

St Giles Presbyterian Church



King's Highway in Jordan, near Wadi Mujib

December 11, 2022

St Giles Presbyterian Church

Greeting and Welcome

Leading in worship is our minister the Rev. Paul Wu. We extend a warm welcome to all our visitors. Let us together know the joy and wonder of worshipping God. There are sermon texts and large print bulletins available. Please speak with an usher. The church is fully accessible with an elevator, ramps and a properly-appointed washroom.

A Note on Our Worship

The symbol ** means please stand if you are able

Forward in Faith — Our Vision

St Giles Presbyterian Church seeks to be a welcoming, fully-alive faith community, which shares Christ's vision for the world and responds in a Christ-like manner to the present-day challenges of our society and world in partnership with all who seek to make Christ's vision for the world a present reality.

Church Office, 181 First Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1S 2G3

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Minister: The Rev. Paul Wu 613-276-2551 paulwu55@yahoo.ca

Church Administrator: Patricia Brush

Office hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Music Director: Heather Rice 613-563-1409 gowans978@gmail.com

Vocalist: Katie Gratton

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg People. The Algonquin peoples have lived on this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to have the opportunity to be present in this territory.

Prelude: *Pastorale* by Arcangelo Corelli

Welcome

Call to Worship

Reader 1: We are people of joy.

Reader 2: God causes flowers to bloom in the desert; the wilderness is glad and breaks into song.

People: We open our eyes and we are surprised by joy in our lives!

Reader 1: The third candle of Advent reminds us that we are called to live as people of joy.

Reader 2: We light this candle, recalling moments of laughter, great beauty and deep faith.

(Light the candle of joy)

Reader 1: Let us pray:

People: Holy One, regardless of what happens in our lives or in our world, may we reflect the warmth and wonder of this

**flame. Make your church a place of joy
and life in our community. Amen.**

Hymn: A Candle is Burning by Sandra Dean.

Tune: Away in a Manger

**A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder,
and eyes light and glow
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

****Hymn: Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel (v 1-4) 122**

Children's Story

Prayer of Adoration

Creator God, Maker of heaven and earth, with the sea and the stars, and everything in between, we praise you for the wonders of this world and beyond it. You set all creation in relationships both fruitful and fragile. You make deserts bloom and refresh the earth with seasonal rain. With your care for the vulnerable in our hearts, we praise you with songs of joy this day, Our God, who is the Source, Saviour and Spirit, three in one, perfect in unity, splendor and truth.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we look around us and we are not proud of what we see. People demonize each other and listen only to those who agree with them. We grumble and think the past holds the solutions, forgetting its inequities and inequities. We hope for things to improve but we do not want to change our ways. Forgive us for sharing in the unhappy mood of our times, and renew in us the joy and gratitude we once knew for your gifts to us in Christ Jesus.

Assurance of Pardon

Receive the Good News in joy. With great mercy, God forgives what we have confessed and offers us new life in Christ. Rejoice that you can make a new beginning and share the joy in mercy and forgiveness with others.

Scripture

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1–10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,

the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;

they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 146:5–10 (with refrain 3)

Second Reading: Matthew 11:2–11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one
has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least
in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

Anthem Advent Carol by Alfred V. Fedak

Sermon The Holy Way

****Hymn There’s a voice in the wilderness 128**

Reception of New Members

(The minister addresses the candidates individually:)

Mary Helen Lloyd, are you prepared to become
a professing member of the St Giles Presbyterian
Church, as part of the Presbyterian Church in
Canada?.....**I am.**

Bonaventure Bigirimvano, are you prepared to
become a professing member of the St Giles
Presbyterian Church, as part of the Presbyterian
Church in Canada?.....**I am.**

(The minister addresses the candidates together:)

Do you desire, in dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, to mature as a Christian in the church, to seek the guidance of Christ as you listen for his Word, to celebrate his death and life at the table he provides, and to engage in his mission to the world?.....**We do.**

(The minister asks the congregation to stand and questions them and the sponsors saying:)

Do you, on behalf of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Mary and Bonaventure. By word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them to follow the way of Christ and to be a faithful members of his church?.....**We do.**

Passing of the Peace

Offering

Doxology:

830

**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.**

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth,

...

we lift our hearts in joyful 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.

We praise you, most holy God,

...

as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died,

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again.

Gracious God,

...

almighty God, for ever and ever.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed 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 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

****Hymn: Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts 366**

Breaking the Bread / Blessing the Cup

Prayer After Communion

Announcements

****Hymn: Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel (v. 5–7) 122**

Benediction

Postlude *Allegro in G* by J.S. Bach

A Request from Session

The Session of St Giles is discerning if the congregation should act as the community sponsor in support of Bonaventure Bigirimvano's effort to resettle his daughter and her family as refugees to Canada. If you would like to know more or to participate in this project, please contact Rev. Paul Wu for details.

Church Administrator

Regrettably, the new church administrator Policena Wanja has submitted a letter of resignation, and it was subsequently accepted by the Finance & Maintenance Committee. She thanked St Giles for giving her a chance, but did not think she is competent to do the job. We are thankful that Pat will continue to serve the congregation while the search for a suitable candidate continues.

Daily Devotion

If you are thinking of getting into a good habit of daily devotion, have you consider using Our Daily Bread? It is an easily accessible and digestible material (print or online) that will take 5 minutes a day to be closer to God. St Giles will be receiving, on a quarterly basis, the printed version of Our Daily Bread (in both English and Chinese). They are available to be picked up in the Narthex.

The Ottawa Mission

It has been a tradition of many years that at the Christmas Eve service, any "open offering" will be donated to The Ottawa Mission. Open offering means any loose money in the collection plate or any donation placed in a visitor's envelope without notation. You may also write in a donation on your envelope and direct it to The Ottawa Mission.

Our Events

Monday, December 12 ~ 11:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour meets by teleconference.

Tuesday, December 13 ~ 3:30 p.m.

F&M Meeting

Wednesday, December 14 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Session Meeting

Thursday, December 15 ~ 5:30 p.m.

Choir Practice

Friday, December 16 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study, please read Ezekiel Chapter 33.

Wednesday, December 21 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Blue Christmas – A way to recognize the holiness of the season for those who, for any reason, are not feeling joyful.

Saturday, December 24 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols