

for immediate release  
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## LOCAL CHURCH SEEKS TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE STRESSED OUT AT CHRISTMAS TIME

Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm

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# Media Release

**Trafalgar  
Presbyterian  
Church**

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Just as the holiday season moves into high gear, it seems that many people's anxiety levels are also rising. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, the added social pressure, financial stress, holiday expectations, loneliness, and increased family interaction are catalysts for holiday-related stress. More and more people are suffering under the weight of a season that is supposed to celebrate peace and joy.

Those who are going through a difficult transition such as divorce or illness, and those who are marking the first Christmas since the loss of a parent or spouse, are particularly vulnerable in December. The recent economic slowdown will also have an impact on many people. "This year, people have added worries about money", says Rev. Kristine O'Brien, minister at Trafalgar Presbyterian Church. "They may feel insecure in their jobs, or not have as much money to spend on gifts as they are used to. This year in particular people are struggling to celebrate".

Among the tips given by mental health professionals is acknowledging your feelings and seeking support. Local resident Sandra Moll is a PhD candidate at McMaster University studying mental health issues. "Christmas can be a stressful time for many," she says, "and social support from the church community can be valuable during difficult times, particularly if you are feeling isolated and alone".

That is why Trafalgar Presbyterian is aiming to help those feeling overwhelmed this Christmas. They hope that their service on December 21<sup>st</sup>, the longest night of the year, will offer support to those who are trying to cope with feelings of sadness or tension.

The annual service, now in its sixth year, may be attended by anyone from the Oakville community. It recognizes the difficulty of the season and offers gentle carols in a warm atmosphere. Visitors may remain anonymous if they wish. "The evening provides a chance to catch our breath and tend to our own needs", says Rev. O'Brien. "People always leave with a little more peace than when they arrived".

Call 905-842-2800 or visit [www.trafalgarchurch.ca](http://www.trafalgarchurch.ca) for more information.

