

Bethel Presbyterian Church
Corner of George & Brookland St., Sydney, NS
Second Sunday in Lent
Sunday, December 6th, 2020



Mission Statement

To share the gospel of Jesus Christ with our community in our worship and our living.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to be a local community of believers where:

Jesus Christ is the head.

The Bible has the ultimate authority as the true, infallible and complete word of God.

Salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and belief in His finished work on the cross is preached.

The Gospel of Christ is spread in our community, our nation, and around the world in both word and action.

Believers encourage each other and hold others in higher regard than themselves so that each may use the gifts God has given him/her to the glory of God.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR APPROACH TO GOD

Prelude

Announcements

Call to Worship

Prayer of Adoration and Approach & Confession (The Lord's Prayer)

Moment of Reflection

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD!; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. ⁵And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. ⁷The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." ⁹You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies

him. ¹¹He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Responsive Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13

¹You, LORD, showed favor to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

²**You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what God the LORD says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants — but let them not turn to folly.

⁹**Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest.

¹³**Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.**

Second Sunday in Advent: PEACE

Reader: In this season of Advent, we celebrate God's peace.

All: Jesus Christ, born the Prince of Peace, calls our community to justice and leads us in the way of peace.

Reader: We call one another to honesty and humility and respond to each other with abundant grace and forgiveness.

All: Our community values relationships. We live in harmony with one another even when we disagree, and strive to glorify God in everything we do.

Reader: Our community longs for unity. We work together with other churches and organizations, and live out God's reconciling love for all the world to see.

All: Together, we are a sign of God's peace in the world.

The candle of peace is lit.

Unison Prayer: God of all people and all nations, you break through the cynicism of our world and lead us like a gentle shepherd. Open our eyes to see the signs of your coming kingdom and inspire us to participate in all you are doing in Jesus' name. Amen.

Written by the Rev. Kristine O'Brien (Director of Crieff Hills)

Produced by Presbyterian World Service & Development
The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in
Canada

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7 * 1-800-619-7301

New Testament Epistle Lesson 2 Peter 3:8–15a

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and

everything done in it will be laid bare. ¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹²as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. ¹⁴So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

New Testament Gospel Lesson: Mark 1:1–8

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ²as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" — ³"a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" ⁴And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Moment of Reflection

Sermon

Peace

Solo Were you there on that Christmas night? David Butler

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OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Intercession

WE GO OUT IN SERVICE

Benediction & Postlude

Announcements

- We welcome everyone to the Service of worship
- The sympathy of our congregation is extended to our Custodial officer Allan & Julia Townsend and family in the passing of Allan's mother on Tuesday of this week.
- If you visit the blog pages or the Bethel Facebook page during December, you will find Advent/Christmas music each week till the end of the year. We pray that this may be a way to sing the carols in our homes and listen to anthems and special music.
- Included in your bulletin this week is the Litany for the Second Sunday of Advent and the candle of peace will be lit. Our readers Richard MacAulay and Donna Lyle will lead us in the Litany.
- The Session will meet in the church this Tuesday, December 8th at 7:30

To the Current Fund

- In memory of Percy Shepard, brother of Edwin Shepard by Eileen MacNeil

To the Benevolent Fund

- In memory of Percy Shepard by Carl & Lorraine Rideout

Sunday, December 6

MISSION MOMENT

Youth Clubs Make a Difference

In Malawi, 20-year-old Layton had been engaging in unsafe sexual behaviours. Several of Layton's friends attended Presbyterian World Service & Development supported youth clubs, where they would get together and discuss how to achieve a world without AIDS. His friends warned him about the consequences of his actions and shared information they learned at the youth club. Layton never thought to attend these meetings until one day when his friends persuaded him to get an HIV test. Anxious about the results—which eventually came back negative—Layton knew he needed to change his life. Deciding to join the youth club himself, he reflected, "I think my friends from youth club saved my life. I joined them so that we can save many from such behaviours."

Prayer List

Sunday, December 6

We pray for Hamilton Banda and volunteers at the Ndirande Handicapped Centre in Malawi who provide support to people with physical and mental disabilities, especially to children and their families.

Monday, December 7

We pray for all in the church as we seek to be in communion with people holding differing theological views. We pray for compassion and understanding to keep us as one in Christ.

Tuesday, December 8

We pray for the health and safety of people serving and worshipping in ministries with Indigenous Peoples.

Wednesday, December 9

We pray for chaplains who serve in correctional facilities, and for the Rev. Glenn McCullough, our denominational representative to the Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy for Corrections Canada.

Thursday, December 10 (Human Rights Day)

We pray for individuals and organizations defending human rights in Canada and around the world. We pray for their safety, and the safety of those they support and protect.

Friday, December 11

We pray for the people of Palestine-Israel who work for peace.

Saturday, December 12

We give thanks for all those who are restless for peace throughout the world, and those who inspire others to resist injustice and defend inequality.