

# ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

Fredericton, N.B.

*190 Years of Glorifying God through Worship, Proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and Serving others in Christ's name*

December 24th, 2022

Christmas Eve

7 PM

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## GATHERING TOGETHER

**PRELUDE:** O Holy Night - Bish

### **GREETING:**

I greet you in the name of the One born this night:

Jesus, our Emmanuel.

May the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

### **WELCOME:**

**HYMN:** *Once in Royal David's City*

VU 62 v1,2,4

*Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattleshed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed.  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little child.*

*He came down to earth from heaven  
who, with God, is over all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall.  
There among the poor and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

*And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child who seemed so helpless  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.*

**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING:** (Responsive) <sup>1</sup>

A mother and father seek rest for the night after a long journey

**Their Hope is not in vain, but a stable is the best they can find.**

The night is quiet, like that moment just before you exhale, an anticipation fills the air

**Because God-Christ is so close, the whole earth is on edge.**

In the distance we can hear the faint songs of angels growing in intensity as the moment approaches,

**In their songs we hear of such Joy, the world has never known.**

Not ready, yet long waiting, for Christ to be born - we move cradle side finding there, Kings shoulder to shoulder with shepherds.

**Everyone watching, for when God's blessing would be poured out equally and freely, over all.**

*(Light Hope, Peace, Joy and Love Candles)*

And now that moment has come. Born in us and in the world, is a light unlike any other.

**A light to push back the darkness, a light to light the way, a light that cannot be extinguished.**

*(Light the Christ Candle)*

**SUNG RESPONSE: A Candle Is Burning**

VU 6 v5

*We honour Messiah with Christ-candle's flame,  
our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.  
O come, all you faithful, rejoice in this night,  
as God comes among us, the Christian's true light.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** (Responsive)

Our waiting time is over,

Have you heard the Good News?

**Do you mean the murmurs of the prophets?**

**Or the impossible stories of the shepherds?**

Yes, but these are not tales of human fantasy.

It is the story of God, who loves us more fully than we can imagine.

Whose hopes for fullness of life and joy for each of us.

Who dreams of us living lives of peace and justice.

**We hope you are right. But why a baby? Why like this?**

God realized we needed more,

The words of prophets and priests were not enough for us to understand

The challenges and temptations were too high

So God did what only God could do. Gave Godself for me and you.

**We come tonight to bear witness to this Good News,**

Believe, seeker and doubters alike, you are faithful by your coming,

And now is the time to worship and to praise.

**HYMN: O Come, All Ye Faithful**

VU 60 v1,3,4,5

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

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

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

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

**OPENING PRAYER:** (Responsive) <sup>2</sup>

Precious Lord, tiny baby,  
We come like shepherds feeling we have nothing to give.

**Awaken in us a new Christmas**

All tired and beaten from eternal forces,  
We look to you our heavenly choice, bringing what we have.

**Awaken in us a new Christmas**

With your first cry in the stable, something changed, the world turned,  
For now you, God, are among us,  
Here to heal and serve,  
you know our yearnings and our needs

**Awaken in us a new Christmas.**

Like new parents meeting their child for the first time,  
We come opening our spirits to you  
Divine peace and Power, Promised King, Emmanuel.

**Awaken in us a new Christmas**

**So that we too may be changed this day!**

### HEARING GOD'S WORD

**TIME FOR ALL AGES:**

**HYMN:** *Away in a Manger*

VU 69 v1,2

*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.*

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 2:1-20

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**MESSAGE:** He came as a baby

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**HYMN: *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly***

**VU 58**

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the babe is born for all.  
Christ the babe is born for all!*

*Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing greet the morrow:  
Christ the babe was born for you.  
Christ the babe was born for you!*

**OFFERING: <sup>3</sup>**

**DEDICATION VERSE: *In the bleak Midwinter***

**VU 55 v4**

*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.*

**DEDICATION OF OFFERING:**

**PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE: <sup>4</sup>**

Immanuel, God with us,  
You hear our prayer.

**LORD'S PRAYER:**

Our Father who Art in heaven  
hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come thy will be done  
on Earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
the power and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen

**LIGHTING OF MEMORIAL CANDLES & SHARING THE LIGHT:**

*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.*

**SENDING FORTH**

**COMMISSIONING:** <sup>5</sup>

**BENEDICTION:** (Responsive)

May the God of all touch us once again with wonder.

**May the Spirit of love fill our hearts to overflowing.**

**May Christ's Spirit of peace be upon everyone, everywhere,**

**And May the grace of Christ be with us forevermore, Amen!**

**CORAL CLOSING:** *Joy to the World*

VU 59

*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.*

**POSTLUDE:** Hark the Herald Angels Sing - Long

<sup>1</sup> *Adapted from an advent liturgy written by Richard Bowley 2022*

<sup>2</sup> *Adapted from Tammy Fergusson Gathering 2021-2022 A/C/E pg 37*

<sup>3</sup> *Adapted from Laura Trunbull Gathering 2021-2022 A/C/E pg 38*

<sup>4</sup> *Clergy Stuff December 24, 2022 pg 159*

<sup>5</sup> *Adapted from Juanita Austin, gathering 2020-2021 A/C/E pg 39*

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**Scripture Readers:** Narrator – Carole Peacock, Chorus of Angels – Chris Grant, Shepherd – Roger Miller  
**Greeters:** Chris Grant & Carole Peacock    **Audio Visual:** John Davis

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join us for worship December 31<sup>st</sup> at 4pm for New Year's Eve service.

Regular services begin on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 10:30am.

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**Contact Information**

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