

Forest Hill United Church

'open doors, open hearts, open minds'



First Sunday of Christmas
January 1, 2017 at 10 am

“The chief beauty about time is that you cannot waste it in advance.

The next year, the next day, the next hour are lying ready for you, as perfect, as unspoiled, as if you had never wasted or misapplied a single moment in all your life.

You can turn over a new leaf every hour if you choose.”

— Arnold Bennett

Worship leader this morning is Libby Cassidy. Next Sunday we will welcome Mary Grant as worship leader while our minister, Rev Ali Smith, takes some time to relax with her family.

There is no Sunday School this morning: children are most welcome to stay with us during the service. Quiet activities are available in the hymn book cabinet for busy hands.

Our greeter this morning is **Jennifer Abbott**,
our tellers are **May Houston and Joan Mitchell**,
our hospitality host is **Norma Reid**,
and our music is led by **Alex Good** and the **FHUC Choir**.

Forest Hill United Church is a safe place for all people to gather regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background, family status,

sexual orientation or gender identity. You are welcome here!

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Gathering

At the **, you are asked to rise in body or in spirit.

Prelude: I Stand All amazed by C.H. Gabriel

Lighting the Candle

****Introit:** (Sung Together) MV #14

**Where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there, I am there.**

Welcome & Church News

Call to Worship:

One: The circle of the year has turned again.

All: **Endings and beginnings
Birth and death.
Changes and transitions.**

One: The circle of the year has turned again.

All: **But in all of the change,
There is one sure thing –
God is present.**

One: God is present.

All: **We are not alone.**

One: We are not alone.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Gathering Prayer: (Spoken Together)

Your presence is constant, God.

We know you are here.

But sometimes, it's hard.

Sometimes, in the midst of chaos,

We don't know what to do,

Or to say, or to be.

Help us, please.

Help us to stop and listen.

**Help us to stop and look.
Help us to be your people.
Now and always. Amen.**

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Opening Hymn: “Joy to the World” verses 1 & 2 VU #59

Listening

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 You-tube video: Judy Collins 2005

Psalm 8 p. 732 VU with refrain READER

Matthew 25: 31- 46 “The last Judgement”

Revelation 21: 1-6 “The heavenly Jerusalem”

Words from Our World:

Special Music: “The Peace Carol” John Denver
Brian Cassidy

Reflection:

**** Hymn of Reflection:** “What Child is This” VU#74

Responding

Presentation of Our Gifts

****Offering Verse:** (*Sung Together*) VU #55 verse 4

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise one, I would do my part.
Yet what I can, I give him: give my heart.**

****Prayer over the Gifts**

Prayers of the People

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Prayer of Jesus: (*Spoken Together*)

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be.
Father and Mother of us all.
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
Sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us,
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
Now and forever. Amen.**

from “A New Zealand Prayer Book”

****Closing Hymn:** “I See a New Heaven” VU #713

****Sharing the Light**

****Blessing**

****Choral Response:** (*Sung Together*) VU 43

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.**

Postlude:

Some prayers taken from Gathering magazines

Church News

Storm Policy Reminder: In the event of a serious storm on a Sunday morning, a decision will be made by 8 a.m. as to whether a cancellation is necessary. If a service is cancelled, a message will be placed on the church answering machine, sent out via email, and passed on to CBC radio.

Committee Chairs: Budget submissions for 2017 are needed no later than January 11th as the budget needs to be drafted for the January Board Meeting. Please send them to Mary Grant, Treasurer and William Hughes Finance Chair.

We are looking for individuals to be trained to use our projector equipment. If you are interested or want to know more, please contact our resident techie Brian Cassidy at bpc@unb.ca or 472-6768

Quilting Group will take a break and start up again on January 11th 1-3 pm in the Upper Room.

Did you know? Did you know that the Stable we have was constructed at an Advent Festival?

The Forest Hill book club will meet on Tuesday January 3rd at 12:00 in the church parlour. The book for January is The Pearl that Broke it's Shell by Nadia Hashimi

Ushers/Greeters needed for 2016: Please check your schedule to see if you are available for one or more Sundays to help out with set up and greeting our congregation on Sunday mornings. Signup sheet is on the back table. If you have any questions please feel free to ask me. Many thanks. Lorna McKnight

Potential Scripture Readers are invited to see the Date Chart and to indicate their availability for any particular Sunday. Please note the manner of indication given at the top of the Chart. New Readers are

most welcome. A copy of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (which is the version of the "Pulpit Bible") is available to loan for practice, with helpful instructions included. If you have questions, please talk with Patricia Powell (455-8602).

Community Events

Mike Bravener will be performing 'The Gospel Side of Elvis' at Marysville United Church January 8th at 3:30 PM. Freewill Offering will be taken and light refreshments will be served.

Grief Share, Beginning Thursday, January 12, 2017, at 7:00 pm, in the Family Room, Brunswick Street Baptist Church is pleased to offer **Grief Share**, a 13 week video series by Christian experts on grief and recovery, combined with support group discussions for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Please call **458-8348** if you would like more information.

Minute for Mission Opening Doors

Our gifts for Mission & Service Support people with disabilities. Let us hear a story of a gathering in Lima, Peru with the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network. The Rev. Sharon Ballantyne attended the 2015 gathering and reflects on that experience.

"As a minister who is totally blind, I was the only Canadian representative, sent to listen, learn, and share. I sat among nearly 30 new friends from across Latin America. We learned about persons with disabilities and left feeling mobilized, energized, and committed to transformational change. Many people were eager to tell me stories about how their communities have been positively impacted by Mission & Service and showed a deep gratitude and thanksgiving for the ways Mission & Service transforms communities in Latin America.

"Gatherings like this one help those in ministry to offer a different interpretation of scripture and new understandings of what it means to live with a disability. Persons with disabilities, their families, and other

allies are often ignored, isolated, lonely, and excluded. This conference went a long way toward opening doors to those living with disabilities.

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“Participants at this gathering are now better equipped to remind communities of faith of Jesus’ model of love and inclusion for all people. We need liturgies that reflect full inclusion and use inclusive language and activities that ensure everyone can participate.”

We sing thanksgiving for Mission & Service partner the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network, which is committed to the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in church and society.

If Mission & Service is already a regular part of your giving, thank you so much! If you have not given for Mission & Service, please join me in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith. In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing thanksgiving to God!