

AVCRC exists to reach people, bringing them to a loving relationship  
with Jesus  
and membership in the Christian Community; helping them to grow  
in their faith,  
guiding them to serve in their gifted ministry, and honouring God  
with their lives.

**Sunday December 29, 2019**



Welcome! Today we close out 2019 and give thanks to God for his faithfulness through the year. The lectionary sends us to Matthew 2 and the terrible story of a jealous king ordering the murder of every boy who might be the one born King of the Jews. In the middle of pain, we find Jesus who heals. Many thanks to Zac A and Abigail A who lead music this morning.

Prayer and Greeting

Songs of Praise:

"Here I Am to Worship" "Joyful, the One Who Saves" "10,000 Reasons"

Reflections on 2019

Song: "Blessed Be Your Name"

Offering: Port Alberni Shelter Society "Amazing Grace"

Morning Prayer

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 63:7-9 (pg. 726); Hebrews 2:10-18 (pg. 1162);  
Matthew 2:13-23 (pg. 934-35)

Message: Jesus in the Middle

Blessing

Song: "Lord I Lift Your Name on High"

**Sermon note:** This didn't fit in the sermon but I couldn't leave it alone. Matthew says that Jesus lived in Nazareth, fulfilling what the prophets had said. Commentators have rummaged through scripture ever since Matthew wrote this and have found no such prophecy. It could mean that Jesus was to be a Nazarene (like Samson, Judges 13) meaning, holy and set apart. The root of the word Nazareth sounds like the word for "shoot," as in a shoot from the stump of Jesse (Isaiah 11). It also sounds like the word for "kept." That word is used to describe the Messiah in Isaiah 42 and 49: one kept, held specially by God to bring light. Or, a person from Nazareth was considered a nobody (John 1:46); that is an apt description of the humble one who came to give his life, the suffering servant. What do you make of it? All seem appropriate.

**At-home Faith Formation Tip:** As the year draws to a close, gather as a family or with friends to reflect on the events of the past 12 months and tell stories of how God guided, protected, convicted, loved, and provided for you. Hearing each other's stories is one of the best ways to grow in faith!

### **Keep these matters in your prayers:**

-Holidays are a wonderful time in many families; in others, the gatherings can be a source of tension. Today, and through the year, pray for healthy families.

-The CRC development agency, World Renew, asks us to pray for Nicaragua: With ongoing political turmoil and civil unrest, the Nicaraguan economy continues to suffer, causing loss of jobs, increased cost of basic goods, and an increasingly precarious situation for many families. Please pray for relief from the continuing economic crisis affecting every family there in one way or another. Pray also for life-sustaining rains that will allow for abundant harvests.

### **Special Collection December 29, 2019 – Port Alberni Shelter Society**

A charitable organization that works with people who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless, in the Alberni Valley. The organization offers temporary shelter, food and gateway services, and helps residents with becoming more self-sufficient, moving towards independence and long-term sustainable housing. 250-723-6511 Business line; Website: [pashelter.weebly.com](http://pashelter.weebly.com); Email: [pashelter@shaw.ca](mailto:pashelter@shaw.ca)  
Agency Background Programs at Port Alberni Shelter Society: Emergency Shelter Program, Overdose Prevention Services, Sobering Centre, and Supportive Housing Program.

**Safe church:** *A recent safe church conference showed both the depth of the problem of pornography and the depth of hope for those who struggle. This column highlights both, especially the hope.*

Much of the response to pornography comes back to “just don’t do it!” But we know that mere willpower is not enough to overcome brokenness and sin. We will do better when we find safe places to talk about struggles. Then, without fear, we can confess that unwanted sexual behavior is wrong but acknowledge that sexual desire can be healthy and is a gift from God. Without shame, we can ask why we are drawn to it. We can ask how, or better, who can break the power of sin.

**Thank you** to all who decorated, served snacks, played music, read or played a shepherd for our Christmas Eve service. Pray that the Good News proclaimed will stay with us.

**Renegotiating Faith Event:** Come hear a compelling presentation by Rick Hiemstra, lead researcher of the recently published Renegotiating Faith study of Canadian Christians aged 18 - 28. This event includes a discussion of five panelists, including two young adults, who will respond to the study and reflect on the application points they see emerging from it. You will come away from this event with helpful new insights about young adults and how to keep them engaged with faith and the church. Saturday, January 18, 2020, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon @ Willoughby CRC, Langley. Event is free. See Eventbrite for more info and to register. Sponsored by Faith Formation Ministries CRCNA and Classis BCSE.

**Hello my sweet sisters in Christ ...** I am going to do a 5 week Women's Bible Study by Beth Moore. I wondered if any of you are interested. It will involve doing a daily homework piece on your own then coming together once a week to watch a video and discuss what comes up. We would meet in the evenings. If you are interested, I would be glad to meet together to look over the material and chat about what kind of time frame works best for you. Contact Erin K: 'Disciples Making Disciples' 😊

| <u>OFFERING SCHEDULE</u>      | <u>COUNTER</u>       | <u>HELPERS</u>          |                 |  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|
| December 29 – Shelter Society | Janay G              | Kim M & Lois L          |                 |  |
| January 5                     |                      |                         |                 |  |
| January 12                    |                      |                         |                 |  |
| January 19                    |                      |                         |                 |  |
| January 26                    |                      |                         |                 |  |
|                               | <u>GREETERS</u>      | <u>NURSERY</u>          |                 |  |
| December 29                   | Alice & Theo V       | Jessica O, Anita B      |                 |  |
| January 5                     | Jane D               | Alsie S, Jill V         |                 |  |
| January 12                    | Jane D               | Kim M, Pat B            |                 |  |
| January 19                    | Bert & Pat B         | Erin K, Yvonne C, Sarah |                 |  |
| January 26                    | Bert & Pat B         | Anita B; Helle C        |                 |  |
|                               | <u>COFFEE MAKERS</u> | <u>LIBRARIAN</u>        | <u>SECURITY</u> |  |
| December 29                   | Roy & Joanne K       | Alice V                 | Pete B          |  |
| January 5                     | Johann & Annemarie S | Margrit D               | Al V            |  |
| January 12                    | Harry & Marjie A     | Bev H                   | Al V            |  |
| January 19                    | Jake & Mitzie C      | Joan W                  | Al V            |  |
| January 26                    | Colin & Aliza B      | Anita B                 | Al V            |  |

**Is this your first time Worshipping with us?**  
**Welcome!** Please join us for Coffee (downstairs) following the Service. We would love to get to know you ☺  
 \*\*There is an Info Card found in your pew seat. Feel free to fill it out and drop it in the Collection Bag. This will help us to keep in touch with you.

**Nursery ...** is provided during the Service for your babies and toddlers. Feel free to drop your children off before the Service starts.

**Sunday School ...** Pastor Curtis will let you know during the **Service** when the children can leave.  
 \*\*All our Volunteers are genuinely caring; have passed RCMP Background Checks; and, are well known by our Leadership.

**A V C R C W E L C O M E S Y O U !**  
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