



Dear Bridget:

Well, Good Morning to you, Bridget Laurel Anne Mitchell. This is your Baptismal Day, at the beginning of January 2019 and you are still very little. So this is a letter for later, when you ask questions and wonder wonderings. You might be curious about what this all means! SO, let me try to imagine what questions you might ask, then I will try to answer them. But first, if other questions come to your mind you go right now, put down this paper and find your godparents, or your grandparents and ask them, pester them until you get a good conversation!

The sacrament of baptism is all about belonging, in a spiritual sense...it's about a beautiful path for us to walk down as we grow and about the gift of a moral compass in life. SO Bridgit, that's a mouthful, right? It means that there are

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some things about today's service that we can all see. If Facebook is still around when you are 15 (and who knows?) then your Mum's page will have a photo or two posted of what this beautiful family looked like around Epiphany Sunday 2019. There are certificates to touch and words to hear that say: Bridget Laurel Anne Mitchell is a precious child of God. Those are the outward signs of the grace of God. We heard from the Bible about how Jesus corrected the disciples when they wanted to send some children away from Jesus. I guess they thought he was too busy or too important to spend any attention on little guys. But Jesus said to them: Hey you are wrong!! Those kids really matter! What's so amazing and powerful about this is how Jesus backed up what He said about children with what He did with children. He invested. He took time. He cared. Brilliant... So that's outside stuff and inside stuff together. Because Jesus taught us that children were important to God, not for being good at dancing or poetry or school or gardening, but just because they are. That's Grace. God's love poured out on us all. On you Bridget from the very beginning, on us all. That's Grace.



We are glad to see you in church today Bridget Laurel Anne Mitchell!!! But today's sacrament is not just about this church.

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It is a Universal Sacrament, which means it is for all the Christian Churches everywhere. We say the same words, even though the minister or priest might speak a different language from ours. It means the same thing. So if you grow up and move to Buenos Aires, or Carthage, or New York City, you will have a community to which you belong! That's a good thing. Some people go to huge churches with stained glass and feel God's presence, some walk through the early morning mist and feel that same spiritual connection. We are all a little different but God yearns to speak to us, to love us all. Isn't that beautiful? Wherever you live, I hope you will be curious about spirituality, to be with others who seek that path in life, and learn about the ways God seeks to communicate with us.

And here at this church we will do our best to live up to Jesus' hopes that all people will feel that they matter to us. And I want to tell you about one of the most important things we do here ...

A wise man once wrote: A baby points the way from which we came. A child points to our innocence... to purity... and glee. Only a baby has the capacity to laugh like that... at the sheer joy of being alive! We thank the Creator for the joy and possibilities you bring Bridget. We wonder what you will be interested in, if you will want to study soil sciences or singing;

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to travel to see the world, or to stay here in BC. You have a wonderful circle of love and support: You are blessed.

Godparents are part of today's ceremony to give you even more support from three very special people. Turn to them with questions and conversations about spirituality and life, they are here for you and will be in the years ahead. If you want to run away to Paris, study in Madagascar when you are 11, or get a full back tattoo when you enter high school, these guys might be good folks to turn to, beyond your wonderful family. But, if you wonder about something like how you know when you are in love, I think your parents would be good ones to talk to! We are glad your Mum and Dad chose to bring you here this morning.

We believe that God's love is poured over you and always will be. We believe that Divine love is the most powerful thing we will ever know. We have experienced the love of God in many ways reaching out to us in conversations, in the Bible, in dreams and in music. We know God yearns to connect with you and always will be seeking to be your best Guide and most loving Source. With faith comes hope and love...or is it with love come hope and faith?

Bridget, welcome to our church, and all churches, but most importantly welcome to the spiritual space where we believe that love is the strongest: God's love in you is the strongest.

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With love from your very first Minister,

Rev. Shelagh MacKinnon

January 6, 2019

First Metropolitan United Church

Victoria, BC

