

# FIRST WITH THE NEWS

*December 2020*

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (EDMONTON) Founded 1881**



## **Reserve a Pew for the Christmas Eve Service!!!**

First Presbyterian Church plans to hold a "COVID-19 compliant" Christmas Eve service. Seating will be limited.

Please use [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.Eventbrite.ca) to reserve seats. Just provide the first and last name of each person attending. Rules for churches require both masks and distancing (6 ft.). Family groups must sit together throughout the service. Some pews will be roped off. Please greet others from a distance, and chat outdoors not indoors. We ask everyone to arrive on time for doors will closed promptly. Should you need to cancel please do so as soon as possible through [www.Eventbrite.ca](https://www.Eventbrite.ca), so others may be seated in "your" space.

Other pandemic rules... Expect some changes to our typical Christmas Eve service. We will not light individual candles, as we usually do. There will be no hospitality following the service. Collection plates will not be passed. Rather you will see collection plates as you leave (yes FPC needs money to support refugees and to aid in local "good works"). Expect to be asked not to sing (Alberta's COVID rules ban informal group singing by the general public). Consider "humming along".

Our church "opened its doors" when permitted, complying with provincial guidelines regarding cleaning, and everything possible has been done to provide a safe environment but, during a pandemic, attendance "in-person" is a personal choice and you do so at your own risk. FYI: In the event of an emergency take the shortest route to the nearest exit.

Please consider whether your best option for participating on Christmas Eve might be through watching from home via TWITCH ([www.twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv)). The Christmas Eve service is expected to attract more than the typical 80-100 persons who sign via TWITCH on Sunday mornings. (If you are a new user of TWITCH, as your editor was, test it before Christmas Eve to avoid frustration.) **STAY ALERT TO ANY CHANGES!!!**



## **Lessons and Carols: The Christmas Eve Service**

First Presbyterian Church Edmonton invites you to a memorable service. No other worship service is as steeped in local tradition as much as the Christmas Eve service. Repeating something without thinking is a habit; reflecting on whether to repeat it, and deciding to, is a practice. Our best liturgical traditions, as practices, can root us and remind us of God's steady and loving presence in our lives. A discerning worship leader, such as Rev. Harry Currie, can help our congregation reflect on this difference.

## **FPC Sunday is available online.**

Adults agree with many youngsters that Julia-Don Edwards manages to prepare amazing online Church School lessons. Go to [www.youtube.com/channel/UCSzLkIA3uQbUMnvNaDQMCLA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSzLkIA3uQbUMnvNaDQMCLA).

To receive the weekly Sunday School Lessons, send an email to [churchschool@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:churchschool@firstpresbyterian.ca).

**FWTN is the official newsletter of First Presbyterian Church Edmonton which was founded in 1881**

## Re-Launch of Services

Since March, we have livestreamed our services using TWITCH (direct to your home computer). This alternate programming has allowed our congregation to remain in contact virtually. Our committee meetings have been held via ZOOM (another online tool). No doubt staying in contact with the church during this health crisis has been easier than many senior members of the church imagined possible.

Recently, FPC returned to limited in-person church services. Typically less than 20 people can attend. To attend a service in-person, you are encouraged to use [www.Eventbrite.ca](http://www.Eventbrite.ca) to register.

Our music continues to amaze. Our 2-4 person "COVID-choir" has been singing hymns inside and outside the church accompanied by our two fantastic organists (Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger). We added plastic wrap on wooden stands as a safeguard. Marnie says Plexiglas would be both more expensive and would have dampened the acoustics. They knew what they were doing in the early 1900's by placing the pulpit in the right spot for the minister to be heard throughout the entire sanctuary without aid of a microphone.

If you attend church services in-person, please follow these guidelines:

- Wear a face mask at all times (face masks/hand sanitizers are available).
- Do not cross the red-line at the front of the sanctuary during the service.
- Use the main floor restroom on the west end of the building, if required.
- Hum along to the hymns, but refrain from singing until further notice.
- Offerings will be collected at the end of service (on your way out) or please use one of the contactless options.
- Faith leaders and others speakers are permitted to remove their masks while speaking provided they maintain a 2-metre distance from others while doing so. Once finished speaking, the speaker must put on their mask again.

From the beginning of the pandemic FPC said, while worship in a community is important to us all, in order to proceed with any activities we have a Christian obligation to ensure the church is a physically safe place for everyone. The following changes to our programming went into effect months ago and remain in place currently:

- Congregants were asked to please take the guidance from Alberta Health Services to heart – prayerfully consider not attending worship during this crisis if you:
  - Are over 65 years of age, or
  - Have existing underlying medical conditions, or
  - Have members of your household who are at risk, or
  - Have you a job that involves contact with persons at risk, or
  - Have you a job that involves supporting critical infrastructure.
- Congregants are asked to maintain a 2 metre separation from others not in their own household and to refrain from physical contact such as handshaking, hugging and congregational singing.
- There will be no church school or childcare available. Children attending need to sit with their caretakers for the entire service.
- There will be no after-church social hour.
- The choir will not sit in the loft or perform as a large group.
- We ask that you not attend worship if you:
  - Have recently traveled outside Canada or been in contact with someone who has;
  - Have recently had any type of cold or flu symptoms, particularly a cough or sneeze.



Our goal is for everyone get through the health crisis this safely so that we can be together again when it is over and regular activities resume.

## Traffic Jam Concerts are Back!!!

We hope you will join us for an enjoyable hour of music virtually via [www.twitch.tv/firstpresbyterianedmonton](http://www.twitch.tv/firstpresbyterianedmonton)

**The next concert will be on Friday, February 5 at 5:15 pm.**

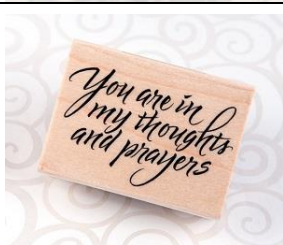
Donations are welcome and proceeds after expenses are for the Lloyd Fourney Refugee Fund, First Presbyterian Church. Donations can be made by mailing a cheque; by e-transfer to: [treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca); or with PayPal using the donate button on the church website: [www.firstpresbyterian.ca](http://www.firstpresbyterian.ca).

When donating, please indicate "Traffic Jam" on your contribution.

## Gifts of Change

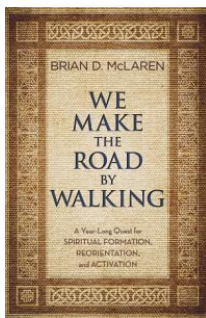
This year for Christmas, choose a gift from the 2020-2021 Gifts of Change catalogue to help change the lives of women, men and children living in the most vulnerable parts of the world. Your gifts will provide much-needed support—emergency relief, clean water and food to sustain families—for many in need.

Every time you give a Gift of Change, put a **Giving Tree** ornament on your tree to serve as a reminder of the meaningful impact your gift will have on people's lives around the world.



**In REMEMBRANCE**, on All Saints Sunday we marked the loss of the following church members:

- ✝ Bill Stewart who died on May 2, 2020
- ✝ Jean Busse who died June 4, 2020
- ✝ Shirley Jay who died on July 22, 2020



**Bible Study** is scheduled to resume on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

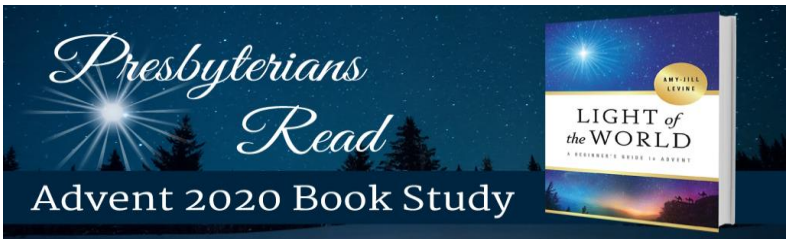
Thanks to Eila Peterson it will be held virtually via ZOOM. Eila has graciously offered her expertise to serve as convener. If you do not as of yet have the ZOOM app, now is the time to get familiar with this technology.

We are continuing to use 'We Make the Road by Walking' as our study book.

## Checkout our New Website

Thanks to Frederick Ako-Nai our church website has been updated! The new website is supported through the national church and has a new web address: <https://pccweb.ca/firstpresbyterian>.

In changing service providers, note that Rev Harry's email is changed to [minister@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:minister@firstpresbyterian.ca).



During Advent 2020, Presbyterians across the country are invited to join a denomination-wide book study on Amy-Jill Levine's *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent*. Using thoughtfully prepared weekly study guides, Presbyterians will journey

through Advent reflecting on what it means to be kingdom-people who participate in the new life that Jesus has brought.

Join the Conversation! On **Wednesday, December 9 from 1-2 p.m. (Eastern)**, author Amy-Jill Levine will do an hour-long Q&A for Advent book study participants.

Please register by **Monday, December 7 at 5 p.m.** to receive a link to join the Zoom meeting. <https://form.jotform.com/203225721701241>

**Edmonton**

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participants teams charities volunteers

### Ride for Refuge 2020 – Edmonton

On Saturday, October 3, 2020 the *Ride for Refuge* happened as scheduled. It was a national family-friendly cycling and walking fundraising event. Team Captains selected their charity of choice when they formed their team. Even though COVID-related health risks, and operational challenges, didn't permit

gathering in large groups. The participants either gathered virtually or self-organized into smaller, COVID-friendly teams.

Congratulations go to the Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland for raising the second highest amount of donations -- \$6,089 and to Rev. Harry for raising \$975. Thanks to Christine Ball (co-captain of the Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland Team) for sharing the pictures below.



**FACTOID #1**

When FPC was built in 1912, it cost \$172,455.54. With inflation it would cost more than \$3,811,267.43 to build today.

**FACTOID #2**

COVID brings innovation... Matt Read reports that the church obtained a wood-friendly and virus-unfriendly cleaning product from Britain to clean the pews.

**FACTOID #3**

Church attendance online (Twitch) has ranged between 50-100 people signed in. We can't count those not signed in, so our numbers are likely higher. About 7 to 9 people are attending in-person.



## SHIRLEY LILLIAN JAY

December 13, 1932 - July 22, 2020

Shirley Jay enlivened and enriched many lives with her warm friendship, community service, lively wit and generous hospitality. Born and raised on a farm in the Pisquid East area of Prince Edward Island, Shirley took her own unique path. Prince Edward Island women of her generation rarely had careers; Shirley built a career, was a business owner, lived in a city she loved, and traveled the world.

After completing high school in Charlottetown, Shirley worked as secretary to the Charlottetown manager of R.T. Holman department store, who encouraged her career aspirations. At age 19 she began work as a passenger agent for Trans Canada Air Lines in Moncton, N.B. Five years later, in 1957, she transferred to Edmonton with TCA. Shirley felt at home immediately and she was a devoted Edmontonian from then on.

Her career at TCA-Air Canada spanned 31 years. As a passenger agent, her superb organizing skills and calm judgment rose to every challenge: on one memorable shift she resolved the diverse travel issues of a senior federal politician, an American TV star and an entire CFL football team! After retiring in 1983, she taught part-time at Grant MacEwan, sharing knowledge and stories with new generations of airline agents. Shirley founded her Blue Jay Pet & Plant Care business and for decades made lasting friendships with her clients across Edmonton and their dogs and cats.

Shirley served her community. She was a strong, dedicated pastoral care volunteer and member of First Presbyterian Church. For many years she was a valued volunteer at the Misericordia Hospital, primarily in the emergency room.

Shirley is survived by her nephew Merlin Jay and wife Bertha, nephew Irwin Jay and wife Barb, nephew Glenn Jay and wife Freda, niece Darla Jay and husband Vaughan Doyle, and grand-nephews and grand-nieces Krista MacEwen, Tara MacBeth, Courtney McGarry, Travis Jay, Candice Hughes and Jarad Pollard. Shirley was pre-deceased by parents Myrtle and Harold Jay and her brother Floyd and his wife Olive.

A celebration of Shirley's life will be held in July 2021 at First Presbyterian Church in Edmonton. If you wish to remember Shirley with a charitable donation, her two favourite charities were the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society.

*Reprinted from the Edmonton Journal - August 4, 2020*

Thank you to Donna Smith Blackburn for sharing some candid photos of Shirley helping, as she often did, at one of the community dinners.





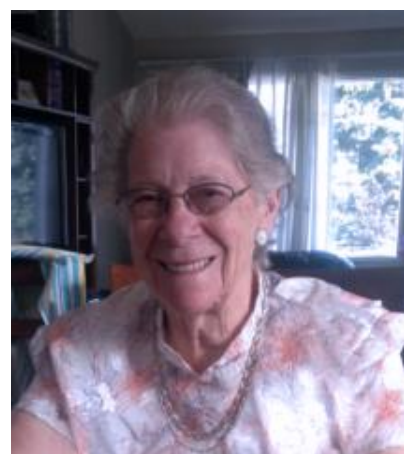
### DIME "The Angel"

Dime's story is not easy to tell, nor will it be easy to read, but it is important to tell. Dime was born in the Congo. War forced him to live in the Mayukwayuka Refugee Settlement in Zambia with his family. As the only boy, he had his older sisters (triplets), a younger sister, and both parents. While in the camp, Dime and his family were approved for immigration to Canada in 2020. Our congregation (FPC) worked with the Presbyterian Church in Canada to sponsor them. Family immigration often takes several years, but COVID-19 is a sad new factor in this process. However, Dime's Canadian aunt and uncle, Jacob and Emerance Kayembe (long-time members of FPC and Jacob is an elder) are here to ease their transition.

In the fall, Dime's mother phoned her sister, Emerance worried about Dime. He had large lump below the knee and his father, Francois, was talking him to nearby city for medical help. Shockingly, a double leg amputation was recommended. In September, Dime (age 16) didn't survive his illness which was likely cancer. He was greatly loved and is sorely missed by all who knew him. When the family emigration comes about, it will have a lingering sadness for Dime's African family and Jacob and Emerance's Canadian family.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) refugee team is highly skilled and highly responsive to refugee family needs, but there are times when a miracle needed. In Canada, there may have been another response to a bad knee. A refugee camp is no place to be sick, no place to stay for years on end and certainly no place to grow up. FPC's efforts are directed toward three groups from Mayukwayuka (30 persons). **Group 1** was approved in 2018 and should be arriving now... **Group 2** was approved in 2019 and **Group 3** is going through approval steps right now.

Throughout the Christmas season remember to count your blessings and think of those less fortunate. Hopefully these 30 immigrants make their way to Edmonton sooner rather than later. **Pray for those in need and please give to *First Presbyterian Church Refugee Fund.***



### Jean BUSSE (nee Seward)

October 19, 1929 - June 4, 2020

Jean passed away on June 4, 2020 after a long struggle with cancer. Left to mourn her passing are her husband of 71 years, Robert (Bob), their children Ken, Terry, Byron, Wendy, Pat (Lacquement), Bruce, Gordon, Pam (Sloan), honorary daughter Rebecca, their families, and numerous family and friends. Her kindness will be missed by all. We would like to thank the staff at Lifestyles Terra Losa for their wonderful care. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society or the WW Cross Hospital. Due to Covid-19, no service is planned at this time. REPRINTED from Edmonton Journal - June 13, 2020



### Church Office Hours

- Office hours vary due to COVID-19
- Please leave a voicemail at 780.422.2937, your call will be returned as soon as possible.



### Update Your Contact Information

Please advise the church office OR Jean Warrack:

- Email: [info@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:info@firstpresbyterian.ca) **OR** [jeanwarrack@gmail.com](mailto:jeanwarrack@gmail.com)
- Tel: 780.422.2937



### Donations

For information please contact *First Presbyterian Church Edmonton*:

- Mail: 10025 105 St., Edmonton, AB T5J 1C8
- Email: [info@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:info@firstpresbyterian.ca)
- Tel: 780.422.2937



**Pre-authorized Remittance (PAR)** - Have you considered setting up a weekly donation? Information can be found at:

- Website: <https://pccweb.ca/firstpresbyterian>



### E-Transfers

- E-Transfer is an effortless way to donate to the church.
- Your security question can be set to anything you want, but send that separately to [treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca)
- For more information, contact our Javed Sommers (Treasurer) at [treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:treasurer@firstpresbyterian.ca)



### PayPal

- PayPal payments are available through our church website.
- Website: <https://pccweb.ca/firstpresbyterian>



### First with the News (FWTN)

- An official publication of the First Presbyterian Church, Edmonton (FWTN).
- For more information or to contribute, contact the church office at [info@firstpresbyterian.ca](mailto:info@firstpresbyterian.ca)