

St Giles Presbyterian Church



John the Baptist Preaching, freestanding sculpture by Thomas Marsh (2000), at San Juan Bautista Mission.

December 10, 2023

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 an accessible 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

613-235-2551 office@stgilesottawa.org www.stgilesottawa.org

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

Church Administrator: Rosemary Bann

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: *He Shall Feed His Flock* by G.F. Handel

Welcome

Call to Worship

Voice 1: The prophets call and an apostle writes
that peace comes from God.

Voice 2: "For a child has been born for us...and he is
named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ...and there
shall be endless peace." (Isaiah 9)

"The peace of God, which surpasses all
understanding, will guard your hearts and your
minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4)

Voice 1: The world, our relationships and our lives are all
too often torn by conflict and injustice. Advent
calls us to pray and work for peace—shalom—in
the world God loves and to which Christ came.
But God's shalom is not simply the absence of
conflict. Shalom is the peace that comes when
we live life in the balance, loving God and one
another.

Voice 2: Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

All: Jesus Christ comes as the Prince of Peace.

Voice 2: We join with all creation and lift our hearts
in joyful praise.

All: We light this candle to shine for peace.

(while lighting the candle of peace)

Sing verse 2 of A Candle is Burning

(#6 Voices United, by Sandra Dean)

**A candle is burning, a candle of peace,
a candle to signal that conflict must cease:
for Jesus is coming to show us the way,
a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.**

****Hymn:** On Jordan's Bank

126

Children's Story

Prayer of Adoration

God of peace and promise, you love the breadth and depth of your creation and care for us like shepherds tend their sheep. You set pathways for us to follow, clearing the way in the wilderness of the world. And yet we break your heart by wandering off, pursuing our own desires. Still, you keep calling us back. You call us by name in our baptisms. You set us in the world to serve you, each one with a purpose you imagine for us. And so we come to worship you, O God, knowing that in you, we will find our true calling, and the path you set will lead to peace and well-being in your deep love, revealed for us in Christ Jesus.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we resist change, even when your Word compels us to reconsider our actions or opinions. We are set in our ways, and prefer to consider the changes others should make. Forgive us. By the power of your Holy Spirit, give us new eyes for seeing, new ears for hearing so that we follow Jesus more faithfully day by day.

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. Amen

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, trust that peace and forgiveness are God's gift to you this day through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Receive the renewing power of the Holy Spirit and be at peace with God, with yourselves and with each other.

Scripture

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1–11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass;

their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers; the flower fades,

when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers; the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms
and carry them in his bosom
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Psalms 85:1–2, 8–13 (*with refrain 2*)

Lord, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

**You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you pardoned all their sin.**

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their
hearts

**Surely his salvation is at hand for those
who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

**Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

**Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.**

Second Reading: Mark 1:1–8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,' " so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I

am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

****Hymn:** There's a voice in the wilderness crying **128**
(repeat verse 1 at the end)

Sermon Prepare the way of the Lord

Prayers of the People

****Hymn:** All earth is waiting **109**

Passing of the Peace

Announcements

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.

Prayer of Dedication

****Hymn:** O day of peace that dimly shines **732**

Benediction

Postlude *Andante Religioso*

by F. Mendelssohn

St Giles Events

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

Coffee Hour by teleconference.



Wednesday, December 13 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Session meeting in person.

Thursday, December 14 ~ 5:30 p.m.

Choir Practice

Sunday, December 17 ~ 10:30 a.m.

Holy Communion will be observed.

Sunday, December 24 ~ 10:30 a.m.; 7:30 p.m.

The morning service is the fourth Sunday of Advent.

The evening service is the traditional Christmas Eve.



Archival Committee Update

Our dedicated Carleton Public History graduate student, Kari Valmestad, has completed her work term with us. Kari has organized and catalogued our holdings of historical items. These records are filed in 26 boxes. Kari has provided us with a computer listing together with instructions and guidelines for updates and additions.

The Archival Committee is now proceeding with scanning our extensive array of photographs, organizing them, and storing them in keeping with Kari's framework. The future challenge will involve bringing the St. Giles material deposited at City of Ottawa Archives back to St. Giles and re-cataloguing it in keeping with the new listing.

Christmas Concert

Attendees donated approximately \$ 1,200 and two carloads of food to the Centretown Community Food Centre. The video of the event is very popular with over 150 viewings.



"Things at camp can get really busy, especially in the summer. When the quiet times come, I am left to reflect on everything that we accomplished. Thank you to the staff for all their hard work! Thank you to the board for their advice and the many volunteer hours they dedicate to the camp! Thank you to our many volunteers, donors and supporters for their tireless efforts in supporting this Christian community! Thank you all!"

Mark Hamilton, Managing Director.

Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre would not exist without the generous donations of so many people. We invite you to partner with us in the mission of the camp, to invite all people to experience the loving presence of the living God, in creation, in Christ and in Christian community.

Donations can be e-transferred to info@gracefieldcamp.ca or sent online at www.gracefieldcamp.ca or donated through St Giles

Mission Moment

In northern Ghana, people living with disabilities face a range of issues, such as widespread poverty, limited access to livelihood opportunities and health care, and social barriers to full inclusion. Political, environmental, and economic challenges work together to create those difficult conditions. PWS&D works with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in a Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program to address these challenges through vocational skills training programs such as soap and pomade making. Ateni Lois, a participant in the soap-making class, expresses her gratitude, stating, "We are so grateful to the CBR program and PWS&D for equipping us with the skills to be able to produce soap and



pomade for money. Very soon, we will be in good business and will be out of poverty in our respective communities."



The Presbyterian Church in Canada