

Fort Massey Church

Spiritual Seekers **United** in Community

5303 Tobin Street, Halifax, NS B3H 1S3
Office: 902-423-4294 ftmassey@eastlink.ca
Minister: 902-333-3123 minister@fortmasseychurch.com
www.fortmasseychurch.com

Ministers: All of us by the grace of God
Clergy: Rev. Beth Hayward
Worship Leaders: Alison McDonald, Elaine and Jim Janson,
David Griffiths, Linda MacDonald
Music Director: Jenny Trites, Guest Musician: John Walter
Office Administrator: Tamara Mugford
Sexton: Emily Kiley Lawlor
Church School: Sancia Knorr, Nursery: Lilli Knorr
Section Leads: Laura Johnston, Lisa Thornhill
Ushers: James, Kari and Graham Robertson
Liturgical Assistant: Carol Sinclair, Scripture Reader: Anne Thompson
Worship Service prepared by Rev. Beth Hayward



First Sunday after Christmas
December 31, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

Service recorded and posted online @ FMC Facebook & Web Page



HERITAGE MOMENT *By Barry Cahill*

How often do ministers of Fort Massey hold a New Year's Day levee? Dr Burns did, on 1 January 1888 — but he did so in his capacity as moderator of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In society terms, that put him in the same class as the Roman Catholic archbishop and the Church of England bishop. He received visitors from 2 to 3 pm at the manse, 18 Kent Street.

** Indicates rise in body or spirit
(please stand or remain sitting according to your comfort.)*

Prelude

Introit: "Jesus Came Bringing Us Light"

MV 33

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement & Call to Worship

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Opening Prayer

Light of life, you came in flesh,
born into human pain and joy.

And so we gather in wonder and praise.

You called us to be both mothers of God and children of God:

Birthing your light and receiving your light.

And so we gather in wonder and praise.

As the year that was, slips into the year that will be, we long to embrace our destiny,
to fully embody your love in our time and place.

And so we gather in wonder and praise.

Open our hearts and minds to the gift and calling
inherent in this and each moment of our living. Amen.

Passing the Peace One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Announcements

***Hymn:** "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

VU 35

Offering

Response: "In the Bleak Midwinter (v 4)

VU 55

Christmas Readings:

Whistling in the Dark, excerpt, by Frederick Buechner

"The Time of the End Is the Time of No Room" in Raids on the Unspeakable by Thomas Merton

Epiphany Readings:

Matthew 2:1-11

Offered as wisdom for the journey.

May we walk in its light.

"The Journey of the Magi", by T.S. Eliot

***Hymn:** "What Child Is This"

VU 74

Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

VU 921

Hymn: "The First Nowell" (v 1-4, 6)

VU 91

*Blessing and Sending Forth

*Sung Blessing: "Go Now in Peace"

VU 964

Postlude

Notices

*Happy birthday to Anne Thompson on January 1,
Ruth MacKenzie on January 5
and Deanna Landry on January 6*

Blessings and our best wishes to all who are celebrating birthdays, anniversaries or other milestones this week. Likewise, if you're walking through some difficulty this week: grief, anxiety, challenge, we hold you in prayer.

A special welcome to all who are worshipping here for the first time. We strive to notice you and make you feel welcome.

Do let us know if we fall short of our aspiration. We know that stepping into a new church can be daunting.

If, after you leave, you find questions, curiosities, or insights arising, you are most welcome to reach out to our minister Rev. Beth (minister@fortmasseychurch.com).

We offer a pretty great coffee hour. Following the service, make your way to the front of the church and down the stairs and you'll be greeted by warm hospitality and terrific snacks!

Please feel comfortable to sit, stand, stretch, move for your own self-care and comfort.

Our services are generally an hour in length. When the Postlude begins, please feel free to get up and chat.

Why do we encourage name tags be worn?

In a spirit of **radical welcome**, we encourage **everybody** to wear a name tag today.

Name tags help us recognize and remember each other. They are a small gesture appreciated by those learning many names at once; those who are deaf or hard of hearing; or those who struggle to match names with faces.

If you are **comfortable** doing so, consider adding your **pronouns**. Sharing **pronouns** is a signal that we welcome those of **all genders** and we appreciate knowing how to speak of each other **respectfully**.

The church office will be closed until January 3. In case of pastoral emergencies, please contact Rev. Beth at 902-333-3123.

Sunday School will not be available today; it will resume on January 7.

The boxes of 2024 donation envelopes are now available for pickup in the Tobin St lobby.

Rev. Beth's Contact for Emailing: Please use the Fort Massey email address: minister@fortmasseychurch.com – thank you.

Thank You for Your Financial Support

We thank you for your financial support of Fort Massey. Whether using e-transfer to fmchurch@eastlink.ca, PAR, cheque or envelopes, all are so appreciated. Donations may also be made through the following online charity donation websites: CanadaHelps - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/fort-massey-united-church/> or Charitable Impact: <https://my.charitableimpact.com/charities/fort-massey-united-church>. In the sanctuary, donations can be made as you leave after worship. Offering plates are located by the font, if exiting to Tobin Street, or in the aisle as you exit into the Queen Street lobby.

Fort Massey Vision Statement

At Fort Massey, we live into being a vibrant and evolving community where tradition is honoured, change is embraced, and injustice is challenged, where everyone is welcomed, needed, valued and belongs. Following Jesus' example of expansive love, we aim to provide a safe, nurturing environment where everyone is free to be themselves. We celebrate and encourage people of every age, health situation, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, family configuration, background, ability, interest, culture, economic circumstance and faith journey into the full participation and leadership of ministries in the life and work of Fort Massey United Church.

Welcome to Fort Massey. We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down at heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers. We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're 'just browsing', just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Moderator of the United Church of Canada or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago. We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit mums, hockey dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like 'organized religion.' (We're not that keen on it either!) We offer a welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because granny is visiting and wanted to come to the ol' Kirk. We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both or neither. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throat as kids or got lost on the Armdale roundabout and wound up here by mistake. We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters... and you!

(adapted and used with permission, Coventry Cathedral, England)