

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

January 2, 2022

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on Sunday January 2nd.

Announcements

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge with gratitude the territory upon which we live, work, play and worship. Knox is on the traditional lands of the Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827. We are all treaty people. We acknowledge that The Presbyterian Church in Canada was a part of the residential school system. We seek a new relationship with the First Nations of this land, one based in truth, respect, and reconciliation.

HYMN Let There be Light #727

CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]

One: The Word became flesh and lived among us

All: And we have seen his glory.

One: The true light enlightens the world.

All: Glory to God who has blessed us in Christ.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON¹

Holy God, we confess that we are a distracted people and forgetful of your love. We make poor choices, hurt each other, and perpetuate injustice in your world. We are deeply regret when we disregard you, your creation, and each other. By the power of your Spirit, we ask you to forgive, restore, and strengthen us to live in your light and walk in your truth; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is the good news: Christ is the light of the world who forgives and heals. Thanks be to God.

May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

To Hear The Word Of God

Prayer For Illumination

Almighty God, through you Holy Wisdom came to dwell to fill your world with her light and life. May she also dwell within your word this day, that we may know of your love for us,

¹ PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

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through the One who is close to your heart, Jesus Christ your Son. Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE	PSALM 147:12-20	[B#582/W#645]²
APOCRYPHA	SIRACH 24:1-12	not in pew bibles
EPISTLE	EPHESIANS 1:1-14	[B#191/W#204]
GOSPEL	JOHN 1:1-18	[B#91/W#94]
Hymn	Hail our once rejected Jesus	# 353

Message

Rev. Dolson

The Christmas stories share how the Word became flesh. God has always been and will always be within Creation. God has spoken through the Spirit and the prophets. The book of Sirach speaks to the Jewish intellectual heritage, preserved in the Torah, prophets, and other ancestral books. In this book, Wisdom is made tangible as one who was with God during the creation and she covers the whole earth. When people are attentive to the counsel of Wisdom, we are able to live in the ways that God intends. Two characteristics of Wisdom help us to understand God's intention that we find Wisdom in community and in serving God. We are created to live in relationship with others. We need to be inter-connected. The God who created and loves this world understands the need and longing for physical presence. Over the last 2 years, the pandemic has made us more aware of this need for the presence of others. The scriptures teach that God intends for people to be in community with one another.

What is Wisdom? Information, knowledge, and experience contribute to wisdom. We do not *get* wisdom, Sirach tells us; wisdom is *given*. It is not something we can acquire by effort or intelligence. Wisdom is a spiritual gift given by the grace of the Spirit of God. Our part of receiving wisdom occurs with prayer, pondering Scripture, and a life of discipleship.

In seeking divine wisdom there can be a lack of clarity and certainty. Certainty can lead to arrogance, when we forget that human knowledge is limited and often skewed. Thomas

² Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

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Merton³ wrote, "My Lord God,... the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you, and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road."

This understanding of Wisdom leads us to the beginning of John's gospel where he wrote, "The Word became flesh and lived among us". Our attention is pulled to the teachings within the scriptures and call us to the action of living in relationship within community. The pandemic has increased our awareness of the importance of community and relationships. We have discovered new ways of connecting and brushed up on our traditional ways of reaching out to one another. God came closer to humanity in a new way with Jesus when the Word became flesh. The living Word teaches in ways that would otherwise be difficult for us to comprehend.

In the living Word it is possible to reflect on justice and faithfulness of God as told by the prophets. The Word came to us as a vulnerable infant within a vulnerable family. This infant brought the message of God's love for all creation. Martin Luther wrote of God's gentle approach to save humanity, "See how God invites you in many ways. He places before you a babe with whom you may take refuge. You cannot fear him, for nothing is more appealing to a person than a babe. Are you afraid? Then come to him, lying in the lap of the fairest and sweetest maid. You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to humankind than this, that Christ became human, a child, a babe, playing in the lap of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to see this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save."⁴ **Amen**

Special Music A Christmas Meditation Roy E. Nolte Piano/Organ Duet

Ruth George and Jean Walker

The Offering of our Life and Labour to God

³ Thomas Merton (1915-1968) was a writer and Trappist monk

⁴ Roland H. Bainton, Ed., Martin Luther's Christmas Book (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) Kindle location 274 of 592.

<https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revise-common-lectionary/second-sunday-of-christmas-3/commentary-on-john-11-9-10-18-9>

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Resources include: PCC Worship Planner, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/> Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, and Feasting on the Word Companion, NRSV Bible

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Quote I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back. *Maya Angelou (1928 - 2014) poet, civil rights activist*

Prayers of the People, Blessing of Gifts

Let us join in prayer:

God your light breaks through the darkness to fill our lives with grace and truth. You delight when we share the good news of the ways of Christ. Shows us how to walk the path of wisdom enlightened by your faithful love. From you we have received grace upon grace. Accept our offering for the sake of the world. All that we have is yours, and all we return to you is but a reflection of your love for us.

Eternal God, we pray for Christ's church throughout the world. May we learn from John the Baptist to point others to the Light your love. Divine Wisdom, we pray for all leaders of the world. May your justice guide authorities to govern with truth and equity for all. Prince of Peace, we pray for all those who live and serve in places of violence and unrest.

God, we pray for the beauty of creation from the heavens to the depths of the sea. May your goodness stir a willingness within us to care for the precious resources which you provide.

We pray for all who suffer sickness or sorrow, and for those in need of food and shelter.

Open our hearts to the Wonder of your love, that Wisdom may be present within us.

Holy God, we bring before you the names of people on our hearts this day: Rudy and Grace; Bonnie; Rob; Courtney and Kyla. We lift up all those who prefer to remain unnamed as they face immense challenges of health and finances. Merciful God, accept our prayers, spoken and unspoken. May your love overflow more and more in our lives, in your church, and in all the world.

We join our voices together across space and time to speak the words that Christ taught his disciples ... **Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

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Hymn Standing at the portal # 811
To Go Forth In God's Name

Commissioning and Benediction John 1:1-18

Go out into the world with the grace of Christ. Rejoice in God's grace. Walk in God's light. Serve with the love of Christ. May God, the fount of all Wisdom, bless you and guide you this day and always.

Postlude Holy, Holy, Holy #623

#727 Let there be light

Let there be light; let there be understanding; Let all the nations gather; let them be face to face. Open our lips; open our minds to ponder; Open the door of concord, opening into grace.

Perish the sword; perish the angry judgement; Perish the bombs and hunger; perish the fight for gain. Hallow our love; hallow the deaths of martyrs; Hallow their holy freedom; hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come; your spirit turn to language; Your people speak together; your spirit never fade. Let there be light; open our hearts to wonder; Perish the way of terror; hallow the world God made.

623 Holy, holy, holy Words: traditional Music: F Schubert

Refrain: Holy, holy, holy, God almighty Lord!

Holy, holy, holy, everywhere adored!

God without beginning, God eternal One reigns and rules forever all beneath the sun

Refrain

Power and love and wonder, circling round God's throne, Praise our God most holy, Lord of Life alone **Refrain**

159 Oh come, all ye faithful

Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; Oh come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the King of angels:

Refrain: Oh come let us adore him; Oh come let us adore him

Oh come let us adore him: Christ the Lord.

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God of God, Light of light, Born unto Mary, the virgin blest, Very God, begotten, not created: **Refrain**

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle, Leaving their flocks draw nigh with holy fear; We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps: **Refrain**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation; Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above: "Glory to God in the Highest!" **Refrain**

Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: **Refrain**

811 Standing at the portal

Standing at the portal of the opening year, Words of comfort meet us hushing every fear, Spoken through the silence by God's loving voice, Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.

Refrain: Onward, then, and fear not, Children of the day,
For God's word shall never, Never pass away.

"I, your God, and with you: do not be afraid; I will help and strengthen; do not be dismayed, For I will uphold you with my own right hand; You are called and chosen in my sight to stand." **Refrain**

God will not forsake us and will never fail; God's eternal covenant ever will prevail. Resting on this promise, what have we to fear? God is all-sufficient for the coming year. **Refrain**