

The prophet's message

to the community of Judah, struggling to re-establish itself after its years of exile, contains a bright vision of hope. Their scattered children will return, their hearts will be radiantly glad.

Lively images of light, abundance, comfort and prosperity assured a despairing people that their God had not abandoned them to the cruelties of international power politics. Rather, the poetry spoke of the restored community as a centre that would gather the best and brightest of the nations.

The early church and Christian tradition saw in these words a poetic reflection of the radiant joy that accompanies the incarnation of God's light to the world in Jesus Christ. Even today, we believe that God-with-us, Emmanuel, brings light to the darkness of despair, whether that be of a people battered by war or a heart beaten down by depression.

Like dawn light, God's glory has risen upon us.

The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls is Dean of Studies and Professor of Hebrew Bible at Vancouver School of Theology.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, January 5, 2014

Communion Service / Epiphany of the Lord

Please stand at items marked * if you are able.
Passages in **Bold Print** are to be spoken in Unison

Organ Prelude - Hymn and Quiet Reflection
Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Susan Mattinson

Organist - Carol Wehrstedt Music Director- Kendall House

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Introit

* Entry of the Bible

Call to Worship

* Hymn: *"Songs of thankfulness and praise"* #176

Opening Prayer:

God of power and might, of grace and of love: You chose to become one of us in Jesus Christ, sharing our joy and sorrow, manifesting your greatness in the child of the manger. And so we praise you for your love which is great enough to embrace the universe, yet close enough to enter our hearts. We confess that our sins and pride hide the brightness of your light; we waste our gifts, we ignore cries for justice, and we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us and make us new. Surprise us with your grace that we, with the rest of the church and the whole creation, may praise and adore you; amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Exchanging the Peace of Christ

Children's Time

Music: *"Nazereth" - Solo by Kendall House*

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Hymn of Preparation

452 (v.2)

**Breathe the Holy Spirit into every heart;
bid the fears and sorrows from each soul depart.**



Prayer Concerns:

Marie Huffman (Roseview)
and her granddaughter, Bronwyn
Douglas Anderson

SUNDAY SCHOOL REMINDER:

THERE IS NO SUNDAY
SCHOOL TODAY.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES
JANUARY 12TH.

The Secretary wishes to thank the board of managers and the congregation for the wonderful Christmas present.

Session Report

Session last met for a regular meeting on Dec. 11, 2013. It was decided that the church would apply for the opportunity to send a group of four people to attend "Stewards by Design" November 20-23, 2014 in Orillia, ON. The conference is designed to help congregations discover how stewardship connects to all aspects of the mission and ministry of the church. In preparation for the Annual General Meeting, it was also discussed that we require a nominating committee. The Session will be asking for volunteers for this committee. It has been suggested by Rev. Bert Vancook in his last interim-minister's report, that a new mission focus be found for our congregation. In the past, First's work with refugees was a large project that unified many of our congregation in a common mission purpose. It is the Session's hope that through prayer, discernment, and conversation with those in our congregation who have a heart for mission, that God might lead our church to a new unifying mission focus. Session's next regular meeting will be January 22, 2014 (due to Rev. Susan being away on vacation) and will include a joint meeting portion with the Board of Managers.



Thank you so much to
everyone who donates to
the Food Bank.



Thank you this week to:

Greeters: Betty Irwin and Betty Irving
Lay Reader: Leslie Shaw
Fellowship Time: Isobel Telford and Val Calder
Elevator Operator: Russel Brown
Offering Counting: Mickey Kennedy and Doug & Joleen Brown
Offering Collection: Russ Brown, Don Munn, Joyce Nystrom, Janet Taylor
Visiting: Joan Anderson

Next week's volunteers: Jan. 12th

Greeters: Betty Irwin and Betty Irving
Lay Reader: Evelyn Konrad
Fellowship Time: Alice & Laird Morrison
Elevator Operator: _____
Offering Counting: Debbie Linkletter, Maureen Verdone, Maybelle Gair
Offering Collection: Russ Brown, Don Munn, Joyce Nystrom, Janet Taylor
Visiting: Joan Anderson

Upcoming Events at First

Tues., Jan. 7th More than Mission Luncheon @ noon
 Thurs., Jan. 9th - Bible Study - 10 am
 - Choir Practice - 7 pm
 Fri, Jan. 10th - Crafts & Conversation - 1 pm
 Sat., Jan. 11th - Church De-Decorate - 11 am
 Sun. Jan. 12th - Question Period/Sack Lunch - noon

 Wed., Jan. 22nd - Joint Session/Board
 Potluck Supper/Meeting - 5:30 pm

CHOIR PRACTICE & PARTY

The Choir Practice on January 9th will be held at Norma Gurney's home at 1089 Victor Street. 577-7875.

Bible Readings:

Matthew 2: 1-12	P. 2	N.T.
Psalms 72: 1-12	P. 533	O.T.
Ephesians 3: 1-12	P. 193	N.T.

Gloria Patri:

594

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.

Sermon: "Following the Star"

WE RESPOND TO GOD

Tithes and Offerings

*** Offertory Response**

434 (v.5)

For each perfect gift of thine, to the earth so freely given, graces human and divine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven, Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

Prayer of Dedication:

Holy One, your light has come; it shines brightly in our humble lives. We recognize that we have been blessed with great abundance, and so we place our offering upon your altar as an outpouring of your light within us. In giving our gifts, may we be strengthened to proclaim your faithfulness and your salvation, this day and always. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Invitation

*** Hymn: "What child is this"**

#161

Affirmation of Faith:

The light of the world has come! The Word is made real and human in our midst. All things are possible with God. Our thanks and praise rise into the heavens. In this season, of all seasons, we believe that God's love will never be defeated and that peace will come and

be found among us. We believe that God has entered human life. Our journeying is forever accompanied by Jesus, who is the light of the world, and is under stood in kindness. This we believe and from this we live.

Remembering the Meal with Jesus

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy and Merciful God, maker of all; blessed are you for all the wonders of creation. All your works, from the heights of the heavens to the depths of the sea and land, echo the music of your praise. You gave us breath and speech, melody and harmony to join all living things to sing your praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

God of heaven and earth, God with us on the streets where we live, God with us in the tiny babe, Jesus, wrapped in the cloth of childhood, you came to be with us to show us that peace on earth begins for us with your embrace. As Jesus grew in this world of conflicts, you taught us that we must live for justice and guard the last and the least in our lives. As we gather around this table laid for us in Jesus' name, we give you thanks for all the tables we have shared this year and years past. Thank you for all the goodness we taste in the gifts of the earth. We remember all those of your children who do not have enough to share this day and pledge ourselves to do what we can to bless their lives in the coming year:

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

(Continued on Page 4)

God of mystery and manger, come again to feed us at this table, so that we may taste your presence in our lives. Let your Holy Spirit move in power over us and over these gifts of bread and wine. As we taste the bread and sip the wine may we know that Jesus Christ, your love made flesh, shares our flesh. Open our eyes to see him in each other and open our hearts to live for him with each other.

Amen.

Sharing the Meal

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer (debtsdebtors)

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

* Hymn: *"Christ, whose glory fills the skies"*

#177

Blessing

Response:

**Praise the Lord from whom all blessings flow.
He has washed and made me white as snow.
I'm redeemed from all my sin and shame.
Now and forever, praise his holy name.
Praise his holy name. Praise his holy name.
To God be the glory now and forever.
Praise his holy name!**

Next week's (January 12th) Worship leader:

Henry Konrad

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission purpose is to put our faith into action through mission education, community outreach, and personal and financial support both at home and abroad.