

***Saint James United Church***

***December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Christmas Eve***

***120 Chapel St. Woodstock, N.B. E7M1H1***

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***Presider: Keith Fullarton and Angela Palmer***

***Music Director and Organist: Amy Anderson***

***Admin. Assistant: Mary Wheelan C.D. Coordinator: Joan Hall***

***Ushers: David and Sandra MacNally, Conrad Anderson,***



*Welcome to all visitors and their families who may be worshipping with us tonight. We pray that you will feel at home here at Saint James and that you will feel the presence of God's Holy Spirit, as we worship this Christmas Eve.*

**WE GATHER**

***Prelude***

***Processional Hymn VU#60 – O Come All Ye Faithful***

***Welcome***

***It's Almost Christmas Poem –***

***Advent Candle Lighting Anne Marie Voutour and Jorja***

***On the first Sunday of Advent, we lit a candle for Hope.***

***On the Second Sunday, we lit a candle of Peace.***

***On the Third Sunday, we lit a candle for Joy.***

***Last Sunday, we lit a candle for Love.***

***Now the time has come to light a candle for Christ.***

# Nativity Story

## The Story of the Nativity - "The Birth of a Babe"

A magnificent brightness lit up the sky when an angel appeared to Mary, a young pure women, who was engaged to be married to Joseph. The angel announced that she was going to have a baby.

"That's impossible for I am not yet married," answered Mary.

"This baby will be very special. He will be the Son of God."

Although Mary did not fully understand she agreed to the Word of God. She was devout.

Some months later Mary and Joseph were married. When it was near to her time they travelled to Bethlehem but found it very crowded. Not a room was available. Then one kind man noticing how tired and heavy with child she was offered them the use of a stable.

Gentle animals - cows, donkeys, lambs and poultry - greeted them. During the night Mary's boy child was born. She wrapped the baby Jesus in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger cushioned with hay. The cows, donkeys and sheep peered into the manger and with their constant breathing kept the baby warm whilst Mary slept.

Out in the countryside beyond Bethlehem the bright light that appeared in the sky was seen by some shepherds tending their flocks. They became frightened until an angel appeared and told them not to be.

"I have great news. A child has been born in a stable in Bethlehem who will save all the world."

## Call to Worship

As the flame of the Christ Candle begins to burn,  
The angels sing, the shepherds draw near,  
and the Magi offer their gifts...  
we, too, are here with Jesus  
to offer our gifts and to sing praise to God.  
As they did so long ago in Bethlehem.

## Prayer of Approach

Let us bow in prayer now,  
Listening for God's Spirit in the slence.  
Pause  
Let your Spirit shine in our hearts;  
It your love shine in our world;  
and let the wonder of this night  
touch all of our hearts  
as the Christ-child invites us  
into God's Love.  
Amen.

Hymn: VU#6 – A Candle Is Burning (v.5)

Children's Time      Jingle Bells  
   Story Time

## WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Ministry of Music      Choir

Scriptures              Isaiah 9: 2, 6 -7  
   Luke 2:1-20

## Carols Sing Along

VU # 1      O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
VU # 74      What Child Is This  
VU # 91      The First Nowell  
VU # 44      It Came Upon a Midnight Clear Verses 1 – 2

## Prayers of the People

**Offertory Hymn:** VU # 69 Away in a Manger

**Offertory:** (tune: Good King Wenceslas)

**Here our gifts we offer, God, thankful for your blessings,  
Take them, Spirit use them to spread the peaceful message  
That Christ comes to bring to us life for all creation.  
May our gifts help bring to all love and transformation.**

### Offertory prayer

Loving and gracious God  
These gifts are for you.  
They are our thank you for love, grace and hope  
Loving and gracious God—  
these lives are for you.  
They are lived in gratitude and thanksgiving  
Accept both for the work  
of your kingdom of shalom.  
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.  
**Frances Flook, Emo/Devlin P.C., Emo, Ont.**

## A CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

Dear Jesus,..... A prayer that this Christmas , you will be born again, if not in the world, then, at least in our hearts.

**In your birth, little Lord Jesus, we find hope for the world and our lives.**

.....We watch the news and see the violence and oppression that dominate far too many places on earth, and far too much of our lives  
**As we celebrate your birth and welcome you into our hearts this Christmas, we pray for your peace, in the world and in our souls.**  
Holy child.....With our joy in our hearts, we welcome you this night, and we treasure the message you bring.

**Your birth bring us joy beyond expression, Little One, and that joy carries us through the struggles and challenges of life, and makes our best days shine even brighter.**

Lord of Love..... This Christmas may your message of love be reborn in our hearts and become the cornerstone of our lives everyday throughout the year.

**May the love we feel in our hearts this Christmas stay with us throughout the year to come, and may we live each day knowing your love and sharing it with everyone we meet.**

On this night.....shares our vision of love, hope, peace and joy born anew this Christmas.

**This evening, as we celebrate the arrival of Christ's message of love, hope, peace and joy, we dedicate ourselves to being the Body of Christ in our world, sharing his light and his love with everyone we meet, and with the world we may never encounter. As the Christ Child is born in Bethlehem, may he also be born in our hearts. Amen.**

**Colin Snyder, Trinity U.C., Listowel, Ont.**

**Candle Lighting** VU#67 – Silent Night  
*(continue singing until all candles have been lit and lights are turned off)*

**Closing Hymn** VU#59 – Joy to the World! (vs. 1&4)

**Blessing and Sending Forth**

**Choral Benediction** VU#43 – Go Tell It on the Mountain  
(chorus only)

**Postlude**

*The bulletin this evening has been dedicated in loving memory of  
Helen and Richard Likely by Ken and Janet Nichols.*