

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS FROM AUGSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH

224 Mill St. S. Brampton, ON L6Y 1T8

December 2020

From Pastor Nadine

Grace to you and peace,

It is my fervent hope that you and your loved ones are keeping safe and healthy this holiday season. Certainly 2020 has been a hard year on everyone, but with the news of a vaccine in our future, Easter 2021 looks like it *might* be an extra special season.

I don't think any of us ever imagined in December last year that COVID 19 would have spread so far and caused so much upheaval in our lives. We certainly didn't think that we would not be gathering this year for our Christmas Service, would not be joining our voices to sing carols or lighting candles together. I suspect that many of us are resigned to the fact that we won't be getting together, and I also suspect that many of us are very sad because of this.

First, I want to affirm that it is okay to grieve for this loss. We have missed so much in 2020, and missing out on Christmas services, a sacred tradition held by so many, just seems like salt in the wound.

Second, I want to assure you that Christ is alive in our hearts. It is not traditions that make Christmas, it is the birth of Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

Whether we gather together for a candlelight service or not, whether we gather with family or not, God is born into our lives again and again. Be it COVID 19, loneliness, or just plain old boredom, God's grace is breaking through all and any adversity, to be with us. That is what God did on that first Christmas night long ago, and what God is still doing now.

God's peace, love and grace is with you,

Rev. Nadine Nicholas



Photo by [James Coleman](#) on [Unsplash](#)

How to Worship with Augsburg:

We'd like to take this opportunity to let you know the multiple ways you can worship with Augsburg in the midst of its closure.

- If you do not have access to a computer, we, at the office, have been trying to mail a "Worship from Home" service on a monthly basis.
- If you do have access to a computer, you can watch pre-recorded worship services on the church's website; www.augsbram.ca. If you are technically challenged, perhaps someone in your family can help you find this site. The Christmas service will be posted for all to enjoy on December 24, 2020 (in the afternoon).
- If you have an email, and we have it at the office, you have been receiving invitations to interactive Zoom worship services. Our **Christmas Eve Zoom service** will be on **December 24 at 7 pm**. However, if you would like to join in at 6:30 pm, you can hear Larry and Tatiana Baziw play some Christmas music.

PLEASE NOTE: you DO NOT need to have a computer to participate in the Zoom services. You can use your phone to call in and listen to the live service. Here's how:

- On December 24, between 6:30 pm and 7 pm, call **647-374-4685** or **647-558-0588**
- When prompted enter the **meeting ID** number: **896 7636 5367**
- When prompted enter the **passcode**: **853281**
- Voila! You can listen to the service.

If you, or someone you know, would like to be added to our mailing list or email list, or if you have any questions, please leave a message on the phone at the church office at 905-459-3262, or send an email: office@augbram.ca



From Don Wilker, President of the congregation:

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Peace, happiness, health and safety to everyone.

The year 2020 has been a different year for everyone, including the church. As the world became aware of the COVID 19 virus and its implications, we as a Christian community needed each other more than ever. The hardship began with the church closing for in-person worship in late March, but we persevered by having YouTube church services with the help of Pastor Nadine and Tasha, and having Zoom coffee fellowship bi-monthly throughout the summer. We tried in person worship after Labour Day with COVID 19 protocols in place. After four weeks and increasing COVID 19 cases in Peel, the council decided to close the in-person worship services by Thanksgiving. Pastor Nadine continued with the pre-recorded YouTube church services but also included communion services on Sundays over Zoom. With this inclusion, our church community began to blossom by seeing and talking to each other.

Major events with church council during 2020:

- During the year, the church council has dealt with the pandemic and how to adapt our Sunday services.
- We have also helped both the Brampton community and the global community by giving money to the following organizations from our Community Outreach Fund:
 - St. Andrew's Food Bank - \$5,000.00 to help them reestablish the food bank from their church to the Regeneration Thrift Store on Queen Street East, Brampton.
 - Regeneration Brampton - \$10,000.00 to assist them in feeding the homeless, assist with their joint venture Food Bank Marketplace with St. Andrew's; providing Christmas meals to those who have food security problems and other programs for the homeless and disadvantaged people of Brampton
 - Canadian Lutheran World Relief - \$5,000.00 to help the many people around the world who have no food and shelter.

Thank you to the following:

- Pastor Nadine, Jennifer Frey and Tasha Sertic for their continuing work in keeping church services going throughout the year.
- Church council members: Andrea Miersma, Walima Ragnauth, Lallita Gunness, Rebecca Lildhar, Tracy Rawlingson, Kendra Frey, David Frey, Ron Hesas, and Terry Dundee for their wisdom and help during this difficult time. Special thank you to Andrea, Walima and Lallita for giving the church six years of their time on council as they end their terms. Our church members and friends who have continued to give to the church even when the church was closed to in-person worship.
- All volunteers who have assisted in any aspect of church worship or helping at the church to keep it running. Especially the volunteers who helped deliver poinsettias to the shut-ins and elderly of the congregation.

A reminder that the last day for donations to the church to reflect on your 2020 donation tax receipt, is **Wednesday, December 30, 2020**. Donations can be dropped off at the church, e-transferred to the church or by donating to Canada Helps.

Again, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone from the Congregational Council and myself.

Blessings, Don Wilker

Donations for 2020:

As Don Wilker has just reminded us, the last day to get your 2020 donation to the church is **Wednesday, December 30, 2020**. There are five ways you can donate:

1. **Drop off:** you can drop your donation at the church and pop it through the mail slot (it's in the frame of the door, at eye level).
2. **Mail:** you can mail us your donation (make sure you send it early enough so that it gets here by December 30th.)
3. **eTransfer:** you can send an etransfer to office@aug Bram.ca. We have set it up so that a password is not required.
4. **Canada Helps:** You can donate through Canada Helps: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/33150>
5. **PAR:** For a more consistent donation throughout the year, you can set up a regular automatic withdrawal through the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) program. Contact the office to do so. office@aug Bram.ca

