

Welcome to Worship

United Church of Canada
Regions East
Fundy St Lawrence Dawning Waters
Region 15
First Dawn Eastern Edge

December 27th, 2020

A Service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas

Christmas is not a time or a season but a state of mind. To cherish peace and good will, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think on these things, there will be born in us a Savior and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world."

- Calvin Coolidge

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PLACE

WELCOME

MINUTE FOR MISSION

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill toward all.*

All: **For out of God's own being, Jesus has come to bring light and love to all people.**

One: *Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, come to gather our tears and laughter, our work and our play, into God's loving embrace.*

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill toward all.**

INTROIT: VU 29 Hark the Glad Sound

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

2 He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

3 He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to bless the humble poor.

4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.

OPENING PRAYER (unison):

Wondrous God, thank you for revealing your glory to us through unlikely people in unexpected places. Surround us as we worship in many different places, as we remember your incarnate love born to a woman from a forgotten corner of the world. Let the holy mystery that surrounds Jesus' birth surprise us with joy and strengthen us to go out into the world with your light, that hope, peace, and love might shine forth from us to your honour and glory and praise. Amen

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

CAROL: VU 75 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night

- 1 While shepherds watched their flocks by night
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.
- 2 'Fear not,' said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind;
'glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind.
- 3 'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:
- 4 'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
and in a manger laid.'
- 5 Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:
- 6 'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace!
Good will to all from highest heaven
begin, and never cease.'

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9: 2,6,7

THE STORY OF STILL, STILL, STILL

THE CAROL: VU 47 Still, Still, Still

- 1 Still, still, still: the night is calm and still.
The Christchild in his crib lies sleeping,
angels round him watch are keeping.
Still, still, still: the night is calm and still.
- 2 Sleep, sleep, sleep: sweet Jesus, softly sleep,
while Mary sings and gently holds you,
safely in her arms enfolds you.
Sleep, sleep, sleep: sweet Jesus softly sleep.
- 3 Joy, joy, joy; glad tidings of great joy!
For through God's holy incarnation
Christ is born for our salvation.
Joy, joy, joy; glad tidings of great joy!

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 34: 1-10

THE STORY OF ANGELS FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

THE CAROL: VU 36 Angels from the Realms of Glory

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.
- 2 Shepherds in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light: R
- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations;
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations;
ye have seen his natal star: R

PRAYER:

God of gifts, God of grace, bless our ears and our hearts this day, that as we sing these carols, hearing both stories of scripture and inspiration, we might find both comfort and challenge within them. May we be inspired to sing with gusto, telling the story of scripture through our actions with reckless abandon, so that the world might be touched by your love. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, we offer this prayer. Amen.

LEARNING TIME: Room for a Little One

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2: 1-20

THE STORY OF JESUS, OUR BROTHER

THE CAROL: VU 56 Jesus, Our Brother

- 1 Jesus, our brother, kind and good,
was humbly born in a stable rude,
and the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus, our brother, kind and good.
- 2 'I,' said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
'I carried the mother uphill and down,
I carried his mother to Bethlehem town;
I,' said the donkey, shaggy and brown.
- 3 'I,' said the cow, all white and red,
'I gave him my manger for his bed,
I gave him hay to pillow his head;
I,' said the cow, all white and red.
- 4 'I,' said the sheep with curly horn,
'I gave him my wool for his blanket warm,
he wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I,' said the sheep, with curly horn.
- 5 'I,' said the dove, from the rafters high,

'I cooed him to sleep that he should not cry,
we cooed him to sleep, my mate and I;
I,' said the dove, from the rafters high.

- 6 Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,
in the stable dark were glad to tell
of the gifts they gave Emmanuel,
the gifts they gave Emmanuel.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

DUET: MARY'S LULLABY

PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

Gifted by your grace, we offer you what you have given us, O God, and pray that these gifts may be used for the sharing of love, the doing of justice, and the giving of peace. Amen

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 21: 1-6

THE STORY OF GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

THE CAROL: VU 43 Go Tell it on the Mountain

- Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.
- 1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. R
 - 2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Saviour's birth! R

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent our salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. R

PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

PRAYER OF JESUS

SCRIPTURE:

Titus 2: 11-14

THE STORY OF O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

THE CAROL: VU 64 O, Little Town of Bethlehem

1 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.

2 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.

3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessed gift of heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;

but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

COMMISSIONING:

One: Every day of the week ahead is a Christmas Day.

All: **A day in which Christ is, and will be; A moment into which the holy one has come, And a moment which anticipates the reign of peace.**

One: Let us then, live as a Christmas people.

All: **Let us be a people filled with God here and now, compassionate, loving, justice-seeking friends of Jesus. Let us also be a people with a light in our window, awake and ready for the Messiah's return.**

SUNG BENEDICTION: VU 59 Joy to the World

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

4 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.

**Thank you to all of the staff of UCC East who participated in
the service as well as the staff from the national church.**

**May the Season of Christmas live in your hearts every day of
every year...**

Blessings!