



St. James United Church

An Affirming Ministry

Centre for Faith, Arts & Multiculturalism

Advent 3 - Joy

Weekly Service Bulletin – December 14th, 2025

221 Romaine St, Peterborough, ON K9J 2C3 • 705-742-2222 • stjamesunitedchurch.ca
More Info: affirmunited.ca • united-church.ca •

**Please rise in body or spirit*

PRELUDE / WELCOME / THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

INTROIT

WE GATHER

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Iris Muir

“We respectfully acknowledge that St. James is located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

Our St. James congregation respectfully acknowledges that these Nations are the stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters, and that they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come.”

Curve Lake First Nation Land Acknowledgement (adapted slightly for use)

CALL TO ACTION

Cora Muir

*A Land Acknowledgement is a single act of reconciliation. As an Affirming Ministry that is part of the United Church of Canada, we commit to learning from, listening to and supporting Indigenous people. One way we can do this is through the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.***

Call to Action #16

We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

***GATHERING SONG**

Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope

MV#33

Words and music: traditional song, Cameroon; arr. More Voices, 2007

1. Jesus came bringing us hope, Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope, hallelujah forever more!
2. Jesus came bringing us peace, Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace, hallelujah forever more!
3. Jesus came bringing us love, Jesus came bringing us love,
Jesus came bringing us love, hallelujah forever more!

4. Jesus came bringing us joy, Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy, hallelujah forever more!

**ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING, GATHERING WORDS,
OPENING PRAYER**

Maeve O'Neill

One: On this third Sunday of Advent, we come with joy as a faith family!

All: We watch, we wait, we wonder.

One: May we bask in the joyful moments that are ours when we take time to notice joy – in the beauty of nature, in the beauty of a single snowflake with its intricate, unique pattern, or in the many snowflakes that comprise the softly falling snow, or in the play and laughter of children.

All: We embrace joy as we anticipate the birth of Jesus, Mary's new boy.

One: As we light the third candle in our wreath, we take a moment to breathe in the Spirit of joy.

(Take a deep breath in and out.)

Let us pray:

**All: God of joy, on this third Sunday of Advent,
may we bask in the joy of the season,
the joy we find in relationships,
the joy of gathering with our family of faith and being with those we love,
and the joy that awaits us in the coming of Jesus. Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE (remain seated) *We Light This Candle*

Then Let Us Sing (new UCC Hymnbook, words and music by Pat Mayberry, Arrangement by David Kai, 2016)

We light this can-dle for Hope.

A-wait the new life with-in.

May our hearts now live each day,
so hope can find a way,
so hope can find a way.

We light this can-dle for Peace.

A-wait the new life with-in.

May our hearts now live each day,
so peace can find a way,
so peace can find a way.

We light this can-dle for Joy.

A-wait the new life with-in.

May our hearts now live each day,
so peace can find a way,
so peace can find a way.

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(in unison)*

VU#921

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.

***HYMN**

Joy to the World

VU#59

Words: Isaac Watts 1719, alt. Music: attributed to George Frideric Handel 1742, arranged by Lowell Mason 1836.

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.

THEME CONVERSATION *We Asked Kids to Explain What Christmas Is*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8t7Xu7ret7M>

(Metro, 2017)

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Jesus, you are the light of the world. Fill my mind with your joy,
and my heart with your love. Amen.

WE REFLECT

POEM

Mindful by Mary Olive

Marney Horton

ANTHEM

GOSPEL READING

Luke 1:26-38

Marney Horton

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what

sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”

³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

*HYMN

Psalm 23, The Lord's My Shepherd

VU#747

Words: Scottish Psalter 1650. Music: Jessie Seymour Irvine 1872.

1. The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want; he makes me down to lie in pastures green; he leadeth me, the quiet waters by.
2. My soul he doth restore again; and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness, even for his own name's sake.
3. Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill; for thou art with me; and thy rod and staff me comfort still.
4. My table thou has furnished in presence of my foes; my head thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows.
5. Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me, and in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be.

REFLECTION

WE RESPOND

OFFERING & OFFERTORY MUSIC

*SUNG OFFERTORY RESPONSE

In the Bleak Midwinter

VU#55 vs 4

Words: Christina Georgina Rossetti ca. 1872. Music: Gustav Theodor Holst 1906.

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 give him—give my heart.

*OFFERTORY PRAYER *(in unison)*

God of many gifts, we thank you for your gift of joy

May our giving today be a sign of joy here and everywhere. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

WE GO FORTH

*HYMN

Still, Still, Still

VU#47

Words: Austrian carol, trans. John Rutter © 1994 Hinshaw Music, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Music: Austrian melody. Arrangement: © 1963, 1980 Walter Ehret, Walton Music Corporation. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A- 723161. All rights reserved.

1. Still, still, still: the night is calm and still.
The Christ child 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!

*BLESSING

One: As we go forth in this Advent season,

All: let there be joy and light!

One: Salaam, Shalom, Peace, Mir Migwetch. Amen.

Carman McClelland, *Gathering – Advent 2022* (adapted for use at St. James United Church)

*SUNG BLESSING

Peace Be with You

MV#215

Words and music: Alison L. Wesley (Slaats), 2000

Hope be with you, hope forever, hope be with you, my friend.
Till we meet again, may God be with you. Hope. Hope. Hope.

Peace be with you, peace forever, peace be with you my friend.
Till we meet again, may God be with you. Peace. Peace. Peace.

Joy be with you, joy forever, joy be with you my friend.
Till we meet again, may God be with you. Joy. Joy. Joy.

POSTLUDE