

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Est. 1786

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Nova Scotia B2H 4M9

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Sunday, December 16, 2018

3rd Sunday in Advent - Joy



*Welcome in the name of the living God, in the name of the beloved Son,
Jesus Christ, and in the name of the Spirit who gives us life.
If you are a visitor, you are invited to sign our guest book.*

*Worship begins with the music of the prelude. Please silence all
electronic devices*

(** indicates standing, as you are able)

THE APPROACH

Organ Prelude

Pictou County String Trio

Entry of Choir and Minister

Welcome and Announcements

**Introit

****Please rise as the Bible enters**

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called
Emmanuel.

Lighting of the Candle of Joy:

Reader: As we light our advent candle

People: We thank you for the joy you give.

Reader: As we prepare for Christmas time

People: Light of the world, shine on us.

Reader: In the midst of sorrow

People: Bring joy to our hearts.

Reader: To all the people who don't know you,

People: Light of the world, shine through us.

Reader: In this world of pain and darkness,

People: Help us to find joy in serving you.

Reader: In our service here today,

People: Light of the world, light the way.

****Call to Worship**

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say Rejoice!

People: Our joy is in the Lord who blesses us.

Leader: Shout for joy, for the Lord is near!

People: Our praises ascend to God for the mighty things God has done.

Leader: Let your praise dance and swirl in tribute to God!

People: Surely God blesses and saves us. Hallelujah! Praise be to God. Amen

****HYMN #115 Hail to the Lord anointed**

Prayer of Praise and Adoration **(unison)** God, we rejoice in you always. You are our strength and our might, we will trust in you and not be afraid. With joy we sing of your glory and proclaim your saving power. Now we seek the inner joy that only your presence can bring to our lives. Open our hearts and our spirits to your love. For we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Change my heart, O God" (*Eddie Espinoza*): Change my heart, O God, make it ever true; change my heart, O God, may I be like you. You are the Potter, I am the clay; mold me and make me, this is what I pray. Change my heart, O God, make it ever true; change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

Prayer of Confession (**unison**) **It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything, but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen**

Words of Assurance

****Passing of the Peace:** As the peace of God keeps our hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus, let us share the good news of God's peace with one another.

One person: The peace of Christ with you.

Other person: And also with you!

***Hymn #125** People look east (*children come forward during singing of last verse*)

Children's time (*children go to class following story*)

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Prayer of Illumination (**unison**) **Gracious God, thank you for sending your Holy Scripture to us this morning. Let it be like a song in our hears, a song that sticks with us, a song that we find ourselves**

humming long after we have left here. Let it be a song that changes us and makes us yearn for the fulfilment of your will among all peoples.

Scripture:	First reading:	Zephaniah 3: 14-20	pg. 719
	Second Reading:	Isaiah 12: 2-6	pg. 530
	The Letters:	Philippians 4: 4-7	pg. 895
	The Gospel:	Luke 3: 7-18	pg. 784

Leader: The word of God for the people of God

People: Thanks be to God

Anthem Pictou County String Trio

Sermon *GIVE ME A SIGN!*

THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer: Now we pray together with your people of all time and places in the words that Jesus taught:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

Hymn **#732 O day of peace

The Offering

Offertory **#145 In the bleak mid-winter (vs. 4)

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;

yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

**Prayer of dedication

Hymn **#110 Come thou long expected Jesus

**Commissioning and Benediction

**Sending Forth #793 Amen, amen, amen

Blessing for the upcoming meal

Postlude Pictou County String Trio

*Today's bulletin is sponsored in loving memory of
Graham Fraser by Phoebe & family.*

Supply Minister: Rev. Dr. Morley Shaw (h) 902-755-5505
Interim Moderator: Rev. Lorne MacLeod (h) 902-695-2817
Organist: Lloyd MacLean
Office hours: Tues. & Wed. – 10-1; Thurs. & Fri. – 9-12
Website: <http://pccweb.ca/first-newglasgow/>

Carrying the Bible: Kent Williams
MacLean St. Ushers: Ron & Mary Jones
James St. Ushers: Bert & Heidie Meyer
Office: Mark Thibeau
Scripture Reader: Brent MacQuarrie

Today is the **Third Sunday of Advent**. During Advent we are focusing on aspects of Advent – Hope, Peace, Joy & Love. How can you enter into the story this year in a new way? Invite your neighbours so they can experience the new life that Jesus brings. Pray that First Church will be able to effectively share the hope, peace, joy & love of Christmas.



TODAY - Sunday School Christmas performance immediately following the service (please remain seated.) Please join us downstairs, as there will be a potluck after with cookie decorating for the children.

A N N O U N C E M E N T S

We are pleased to welcome the musical talents of the Pictou County String Trio, who are contributing to our morning worship service. The trio members are: Doris Hiltz, violin; Allister Fraser, viola and Don Cameron, cello.

A memorial donation has been received from Dorcas Rebekah Lodge #42 in Thorburn in memory of Ethel Porter.

Offering Reminder - Just a reminder that any contributions to First Church that you would like to claim for 2018 Income Tax purposes must be received by Sunday, December 30th at the latest.

2019 Offering Envelopes are available in the Upper Hall. The weekly and monthly ones are there. If you don't presently get envelopes and would like to, please contact the office.

Following the Pictou County Council of Churches prayer roster, we are asked to pray for the congregation of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Pictou Landing, and their minister, Rev. Lorne MacLeod.

2019 Presbyterian Church in Canada **wall calendars** have arrived! The pictures are beautiful, with pictures of stained-glass windows from across Canada. They are available at the office during regular office hours for \$4.00 each.

There is a survey in the bulletin this week regarding worship that was held in the Upper Hall. Please take the time to fill it out and put it in the collection plate. **YOUR OPINION COUNTS.** Thank you!

U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

Dec. 17- New Glasgow New Horizons Band Christmas Concert at Christ Anglican Church in Stellarton.

Dec. 21 - Longest Night Service – a service of hope, strength & community at St. Paul’s United Church in Westville at pm. Poster on bulletin board with more information on it.

Dec. 23 - Regular service at 11:00 am.



Dec. 24 - **Christmas Eve** Candlelight Service at 7:00 pm with special musical guests and the Children’s Handbell Choir.

Dec 25. - the Annual Community Christmas Dinner will be served once again this year on Christmas Day from Noon to 2pm at St George’s Anglican Church, 199 Temperance St. Tickets are free (used to make sure we have enough food prepared) and can be purchased by calling the church office at 902 752-4551. If no answer leave a voice message and your ticket will be reserved.



YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

For three weeks First Church experimented with holding Sunday morning worship services in the upper Fellowship hall. We were hoping to encourage greater congregational interaction and participation in worship, especially in the area of Congregational singing and a closer feeling of community. December we will be worshipping once again in the church Sanctuary. For the first three Sundays of Advent we will be circulating this Questionnaire to members and adherents as a bulletin insert, Newsletter, and via our website/email, **to get YOUR opinion on how YOU assess the congregation worshipping in the fellowship hall.** Please complete the Questionnaire and turn it in to the church office, pass it on to an Elder or place it in the offering plate during worship. Your opinion counts!

Thank You, from the Worship and Music Team

1. What did you consider to be the advantages and benefits of worshipping in the Fellowship hall?
2. What did you consider to be the disadvantages?
3. Would you prefer this arrangement to continue during the winter months?

Why? Or Why Not?

4. How do you think first time guests, visitors, and “church shoppers” feel about the Fellowship Hall arrangement?
5. If you feel there are advantages to worshipping in the Fellowship hall, how might we incorporate these advantages into worship in the Sanctuary?