

Welcome to this service of worship. We begin by acknowledging the traditional territory upon which we gather this morning. For many thousands of years, the Mi'kmaq have sought to walk gently on this land. They offered assistance to the first European travellers to this territory and shared their knowledge for survival in what was at times a harsh climate. We seek a new relationship with the Original Peoples of this land, one based in honour and deep respect.

St. James Presbyterian Church is a Christ-centered community where God is celebrated. We are committed to discerning and answering the Holy Spirit's call. In response to God's call St. James is and will continue to be a spiritual community that:

- Worships joyfully in a manner that is Scriptural, inspirational, educational, active, varied and prayerful.
- Welcomes all in an open, inclusive, and caring manner, accepting that all are equal before God.
- Honours and takes care of each other as we seek to know God together in the spirit of Christ.
- Puts its faith into action visibly and tangibly in the surrounding community, serving through faith, speaking for Christ, and seeking justice.
- Remains connected to its heritage of faith, reform, and active witness, and looks forward in faith and confidence to God's presence.

At the Kirk this Week

| | | |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Today: | 10:30 a.m. | Sunday Service & Children's Worship |
| Greeters: | | Glenda Montigny & Linda Evans |
| Wednesday: | 7:15 p.m. | Choir Practice |
| Sunday: | 10:30 a.m. | Sunday Service & Children's Worship |
| Greeters: | | David & Paulette Hooley |

St. James Presbyterian Church Staff

Minister: Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton W: 892-2839 H: 894-5382
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Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.



St. James Presbyterian Church

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Order of Service

Sunday, January 21st, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

(*Those who are able are invited to stand. Responsive text is in bold.)

Approach to Worship

- Prelude: *Concerto in d minor, I: Poco adagio* G. F. Handel
Call to Worship
* Processional Hymn: *We are God's people* 472
Prayer of Adoration
Welcome and Announcements
Introit: *Every day will I give thanks* G. Thalben-Ball
* Hymn of Praise: *We are one in the Spirit* (Vs. 1-2) 471
Children's Time
(The children are to follow the banner to the Children's Worship Service)
Hymn of Praise: *We are one in the Spirit* (Vs. 3-4) 471
Rite of Reconciliation
Invitation
Prayer of Confession: (See Insert)
Assurance of Pardon
Sung Response (Vs. 3) 141
**Good Christians, all rejoice with heart and soul and voice
Now you need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save,
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save; Christ was born to save.**

The Word Proclaimed

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

As we listen to the familiar story of your coming among us as a child, open our minds and hearts so that we may hear the wondrous events with new understanding, with wisdom, and with joy. Amen.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 139:1-16 (Burgundy Book) R. 2
New Testament Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Pg. 174 NT
(L: The Word of the Lord: **All: Thanks be to God.**)

- * Hymn: *The love of God comes closes* 474
Sermon: Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton

Response and Thanksgiving

Anthem: *Let us love one another* arr. R. Lau
Offering announcement
Offertory: *Little fugue in F* J. S. Bach
* 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.**
Offertory Prayer
Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession
The Lord's Prayer (*debt and debtors*)

Returning To Service

- * Recessional Hymn: *Lord, you give the great commission* 778
* Commission and Benediction
Choral Amen
Postlude: *Concerto in d minor, II: Allegro moderato* G. F. Handel

In Worship This Week

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Minister: | Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton |
| Music Director/Organist: | Frances McBurnie |
| Prayer of Confession: | Sue Senior |
| | David Robinson |
| Scripture Reader: | Sue Senior |
| Sound System: | David Hooley |
| Videographer: | Shauna Sullivan Curley |

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Confession to God and LGBTQI People

Adopted on June 6, 2022

The 2022 General Assembly adopted a confession to God and LGBTQI people, confessing the harm caused by homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism and hypocrisy in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and committing the church to a true change of heart and behaviour. The whole church is called to live out this confession as individuals and communities of faith so that harm does not continue.

THE MEANING OF CONFESSION

This confession is addressed to God and to each other in the presence of the whole community of believers. It presupposes the existence of a breach, or a falling short, that runs contrary to God's desire for how people live with and treat each other. It calls the church: to acknowledge harms done; to seek forgiveness from God and those who have been harmed; to stop causing harm; to repent of wrongdoing; and to begin a new journey of reparation, restoration, and reconciliation within the community of believers.

OUR CONFESSION TO GOD AND LGBTQI PEOPLE

All: Let us pray.

One: In response to the Holy Spirit's action in its midst
The Presbyterian Church in Canada comes before God
in the presence of one another
to confess its sins to God, and to LGBTQI people.
The church has wounded many
through its practices of exclusion and hurtful treatment.
The church seeks your forgiveness, O God,
and the forgiveness of all whom we have harmed.

All: We offer this confession in humility, desiring to go a new way.

One: Creating and Covenanting God,
you created us in your own image.
In Christ, you call us to be a welcoming and nurturing community,
to love one another as Christ has loved us.
Yet we have ostracized and excluded LGBTQI people
from full life within the body of Christ.
We have often turned the courts of the church into places
where those who are not straight or cisgender
are attacked, shunned and belittled.
We confess that we have failed
to love one another as Christ commanded us
and we have disrupted our covenantal relationship with you.

All: For these wrongful and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: The church has enacted policies and adopted customs
that have dehumanized and harmed LGBTQI people.
In doing so the church has led many people to believe
they have to choose between embracing their sexuality
and gender identity or being a part of the church.

All: For these wrongful and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: The church has often perpetuated
harmful lies that LGBTQI people are dangerous and abusive.
The resulting stigma fosters an environment
where gifted people are discouraged and excluded
from providing leadership in the church.
The church's prejudice contributes to
hatred and neglect of LGBTQI people
making them targets for physical, spiritual and emotional violence.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: The church has no higher calling
than to offer the worship that belongs to God.
In worship, we find strength and hope
for proclaiming God's reign in the world.
Yet often our language in worship is not inclusive
and renders many people and their families invisible.
This makes worship a wounding and alienating experience.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions,
the church asks forgiveness.

One: The church has been dismissive of and indifferent to
LGBTQI people when they have named
the harm the church has caused
to their mental, physical and spiritual well-being.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: O God of justice and mercy,
you have called us to love and nurture the vulnerable among us,
yet we have not been loving and supportive role models
to young LGBTQI people.
We have failed to listen to their cries for healthy pastoral support.
Our actions have abandoned them to a future
that often includes internalized homophobia,
self-loathing, depression, substance abuse,
self-harm, homelessness, and suicide.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness

One: In this church called home,
some LGBTQI people still long
for the love and security of home.
In this church called home,
some of us have witnessed
demeaning conversations and attitudes
that belittle LGBTQI people.
Yet we choose to be silent in the face of such injustices,
becoming complicit in the resulting oppression.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: Creating God,
your creation bears witness
to the vastness of your diversity.
In carrying out the mission entrusted to it,
the church has embraced ideologies and narratives
that have normalized the exclusion
of those it deems different.

All: For these unloving and unjust actions, we ask forgiveness.

One: To those of you whom we have harmed
by our unloving and unjust actions,
we confess that we have failed you.
We acknowledge that the church has wounded you deeply.

All: In humility and with sorrow, we ask for your forgiveness.

One: Come Holy Spirit come.
Be present in this time of silence.

(Hold a moment of silence)

One: God of justice and mercy,
we praise you for the presence of the Holy Spirit
prompting us to work purposefully and compassionately,
to find new and just ways of living out that larger story
of loving God and neighbour.
Help us to overcome the pride that covers up wrongdoings,
the indifference that stands in the way of feeling,
and the fear that stalls change.

All: God of justice and mercy, we turn to you.
Only you can help us to do this hard work
of repairing, restoring, reconciling and healing.
Fill us with courage and hope
as we commit to working
for the restoration of your church and
our relationship with one another, and
for the collective flourishing of all people
for your glory.

All: Amen.