

## Food and Clothing Ministry

Oak Park runs a clothing and food ministry on Thursday mornings. It is a privilege to share about this ministry, as well as how my husband Philip and I got involved. As some of you know, Angela Hosier is my sister. When we used to live in B.C., we occasionally came to Calgary to visit Angela and Martin. Angela asked many times when we would be moving here, and I never thought we would. God does have a sense of humour, because in 2018, our son started looking for jobs here in Calgary! After much prayer, we made the move here in August 2019, and our son subsequently got a job with the city of Calgary in July 2021.

The clothing ministry was started by Doris MacKinnon in November of 2012. She had a heart for single parents and wanted to help them in a practical way. This ministry has expanded significantly over the years, and now offers not only clothing, but household goods and occasionally some furniture as well. Approximately 2,000 items every month are given away. Leftover items are given to WINS Thrift Store (Women In Need Society).



In 2018, the food ministry started at Oak Park (distinct from Oak Park's Food Bank). Dedicated volunteers would pick up a bread donation weekly and drop it off at the church, and it was given away the next day, alongside the clothing ministry. In March 2020, the pandemic restrictions required a new process for this ministry. This is when Phil and I first got involved; we would individually package the bread and hand it out. The food ministry has also evolved and expanded over the years, and now offers bread, produce, and sometimes even meat and ready-made meals. We have dedicated volunteers who pick up the donations and deliver to the church each week. Early



Thursday morning, Phil and I go through the perishables and sort out anything unfit for consumption. Once we open the doors, our team keeps busy visiting with the clients, restocking the tables, and trying to help everyone find what they need. We have seen the number of clients grow from 20-30 up to an average of 50-60; with that increase, the number

of volunteers has grown as well, and we are so grateful for every one of them.

We have had the chance to get to know a lot of the clients and their situations. This is what keeps us coming back to help every Thursday. Here are a few stories:

One young lady runs a program feeding homeless people in downtown Calgary. One Thursday she had no bread to make sandwiches. She happened to drive past our church and saw the sign for free bread. We had received a particularly large donation that week, so we were able to give her plenty of bread and buns, and some fruit and clothing. She later teamed up with another ministry that was also helping street people (Lot Ministries).

We now set aside items for this organization weekly. If you want to hear a little more about this ministry, ask Doris or Ken, as they have gone downtown and seen first-hand the help they provide. On another occasion, Lot Ministries had not received enough donations to provide for those they serve (sometimes up to 100 people). God is always

at work, because that day we again had a larger than normal donation and were able to give them bread, fruit, vegetables, and meat. Lot ministries told us that what we were able to give them that day more than covered their regular donations.



Many clients are single parents and there is a single grandparent raising two grandchildren who comes in regularly. One single mom has three special needs children, all of whom require the medication. She has told us more than once

how the food and clothing she receives from our ministry relieves some of her financial burden and allows her to pay for her kids' medicine. Another gentleman and his wife both only have part-time work and are the caregivers for his parents who live with them. The extra food they get from us helps their budget stretch further.

We recently had a new family come in. They had just moved here from B.C. and were not able to bring everything with them. Their neighbour had suggested they come to the church for help. The husband was still looking for work and needed a bike for transportation. As it happens (God is good) we had brought a bike in with us that very day for Ken to look at, as it needed a tune up before being given away. The man was very surprised and grateful to take the bike home.

People from our congregation have introduced new immigrant families from the Philippines and a refugee family from the Ukraine to our Thursday ministry. We do our best to provide these families with food, clothes, and furnishings for their accommodations. What a privilege to be able to help them in such a tangible way.

We have another lady who comes in regularly. She, along with a group of ladies, makes bags out of pillowcases and men's ties. They fill them with baby clothes and diapers and send them to part of Africa where the women have nothing to clothe their babies with. When we receive pillowcases, men's ties, baby clothes, and disposable diapers, we often set them aside for these ladies. When Ricot requested wedding dresses for Haiti, we were able to provide six. This month two suitcases full of children's clothing from our clothing rack will be going to an orphanage in Cuba.

It is amazing to think of how this combined clothing and food ministry serves our community, assists other ministries in our community, and helps other countries. God is at work, and we pray that we can continue to be his hands and feet as we volunteer every Thursday morning.

By Cynthia Taylor

## Advent Series: The Promised One

For to us a child is born... (Isaiah 9:6)

During Advent, we prepare our hearts to celebrate the arrival of this child – the infant Jesus, laid in a manger, loved by Mary and Joseph, worshipped by shepherds and wise men. But Advent – which means “arrival” – invites us to prepare for much more than the holy night of His birth.

Throughout church history, Advent has been a season of anticipation. It began in the early centuries of Christianity as a penitential period in preparation of Epiphany – the celebration of Jesus’ appearance and the manifestation of his identity, which was also a day set aside for baptism of new believers. Soon Advent began to focus on the anticipation of another appearance: the second coming of Christ. By the Middle Ages, the themes we tend to associate with Advent today had become part of the church’s observance, as Christians included celebratory anticipation of Christmas alongside the contemplation of Jesus’ return...

The Book of Isaiah contains some of the most compelling prophecies pointing to Jesus. We read of a promised son who would be called Immanuel – God with us (7:14). We learn of a light that will dawn upon people living in darkness (9:2). And we encounter this resounding promise: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever” (9:6-7).

Scripture’s prophecies of the Promised One often have layers of meaning and multiple fulfillments. They frequently point toward a fulfillment in the prophet’s own time but also direct our gaze toward the Messiah and His first coming as well as the Second Advent we await.

Selections taken from *The Promised One: Advent Readings from Christianity Today* 2022.





**MEN'S PRAYER  
MORNING**

Wednesdays @ Oak Park  
6:30-7:30am  
Coffee Provided

  
oak park  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

## Missions Update: Operation Christmas Child

Many thanks for taking an interest in filling a shoebox for a child in need. This is a great way for the children to participate in the care of another child. We have shoeboxes available in the church foyer. You can choose the age and gender of a child you would like to pack for. Samaritan's Purse delivers shoeboxes year-round, but we would like to collect boxes from now until December 18th. If you return your shoebox to the church by the deadline, we will make sure it gets to Samaritan's Purse in time for Christmas.

There are lots of good suggestions in the brochure for gift ideas. I have a few additional recommendations/things to consider: children in the developing world often do not know what some of our toys are, or how to use them, so very basic toys are the best: soccer balls or balls of any kind, marbles, skipping ropes, dolls. Toys that are not easily broken are a real plus. Children love things they really understand, like a toothbrush, face cloth and soap. That is a special gift to them! A new t-shirt would also be special. Remember most of these kids do not have a way to store toys that have parts. Even things like pencils, pens, and crayons, will be better cared for and last longer if they come in a ziploc bag or pencil case. Many children have no garbage disposal available to them, so please remove all excess packaging if possible. Flashlights are great, but even better for the older child is a headlamp so they can do their homework at night when there is no power. A photo really helps personalize your gift - it shows that it came from someone who cares for them.

Have fun packing!

By Mary Davis



**4pm**  
**6pm**  
**10pm**



  
**oak park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Prayer &  
Communion  
Service**



  
**oak park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

# Seniors' Lunch

Monday, December 12, 12pm

Register at [oakpark.ca](http://oakpark.ca) or contact the church office

## Bake Sale

Sunday, December 18

After Service

Support the Youth Mission Team

## Construction Update

Folks will recall from our previous updates that following our funding gap for our original design, we spent the summer redesigning our plans to reduce costs while still maintaining as many of our expansion goals as possible. Those revised plans have since been widely shared with the congregation.

Because the revised plan changed the building footprint and how services (water, sewer) will be provided, we had to apply for a new development permit with the City of Calgary. The City has since approved our revised application. We are now awaiting final approval of our Development Site Servicing Plan (DSSP) with the City of Calgary.

We continue to work with Milestone to firm up costs for our revised plans and those costs should be within our affordability based on pledges to date and anticipated mortgage financing. There is still no word from the Alberta Government's Community Facilities Enhancement Program (CFEP) on the grant application we submitted in May, although we anticipate feedback by year end.

Our next step is a meeting with the Church of Christ Development Company (CCDC) in early December to answer questions they have on Oak Park and the project before processing our mortgage application for the project. Following that meeting we anticipate a response from the CCDC early in 2023. If all continues to proceed according to this revised plan, construction could still begin in the spring of 2023. Pastor Lane will share about the Infinitely More Lunch & Learn, as we were away on holidays.

Doug Walker, Chairman of the Long Range Planning & Construction Committee

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Our Lunch and Learn Potluck was very well attended on November 13th, with just under 100 people. Rick Lautischer did a fantastic job hosting a panel with Norm McLennan, Julie Kerr, and myself. Norm walked us through the latest conceptual plans and gave an update on where the permitting was at with the city. During the question and answer time, Norm handled construction related questions, Julie spoke to the CFEP grant application and addressed Board-related and fundraising questions, and I responded to a few questions about process and internal decision making. We are so thankful for those who attended, the encouraging atmosphere, the meaningful questions, and the recommitment of our church family to continue praying and seeking God's leading in this process. We are always open to questions anytime, so please don't hesitate to ask.

Pastor Lane





## Christmas Food Bank

### Sunday Dec 18 & Monday Dec 19

We are going **big** to bless as many families as possible, but we need your help:

**Donations of money** (mark offering 'Food Bank')

**Plastic bags** to pack it all in

**Volunteers to:**

Sort/pack food Sunday, Dec 18 (evening)

Sort/pack perishables Monday, Dec 19 (am)

Deliver food Monday, Dec 19 (pm)

**Sign-up sheets in the foyer**



## Christmas Gift Drive

### Tuesday Dec 13 & Tuesday Dec 20

Join us Tuesday evening, Dec 13 at Oak Park to help **wrap Christmas gifts** for 30 families in our community

We also need volunteers to **deliver** those gifts on Tuesday evening, Dec 20

**Sign-up sheets in the foyer,**  
or contact Mitch and Ray-ann Bradley



*Eat Well. Spend Less.*

 **Oak Park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

2022

**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

ORDER BY	DELIVERY DATE
January 17	January 26
February 7	February 16
March 7	March 16
March 28	April 6
May 2	May 11
May 30	June 8
June 27	July 6
September 5	September 14
September 26	October 5
October 24	November 2
November 28	December 7

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

# YOUTH GROUP

FRIDAY NIGHTS  
7-9 PM  
GRADES 7-12

## CLOTHING RACK MINISTRY

GENTLY USED CLOTHING

Open for **free** business  
Thursdays 8.15am – 11.00am



Access online sermons & event information at [oakpark.ca](http://oakpark.ca). You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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