



South Nissouri Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Upcoming Events

December 2015

See Upcoming Events on the back for more details.

January 2016

January 10th
Chartwell Service

January 31st
Annual Meeting

Luke 2:14
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



Minister's Message

"The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God". Isaiah 35:1-2

With the blanket of snow and winter winds upon us we wouldn't think that the image of a rejoicing and blossoming wilderness would help us to think of the Advent season. But the 35th chapter of Isaiah has been claimed as a text of Advent for many years. It was originally written for a people living in exile, apart from their homeland and everything with which they were familiar. They were in a time of long and difficult waiting for God's promises to come true.

Hearing a prophecy like this helped them to hope that the Messiah would bring change, like life overflowing to their dry and desperate situation. So we read this passage at this time of year and think about the promise of Christ's coming to us again as the calendar year ends, as the world continues to be filled with darkness. Christ brings life overflowing in the restoration of relationships (with the land, with God, with each other), and in the beauty of hoping in the midst of despair. It may seem unrealistic, as it seemed to the Hebrew people. But God promises that we too will see the glory of the Lord, that we will walk in the holy way...whatever that may look like today. The task, especially in Advent, is to wait and prepare by keeping that vision of God's will for the world right in our sights, within our grasp. This vision will help us to blossom in the cold and share Christ's light in the darkness..

Rev. Heather Paton

What's going on with the wider church?

The 2015 General Assembly received several overtures regarding the full inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people. Some of these overtures (an overture is like a motion at a meeting requesting action to be taken) were in favour of full inclusion while some were not. The outcome at General Assembly was for the Church Doctrine and Justice committees to study the issue further and report back to the next assembly. Part of this study involves consulting with Presbyteries and congregations through a discussion document. The current stance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is that it is acceptable to be LGBT but not to act on that sexuality. The belief is that the sexual orientation is not a sin itself (i.e. people don't choose to be gay), but the act of having sex with someone of the same sex is. Currently the church does not allow for same sex marriage nor does it ordain people who are openly in a same sex relationship. Some of the overtures are requesting this stance be changed to fully include all people into all aspects of the church. The session hopes to have an open discussion about this difficult subject with those interested in the near future. In the meantime, you are free to speak to Heather about it and are encouraged to pray for a just and loving resolution. Please find some helpful resources online at <http://presbyterian.ca/sexuality/> including a study guide that has been prepared for the current discussion. Or you might read the articles over the past year in the Presbyterian Record (which is available at the back of the church).

Sermon Suggestion Box

Rev. Heather would like your input on topics you'd like to hear preached. Please write down your suggestions of scriptures, topics or issues that you'd like to hear explored from the pulpit. You don't have to include your name, but the more details you give the more helpful it will be to know what you're interested in. Feel free to speak to her, or your elder, in person too.

Upcoming Events

December, 2015

December 13: 2 pm - Chartwell Nursing Home Service

If you haven't been to Chartwell yet, this will be a good opportunity to come for the first time and share some Christmas Cheer. There will be readings and carols to celebrate the season with folks who are not in their regular homes for the holidays.

December 20: 7 pm Lessons and Carols

St. George's Anglican 7:00pm- **readers needed**

December 24: 7 pm Christmas Eve service

Joint Service at South Nissouri Church

December 27 and January 3: 11 am Worship Service

Guest Minister: Ian Marnoch

January, 2016

January 10: 2 pm Chartwell Nursing Home Service

January 31: 12 pm Annual Meeting



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