Rawdon-Mascouche-Kilkenny
Advent-Christmas-Epiphany 2026-27

Located in the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat people

Henry Woodsworth Longfellow: I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Longfellow wrote this poem on Christmas day in 1863. His wife had died in 1861. One of their sons had joined in the Union Army, and in 1863, had been grievously wounded.

I heard the bells on Christmas day; their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat; of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head: 'there is no peace on earth, ' I said
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: 'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on earth, good will to men.'

Till, ringing, singing on its way, The world revolved from night to day
voice, a chime, a chant sublime, Of peace on earth, good will to men.

You can listen to this poem, sung by the Appalachian Children's Choir:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRUmN4xTg0Q&list=RDmRUmN4xTg0Q&start_radio

Poets work to see the world with clearer eyes and with gentler focus. Reading poetry challenges us to look with greater care at the world we live in. Today we find ourselves more than 2000 years after the birth in time of the timeless Prince of Peace. Though the people of our world have heard the Good News and the songs of Angels, and seen the miracles of lives transformed by Grace and seen the lowly lifted up and the disenfranchised reconciled, we continue, sadly, as a world which Longfellow mourned in the third stanza of his poem: "*… in despair I bowed my head: 'there is no peace on earth, For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men.'*"

Christmas 2026 sees the fragile fabric of our global community more stretched and stressed than it was a year or a decade or a generation ago. We see a world torn in ever more places as conflicts rise to the surface and people choose weapons over conversation. We hear shouts claiming entitlement or superiority instead of the calm and steady voice which speaks of the dignity of every human being. Our Sunday intercessions name Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Gaza, Haiti, Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Ukraine, & Yemen; but these are only the places and conflicts which make the evening news. We could add dozens of other conflicts – in places like South Sudan, the DRC, Mali, Cyprus, Moldova, Syria, Iraq, and the UAE, to name but a few; and we could add to these not-yet-headline-news conflicts an increasing number of tensions arising from ethnic and cultural oppression in places such as Western China and in parts of Europe and Africa and North America where communities and politics are falling back into xenophobic intolerance and ethno-nationalism. Sadly, many communities choose to see a deficit of resources to share rather than the abundance which we have been given to share. We hear amplified voices speaking of superiority over those who are different, with amplified voices overcoming the gentle voice that speaks of the dignity and inherent value of every human being – for we are each created in the image of God.

Luke 2:10-14 tells us that a group of poor shepherds were the first to hear of the arrival of the Prince of Peace: *Fear not [said the angels]: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord…... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will toward all.* The proclamation of was not made to one person, nor to one community: but to all people. Racist and misogynist voices have argued that some people have preferential access to the Good News. Voices of intolerance towards those with different languages, skin colours, orientations, social status, wealth, religious heritage, social mobility, or gender are all invited to hear the same music of the heavens proclaimed by the heavenly choir: *For unto us is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!*

In our parish, encompassing, among other communities, Rawdon, St-Alphonse Rodriguez, St-Côme, Sainte-Julienne, Ste-Marcelline-de-Kildare, Chertsey, St-Thomas, Lavaltrie, St-Lin, Mascouche, Terrebonne, St-Hippolyte, and St-Jérôme; we are miles and times-zones from conflict zones. Though there are currents of intolerance in some corners of La Belle Province, we are among the most blessed of people and can freely share '*good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people'*.

Advent offers us the chance to listen to Luc Beausejour + a 5-piece brass ensemble + 4 professional voices on Dec 6th @ Christ Church @ 3:30 & 7PM [tickets are available at the town hall - $10 / $20]; participate in a service of Lessons & Carols on Dec 13th @ Christ Church @ 7PM to raise funds and non-perishable food for the Rawdon Christmas Hamper campaign; join a 'Carol & Wassail' party @ Grace Church on the 19th @ 7PM in Mascouche to raise funds and non-perishable food for the Mascouche Christmas Hamper campaign; participate in a Christmas Pageant @ Christ Church on the 20th @ the 10:30 service @ Christ Church; listen to excerpts from Handel's Messiah and Bach's Christmas Oratorio @ Christ Church on Dec 20th @ 7PM [$25]; celebrate Christmas Eve @ Residence Ste-Anne @ 4PM on Dec 23rd; or on Christmas Eve in Rawdon @ 7PM, or in Mascouche @ 10PM on the 24th; worship on Dec 27th – the first Sunday of Christmas - @ 10:30 in Rawdon & 1PM in Mascouche; and listen to smooth Yuletide Jazz @ Christ Church @ 3PM on the 27th [$25]. You are encouraged to bring non-perishable food stuffs to Christ Church and to Grace Church, and to the Parish Hall from November 29…Dec 20, for the need in our communities is significant, and we can make Christmas a time of blessing for others by giving generously throughout Advent.

Though Longfellow spent Christmas of 1863 grievieng for his wife and despairing for his wounded son, he found his way to the Joy and the Hope which the gospel offers to those willing to listen. The last two stanzas of his poem speak to this truth: '*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: 'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on earth, good will to men. 'Till, ringing, singing on its way, The world revolved from night to day, A voice, a chime, a chant sublime, Of peace on earth, good will to men.* As we work our way through Advent, as we work to prepare hearth and heart for the birth of a child who was wrapped in rags and laid in a manger, let us work to ring bell and sing hymn – for there is Good News for us to share in word and in song and in deed.

Rodney +

Christ Church seeks someone to donate pink flowers for Dec 13, which is the 3rd Sunday of advent.
If you wish to donate flower for this day, please contact Ann @ ann_hotpink@hotmail.com

To donate poinsettias for Christmas, for Christ Church please contact Ann @ ann_hotpink@hotmail.com
for Grace Church please contact Diane brunet.diane62@outlook.com

Christ Church, 3537 rue Metcalfe, Rawdon
https://christchurchrawdon.com email: christchurchrawdon@gmail.com
People's Warden: Ann Allen ann_hotpink@hotmail.com 450-834-2492
Rector's Warden: Sharon St Maurice sharonstmaurice@gmail.com 514-889-0094
Safe Church: rawdonsafechurchcontact@gmail.com 450-834-4340
Prayer Requests: rawdonprayerrequests@gmail.com
Hall Rental: dianeckyte@hotmail.com
Flower Memorials: Altar Guild: ann_hotpink@hotmail.com 450-834-2492
Donate on-line at www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/70387

Grace Church, 2174 Chemin Ste-Marie, Mascouche
Rector's Warden: Sean Sampson Sean_Sampson@bat.com 514-243-1972
People's Warden & Flower Memorials: Diane Duclos brunet.diane62@outlook.com 450-477-1475
Donate on-line at www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/st-margarets-anglican-church/

St-John-the-Baptist, Kilkenny: 978 Chemin de la Chapelle, St. Hippolyte
Rector's Warden: Dave Ward: davidward3@sympatico.ca 450-563-3729
People's Warden: George Quinn: 450-563-3126
Donate via e-transfer by sending e-donations to
churchstjohnthebaptistkilkenny@gmail.com

The Rev. Rodney Clark frrodneyclark@gmail.com 514-571-3202
The Rev. Maylanne Maybee, Deacon maylannemaybee@gmail.com