

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

Dec. 24, 2017
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Communion

Minister Rev. Blair Lewis **Organist** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Isabel Clouston **Greeters** Nancy & Allen Jagoe
Custodian Alan Wilcox

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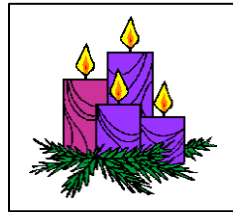
| Lectionary for today | Lectionary for next Sunday |
|--|---|
| <i>II Samuel 7:1-11,16</i> <i>Psalm 89</i> <i>Romans 16:25-27</i> <i>Luke 1:26-38</i> | <i>Isaiah 61:10-62:3</i> <i>Psalm 148</i> <i>Galatians 4:4-7</i> <i>Luke 2:22-40</i> |

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

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

Musical Prelude:

***Choral Opening:** *'Oh, How Joyfully'*
Oh, how joyfully,
Oh, how hopefully,
Waits the world on Christmas Eve!
Love comes healing,
God revealing
Friends, be joyful and believe!



Welcoming:

Welcoming Friends Worshipping by CD:

Announcements:

The Fourth Advent Candle: Shepherds – Love
(Katie, Mark, Mya and Weston Brewster)

(Two blue candles and one pink candle are relit)

**All: Shepherds, where are you going?
Can we go, too?**

One: We are rushing off to Bethlehem.
The angels came and told us that a baby was born.
Not just any baby, but God's baby, Jesus.
This baby is God's gift of hope and peace, joy, and love
For the whole wide world.
The angels will watch the sheep,
But we've got to go.
There is no time to waste.
We are so excited. We are filled with joy!
We must see this child, this baby Jesus.
Yes, you can come with us, but you must hurry.

**All: Thank you, shepherds,
for your faith and your gift of love.
We will join you on this Advent adventure.**

(The remaining blue candle of Advent is lit.)

Choral Response: *Hope Is a Star'* **#7 VU**

*Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.*
Refrain:
When God is a child there's joy in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.

*Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth.*
Refrain:

*Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,
Telling the world that the Saviour is born.*
Refrain:

*Love is a flame that burns in our heart,
Jesus has come and will never depart.*
Refrain:

Prayer of Approach:

One: God, our Father,
the One who comes in your name comes again
with grace and power,
with forgiveness and strength,
with truth and imagination,
with gentleness and love.

**All: May the coming One enter our hearts
as we wait with quiet expectation
for all that is good and holy and just. Amen.**

***Opening Hymn: 'O Come, All Ye Faithful' #60 VU**

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PROCLAIMED

The Prophecy Chesley Eddy
Isaiah 9: 2-4, 6
'A Prophet Foretold the Gift'

The Annunciation
Luke 1: 46-56
'Mary's Song of Praise'

***Hymn: 'Angels We Have Heard on High' #38 VU**

The Birth of the Christ Child
Luke 2: 1-7
'God's Greatest Gift'

The Adoration of the Christ Child
Luke 2: 8-20
'Shepherds Keeping Watch'

***Responsive Psalm Psalm100 Page 824 VU (Refrain 2)**

A Christmas Message: "Communion on Christmas Eve"

A Musical Offering:

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Presentation of Our Gifts:

Choral Response:

(Tune Praise God from whom all blessings flow.)

**Love fills our hearts and overflows.
Love fills our lives, expands and grows.
Loving is how we're called to live.
Loving is how each one can give.**

(from Gathering A/C/E 2010 pg .84).

Prayer of Dedication:

**As we prepare, O God,
for the festival of Christ's birth,
help us to give in expectation of his return.
May our gifts be used to prepare
the world for Christ's coming,
when all creation shall sing your praise. Amen.**

THE SERVICE OF THE TABLE

An Invitation to the Table:

***Our Communion Hymn: 'I Come with Joy' #477 VU**

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer:

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Blessed are you, gracious God, Creator of light,
Giver of all life, and Source of love.

We bless you for all your gifts.

We praise you for this holy day of hope
and for the wonder of this time of joy
on this Christmas Eve.

All: We praise you, O God.

One: We thank you for those who,
like Mary woman of promise,
who had the strength and the courage
to give birth to your love in the world
and for those who, like the shepherds
dared to seek out the Child of Bethlehem.

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Jesus Christ, in whom you gather
the hopes and fears of all the years,
we bless your Holy Name.
We join now with all your people
of every time and place,
and with the angels and archangels
who proclaim the holy birth:

Choral Response (*Sanctus and Benedictus # 942VU*)
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might;
holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heav'n and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

One: We remember on the night before Jesus died,
he had supper with his disciples.
He took bread, thanked you, as we have thanked you;
He broke the bread,
and gave the bread to his friends saying:
Take this, all of you, and eat it.
This is my body, given for you.
Each time you do this, remember me.

After supper Jesus took the wine;
thanked you for it and passed the cup of wine
to his friends saying:
This cup is the new promise God has made
with you in my blood.
Each time you do this and drink from this cup,
remember me.

Remembering his death and celebrating his resurrection;
we await with hope his coming again
to bring peace and justice to the earth.
And so, we affirm the mystery of our faith:

All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

One: Send O God your Holy Spirit upon us
and what we do here;
that we and these gifts, touched by your Spirit,
may be signs of life and love to each other,
and to all the world.
Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours,
God most holy, now and forever.
We gather these and all our prayers,
thankful that we may now turn to you in one voice:

All: Our Father, Who art in heaven..... Amen.

Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup:

Sharing of the Bread and Cup:

A Musical Offering

Our Christmas Prayer:

All: For the bread we have eaten,
for the wine we have tasted,
for the life we have received,
we thank you God.
Grant that what we have done
and have been given here,
may so put its mark on us
that it may remain always in our hearts.

One: May your joy be with us,
the joy of Christmas friendship
and the love we experience in our lives..
Challenge awaits us,
the challenge of sharing the just and holy light
of Jesus Christ with those we meet.

**All: Peace awaits us,
the peace of your love of God
that comes at Christmas as a little child,
the peace that never ends. Amen**

Blessing and Sending Forth:

***Closing Hymn: 'Joy to the World' #59 VU**

Organ Postlude:

*And, so, Christmas comes to bless us!
Comes to teach us how to find
The joy of giving happiness
And the joy of being kind.
~Gertrude Tooley Buckingham~*

Church News

This Week at First United –Dec.25- Dec.30

| | | |
|--------|--------|---------------|
| Monday | Closed | Christmas Day |
| | Closed | Boxing Day |
| Friday | 12:00 | Office Closed |

The bulletin today has been placed
in loving memory of Ruth Knowles
by Joyce & Bill MacLeod and family

Peanut Butter for Volunteer Centre

Commitment December 31, 2017 **900**

Total to Date **940**

The Volunteer Center supplies, on average,
500 households monthly.

This number increases over the Christmas Season. Because of your generous donations and continued support, we will be able to give extra Peanut Butter this year



The Upper Room for Jan. and Feb. are in the Narthex. Please feel free to take one. A container for donations is located with the publication.

Notice from the Property Management Team For security reasons, all doors to the sanctuary will be kept locked except the one closest to the office. To enter the church during business hours, please use the St. Patrick Street entrance.

2018 Envelopes: The Contribution Envelopes for 2018 are located in the Narthex. Please insure that envelopes for the correct year are used as individual contribution #'s have changed.

Community Events

Family & Community Breakfast Saturday, January 13, 2018
8:00 – 10:00 am Saint George's Church Hall 432 King Avenue

At Christmas Time

*Do you remember, in the old days,
How you gathered around the cheerful blaze
On Christmas eve, while the winds sang low
Across the limitless fields of snow?*

*It was winter without, but what cared you?
In your heart was summer, for well you knew
'Twould be Christmas to-morrow; and can you see,
Within the mirror of Memory,*

*When stockings were hung and prayers were said
And your mother had tucked you safe in bed,
How you sneaked downstairs at the dawn's first light
To see what Santa had brought that night?
~J.A. Edgerton~*

The Prophecy

Isaiah 9:2-4, 6 New International Version (NIV)

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

³ You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.

⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.

⁶ 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.

The Annunciation

Luke 1:46-56 New International Version (NIV)

Mary's Song

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then
returned home.

The Birth of the Christ Child

Luke 2:1-7 New International Version (NIV)

The Birth of Jesus

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

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

³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ 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.

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

⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,

⁷ 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.

The Adoration of the Christ Child

Luke 2:8-20 New International Version (NIV)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁵ 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."

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

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

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

¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

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