



November 24, 2020

This Week at St. Andrew's



Pastor's Parable

In the parable from a week ago, you were led into a childhood story in which you discovered, in case you were not already aware of it, of my full name. Our Advent study over the next 4 Monday evenings (all virtual due to the current pandemic) will assist in preparing us spiritually, emotionally and mentally for Christmas. We will be using the book by Walter Brueggemann, *Old Testament Professor at Columbia Presbyterian Seminary Names for the Messiah*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2016.

Centuries before the birth of Jesus was the prophet's prediction, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Was the prophet speaking about Jesus? What do the individual names mean? What did they mean to the people to whom Isaiah wrote? The cultural expectation for a coming king when Jesus was born was to have war victories, economic success, agricultural productivity, and social justice. Much like the reign of David or Solomon. That's what the Jews were expecting in a Messiah. Did Jesus fulfill those expectations?

Did I fulfill expectations when given the name 'Mitchell' and 'Joel'? Mitchell means "Who is like God". My brother and sister could fill you in on meeting that expectation! While I have, throughout my life attempted to serve God faithfully, I know more often than not that I am not like God in the least. My middle name, 'Joel' however means 'Yahweh is God'. This name points to a more realistic expectation that, indeed 'Yahweh is God!' If I can be successful in pointing people to someone who is perfect, rather than imperfect; holy rather than sinful and faithful rather than fickle, then I will have met at least part of the expectation of my name. As we study the four names given to the Messiah, we will see that indeed Jesus not only met the expectations of Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, but He far surpassed them.

Join us on Monday November 30, December 7, 14, and 21 at 7:00 pm on Zoom (or call in by phone). I look forward to learning together as we prepare once again for Advent.

[Click here](#) for the hymn "The People in Darkness are Looking for Light" sung and played by Christine. This hymn was written by Dosia Carlson who had hoped to become a missionary. Dosia suffered complications from Polio and instead of travelling, she went to seminary and earned her doctorate. Her hymns are used for worship by many churches.



Mask Requirement

Just a reminder that masks are now required for everyone in **all public indoor settings** and workplaces. This includes St. Andrew's and the Kirk Hall.

Please put on your mask before entering the building for any reason. People who cannot put on or remove a mask on their own are exempt.



Preserves



Every year Ann Lambie makes preserves for our annual church bazaar. We won't be able to host the bazaar in-person this year but we have an opportunity for you to support the church and get some yummy jams, marmalade and more! Ann has worked hard to help us with this fundraiser so please consider ordering soon. These preserves make great stocking stuffers or basket stuffers or are delightful to enjoy at home. [Click here to fill out an order form for delivery of preserves right to your door](#)



Christmas Eve



This year our Christmas Eve service will be offered as a video filled with music from Christine, members of our community and harpist McKenna Jennings. The service will be made available in some form to our entire congregation, even those shut-in without computers so that everyone at St. Andrew's as well as our extended family and friends can worship safely together on Christmas Eve, no matter where we are, while we need to be physically apart.



There is willingness from the session to open the church on the night of Christmas Eve (December 24) for people to listen to prerecorded carols in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm.* Volunteers would be needed to help at the door and to spray pew cushions, wipe all hard surfaces and clean bathrooms both between these sittings and after. Potential volunteers may contact the office.

***This would only go ahead if gatherings are once again allowed by provincial mandate**

Did you know? The Advent Wreath

The wreath crown is traditionally made of fir tree branches knotted with a red ribbon and decorated with pine cones, holly, laurel, and sometimes mistletoe. The use of evergreens and light during winter festivals probably predates Christianity in Northern Europe.

Some of the symbols include:

-The crown shape symbolizes victory and the round form evokes the sun and its return each year.

- The four candles represent the four Sundays of Advent (hope, peace, joy, love)
- The green twigs are a sign of life and hope
- The fir tree is a symbol of strength
- The laurel a symbol of victory over sin and suffering
- The holly, which stays vibrant all year represents the eternity of God

The concept of the Advent wreath as we know it originated in the 16th century among Lutherans but was popularized in the 19th century by a German pastor working in impoverished communities who used it as a way to teach children about the season.



[Click Here](#) for a video message from Pastor Mitch

This Sunday, November the 29th is the deadline for submissions to The Link (our congregational newsletter). Please email your submissions to the editors at thelink@shaw.ca

Read From Your Bible This Week

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37



Advent

the season of expectation

Advent Bible Study:

November 30, December, 7, 14 and 21 at 7:00 pm.

[Click here for the zoom link](#) to the first bible study. Remember that you can also access a zoom meeting by phone. [Click here](#) to find a call-in phone number for Canadian participants.

The meeting ID is 853 1031 7404



*From the Presbyterian Church in Canada on
Celebrating Advent and Christmas This Year*

"While we will have lived with corona virus as part of our lives for a while now, the grief it has brought with it continues to affect many people's well being. We've had to change the way we worship, work, gather, educate, exercise, eat and so many other things. Along with these changes has come a loss of sense of predictability, safety, comfort, control and security. Our grief connects us to the reason for Christ's incarnation—God's presence with us, even in the darkest times.

Many Christmas traditions in our churches and homes emphasize comfort and joy with decorations, feasting, and extravagant celebrations. Yet, the first Christmas was far from extravagant. **God kept the birth of Jesus simple: a baby born in a manger to two regular people.** The hope and wonder on that first Christmas did not come from organizing the perfect worship service or cooking the best Christmas dinner; it came from the miracle of God becoming flesh. This year, as the pandemic prevents us from engaging in certain traditions and forces us to adapt others, it is a great time to invite those in our communities to focus on simplicity in their celebrations of Jesus' birth."



If you are receiving this newsletter by email you will also receive an advent litany and study questions that you can read at home each Sunday of Advent. You might use it as you light your own advent candles, if you have some or as you sit with a cup of tea or have a special moment on your own or with the people you live with.

The study questions relate to the zoom bible study to help you stay connected even if you aren't able to participate on Mondays. People who do not have computers have been mailed this advent package so that everyone can be involved.



You can still donate towards our Share the Joy of Christmas campaign for turkeys and gifts for the residents at Our Place.

Send a check to the church, donate to the church online or contacts Debra Verwey at 250-383-1009

or Brian Titus at 250-382-2387 for more information.