



Pretty much everyone who gives a Christmas present wraps it in colourful paper—or a pretty box or gift bag. But why? The historical answer is that back in the 19th century, most people gave each other homemade gifts, which came wrapped in intimacy and affection, but usually without any wrapping paper. When stores wanted in on the

Christmas gift business, they were in competition with homemade items. To compete, they started wrapping their products, so they looked more special. In time, everyone was buying wrapping paper for almost all Christmas gifts, even the homemade ones.

The Hallmark Brothers basically invented Christmas wrapping paper in 1917, when they ran out of tissue paper, and sold fancy French patterned paper instead out of desperation. Customers liked it so much Hallmark started making their own wrapping paper. Today, stores sell us not only the present, but the wrapping too. Not a bad hustle!

But why does a gift need to be wrapped at all? We can sense that a certain magical quality is lost with an unwrapped gift. The addition of a thin layer of colourful paper transforms a product into a gift. There is a temporary sense of possibility, where one thing could be many (is it a watch, a ring, a Fitbit?). Wrapping paper lends a gift of cosmic possibility, a connection to the rest of the universe, literally and in the imagination. All those possibilities last until the moment we rip open the paper, and the gift collapses, to be revealed as only what it is.

That sense of possibility seems entirely in keeping with Christmas, when we are invited to believe that almost anything is possible. It's not hard to imagine why we have opted for that sense of wonder and possibility, even for products we could have purchased on ourselves. Wrapping paper is the material expression of the Christmas spirit.

—Rev. Stephen Milton came to Lawrence Park Community Church in Toronto in 2019, after decades of work as a documentary filmmaker. His passion is creating new ways to explore spirituality, appealing to people who aren't interested in regular Sunday morning church services.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS  
BEAVERLODGE-WEMBLEY-HYTHE  
PASTORAL CHARGE  
PHONE: 780-354-2016**

**December 24 – Advent 4 -Christmas Eve**

**Scripture Readings for those who would like to read them in advance:**

**December 25 – Christmas Day (Monday)**

**Isaiah 62:6–12**

Prepare the way for the people.

**Psalms 97 (VU p. 817)**

Let the earth be glad!

**Titus 3:4–7**

Saved by grace, heirs of hope.

**Luke 2:(1–7), 8–20**

Shepherds and angels.

**December 31 – First after Christmas**

**Isaiah 61:10—62:3**

God clothes me with salvation and righteousness.

**Psalms 148 (VU p. 871)**

Let all creation praise God.

**Galatians 4:4–7**

No longer a slave but a child of God and an heir.

**Luke 2:22–40**

Jesus is presented in the temple.

**Minister information**

**Please contact Rev. Dr. Dorcas Kanana Muketha**

- Cell phone 780-876-7042
- Email [dokamu2003@yahoo.com](mailto:dokamu2003@yahoo.com)

- **Day off – Mondays**
- **Christmas Holiday** - December 25 to January 2 inclusive

### Beaverlodge-Wembley-Hythe Pastoral Charge

**Bible Study:** Regular Bible Study will resume in Wembley, Thursday, January 10, 2024. 12:00 to 1:00, bring a bag lunch and a friend.

**The Advent Extension of Generosity,** we would like to thank everyone who participated and joined us for Prayer and Social time.

### Wembley United Church

- Wembley Sunday Service 9:30am
- **Wembley Thrift store:** Thrift store hours - **Second Saturday** of each month from 10:00am to 1:00 pm in the Church basement. Facebook Page is **Wembley Thrift Store**, check out our page for updates and specials.
- **No Morning Service** on December 24
- **Christmas Eve Service:** December 24, 7:30 pm
- **No Service on Sunday, December 31.** Service will return January 7. Beaverlodge will be holding regular service at 11:15 if you wish to join in.

Mailing address: Box 534, Wembley, AB  
 Street address: 9711 100 Street Wembley, AB T0H 3S0  
 E-transfer Offerings: [unitedwembey65@gmail.com](mailto:unitedwembey65@gmail.com)  
**Web page :** <https://wembleyuc.ca/>  
**Facebook pages:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/406148680279467>  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1552615295042898>

### Beaverlodge United Church

- Beaverlodge Sunday Service 11:15 am
- All are welcome to come for refreshments downstairs after the worship service. Thank you to the Ushers for helping with the Ushering and kitchen duties. Much appreciated.
- **No Morning Service** on December 24
- **Christmas Eve Communion Service:** December 24, 4:30 pm
- Please submit all **“Gift in Kind”** receipts to Lorraine as soon as possible.

Mailing address: Box 387 Beaverlodge, AB T0H 0C0  
 Street address: 403 10 Street Beaverlodge, AB  
 E-transfer Offerings [envelope.steward@gmail.com](mailto:envelope.steward@gmail.com)  
**Web page :** <https://beaverlodgeuc.ca/>  
**Facebook :**  
<https://www.facebook.com/BeaverlodgeUnitedChurch>

*Happy 4th week of Advent!*

