

**DOWNTOWN UNITED**  
*A Service of St. Paul's and Wilmot United*  
Fredericton, N.B.

December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

New Year's Eve

4 PM

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PRELUDE: In Dulci Jubilo - Bach

**GATHERING**

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** (Responsive) \*

Jesus Christ is waiting

**Waiting for healing, justice and peace.**

Jesus Christ is waiting, and so we worship today.

Jesus Christ is waiting

**For the hungry to be fed,  
the stranger to be welcomed,  
the naked clothed.**

Jesus Christ is waiting,

**For the reign of love that he told stories about,  
That he prayed for, that he gave his life for.**

Jesus Christ is waiting, and so we worship today.

**OPENING HYMN: *Will You Come See the Light***

VU 96

*Will you come and see the light from the stable door?  
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.  
It will be your guiding star,  
it will show you who you are;  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you step into the light that can free the slave?  
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.  
By the pyramids of greed  
there's a longing to be freed;  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?  
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.  
When the truth is cut and bruised,  
and the innocent abused,  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,  
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?  
When the lowest and the least  
are the foremost at the feast,  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

***Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?  
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,  
and the darkness all about  
is too dim to put it out:  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?***

**CENTERING PRAYER:**

Poet Amanda Gorman spoke the words we share now from “The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country, Jan 20, 2021”

“Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true: That even as we grieved, we grew, That even as we hurt, we hoped, that even as we tired, we tried. That we’ll forever be tied together. Victorious, Not because we will never again know defeat, But because we will never again sow division”

**Gracious God, these powerful words speak of your love that flows through us in Scriptures. We envision “That everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid.” We pray while on this bridge of the past and the future year that your love in Jesus the Christ will guide us to repair inherited sorrows and build new bridges of your Kin-Dom. Amen.**

**SHARING THE WORD**

**TIME FOR ALL WHO ARE YOUNG AT HEART:**

**READING:** Matthew 2:1-23

**HYMN:** *What Child Is This*

**VU 74**

***What child is this, who laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?***

***This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!***

***Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading. R***

***So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, one and all, to own him.  
The King of Kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him. R***

**MEDITATION:**

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S LOVE**

**HYMN: *O, Holy Night***

*O, holy night,  
the stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth  
Long lay the world in sin and error, pining  
'Til He appeared and the soul felt it's worth*

*A thrill of hope,  
the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn'*

*Fall on your knees,  
O, hear the Angels' voices*

*O, night divine,  
O, night when Christ was born  
O, night divine,  
O, night, oh night divine*

**OFFERING OF OUR TIME, TALENT AND RESOURCES:**

**DEDICATING OF THESE GIFTS TO GOD:**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:**

**THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TAUGHT:**

**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**

**GOING INTO THE NEW YEAR**

**HYMN: *The First Noel***

**VU 91**

*The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay akeeping their sheep  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.*

*Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
born is the King of Israel.*

*They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east, beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. R*

*And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. R*

*This star drew nigh to the northwest;  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay. R*

*Then entered in those wise men three,  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. R*

*Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
and with his blood our life hath bought. R*

**COMMISSIONING:** (Responsive)

Let us go from here, into this new year, with deep trust in God's sending,

**That we may follow God's heart and not our own.**

Let us go forth bearing the name of Christ,

**That we may become as Christ to those we meet.**

Let us go from here in the courage and strength of the Spirit,

**That we may turn from fear embracing commitment in love.**

**BLESSING:**

**POSTLUDE:** Echo Noel – D'Aquin

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\* Adapted from the Gathering/22019/20 Prayers for Worship pg 42)