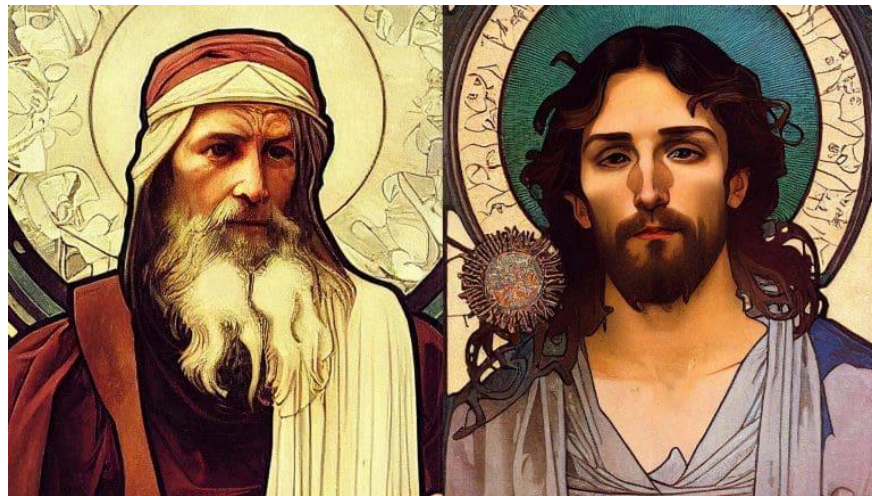


A Year with the Hebrews Scriptures:

Focusing on the Intentions of our Creator

The focus of our conversations in worship and beyond for the next year (in the Christian tradition, the year starts with Advent on Nov 30, 2025) will be the Hebrew scriptures and how, through the influence of the Holy Spirit among and within us, they open up deeper insights into the intentions of our Creator, normally designated as YAHWEH in those writings. We'll follow the Hebrew scripture readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary for Year A.¹ We'll continue to do two readings every Sunday - mostly one from the accounts of God's activities with and for their creatures in the book of Isaiah and one from the responses of God's people compiled in the Psalms. The stories of Isaiah and his prophetic community compiled in the Book of Isaiah in the Hebrew scriptures are the most quoted prophetic literature in the New Testament.



(artist of this image of Isaiah and Jesus unknown)

¹ The standard source for information on and the substance of the Revised Common Lectionary is <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu>. There are 4 readings suggested for each Sunday and the special Christian observances – one from the Hebrew scriptures, one from the Psalms, one from the gospels, and one from the epistles.

Sunday Morning Info from Nov 30, 2025 – Jan 11, 2026

Please note additional information for those engaging in bible study with us on Saturday mornings from 11am-12pm on Zoom is appended to this outline. The Zoom link for the week is always on our homepage at www.brentwoodpcc.com.

November 30, 2025 – Advent 1 - Hope
Kayla Green reading Scriptures Psalm 122 – Refrain #1 <i>Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.</i> Isaiah 2:1-5
Hymns Opening Chorus #122 – vss. 1&7 #84 – I joyed when to the house of God #331 – The God of Abraham praise #765 – We’ve a story to tell to the nations Music for Reflection – I’m gonna lay down my burden
Sermon Title Walking in the Light of the Lord
Words to Ponder Light

December 7, 2025 – Advent 2 - Peace

Celebrating Holy Communion at the Lord's Table

Lynn Dookie reading

Scriptures Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 – Refrain #2

And in that day shall peace and justice flourish

Isaiah 11:1-10

Hymns Opening Chorus #122 – vss. 1&7

#43 – God's name forever shall endure

#534 – All who hunger, gather gladly

#563 – Let us talents and tongues employ

Sermon Title The Spirit of Truth

Word to Ponder Truth

December 14, 2025 – Advent 3 - Joy

Ryan Clarke reading

Scriptures Psalm 146:5-10 – Refrain #1

***O gracious God, you open your hand
and feed us from the storehouse of your grace.***

Isaiah 35:1-10

Hymns Opening Chorus #122 – vss. 1&7

#105 – I'll praise my Maker while I've breath

#118 – Hark the glad sound

#124 – People in darkness

Music for Reflection #128 – There's a voice in the wilderness crying

Sermon Title Everlasting Joy

Word to Ponder Joy

December 21, 2025 – Advent 4 - Love

Sherwin Xie reading

Scriptures Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 – Refrain #1

***Turn us again Lord God of hosts
And hear your people's cry.***

Isaiah 7:10-16

Hymns Opening Chorus #122 – vss. 1&7

#110 – Come, thou long-expected Jesus

#130 – To a maid whose name was Mary

#122 – O come, O come, Emmanuel

Music for Reflection - #125 – People look east

Sermon Title

The Sign from the Lord

Word to Ponder Emmanuel

December 24, 2025 – Christmas Eve – Lessons & Jazz Carols

Brian Fraser with The Brentwood Hymn Swing Quartet

The Order of Service

A Melody of Carols as We Gather -

Opening Prayer

#159 – O come all ye faithful

Genesis 1:26-31

#146 – Angels from the realms of glory

Genesis 12:1-5

#510 – Deep in the shadows of the past

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

#171 – The people that in darkness

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

#160 – Unto a child is born

Luke 1:26-35, 38

#155 – That boy-child of Mary

Luke 2:1-7

#149 – Away in a manger

Luke 2:8-16

#133 – Go tell it on the mountain

Matthew 2:1-12

#173 – We three kings

John 1:1-14

#154 – Silent night

Closing Prayer and Benediction

#153 – Joy to the world

December 28, 2025 – 1st Sunday after Christmas

Kayla Green reading

Scriptures Psalm 148 – Refrain #1

*Heav'n and earth and all creation,
Praise and magnify God's name.*

Isaiah 63:7-9

Hymns Opening Chorus #727 – Let there be light – vss. 1 & 6

#106 – Let all creation bless the Lord

#377 – Come, children, join to sing

#371 – Love divine, all loves excelling

Music for Reflection - #163 – Of eternal love begotten

Sermon Title

Saved by Our Creator

Word to Ponder Saved

January 4, 2026 – 2nd Sunday after Christmas

Celebrating Holy Communion at the Lord's Table

Lynn Dookie reading

Scriptures Psalm 147:12-20 – Refrain 2

Praise the Lord, who heals the broken hearted.

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Hymns Opening Chorus #727 – Let there be light – vss. 1 & 6

#530 – I come with joy

#534 – All who hunger, gather gladly

#556 – Now let us from this table rise

Sermon Title

Returning Home

Word to Ponder Home

January 11, 2026 – Baptism of the Lord – 1st Sunday after Epiphany

Kayla Green reading

Scriptures Psalm 29 – Refrain #1

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Bow down before God, God's glory proclaim

Isaiah 42:1-9

Hymns Opening Chorus #727 – Let there be light – vss. 1 & 6

#723 – Lord, in this broken world

#641 – One more step along the world I go

#521 – Child of blessing, child of promise

Sermon Title Called to Become Friends of God's SHALOM

Word to Ponder Baptism

Bible Study at Brentwood

Our weekly bible studies happen on Saturday mornings from 11am -12pm. We gather on Zoom for a hour to consider together the passages that will form the focus of our Sunday morning worshipping the following day.

We've designated these conversations the *Shakla Vetarya* Gatherings, using the Aramaic phrase that indicates a spirited dialogue of give and take through which the Spirit of our Creator's Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, inspires and instructs in walking the path of the gospel message of forgiving and reconciling love for the whole world. Aramaic was the language that Jesus spoke.

Though we don't follow it rigorously (it's not meant to be), we are guided by an approach to bible study developed by the Rev Dr Elisabeth R Jones based on the Jewish tradition of *midrash*. Here is Elisabeth's summary of that process of discerning dialogue.

Midrash: A Way of "Turning" a Biblical Text

You know how when you turn a cut-diamond to catch the light, different facets of the same diamond refract the same light differently, so you see many colours of the spectrum? This metaphor may be what the second century Rabbi Ben Bag Bag had in mind when he encouraged people to take any Biblical text and "Turn it, and turn it, for everything is in it. Reflect and grow old and grey with it."

This way of turning sacred texts this way and that, so that God's light catches the text in different ways, depending on changing contexts and circumstances, is as old as the Bible itself, where we find younger texts (for example Paul's letters or the Gospels) which 'turn' an older text (e.g. from the prophets or psalms), to show how they can be reinterpreted in light of new contexts for God's people. The process of turning a text is known as "midrash" (from the Hebrew verb דָּרַשׁ darash, which means to search, probe, ponder, seek). While individuals can turn texts, the process is far livelier – and far more likely to transform the way we live our faith – when done in community.

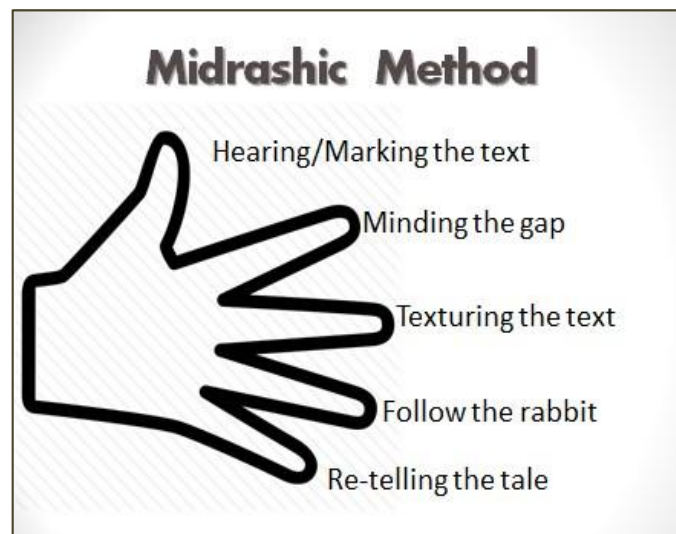
Midrash as an interpretive process is deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition and continues to this day. One contemporary Rabbi has described the process as

“reading the Bible with question marks”, not just as an intellectual activity but as a “personal journey” in which we can “glimpse the light of old souls” who saw the Holy in the words of Scripture, but also “to find that light within our own souls” and lives.

Some Christians may worry that this is not “the way” to study a Biblical text; we’ve become used to thinking one text means one thing, as if it were some sort of mathematical equation. However, Jesus was a master “darshan” (one who turns a text), as you can see so many times when he turns an ancient text (like Deuteronomy 6) to bring new light to bear on its meaning, as it meets the present circumstance (See Matthew 22:34-40). In similar fashion we see Peter “midrashing” the prophet Joel to bring light to the resurrection, when he preaches to the crowd at Pentecost (Acts 2), and Paul sees Isaiah’s description of holy mystery as the best way to describe the apparent folly of faith in the crucified Lord of glory (1 Cor 2:9;16), Jesus Christ.

A Christian Midrashic Method

This simple way of using a “midrashic approach” to Bible study has been developed over the past eleven years in the Christian community of faith of Cedar Park United in Pointe Claire, QC. It’s a five-finger process:



1. Reading/Marking the text

Hear it first (listening is how most people have encountered Scripture). Next, print off or mark up the text- with any of YOUR reactions, questions, shocks, surprises. Note repetitions, odd words, gaps (what's missing?)

2. Minding the Gaps

Share everyone's "gaps" (discovered while marking the text). (DON'T answer the questions yet, let them fill the room!) Identify the key or pressing ones. Be ready to use commentaries, online resources, and human wisdom.

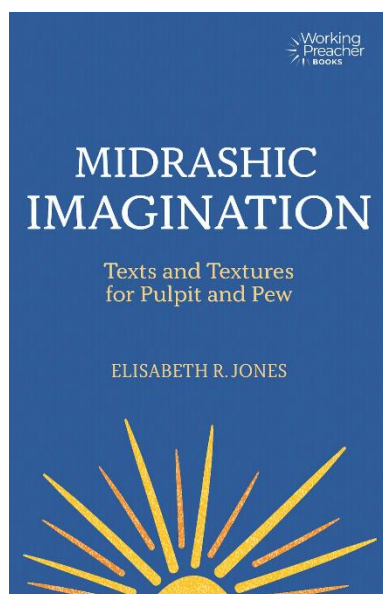
3. Texturing the Text (Putting the text into its biblical context.)

Who wrote it, when, for whom? Who shared it? Who passed it on? What layers are added now that the text has come to us?

4. Follow the White Rabbit (a reference to Lewis Carroll's Adventures in Wonderland; Alice followed the rabbit, and entered a world both recognizable and strange). Some element(s) of a text just beg to be followed; go there! Look things up, and see how this particular point intersects with your own life.

5. Re-telling the Tale

When Scripture re-writes us, we get to re-tell it! How would you re-tell this text? (As artist, poet, pray-er, preacher, person of faith?) Share others' re-tellings of this text (e.g. Songs, art, or contemporary re-tellings, e.g. Godspell, etc.)



The **Rev Dr Elisabeth R Jones** studied and taught at Vancouver School of Theology, was Director of Studies at United Theological College in Montreal and completed her Doctor of Ministry degree at Luther Seminary with a project on using midrash to help people engage the Scriptures in ways that transform their lives. She has recently retired from Cedar Park United Church in Pointe-Claire, PQ. The book she has written on *midrash* will be published in 2026 by Fortress Press.

A Few Books on Isaiah to Consider

Brueggemann, Walter, *Isaiah, Vol 1: Chapters 1-39*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

_____, *Isaiah, Vol 2: Chapters 40-66*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Childs, Brevard S., *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.

Hanson, Paul D., *Isaiah 40-66*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

Seitz, Christopher R., *Isaiah 1-39*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011.