

## WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
January 15, 2017

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### A MESSAGE FOR EVERYONE



**Gathering:** *God shows no partiality. No race or group is shown special advantage. In every nation anyone who respects him and who does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message God sent to all through the people of Israel. It is a message of peace by Jesus Christ, who has been made Lord of all. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.*

**Hymn:** In Christ there is no east or west (1-2)

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**Confessional Prayers:** *Almighty God, you love us, but we have not loved you. You call, but we have not listened. We walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.*

**Gracious God,** our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

**Words of Assurance:** *In God's mercy, we are made whole again, baptized with the Spirit, forgiven and renewed, able to show God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Hymn:** In Christ there is no east or west (3-4)

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**Acts 10:34-43** Then Peter began to speak to them *"I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."*

**Hymn:** Brother, sister, let me serve you (1-2)

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Peter's speech is monumental. It reflects Peter's gigantic "aha!" moment when he has come to realize that, within God's missional program of salvation, all really, truly means all... What is absolutely new here are the implications of divine impartiality. The character of God as an impartial God now means the character of God's community is impartial. For Peter this is a conversion experience second to none. *"What Peter did changed the course of Christianity forever. He opened it to the whole world - to you and me, who would never have been welcome if this vision of God's impartiality had not worked its way through Peter's - and Cornelius' - active imaginations. When Peter declared, "God shows no partiality," he opened the possibility that anyone - everyone - is welcome in the family of faith. He also put us on warning: the rules were changed for you, so that you could come in - who are you, then, to prevent God from blessing the whole human family? Who are you to stand in the way of God's love?"* Rev. David Lewicki

This story is a powerful symbol of a promise enunciated from the beginning of Luke's gospel and throughout Acts, a promise represented most powerfully in the resurrection of Jesus. Without question, God's spirit is moving. The only question is whether Peter, as well as the church, will sense the winds of change and follow God's lead.

**Pastoral Prayer:**

Val Macdonald

**Invitation:** *Let us gather around the table with the offering of bread and drink upon it and the promise of the Living Christ among us. This is the welcome table of God where all who seek to be at peace with their neighbour and all who seek the mercy of God in Christ are embraced. Come, for we are invited in to this holy mystery. Come. We are ready!*

**Hymn:** Brother, sister, let me serve you (3-4)

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**INCLUSIVE** means a place around the Lord's Table for everyone. Every human division is bridged in Christ's reconciling love and outstretched hands. Barriers of race, colour, gender, language, sexuality and religion are overcome. All we have in common is Christ, and Christ is all in all.

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *(concludes with...) Remembering your grace toward us, we take this bread and wine from among the gifts of your creation as signs of your saving help to us in Jesus Christ. We offer ourselves as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to proclaim the dying, rising, coming Christ. Pour out your Spirit on us. Pour out your Spirit on us. Pour out your Spirit on these gifts. Make these gifts the body and blood of Christ. Make us, through them, Christ's body alive in the world. Gracious God! Let your kingdom come! Glory to you! Glory to you! Come, Lord Jesus! Be our daily bread. Glory to you! Glory to you! Holy Spirit! Send us to the world. Glory to you! Glory to you! Holy, Blessed Trinity! One God forever! Glory to you! Glory to you!*

Hymn: All who hunger

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## Communion

**Prayer following communion:** *Gracious and loving God, you have made us one in the body of Christ, and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink. Thank you for feeding our hunger and relieving our thirst. Now send us into the world to do the work you have given us to do: to find the lost and lonely, to heal broken souls, to free prisoners, and make the powerful care. Grant us strength to persevere in resisting evil, and to proclaim in all we say and do your good news in Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen.*

Hymn: Lord God, you now have set your servant free

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*Your light is the only light I need as I travel through life's mystery. Your word the only voice I hear - that still small voice that leads me to the place where I should be. Your presence is the only company I need as I walk this narrow road. Your companionship the warmth I crave to help me on my way.*