



St. James United Church

An Affirming Ministry

Centre for Faith, Arts & Multiculturalism

Advent 4 – Love/Messy Church/Visit from Santa

Weekly Service Bulletin – December 21st, 2025

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**Please rise in body or in 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 #17

We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

***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 fourth Sunday of Advent, we come with love as a community of faith.

All: We watch, we wait, we wonder.

One: When we feel God's unfailing love, we are able to give love to – and receive it from our friends, our community of faith, and yes, even those we find hard to love. There is enough love for all.

All: We experience God's love in the greatest gift for all of us, in the birth of Jesus, who is bringing love to the world.

One: As we light the fourth candle in our wreath, we breathe in the spirit of love.
(Take a deep breath in and a deep breath out, then light the candle.)
Let us pray:

**All: God of love, we give thanks for your unfailing love,
and for the gift of love in all the relationships that give our lives meaning.
May we come to the manger filled with your overflowing love. 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 candle 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 candle 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 candle for Joy.

A-wait the new life with-in.

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

We light this candle for Love.

A-wait the new life with-in.

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

*CAROL

Away in a Manger

VU#69

Words and music Public Domain, Arrangement copyright 1992 Desmond Hassell

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

WELCOMING NEW PEOPLE TO THE ST. JAMES FAMILY

THEME CONVERSATION

Christmas Craft, Christmas Colouring Sheets, Christmas Carol Trivia

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

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

WE REFLECT

ANTHEM

CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:1-20

Eillen, Deanna, & Demi

(Ralph Milton's Children's Bible)

*HYMN

The Sung Nativity Drama

*(*Sung to, "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain")*

You are Joseph looking for a place to rest...knock, knock (sung twice)
You're Joseph looking for a place, Joseph looking for a place
You're Joseph looking for a place to rest...knock, knock

You're the keeper of the inn – you slam the door...no room (sung twice)
You're the keeper of the inn, the keeper of the inn
You're the keeper of the inn – you slam the door...no room

You are Mary holding Jesus – rock your babe...sh, sh (sing twice)
You are Mary holding Jesus, Mary holding Jesus
You are Mary holding Jesus – rock your babe...sh, sh

You're the shepherds on the hillside guarding sheep...baa, baa (sing twice)
You're the shepherds on the hillside, shepherds on the hillside
You're the shepherds on the hillside guarding sheep...baa, baa

You are angels in the night sky singing peace...amen (sing twice)
You are angels in the night sky, angels in the night sky
You are angels in the night sky singing peace...amen

You are wise ones on a journey from the east...where's the star? (sing twice)
You are wise ones on a journey, wise ones on a journey
You are wise ones on a journey from the east...where's the star?

We're celebrating Jesus' birth today...hip hooray! (sing twice)
We're celebrating Jesus' birth, celebrating Jesus' birth
We're celebrating Jesus' birth today...hip hooray!

CHRISTMAS STORY *The Christmas Pea Coat*
(written by Richard H. Schneider, illustrated by Higgins Bond)

Kidventure

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 love

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Kids Praying*
(NickSalesMusic, April 2020)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= YJi7hF1iKg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJi7hF1iKg)

***CAROL** *Angels We Have Heard on High*

VU#38

Words: French traditional, translation James Chadwick. Music: French carol melody, arranged by Edward Shippen Barnes.

1. Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heavenly song?

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

3. Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing,
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King. **R**
4. See him in a manger laid, Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise. **R**

***BLESSING**

One: As we go forth in this Advent season,

All: let there be love and light!

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

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

***SUNG BLESSING**

Go Tell It on the Mountain

VU#43

Arrangement: copyright United Reform Church, used by permission of Oxford University Press

Refrain:

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**

POSTLUDE