

**St. Andrew's Hespeler  
Presbyterian Church  
December 20, 2020  
Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**St. Andrew's Hespeler Presbyterian Church  
73 Queen Street East,  
Cambridge, ON N3C 2A9  
519-658-2652**

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Website: [www.standrewshespeler.ca](http://www.standrewshespeler.ca)

Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-12pm

Order of Online Worship for December 20

We will meet online for as long as people want to stay on at 10 am. The link will be sent out by email and posted (with a password) on the website. In addition, those who wish to may come and join us in the sanctuary. If you are coming, please let us know. You will be screened and registered when you arrive, and you must wear a mask.

**Call to worship (Microphones on)**

L: God comes to us in the cry of a child:

**P: Let every heart prepare a welcome.**

L: God comes to us in the whisper of a loving mother:

**P: Let every heart prepare an embrace.**

L: God comes to us, abides in us:

**P: Let every heart prepare to receive the Christ.**

L: Let us worship the God who has come, who is here and who will come again.

**Lighting of the Third Candle of Advent**

L: In our church and homes we gather around wreaths to pray our lost hopes, broken peace, limited joys, and love so hard to find and share in this season of coronavirus. We affirm that our candles mean we claim the power to call this season Advent, when God's light comes into the world and nothing can overcome it.

We light the candles of hope, peace, and joy. (relight candles)

**P: We now light the candle of love even when many things dim our sparkling...**

We pause to name and write things that seem to conspire against love like, e.g., loneliness, racism, abuse, hatred etc.

L: God's love illuminates hatred and a compassionate heart and brightens the path to the birth of Christ.

**P: Emmanuel, God be with us in the week to come lighting hope, peace, joy and love on the wick of our lives, so that we may shine on our world your unconditional welcome to all.  
Amen.**

## **Prayers of approach and confession**

L: God of majesty and mercy, Creator, Christ and Spirit, you are powerful, you are holy, and you are loving. You come among us not as a warrior or tyrant, but as a child. new life born among us and for us. And so we come to worship you this day, trusting your wisdom with Joseph, pondering your mystery with Mary. We offer you our love for all that you have been, all that you are, and all that you will be, one God. Holy and loving, now and forever, Amen.

**P: God of mystery and mercy, you came to be with us and offer us new life in Christ, and yet we often stray from your side. You came to offer us love, but we confess that we can be stubborn and selfish in the ways we live. You came to reconcile all people, but we confess that we often resist repairing relationships and so remain divided. Forgive who we have been, amend who we are, and direct who we shall be through Jesus Christ who reaches out to us from the manger and the cross. Amen.**

L: "Love came down at Christmas; Love all lovely, love divine. Love shall be our token, Love for plea and gift and sign." (Christina Rossetti) We meet God's gift of love in the Christ Child, whose forgiveness restores us for whatever lies ahead, giving us reason to rejoice.

**P: Thanks be to God for this hope!**

## **Responsive Reading Luke 1:46-55 (Microphones on)**

L: And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord,

**P: and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,**

L: for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

**P: Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;**

L: for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

**P: and holy is his name.**

L: His mercy is for those who fear him

**P: from generation to generation.**

L: He has shown strength with his arm;

**P: he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.**

L: He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

**P: and lifted up the lowly;**

L: he has filled the hungry with good things,

**P: and sent the rich away empty.**

L: He has helped his servant Israel,

**P: in remembrance of his mercy,**

L: according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

**P: to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'**

Ongoing life of the church

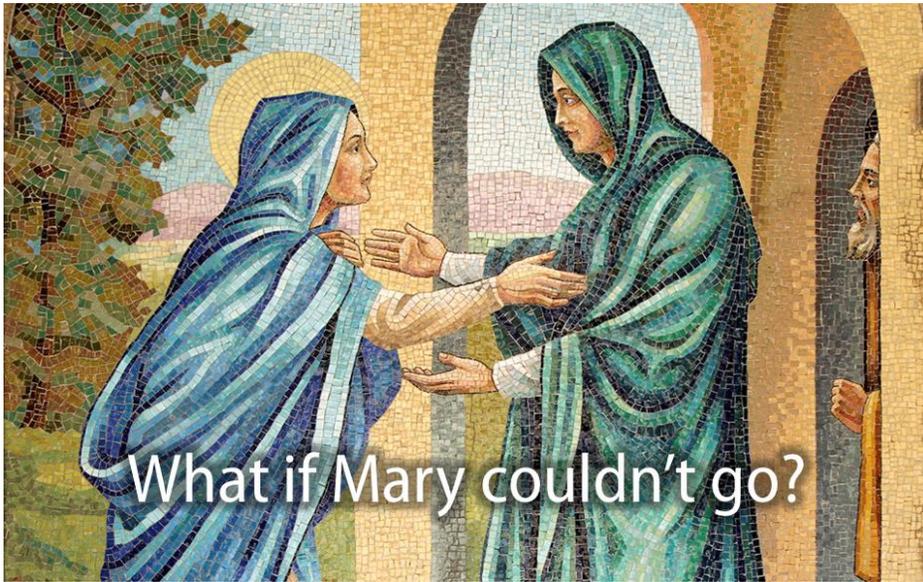
Scripture: Luke 1:26-38 (see below)

Special Music

Celebration of our Generosity

Prayers of the people (using chat to share requests)

Sermon: Rev. Scott McAndless will preach a live sermon over Zoom. The sermon title is:



Benediction

One of our special musical guests this morning is Alice Taylor who has volunteered to play for us. Thank you, Alice!

We also have a special performance from Marsha Laur (who also sings under the name "Daisy Rose.")

There are some goodies in the mailbox at the church (the one marked "bulletins") that is free for anyone to pick up.

You will find:

The New Nov/Dec edition of Today is now there!

The Dec-January edition of Our Daily Bread

**The winter issue of Presbyterian Connection!**

Printed copies of this bulletin each week

Printed copies of Scott's most recent sermon each week.

### **Christmas Worship Services**

For the foreseeable future, we will continue to worship as we have been, with many present online and some present in the sanctuary. If you would like to attend in person, please let us know so that we can plan to make your visit safe.



There will be a **Longest Night** worship service held on Monday December 21, 2020 at 7:30 pm. This is a service especially for people who may struggle with grief, loss or depression at this season of the year (which could be all of us this year). This will be an **online only** service this year and the link will be distributed in the usual ways. Zoe McAndless will be our special guest musician. It will also be a communion service so please prepare communion elements if you are participating. Please also prepare some candles that we will light during the service (traditional or battery operated).

The **Family-Oriented Christmas Eve** service will be posted online for streaming this year. It will not be at a specific time and family may watch and participate when it is convenient to them. A video of The Christmas Story: on the way to Bethlehem will also be posted on the morning of Christmas eve for families to view at their convenience.

There will be a **Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service** on December 24 at 8 pm. This service will be broadcast from the sanctuary over Zoom like our other services and we do encourage most to participate from home. Assuming the Province continues to allow us to do so, we will welcome a limited number of people into the sanctuary with us. Please register with us ahead of time if you would like to attend. (Call the office at 519-658-2652 or email to Paula, Scott or Joni. Even if you are a “regular” on Sunday morning, please register separately for this one). As it is a communion service, please prepare communion elements if you are participating both in the sanctuary and at home.

*We would like to say a huge THANK YOU to Karen Nixon and the Decorating Committee for preparing the church inside and out for Advent and Christmas.*

*It looks fantastic!*

## Mission Moment – December 20, 2020

### Preparing a Place of Welcome

Being forced to flee from one's home and ending up in a foreign land is terrifying. There are often language, social and cultural barriers in the new place that make settling very difficult. Rani Ibrahim, the leader of the Newcomer Mission at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Peterborough, Ont., sees it as his calling from God to make this transition easier for those in his community. He does this through social programming, accompaniment services and prayer gatherings. With support from Presbyterians Sharing, this mission has helped hundreds of people experience the love of God and provided people with a sense of belonging in Canada.



## Prayer Partnership

**Sunday, December 20** Jesus said: "Those who welcome the stranger, welcome me." We give thanks for the Kalunba refugee ministry in Budapest, Hungary, and for Director Dóra Kanizsai-Nagy.

**Monday, December 21** We pray for the Rev. John Wilson who serves as the convener of the Ministry and Church Vocations Committee for the Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay.

**Tuesday, December 22** Gift-giving God, we pray that you move us to greater generosity with all the gifts entrusted to us so that we might bear witness to your love.

**Wednesday, December 23** We thank God for people who pray, opening their hearts to God's direction, trusting in God's faithfulness, and holding others up in care.

**Thursday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)** Christ was born as one of us and in him God shows how much the world is loved. We pray that the light of God's love bless and fill the world with peace.

**Friday, December 25 (Christmas Day)** For Christ there was no room in the inn: we pray for shelter for those who are homeless. Christ had to flee his birthplace: we pray for the safety of all refugees. Christ read scripture in the synagogue: we pray for God's wisdom to guide us.

**Saturday, December 26** God of love in whom we hope, we pray that you send your peace to the vulnerable, unemployed, anxious, hurting and to those who experience violence.

## Announcements

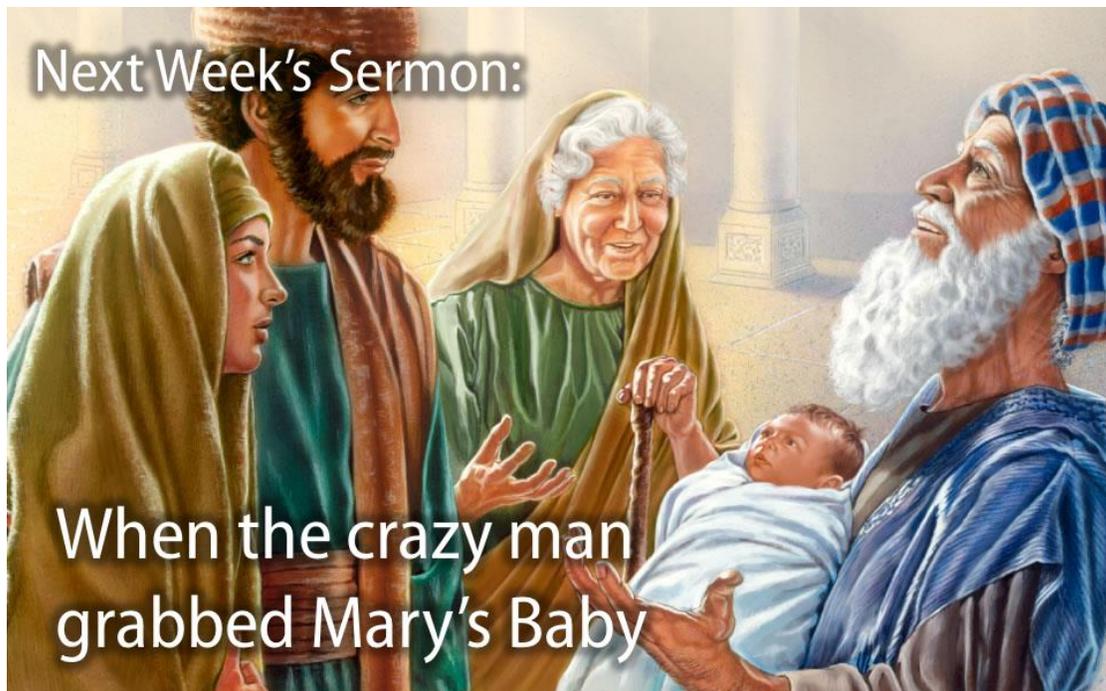
### Sunday School News!

1. Sunday School is taking a break for two weeks. Lessons and videos will be posted again in the new year.
2. All of our read alouds will need to be removed on December 31, 2020, so if you have been listening to LarryBoy and the Emperor of Envy you will need to listen by then. Alternatively, you could sign the book out from the Children's Library.

Please note: if you are worshipping with us, in the sanctuary, the only door open to enter is Door #1, adjacent to the parking lot on Queen St. E. This means that if you park around back you will have to walk around the church (which might not be nice if it's raining).

### Please Note

Regular church activities have been suspended until further notice. If you have questions or concerns, or if we can support you in any way, please contact us by calling the church (messages are checked regularly) or email us at [office@standrewshespeler.ca](mailto:office@standrewshespeler.ca). We care about you! You are not alone!



## **Week Four**

Today we acknowledge the gifts of time, talent, community support and moneys generated from our 165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Auction.

As with everything else this year we had to make adjustments to how we gathered for our annual Dream Auction. This year we wanted to celebrate our 165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with our Dream Auction, so we decided to use an online platform for our auction. While we couldn't gather in person there were zoom parties and some good natured out bidding by friends.

At the beginning of organizing the auction we were hoping that we would have donations of approximately 50 prizes. To say we were overwhelmed is an understatement! Donations of home made, delivered dinners; lovingly baked pies and cheesecakes, scones and shortbread; trips to the dump; bacon wrapped chestnuts; watercolour paintings and prints; hand knit and crocheted items; gift baskets; Christmas decorations; pool/patio furniture; decorating items; choosing a sermon topic; hand crafted wine; fresh eggs; clothing items; porcelain dolls; skincare products; gift cards; and more came in faster than we could sometimes get them posted. We were so excited to have more than 100 items up for auction. We are very thankful for all of the gifts of time, talent, community support and monies generated by the auction. A BIG Shout Out to our organizing committee, in particular to Donald Paddock for sharing your talents and keeping us on track and well organized. Together we were able to raise (net) \$4,990.14!

GivingTuesday Campaign gifts can be either sent via mail to the church office or placed on the Sunday morning offering plate if you are attending church in person. Please do not send cash via external mail. GivingTuesday Campaign gifts can also be made online at [www.standrewshespeler.ca](http://www.standrewshespeler.ca) and use the "Donate Now" button. From there you can choose where your GivingTuesday gift should go.

If making a GivingTuesday Campaign gift using your Offering Envelope, please clearly mark the amount to be designated to this campaign on the envelope so that it can be distinguished from your regular givings.

If not using your Offering Envelope nor the envelope provided, please ensure the outside of the envelope you use clearly indicates (a) your name and (b) that the amount inside is to be designated to the GivingTuesday Campaign

All one-time GivingTuesday Campaign gifts of \$20 or more will be receipted for tax purposes if a proper name and address is supplied.

**Double your giving!** The first \$6,500 in gifts to this campaign will be matched by a generous donation.

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

<sup>1</sup> Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.'

<sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your

enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

<sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

Romans 16:25-45

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

Luke 1:26-38

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup> Mary

said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God.' <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."