

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**208 MacLean St., New Glasgow, NS**

**902-752-5691**

**First.church@ns.aliantzinc.ca**

**Reverend Andrew MacDonald**

**902-331-0322**

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**December 17th, 2023**

**Third Sunday In Advent**

***PEACE***

**THE APPROACH**

**\*\*PLEASE RISE\*\***

**MUSICAL PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*\*MUSICAL INTROIT - #109** "All Earth is Waiting" vs. 3

 Mountains and valleys

will have to be made plain;

open new highways,

new highways for our Lord.

He is now coming closer,

so come all to see,

and open the doorways

as wide as wide can be.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**\*\*HYMN #120 –** “Lo! Christ comes with clouds” vs. 1,2,4

1 Lo! Christ comes with clouds descending,

Lamb of God for sinners slain;

thousand thousand saints attending

swell the Lord’s triumphant train.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

God appears on earth to reign.

2 Every eye shall now behold thee

robed in awe and majesty;

we, who scorned and mocked and sold thee,

pierced and nailed thee to the tree,

deeply grieving, deeply grieving, deeply grieving,

shall the true Messiah see.

4 Evermore let all adore thee,

high on thine eternal throne;

crowns and empires fall before thee:

thou shalt reign and thou alone.

Come , Lord Jesus; come Lord Jesus;

come Lord Jesus!

Claim all glory for thine own.

**PRAYERS OF APPROACH AND LORD’S PRAYER**

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in 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

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**PASSING THE PEACE**

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE: Joy**

**Lois and Lynne Ann MacLellan**

***\*\*HYMN: #119*** *“Hope is A Star” vs. 3*

Chorus When God is a child

There’s joy in our song.

The last shall be first

and the weak shall be strong,

and none shall be afraid.

3 JOY is a song that welcomes the dawn,

telling the world that the Saviour is born.

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

**FIRST LESSON:** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

**EPISTLE LESSON:**   1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

**RESPONSIVE PSALM:** Psalm 126

ONE: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

**ALL: Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations,  ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’**

ONE: The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

**ALL: Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.**

ONE: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

**ALL: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.**

**\*\*GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,

and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

world without end.

Amen, amen.

**GOSPEL LESSON:**  John 1:6-8, 19-28

**ANTHEM –** “Lo, how a Rose E’er blooming”

**SERMON:** *“Joy!”*

**\*\*REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH—APOSTLES CREED**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell. On the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits
at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**\*\*HYMN: #164 -** “O Little town of Bethlehem” vs. 1,2,4

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

**OFFERTORY**

**\*\*DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise Him above Ye Heavenly Host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**\*\*HYMN: #795 -** “Christ is coming” vs. 1,2,3

1. Christ is coming! let creation

from its groans and labour cease;

let the glorious proclamation

hope restore and faith increase:

Christ is coming! Christ is coming!

Come, O blessed Prince of peace.

1. Earth can now but tell the story

of your bitter cross and pain;

we shall yet behold your glory,

Lord, when you return to reign:

Christ is coming! Christ is coming!

Let each heart repeat the strain.

1. With that blessed hope before us,

flutes are tuned and harps are strung;

let the mighty advent chorus

onward roll from tongue to tongue:

Christ is coming! Christ is coming!

Let each heart repeat the song.

**\*\*BENEDICTION**

**\*\*CORAL RESPONSE: THREEFOLD AMEN**

**\*\*RECESSIONAL**

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Minister: Rev. Andrew MacDonald (c) 902-331-0322

Organist: Clare Grieves

Office hours: Tues. to Fri. – 10 -1pm

Rev. MacDonaldoffice hours -Tues. to Thurs. 10-2 or by appointment

**Mission Statement:** But he’s already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It’s quite simple. Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don’t take yourself too seriously – take God seriously. Micah 6: 8-The Message

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

All are welcome at First Presbyterian Church. We hope you experience the love of God and of this congregation as we worship, celebrate, and serve one another.

**PASTORAL CARE:**

In order to provide support to the people of First Church, when you or a loved one is sick or in hospital, we encourage you to contact the church (902-752-5691), Reverend Andrew (902-331-0322) or Cathy Lewis, Chair of the Pastoral Care Team (902-759-9649), to inform us directly. It is also important that you inform the hospital that you would welcome a visit from your minister and/or your Elder.

The bulletin this morning is sponsored in loving memory of Elder Graham Fraser, by Phoebe and family.

In memorium donations have been received in loving memory of:

* Elder Graham Fraser, from Phoebe Fraser and family
* Husband, Hugh Matheson from Catherine Matheson
* Parents, Melda and Roy MacGregor from Susan and Chuck Stallard, and
* Parents, Melda and Roy MacGregor from Janet and Brian Hiscott



Christmas Greetings are extended to everyone at

First Church from Catherine Matheson and family.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**TODAY – 2:00 P.M. –** First Presbyterian Church, Stellarton, is hosting“A Christmas Ceilidh” featuring Ray Stewart, Amelia Parker, Three Wise Men, Jeannie Cameron, Rev. Charles & Coleen MacPherson, Rev. Andrew MacDonald and many other local talents. Treats to follow in the church hall. Free will offering.

**Thurs., Dec. 21st – Blue Christmas Services at 7p.m. and 8 p.m. –** “A Service of Healing and Wholeness”.This service is for anyone but in particular, for those who may be struggling with loneliness, grieving or illness. All are welcome.

**The Worship and Music Team** are featuring special music prior to morning services during the 4 Sundays of Advent.  Refreshments will be served at the rear of the Sanctuary from 10:30 a.m. to the start of service.  Hope you can join us.

**Pictou County Fuel Fund –** The ‘PCFF’ provides short term assistance to those facing the prospect of an unheated home during the winter months. If you or someone you know needs heating assistance, call 1-902-616-4328 (heat) or visit the website www.PictouCountyFuelFund.ca

**SCRIPTURE READERS & USHERS:**

**Scripture Reader –** Jennifer Thibeau

**Candle Lighting** – Lois and Lynne Ann MacLellan

**Ushers**: Main Door (Office) – Jane and Keith MacDonald

 James St. – Ruth-Anne MacIntosh

 MacLean St. (Main Entrance steps) – Ellen Jardine

**Early Christian Educators**: Lynne Ann and Lois MacLellan

**\*\***If you have a notice for the bulletin, please ensure it is submitted to the office by 9:00 a.m. Thursday morning.