “e” slipped in! This play-on-word is not one we see often in print, instead of a “spinning a yarn” story, we’re talking about the levels of a building. Now, as is the case with sermon series titles that try to be too clever by half, this title is intended to have connotations of both terms: “story” and “storey,” in this case, belong together.

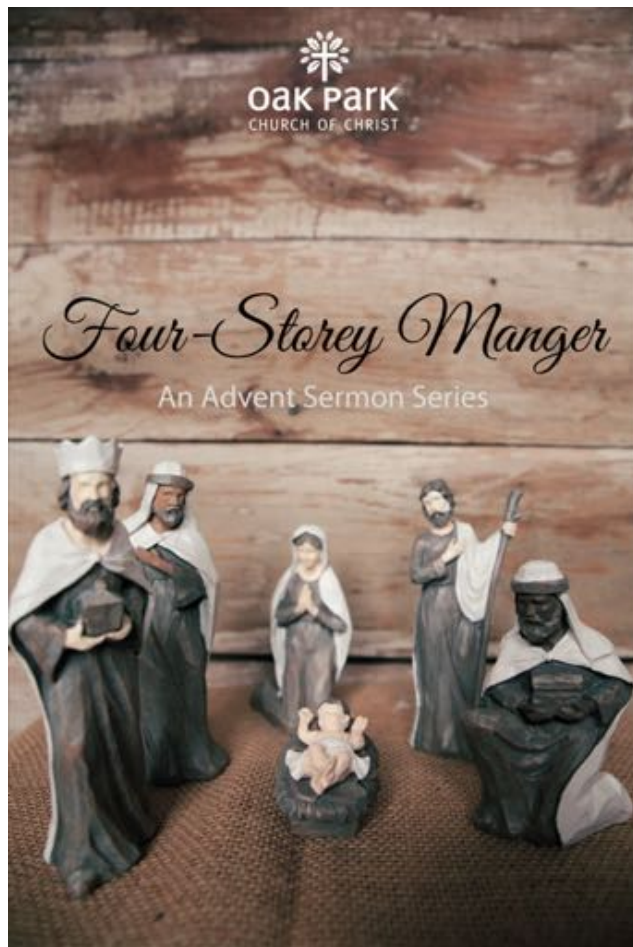
Over the next 4 weeks we will observe the season of Advent in the Christian calendar. It is the start of a new year in the seasons of the church, beginning with 4-weeks of Advent before we enter Christmastide and then Epiphany. And I’m sure we can all agree we are ready for the start of a new year! For this year’s Advent series, we want to look at how the stories of Emmanuel (God’s coming to us in human form) are so different across the four gospel narratives: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But they aren’t

just independently unique, they are also interconnected and help us to

see the whole truth of the good news. Think of it like the layers of coloured light that overlap to produce radiantly bright white light... almost like an especially bright star leading the way to a manger! Or, think of the four gospel stories of Christ’s entrance into the world as a four-storied manger with each floor giving a unique, but integrated piece of the full reality of the Word made flesh.

Come along and consider why the story is told 4-ways – hear afresh the good news of a God who became a helpless babe, of the Word that became flesh, of a prophet who prepared the way, and of a world that took notice of that little town of Bethlehem with the four-storey manger taking centre stage. This year, perhaps more than ever, we need to be reminded that nothing can “cancel” the good news of great joy, for “Unto us, a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). –By Pastor Lane





# Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Family Service

6:00 pm Family Service

10:00 pm Candelight Service

**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Rosscarrock Church of Christ  
Oak Park Church of Christ (services held here)  
Hope for Life Christian Fellowship

# Online Services

Good news! We are streaming our Sunday services online!

How to view our online services:

1. Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
  2. Search for "Oak Park Church of Christ"
  3. Select and subscribe to our channel
  4. Select the Sunday service video that streams at 10am on Sundays
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## Gift Drive for the Food Bank

Ways **YOU** Can Help Take Part:

- Give a special financial gift to the Benevolence Fund
- Volunteer to be a Shopper
- Volunteer to be a Wrapper (not a rapper)
- Volunteer to be a Delivery Driver



This year our Christmas Food Bank (happening on December 17th) will also involve a Gift Drive for the families involved (and for some additional families). Mitch and Ray-Ann Bradley have stepped up to lead this initiative and we are hoping to raise enough funds to shop and bless 20 families.

Please contact the church if you would like to be involved. As well, you can easily give to the drive by e-transferring your gift to [donate@oakpark.ca](mailto:donate@oakpark.ca) with "Benevolence" in the notes or write it on your envelope.

## Oak Park Missions Update

### Vienna - Refuge of Hope

Vienna is having a very challenging time at the moment. Due to severe flooding and destruction in the next province, their power has been out for some time and they are not sure when they will get it back. (WOW! No A/C and temperatures in the 30's!) Five tropical storms have made landfall in the Philippines in a short period of three weeks. Vienna has now been away for 2 years and had hoped to come home but that is not possible. Her American friend Ellora, who was supposed to join her, has been unable to come due to Covid. Vienna continues to work on learning the language. They are doing all they can to love and care for the girls they have been able to rescue, some as young as 8 and 12 years old. We were able to pack 3 very large boxes with some basic items and some fun things we collected and they should arrive before Christmas. Many thanks to everyone who donated. Please pray the boxes arrive safely.



### Carissa - Streetlight Ministries



Streetlight has tried to adjust to the new Covid protocols. In the summer Oak Park assisted them with "snack packs" which they shared when they hung out with kids at city parks, etc. A huge blessing was the renovation of the kitchen in the Streetlight trailer. They are now meeting with kids on the street three nights a week and available 24/7 via phone. Receiving a hot meal is a big highlight for the youth and Oak Park was also able to help them with a Superstore gift card for food purchases.

## Oak Park Missions Update

### Jay and Colette - Graceland Ministries

Life has been extra hectic mostly due to Covid. Classes must be organized so they can be done online, which requires a lot of extra work ahead of time preparing, registering students, setting up cameras, etc., to keep things looking professional. They are very pleased to have three online classes for teens and six for adults. Wow! Colette is doing an in depth study in the book of John for Sequoia with participants discussing openly and learning to pray aloud each week. They currently have five classes with North American discussion partners for which they are thankful. So impressive! Colette requires a new high tech leg brace which will be very expensive so that is a concern. They ask for prayer that the Lord will give them the extra strength they need at this time and the ability to choose joy when it might be easy to choose grumpiness. Please also pray for protection from the virus. At the moment they are self-quarantining due to a second-wave lock-down.







*Eat Well. Spend Less.*

 **Oak Park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

2020

**Any one can order one or more  
Good Food Boxes.**

Boxes must be pre-ordered and paid for in cash (exact change) on or before the order by date. You can pre-purchase your next box when you pick up your order. Boxes must be picked up, before 6pm. (Note: Boxes not picked up will be donated - no refunds will be given.)

Good Food Boxes come in the following sizes:

<b>LARGE</b>	40 lbs	\$35.00
<b>MEDIUM</b>	30 lbs	\$30.00
<b>SMALL</b>	20 lbs	\$25.00

<b>ORDER BY</b>	<b>DELIVERY DATE</b>
January 13	January 22
February 3	February 12
March 9	March 18
April 13	April 22
May 4	May 13
June 1	June 10
September 7	September 16
September 28	October 7
October 26	November 4
November 30	December 9

For information call Oak Park Church office at (403) 251-5150 or email [office@oakpark.ca](mailto:office@oakpark.ca)

# ~~Food~~ Bank.

Oak Park Church will be holding its Christmas Food Bank on **Thursday, December 17th**. But this time, for COVID-related logistical reasons, we're **not** looking for donations of food.

Instead we really need **financial donations** to buy groceries, **volunteers** to do the shopping and/or deliver the food parcels, and **bags** – lots of plastic bags. Please help us make Christmas special for our neighbours in need.

Shopping lists and volunteer sign-up sheets will be available at the church from Tuesday, December 8th.



# Long Range Planning Committee Report

This month's LRP update was also covered at the recent AGM, so this will be a refresher for those who made it to the AGM.

Folks will recall that following extensive consultation with all of Oak Park's ministries, staff, elders and board, the ministry expansion plans were updated over the past couple of years and drawings of what is planned are available in the AGM package and in the church office.

This fall, we consulted with the Verger Group, a consultancy in church expansions, on the planned expansion. Verger was used for two reasons – 1) they are experts in this field so they can give Oak Park an informed and unbiased view of the expansion feasibility, and 2) to keep individual feedback confidential by conducting the interviews at arm's length.

Verger consulted via Zoom with 21 families in September and provided the staff and long range planning committee with a preliminary report in October. Results of that initial consultation included:

- Strong awareness and support for the project within the overall Oak Park family – all families interviewed were aware of the expansion plans and were prepared to donate to the project over a three to five year period.
- Prefer to wait until the Covid situation stabilizes – while unanimously in support, most families also felt there was too much Covid uncertainty still to proceed with formal fundraising and building expansion just yet, preferring to wait to see how things look as we get further into 2021.
- Request for ongoing communication to keep the congregation up to date on plans and efforts affecting this expansion.

Based on this feedback the next steps and timing now are:

- Complete the Verger consultation with a further 19 interviews (total of 40) early in the new year (Q1 2021). A reminder the goal is not to interview all Oak Park families – just enough to give a strong cross section of our church families to determine project understanding and support. 40 is the number of interviews Verger recommends.
- A much more detailed report will then be provided by Verger in the late winter / early spring of 2021.
- Formal fund-raising campaign in either the spring or fall of 2021 – timing of course is dependent on Covid. And of course dependent on



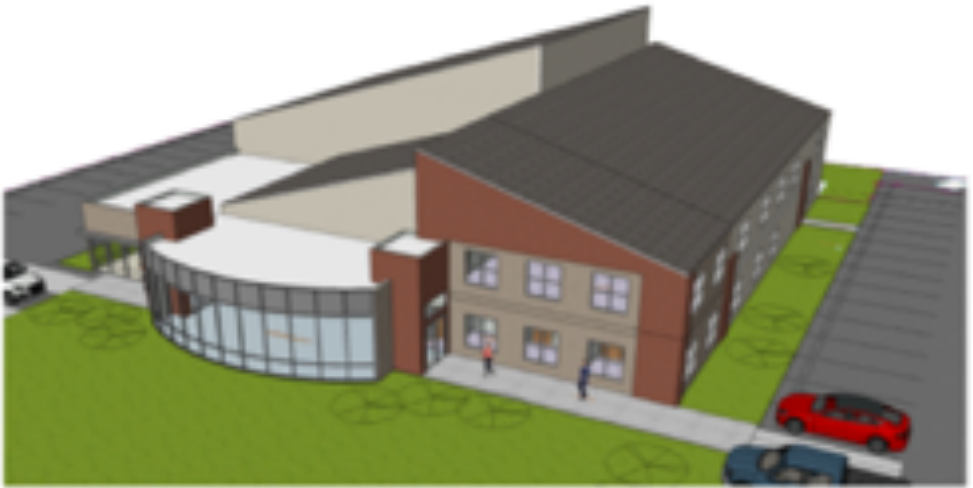
continued strong congregational support for the project following the second round of Verger interviews.

- Detailed construction drawings and city development permit applications in late 2021 and early 2022.
- Construction during the summer of 2022 – tentatively May through August of 2022.

If anyone wants a copy of the recent AGM presentation, which includes copies of the draft drawings, please just let me know.

Doug Walker, Chairman  
Long Range Planning Committee

### **Planned Renovations - Exterior View**





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## JUST DO IT!

**Oak Park Women! Gather to pray & worship the Lord!**

**Saturdays: Dec 12 and Jan 16 10-11:30am**

**Mark Your Calendar Now!**

**Bring your own water bottle, tea or coffee, and please wear a mask.**

Social distancing and Covid-19 protocols in place. Contact the church office for more information.

# The Church in a Hot Mess!

ANOTHER SERMON SERIES IN ACTS



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CHURCH OF CHRIST

Starting January 2021

## Your Giving Matters! November Financial Update

Be sure to check your inboxes soon for one final personal giving update so you know where you're at with your donations for the year (up to the end of October). Let me just reiterate what I've said in the letter accompanying that update: THANK YOU! We continue to hold a small surplus in our overall budget for the year, nearly matching our overall giving from 2019 as well. Those two facts are hard to fathom from my point of view, considering the chaos that both locally and globally has defined 2020. I can't help but shake the feeling that God is doing something amazing in our midst - not only have our finances stabilized, but we have invested more in our community through local mission than ever before!

My prayer for 2021 is more of the same: Let us continue to give sacrificially and generously as God leads us and calls us into more areas of His kingdom work in our community. Let us be faithful with everything He has given us. Amen.

-By Pastor Lane



**Oak Park  
Youth Group**

**Sundays**  
**7:00 pm - 8:30 pm**  
**@ Oak Park Church of Christ**

\*Masks will be required to attend in compliance with Calgary Bylaw 26M2020



Did you know Oak Park has an app? Download to your smartphone to access online sermons & event information. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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