

*The United Church of Canada*  
*Bathurst Pastoral Charge*  
**First United Church, Bathurst**  
[www.firstunited-bathurst.ca](http://www.firstunited-bathurst.ca)

**Dec 24, 2018**  
**Christmas Eve**  
**7pm**

**Minister** Rev. Jean Herman    **Organist** Martha Vickers  
**Office Adm.** Isabel Clouston    **Greeters** Gayle Ferron  
**Custodian** Steve White    Lester Scott

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### **GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

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

#### **Organ Prelude:**

#### **\*Opening Hymn:**

'O Come, All Ye Faithful'    **#60 VU**

O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem:  
come and behold him, born the King of angels;

#### **Refrain**

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.

God of God, light of light,  
Lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb,  
Very God, begotten, not created:

#### **Refrain**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God in the highest:

#### **Refrain**



See how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;  
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;

#### **Refrain**

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

#### **Refrain**

#### **Our Christmas Candles:**

*(The four candles are re-lit.)*

One: For four weeks the candles have been burning  
as we thought about hope, peace, joy, and love.  
These are the gifts which Jesus brought to us  
that first Christmas long ago, and offers to us today.  
The waiting is over and Jesus is born.  
Each week another candle glowed,  
and our wreath shone more brightly.  
Tonight we light our Christ candle,  
the candle which represents Jesus.  
It is at the center of our wreath,  
just as Jesus is the center of our lives.

**All: God, our hearts sing with joy and praise  
because of Jesus.  
At this happy season,  
we rejoice that Jesus came among us.  
By his birth and life  
he has shown us that we are your people  
and that we are greatly loved.  
Help us to remember Christmas all year long  
by giving to others the gifts of life:  
hope, peace, joy, love,  
kindness and understanding. Amen.**

*(The Christmas 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***

**Call to Worship:**

One: In this silent night,

**All: We ponder your mystery with Mary and Joseph.**

One: In this holy night,

**All: We come with the shepherds to worship.**

One: On this night of joy for the world,

**All: We sing praises with choirs of angels.**

One: In the darkness of this night,

**All: We celebrate the Light of the World.**

**Prayer of Approach:** (in unison)

**Creator, Christ and Spirit,  
God of mystery and wonder,  
On this holy night,  
we come to sing praises with the angels  
we come to bow with the shepherds  
we come to adore you with Joseph  
we come to ponder your mystery with Mary  
we come to you this night, because you first came to us.  
we come to love you because you first loved us.  
we come to serve you, because you first served us. Amen**

**Carol:** 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' #64 vs. 1&2

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,  
and gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all on earth.

**Prayer for Understanding:**

God of light, we desire to hear your Word in fresh ways.  
Open our ears to the startling call of your voice.  
Open our eyes to the dawning of a new day.  
Open our hearts to the grace of your Good News  
and fill us with anticipation for your future. Amen.

**Scripture Readings:**

Pat MacIntosh

**New Testament Reading:**

Titus 2:11-14

**Responsive Reading:**

Psalm 96 #816 VU

**A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS****The First Lesson:** Genesis 1:26-2:4 Albert Vickers**Solo:** 'Wexford Carol' Emma Vickers**The Second Lesson:** Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 Margaret Payne-Chénard**Carol:** While Shepherds watched Their Flocks' #75 VU vs. 1,2&3

While shepherds watched  
Their flocks by night  
All seated on the ground  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he,  
For mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled minds;  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and human-kind.

"To you in David's  
Town this day  
Is born of David's line  
A Savior, who is Christ the Lord;  
And this shall be the sign:"

**The Third Lesson:** Luke 1:26-35 Albert Vickers**Carol:** 'Angels We Have Heard on High' # 38 VU

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains.

**Refrain:**

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*  
*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?

**Refrain:**

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*  
*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angles sing.  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the Newborn King.

**Refrain:**

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*  
*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

See him in a manger laid,  
Whom the choirs of angels praise,  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,  
While our hearts in love we raise.

**Refrain:**

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*  
*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

**The Fourth Lesson:** Luke 2:1-20 Albert Vickers

**Carol:** 'He is Born' #50 VU vs. 1,3&4

**Refrain:**

*He is born, little Child divine;*  
*Play on the reeds while the lutes are strumming.*  
*He is born, little Child divine;*  
*Join the song to announce the day.*

Through long ages of the past,  
Prophets have foretold his coming,  
Thru long ages of the past,  
Now the time has come at last.

**Refrain:**

Lowly lodged in a stable poor,  
Laid on straw for his infant cradle.  
Lowly lodged in a stable poor,  
God come down to our mortal aid.

**Refrain:**

Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
Coming as a child among us,  
Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
Grant to us your heavenly peace.

**Refrain:**

**The Fifth Lesson:** John 1:1-14 Margaret Payne-Chénard

**Carol:** 'Joy to the World' #59 VU

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.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make, His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the earth with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness  
And wonders of his love,  
And wonders of his love.  
And wonders, wonders of his love.

**Message:** 'Merry Christmas'

## RESPONDING IN LOVE

### 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: (in unison)

**Blessed Lord, you have given us your greatest gift—  
your very Word come to earth,  
to live with us and through us;  
you have filled us with your grace and truth—  
your holy child sent to free us from our bonds.  
How can we repay such divine generosity?  
Receive our thanks and praise.  
As you have given to us,  
so now we share your gifts  
and your grace with a world in need.  
May this offering help bring your light and love  
to those who still wander in darkness. Amen.**

### Prayer of Confession

**Lord, we are so excited.  
Christmas Eve is here.  
We are impatient to hear the whole story.  
Slow us down again, Lord.  
As we hear Mary say "Yes!" to God's good news,  
help us to remember that God  
continually calls us to be those  
who will bear the good news to those in need.  
Forgive us when we forget to do that.  
Heal our wounds and bind up our spirits.  
Enable us to go into your world offering our lives,  
our gifts, our talents, for your glory.  
In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN**

### Assurance of Pardon:

God's love and faithfulness have been at work in you.  
You are healed and forgiven. Rejoice in God's love. **Amen.**

### Prayer of the People:

### The Lord's Prayer:

**Solo:** 'O Holy Night' Emma Vickers

## MOVING IN GOD'S WAY

### Sharing the Christ Light: :

(Please form a circle around the Sanctuary)

**Carol:** 'Silent Night, Holy Night' #67VU

Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight:  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,  
Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night! Holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

### Benediction:

**One:** In darkness we arrived.

**All:** **In light we now leave.**

**One:** Though once we stumbled,

**All:** **we now walk with confidence.**

**One:** Rise up and go,

for the grace of God has appeared,  
bringing salvation to all.

**All:** **May the light of Christ lead us forevermore.**

(Isaiah 9, Titus 2)

### Organ Postlude:



Poinsettia Memorial booklets are available in the Narthex.

*May you have  
The gladness of Christmas  
which is hope;  
The spirit of Christmas  
which is peace;  
The heart of Christmas  
which is love.  
~Ada V. Hendricks~*

The bulletin today has been placed  
*in loving memory of*  
***My Parents , Gladys & Harold Moore***  
and  
***Brothers, John, Thompson & Laurie***  
by Gladys Jean

## *Year-Round Joy*

*Christmas is full of shiny things  
That sparkle, gleam and glow;  
These holiday pleasures dazzle us,  
And yet, deep down, we know...*

*That Christmas has its special gifts,  
But our year-round joy depends  
On the cherished people in our lives,  
Our family and our friends.*

*By Joanna Fuchs*

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>[a]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

<sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

<sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

### **Adam and Eve**

<sup>4</sup> This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

**Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 New International Version (NIV)**

**Margaret Payne- Chénard**

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.

**The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,

<sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

<sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

<sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.

<sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

<sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,

<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called<sup>[a]</sup> the Son of God.

**The Birth of Jesus**

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

<sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while<sup>[a]</sup> Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

<sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.

<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

<sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

<sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,

<sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

<sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

<sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

<sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

<sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,

<sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

<sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

<sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**The Word Became Flesh**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome<sup>[a]</sup> it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

<sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.

<sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

<sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Titus 2:11-14 New International Version (NIV)**

**Pat MacIntosh**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.

<sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

<sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

<sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.