

St Giles Presbyterian Church



Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853–1890), Sower with Setting Sun, 1888. Oil on canvas, 162.5 × 204.5 cm. Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, Netherlands.

December 17, 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: *Panis Angelicus*

by César Franck

Welcome

Call to Worship

Voice 1: The prophets call and an apostle writes
to announce that joy comes from God.

Voice 2: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me...
and has sent me to bring good news to the
oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, ...
to comfort all who mourn; ...
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning..."
(Isaiah 61) "Rejoice in the Lord always; again,
I will say, rejoice." (Philippians 4)

Voice 1: Grief, pain and loss are inevitable. But woven
into life is the joy of living in a universe that
reflects God's beauty. Advent provides time to
nurture joy in our lives and in the world God
loves. Advent calls us to share with others the

good news that comes into the world with the birth of Christ.

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

All: Jesus Christ comes as joy to the world.

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

All: We light this candle to glow for joy.

(while lighting the candle of peace)

Sing verse 3 of A Candle is Burning

(by Sandra Dean; used with permission)

**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

God of light and love, we rejoice in your presence this day, for you look kindly on us, no matter how we came to be here. You bring order from chaos, and call for justice for the vulnerable. You turn weeping into laughter, promising life made new. You redeem all that appears lost, giving each one a path and purpose. And so we come to you in joy, trusting you to bring peace and hope into these uncertain times. Receive our worship this day as we

anticipate the difference your gifts will make to us through Christ, your Son and our Saviour.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Generous God, we confess that our concerns are narrow, focused mostly on our own lives.

Opportunities to say thanks or to offer encouragement slip by. Anxiety turns us inward and anger can make us lash out. Forgive us for neglecting the joy at the heart of the Advent season. Turn our hearts back to you, and inspire us with your love made flesh in Jesus Christ.

Assurance of Pardon

In Jesus Christ, we are part of God's new creation. God's love makes all things new! Know that you are forgiven by this great love. Now find the courage to forgive one another in Jesus' name.

Scripture

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1–4

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

Psalms 126 (with refrain 3)

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

**Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;**

then it was said among the nations,

"The Lord has done great things for them."

**The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.**

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

**May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.**

**Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.**

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

****Hymn:** Long ago, prophets knew

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Sermon Rejoice Always

Prayers of the People

****Anthem:** Advent Carol

(by Alfred V. Fedak)

Passing of the Peace

Announcements

Reception of New Members

Offering

Doxology:

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**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

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:** All who hunger, gather gladly

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Breaking the Bread / Blessing the Cup

Prayer After Communion

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

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Benediction

Postlude *Largo*

by Georg F. Handel

St Giles Events

Monday, December 18 ~ 11:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour by teleconference.



Thursday, December 21 ~ 5:30 p.m.

Choir Practice

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.



Welcome New Members

The Session of St. Giles has resolved to receive Nora Bihari, Hanga Papp, and Aaron Papp as new members, and to restore the membership of Samuel Jr. Banda, through the public service scheduled for the Sunday of December 17 (today). May God bless them and keep them.

Change of Procedure for Collection of Offering

Session has decided to go back to using the traditional procedure for collecting the offering starting from next Sunday, December 24, 2023. It will replace the method that was adopted for the pandemic, namely that people put their offering in the offering plates at the back of the sanctuary.

The traditional method involves having two people pass offering plates to collect the offering. They will carry the offering plates forward with the singing of the doxology and place them on the communion table and walk to the back of the church after the offertory prayer.

If you giving monthly donations by PAR, you do not need to contribute each but may do so if you wish to add to your regular offerings.

If you wish your offering to be included in a tax receipt, please place cash donations in an envelope with your name, date and the amount. If you have any questions, please ask the duty elder.



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

Robbie Burns Dinner at Knox Presbyterian Church

SAVE THE DATE: The Robbie Burns Dinner returns to Knox in Iona Hall on Friday, January 26 at 6:00 pm. Save the date and invite your friends for a rollicking evening of Scottish food both Haggis and Roast Beef, the ballads of Burns sung by John Young, sing along songs and a new Toast to the Immortal Memory by Burns scholar Sandy Scott. Tickets will be available in early January.

Mission Moment

With support from Presbyterians Sharing, The Well Church (Mississauga) provides a welcoming space for those who identify as a third culture community; that is, one that is neither the culture of mostly immigrant parents nor the dominant culture of Canadian society. In a post-pandemic world, the ministry has decided to re-set their focus around spiritual formation, in everything from small groups to children's ministry, retreats and conferences. They are also training leaders to be elders with spiritual formation at the centre. By focusing on spiritual formation and becoming more Christ-like, the congregation has not only grown closer as a community, but they also feel better equipped to share their personal stories of hope and transformation with friends and neighbours.



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The Presbyterian Church in Canada