

The United Church of Canada
Bathurst Pastoral Charge
First United Church, Bathurst
www.firstunited-bathurst.ca

Dec 24, 2018
Christmas Eve
4pm

Minister	Rev. Jean Herman	Organist	Martha Vickers
Office Adm.	Isabel Clouston	Greeters	The Lavigne Family
Custodian	Steve White		

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THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

*The asterisk * identifies those times in the service where the congregation is invited to stand as able.*

Organ Prelude:



Gathering Words, Christmas Eve:

Leader: He's coming! He's coming!
The Savior of the World is coming!

People: Let us prepare our hearts to greet him!

Leader: O Come, Prince of Peace, bring your light to us!

People: We are ready to receive you in our lives!

The lighting of the Advent candles and the Christ candle:

(The Brewster Family)

One: This is Christmas Eve.
In the Sundays of December,
we have been lighting the Advent candles
in our advent wreath
as we have waited for this very day
when we are ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
First we lit the candle of hope:
the promise of hope born in Jesus tonight.

[The first candle is lit]

Next we lit the candle of peace:
the promise of peace born in Jesus tonight.

[The second candle is lit]

Then we lit the candle of joy:
the promise of joy born in Jesus tonight.
[The third candle is lit]

Finally we lit the candle of love:
the promise of love born in Jesus tonight.

[The fourth candle is lit]

**All: We live in a world longing for God,
the God who will be our guide
when the path is unclear;
the God who will be our courage
when we are scared of what comes next.
The God who will be our wisdom
when we don't know which way to turn;
the God who will be with us now and always.
We have a need for God in our lives
and in our worship
we light this candle as a symbol
that God is with us, born in Jesus this night.**

[The Christ candle is lit]

Choral Response:

***Candle light, sacred light.
Mystery flames, burning bright
Hope, joy and peace are the gifts of this night.
Love poured out over all within sight.
Shine your light in our world;
shine your light in our world.***

Hymn: 'Joy to the World' #59VU

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns:
let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Call to Worship:

One: A light shining in the darkness . . .

All: What could it be?

One: The sound of angels' wings . . .

What could it mean?

A baby born in a stable . . .

All: Who could it be?

One: Come to Bethlehem and see.

Prayer of Approach: (in unison)

**O wondrous God of the stars,
we come tonight with breathless wonder
to see the babe who will change our lives.
We hear the names "Wonderful Counselor,"
"Mighty God," "Prince of Peace,"
and we are in awe.
You have touched the earth
with your unconditional love.
Touch us—touch our hearts and minds and souls.
May we never tire of this story.
May we never take it for granted.
Make this night magical again. Amen.**

Scripture Readings:

Wayne Lord

Gospel Lesson:

Luke 2 : 1-20

Musical Offering: The Children of the Sunday School

'This Little Light of Mine'

'We Wish You a Merry Christmas'

Christmas Eve Prayer: (in unison)

**Loving God, Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.
Close the door of hate
and open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift
and good desires with every greeting.
Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.**

**May the Christmas morning
make us happy to be thy children,
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
with grateful thoughts,
forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer:-----

Amen

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS

Presentation of Gifts and Self to God:

Choral Response: *'In the Bleak Midwinter'* #55VU vs.4

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part,

Yet what I can, I give him, give my heart.

***Prayer of Dedication:**

**Come now and kneel before the Christ child.
Bring all that you are and all that you have.
Offer your gifts in wonder and surprise and awe.
Offer your gifts in joy and delight.**

THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH

***Closing Hymn:** *'Away in a Manger'* #69VU

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,

The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,

The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,

But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.

I love you, Lord Jesus; Look down from the sky,

And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay

Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.

Bless all the dear children in your tender care,

And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Benediction:

Let us go from this place proclaiming
that we have seen the glory of God
Believing that there is a light that shines in the darkness
Which the darkness shall not overcome

And may the love of the Creator
The joy of the Spirit
And the peace of the Christ-child
Be with you this Christmas, and evermore
Amen.

Organ Postlude:



Poinsettia Memorial booklets are available in the Narthex.

*May Peace be your gift at Christmas
and your blessing all year through!*
~Author Unknown~

Luke 2:1-20 Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)

The Birth of Jesus Christ

2 It was about that same time that Augustus Caesar sent out an order to all people in the countries that were under Roman rule. The order said that everyone's name must be put on a list.

² This was the first counting of all the people while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

³ Everyone traveled to their own hometowns to have their name put on the list.

⁴ So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee, and went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. It was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David.

⁵ Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (She was now pregnant.)

⁶ While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby.

⁷ She gave birth to her first son. She wrapped him up well and laid him in a box where cattle are fed. She put him there because the guest room was full.

Some Shepherds Hear About Jesus

⁸ That night, some shepherds were out in the fields near Bethlehem watching their sheep.

⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord was shining around them. The shepherds were very afraid.

¹⁰ The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid. I have some very good news for you—news that will make everyone happy.

¹¹ Today your Savior was born in David's town. He is the Messiah, the Lord.

¹² This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in pieces of cloth and lying in a feeding box."

¹³ Then a huge army of angels from heaven joined the first angel, and they were all praising God, saying,

¹⁴ "Praise God in heaven,
and on earth let there be peace to the people who please him."

¹⁵ The angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this great event the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they went running and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the feeding box.

¹⁷ When they saw the baby, they told what the angels said about this child.

¹⁸ Everyone was surprised when they heard what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹ Mary continued to think about these things, trying to understand them.

²⁰ The shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.