

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

traditional land of the Three Fires Confederacy: the Odawa, Potawatami and Ojibwe.

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519-683-2442 standrewspcdresden@gmail.com Rev. Andy Cornell

Worship This Week Jan 7, 2024

Ordination of new ruling elder

Piano – Marilyn Wranich

Sound/powerpoint/livestream –

WELCOME –

PRAYER

SONGS – 172 As with gladness men of old, You are my all in all

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART – Rita

Kid's PRAYER –

SONG – Because He lives

RECEIVE OFFERING –

ANNOUNCEMENTS –

GOOD NEWS MOMENTS –

PRAYER REQUESTS/PRAYER –

SCRIPTURE – Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-2 (NIV), 3-5, 14-18 (New Living Translation)

During Advent and Christmas we remind ourselves of the reason for the season.

Christmas is about Christ. Thank God we are still able to proclaim that truth. But what about the rest of the year? When we pack our Christmas decorations away for another year, we don't pack the Messiah. Quite the opposite, He is the reason for EVERY season. All of scripture is a witness to Christ, which the opening words of the Old Testament and the New Testament testify.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. God created everything through Him, and nothing was created except through Him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and His life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. . . . So the Word became human and made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. . . From His abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love

and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

MESSAGE –

In the beginning is more than just the start of a story. It's a great story, the greatest ever told. It's the story of life – the source of life and the purpose of life. In that sense, "in the beginning" is more of a revelation. It reveals what we need to be truly alive – physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

The author of Genesis reveals that in the beginning, "God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters." It was like all the materials were there, waiting to be formed into something beautiful and useful. We are told that the Spirit of God was present, hovering. That's the Holy Spirit. It's also Christ.

John refers to Christ as the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." These are among the most powerful words of scripture. The one who came to be born of a woman and enter the world as a baby was also with God when creation was designed and made. "He was with God in the beginning. God created everything through Him, and nothing was created except through Him." If we want to know God the Father, we first need to be introduced to Christ the Son. When we see Christ, we see God. Christ is the mind of God. And if we invite Christ into our hearts and minds, we will get a glimpse of hope, peace, joy and love.

This is wisdom and power in union with God. We believe that God is in three persons – God the Father, God the Son and God The Holy Spirit. This is a mystery, something our human minds are unable to fully grasp. It's also intensely powerful. The expanse of the universe and the ability to create it and sustain it comes from one source. The beauty is that we can have a personal relationship with God by knowing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

"The Word gave life to everything that was created, and His life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. . . .
." This is a dark world. It has been given over to Satan. This explains the presence of war and violence, depression and despair, brokenness. But the light is available and all we have to do is believe. Easy to say but difficult to do because the enemy places all kinds of obstacles in the way. Even those of us who believe run into challenges and temptations every hour of the day.

“So the Word became human and made His home among us.” This is the Messiah, what we celebrate during Advent and Christmas each year. He is – or at least should be – the centre of our church. If He has been removed from the centre, if He is not the reason we gather, if He is not the sole reason we do what we do, then we are called to get back on track.

The Prayer of Saint Patrick (c. 390–461) is a powerful reflection of the need to have Christ at the centre of our lives, and our church.

I arise today

Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through a belief in the Threeness,
Through confession of the Oneness
Of the Creator of creation.

I arise today

Through the strength of Christ's birth and His baptism,
Through the strength of His crucifixion and His burial,
Through the strength of His resurrection and His ascension,
Through the strength of His descent for the judgment of doom.
I arise today . . .

. . . Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,
Christ in the eye that sees me,
Christ in the ear that hears me.

I arise today

Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through a belief in the Threeness,
Through a confession of the Oneness
Of the Creator of creation.

Christ is the human reflection of God and as such, He is the perfect image of the leader. Every believer is called to model their lives on Christ. We invite him into the head and our thinking, into the heart and our actions. This is important for everyone but even more so for those in leadership.

Every believer has at least one spiritual gift which is used to build up and advance the Kingdom. One of those gifts is leadership. Today, we are ordaining another new ruling elder. This is the second ordination of an elder in just over a year. (Andrew Neely was in late 2022). It's a blessing. In a few minutes, we will be asking Bob to agree to the ordination vows.

Among them is the statement that "Jesus Christ is the Church's King and Head." My boss, who is also your boss, does not occupy a corner office but resides in the Heavenly Kingdom. Christ is the King, but not of this world. Leadership is required to know the mind of Christ and His will and to rely on Him as our help.

The main piece of truth in the opening words of John is that every living thing and person belongs to God in Christ. Not everyone recognizes that. If we want to get to know ourselves and the world, we start by getting to know Christ. If we want to get a glimpse at the secrets of the universe and the purpose of life, we need to get to know God in Christ. If we want peace, and hope, and strength, and joy and rest, we will start with Christ.

Jesus told his disciples that He is the word. In John 6:63, he said, "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life." There are not just words to follow as wise advice; these are words which are meant to grab you, and hold you and transform you. That's what a real relationship with Christ is – life changing and transforming. And not just once, but continually, throughout our earthly lives.

HYMN: 324 Great is thy faithfulness

ORDINATION OF BOB VRIESEMA AS RULING ELDER:

The Presbyterian church is run by elders. In fact, the name "presbyterian" comes from the word "presbyter" or "elder." There are two types of elders: "ruling" elders and "teaching" elders. Ministers are teaching elders – we are responsible for the word and the sacraments. Ruling elders are more about the order and mission of the congregation, along with pastoral care. Together, we meet as a session, which oversees everything in the congregation, with the assistance of the board of managers. Ruling elders and teaching elders all read the same ordination vows. What Bob will agree to today is the same that I agreed to when I was ordained as a minister. That's significant.

Ordination always takes place in public with the congregation. We are in this together. In that light, let's begin with this responsive reading:

There are varieties of gifts, **but the same Spirit**; There are varieties of services, **but the same Lord**; There are varieties of activities, **but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone**. To each one is given a gift by the Spirit, **to use it for the common good**. Together we are the body of Christ, **and individually members of it**. Though we have different gifts, together we are called to be the church with a ministry in the world which is led by the risen Christ.

CLERK OF SESSION:

Here are the steps that were taken by the session of St. Andrew's Dresden which led to this ordination.

Hearing the call from God to add new members to the court, session proceeded in September to call for nominations from the congregation. One name came forward. After a time of reflection, we presented Bob Vriesema to the congregation. Ballots were distributed and collected from Nov. 12 to Dec. 3. They were opened on Dec. 4 by session. The nominee received unanimous support and no concerns were raised. Based on the strength of the congregation's response, session proceeds with the ordination. This was announced to the congregation on December 10th and 17th. Bob has been provided with orientation on the rights and responsibilities of ruling elders in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

MINISTER: This is what The Presbyterian Church in Canada believes concerning the ministry of ruling elders. All ministries of the Church proceed from and are sustained by the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Prophet, Priest and King, the Minister of the covenant of grace. By the operation of God's Word and Spirit, the Church is gathered, equipped, and sent out to participate in this ministry. All members of the Church are called to share the Gospel with the world, and to offer to the Father the worship and service that are due to the Creator from the creation, through Christ, the only Mediator, until he comes again. That the Church may be continually renewed and nurtured for ministry, Christ furnishes the Church with pastors and teachers. He requires and enables the Church to discern and to confirm by ordination those whom he calls to this pastoral and teaching office. The standards of his Church he entrusts in a special degree of responsibility to their care.

Our confessions of faith remind us that Christ has called some in the Church to join with the Minister in the government of the church. This is the office of elder.

We are also reminded that in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Jesus Christ is the Church's King and Head. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word of God, testifying to Christ the living Word, are the canon of all doctrine, by which Christ rules our faith and life. We acknowledge our historic continuity with the Holy Catholic Church and our doctrinal heritage in the ecumenical creeds, and the confessions of the Reformation. Our subordinate standards are the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted in 1875 and 1889, the Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation of 1954, Living Faith as adopted in 1998, and such doctrine as the Church, in obedience to Scripture and under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, may yet confess in the Church's continuing function of reformulating the faith.

THE VOWS

MINISTER: Bob, that your faith in God and your integrity of purpose may be declared before God and all people, you are required to answer the questions appointed for all who would enter the office of the Ruling Elder.

1. Do you believe in God the Father, made known in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom the Holy Spirit witnesses in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

I do.

2. Do you accept the subordinate standards of this Church, promising to uphold its doctrine under the continual illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures and to be guided thereby in fostering Christian belief, worship and service among the people?

I do.

3. Do you accept the government of this Church by sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, and do you promise to share in and submit yourself to all lawful oversight therein, and to follow no divisive course, but to seek the peace and unity of Christ among your people and throughout the Holy worldwide/Catholic Church?

I do.

4. In accepting the office of Elder, do you promise to perform your duties in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, striving to build up his Church and to strengthen its mission in the world?

I do, God helping me.

May the Lord bless you and give you grace to keep these vows.

Minister invites the congregation to stand.

Let us confess our faith together in the words of The Apostles' Creed: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy worldwide Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Congregation remains standing. Questions and answers on powerpoint.

MINISTER: If the leadership and ministry of elders is to bear fruit, the entire congregation needs to be in support. These questions are to the members and adherents of this congregation.

1. Do you confess your faith in God as creator and ruler of the world, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your inspiration and strength?

We do.

2. Do you receive Bob Vriesema as a ruling elder, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead you in the way of Christ?

We do.

3. Do you agree to encourage him, to respect his decisions as a member of the session, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is head of the church?

We do.

May the Lord bless you and give you grace to keep these promises. **Amen.**

The congregation will be seated. All current and retired members of session are invited to come forward as a sign of solidarity and place hands on the new elder and the congregation is invited to extend hands of blessing.

MINISTER: We praise and glorify you, Lord God Almighty, for you have created us and called us to yourself; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ your Son; you sustain our lives and our works through the presence and power of your Holy Spirit.

Almighty God, in every age you have chosen servants to speak your word and lead your people. We thank you for those you have called to serve you as ruling elders. By the power of your Spirit, develop in them the gifts of ministry; may they have the same mind that was in Christ, serving you in the world as long as they shall live; through Jesus Christ the Lord.

God of Grace, who baptized us into a common ministry as ambassadors of Christ, who called us to be a priesthood of all believers, who entrusted to us the message of reconciliation, we pray for courage and discipline to follow where your elders rightly lead us, that together we may declare your mighty acts and show your love to the world, through Jesus Christ who is ruler of all. **Amen.**

DECLARATION

MINISTER: In the name of Jesus Christ, the only king and head of the church, and by the authority invested in me by the Presbytery of Essex-Kent, I now declare you, Bob, to have been ordained as a ruling elder and admit you to the session of this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or action, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God through him.

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

Ruling elders extend congratulations to the newly ordained elder

WORDS OF APPRECIATION – the newly ordained elder may want to share a few words.

FINAL HYMN – *Invite Bob to introduce this* – 683 I know not why such wondrous grace

BENEDICTION –

NEW PRAYER

1. Condolence to the family of Johan Boldt, whose body was recovered on Jan.1; blessings upon all who went out of their way to search for him.

CONTINUE TO PRAY

Health and healing –

1. Ellen Robinson healing from triple bypass.
2. Doug Robinson healing from a stroke.
3. Bruce Stephens: pain, radiation treatments and scheduled surgery
4. Colin Paterson, radiation therapy for prostate cancer
5. Rev. Mary Templar, brain injury: difficulty reading
6. Park Street Place: residents, staff and owner
7. For all those recovering from surgical procedures.
8. Pat McKinnon's friend Linda, Becky Desjardine, Margaret Follows, Ron Mason, Bette Northcott, Karen Northcott, Tom O'Neill, Cherie Pegg, Sandra Pegg, Julie Shaw, Sandra Whitson
9. Anyone seeking or undergoing treatment for addictions
10. Anyone wrestling with anxiety and depression

Seniors and shut ins – Betty Bradley at Albany Retirement Home Petrolia, Dianne Richards at Park Street Place, Jim Lusk at Oaks Wallaceburg, Lane Douglas and Ross Fuchs at Fairfield Park in Wallaceburg, Aubrey Butler at home.

Elders on session – Mark Labadie 519-359-4842, Cindy Brewer 519-683-4113, Sheila Eves 519-683-4148, Andrew Neely 519-359-8903, Mark Richards 519-809-9175 and Julie Shaw 226-627-1953.

Board of managers – Wendy Weston (chair), Will Brewer, Linda Malott, Jenn Mason, Von Parking, Mark Richards, Jodie Rich, Bob Vriesema and Mike Wicks.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Clothing closet – Free clothing distribution at North Dresden Baptist Church every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. A few **MALE volunteers** would be appreciated. All you'd need to do is be present for whatever time you can spare, even just for an hour.

WE'RE HIRING:

[A new administrative assistant.](#) To start anytime.

WHAT'S UP:

Chair Funding – Have you ever considered giving a Christmas gift to the church? This is the year. Session and the Board of Managers have purchased 40 chairs for Rutherford Hall. You are invited to contribute any amount of money towards the Chair Fund.

Weekly email – Send announcements and new info to standrewspcdresden@gmail.com

Presbytery consultant– Grant Fairley met with session and the board on Nov. 25 and will prepare a report prior to a followup meeting early in the new year.

Free Community Meals –

North Dresden Community Church – first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.
Dresden Christian Reformed Church – second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

DATES

Jan. 7 – Ordination of new ruling elder Bob Vriesema during regular worship

Jan. 8 – Board of Managers 7 p.m.

Jan. 9 – Session 7 p.m.

Jan. 23 – 3 p.m. new weekly Bible study begins. We will be reading and discussing Ephesians. One chapter per week.

Feb. 11 – Congregation annual meeting

ANNIVERSARIES

Jan. 10 – Max & Maisie Deline (73 years!)

MINISTRY LINKS

[Renewal Fellowship](#) – Pastor Andy is employed at 40% time as RF’s Executive Director. St. Andrew’s is the other 60%.

[Dunamis Fellowship Canada](#) – Pastor Andy serves on the Board of Directors.

[Community Counselling Centre](#) of London – Pastor Andy is a Therapist Intern as he works towards a degree in Psycho-Spiritual Counselling and registration as a psychotherapist.

WAYS OF GIVING:

E-transfer st.andrewspcdresdenon@gmail.com. If required by your bank, our treasurer’s name is Linda Moore. Her number is 226-627-2727. If you are asked for a security question, please contact your local bank branch.

Bring envelope on Sunday or if you have a key, leave it in the treasurer’s mailbox.

Mail it to the church, PO Box 93 Dresden. NOP 1M0.

Gift Cards – You pay face value for the gift cards and the church buys them at a discount through Chatham Christian Schools. Next deadline Jan. 29. Cards will be available for pickup at the church on Feb. 2nd or will be distributed in church on Feb. 4th. Gift card orders are on the website. <https://standrewsdresden.ca/> under the “giving” tab Send e-transfer AND order forms to st.andrewspcdresdenon@gmail.com. Normal deadline (the last Monday of the month) returns in January.