

# **ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH COMMUNITY OF FAITH**

*A spiritual hub for  
creativity, discovery and growth*



***Thursday, December 24, 2020 ~ 7PM  
Christmas Eve Family Service***

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## ***We Celebrate the Night of Nights***

Welcome and Life of Community

Prelude: "Carol Prelude" - Alyssa Misener, cello

Introit: "Once in Royal David's City" vs 1 - Rowan Holte-McKenzie, (2019 Nine Lessons and Carols)

Call to Worship:

The splendour of God has been revealed among us. A child has come to change all our ways.

**We who have walked in the shadows have seen the light. We have given up the unnecessary burdens we carry.**

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice!

**We are ready to declare God's marvellous works!**

\*Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" verses 1-4 VU60

1 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;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

2 God of God, Light of Light,

Lo! he abhors not the virgin's womb;

Very God, begotten, not created, [Refrain]

3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:

"Glory to God, in the highest!" [Refrain]

4 See how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,

leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;

we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps; [Refrain]

Gathering Prayer

### ***Our Gifts of Light and Love ...***

Advent Candle lighting:

As we light the Christ candle to signal peace and goodwill to all on earth, let us remember all who yearn for a word from God,

**and all who gaze into the night sky in longing and in hope, listening for an angel song.**

May the flame of God's eternal light find a welcome in every spirit this night.

Hymn: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

VU 44

1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,

from angels bending near the earth,  
to touch their harps of gold,  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love song which they bring.  
O hush the noise and cease your strife,  
and hear the angels sing.

4 For, lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

Junior Choir: "Hallelujah, Glory Hallelujah" - Sleeth

(2001 recording "A Christmas in Perth, Sounds of St Paul's", recorded and mixed by Jon Van Wingerden)

Sharing Time with Young People

Solo: "Joseph's Song" - *Joel LeBlanc*

### ***Hearing the Good News***

Hebrew Scriptures: Isaiah 9:2-7a

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

3 You have multiplied the nation,

you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

4 For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

6 For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

#### The Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.

2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

3 All went to their own towns to be registered.

4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,[a] the Lord.

12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,[b] praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"[c]

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,  
"Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has  
made known to us."

16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;

18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it  
had been told them.

### Meditation

## ***Responding in Love and Action***

### Invitation to offer Gifts, Tithes, PAR and Our lives

\*Offertory Response: "What Child is This" VU 74 vs3

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

\*Offertory Prayer

**O come to us, Emmanuel, and make our offerings holy.**

**For what is here is freely given, with hope, peace, joy and love. Let our gifts join with others  
so that the world may become your place of peace. Amen.**

Anthem: "Wexford Carol" - Scott Somerville soloist (2008 Nine Carols and Lessons) - John Rutter

### Prayers for a Holy Night

## ***Leaving with the Joy and Peace of Christ***

\*Hymn: "Go, Tell it on the Mountain" VU43

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. [Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Saviour's birth. [Refrain]

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

\*Blessing & Sending Forth

We have heard the angel's song and now it is ours to proclaim.

**May the joy of the angels sing in our voices;**

may the hope of the shepherds enliven our minds;

**may the strong faith and justice-filled actions of Mary and Joseph strengthen our spirits;**

may the love of the Christ Child shine in our hearts, and may God's blessing be upon you all, this holy night and forever. **Amen.**

Silent Reflection: "Silent Night, Holy Night" VU 67

1 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.

2 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!

3 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.

Organ Postlude: Trumpet Tune on "Adestes Fideles" - David Lasky

Thank you to scripture reader Barb Guthrie  
Thank you to guest musician Alyssa Misener  
Thank you to AV Technicians, Karen & Donald McLean  
Thank you to soloists Joel LeBlanc and Scott Sommerville  
Thank you to members of Worship and Arts Team and ushers

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