

**December 26, 2021**  
**First Sunday after Christmas**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...**

**Call to Worship**

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

**For out of God's own being,**

**Jesus has come to bring light and love to all people.**

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

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

**History**

**Hymn VU 70** "There's a Star in the East"

There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,  
rise up, shepherd, and follow;  
it will lead to the place where the Christ was born;  
rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,  
follow the Star of Bethlehem,  
rise up, shepherd, and follow.

If you take good heed to the angel's words,  
rise up, shepherd, and follow,  
you'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds;  
rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,  
follow the Star of Bethlehem,  
rise up, shepherd, and follow.

**Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

God of mystery, you come to us as softly as a mother's sigh; as startling as the cry of a newborn baby. You come offering the gift of new life in the baby at Bethlehem, but we confess that we have made something trivial, something sentimental, out of Christmas. Your light comes into the world, and we see only the pretty lights on trees. You shine in the darkness, but we turn away from your light, towards the darkness of this world, and we miss you. Your Word is made flesh, but we like something nicer, more spiritual, than the humanity of God with us in the flesh. Forgive us, God. Strengthen us with the hope that cannot be packed away with the Christmas ornaments. May we who have beheld this glory hold it in our hearts forever. Amen.

**History**

**Hymn VU 58** "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the babe is born for all.  
Christ the babe is born for all!

Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till  
the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing greet the morrow:  
Christ the babe was born for you.  
Christ the babe was born for you!

**History**

**Hymn VU 35** "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Give ye heed to what we say: News! News!  
Jesus Christ is born today.  
Ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace!  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all  
to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer**

We have gathered, O God, to celebrate the birth of the Christ child: to join our voices with the choirs of angels; to come with shepherds to the stable and wonder at this Christmas miracle. With us we bring the hurt and the hopes of our world. In this season of excess, we remember all who are empty. We remember neighbours who are unemployed, whose dreams have been shattered, and whose futures have been frustrated, we think especially of our flood-stricken neighbours in B.C. and the Maritimes, and the states hit by tornadoes. In this season of carols, we remember all in our midst who have little to sing about, all who are lonely, depressed, anxious, sick or mourning, especially we pray for Cecil Jenkins, Marleen Parish, Marlene Smith, Mac Toner, and the friends and family of Cathy Meeuse, Jim Parish, and Alexandra Stemp. In this season of festivity, we remember all who face the harsh reality of oppressions: prisoners, refugees, exiles, all facing torture. Yet through the shadows of our world, shines the light of your promise; the angels' heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world. We pray for the church of Jesus Christ, that we may be lucifers, bearers of your light; singers of the angels' song, messengers of goodwill to all on earth. Especially we pray for Westminster United Church in Windsor, and their minister, the Rev. Del Stewart. We pray for all in power and authority, that they may be open to hear the glorious song of old, with its message of justice and peace to all humankind. We pray for all the people of the earth that all may have what they need to live and thrive in peace and safety, especially we pray for the people of Japan, North Korea, South Korea, and Taiwan. For ourselves, we ask strength and purpose, to live the love of Christmas. Emmanuel, God with us, abide with us; we pray in the name of the one who taught us to pray, saying:

**Our Father who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be your 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,**

**and the power, and the glory,**

**for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **Invitation to Invest in God's Mission**

We join in the goodwill of Christmas and in the blessings of the Christ child as we give to the glory of God. Our tithes and our offerings will be received.

**Offertory Hymn** "Bless Our Hands" *to tune Good King Wencaslas*

Bless our hands to do your work, bless the gifts we're bearing.

May your love and grace be known in the way we're sharing.

Peace and hope and joy and love – these are gifts worth giving.

These be ours to pass along when in Christ we're living.

## **Prayer of Dedication**

Holy God, you birth abundant life. We thank you for the birth we celebrate. In response to your great labour of love, we offer our gifts. As we open ourselves to you, may your love be born in us this Christmastide. Amen.

## **History**

### **Hymn 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.

While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Saviour's birth!

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

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

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

## **History**

### **Hymn VU 55** "In the Bleak Midwinter"

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;  
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,  
a breast full of milk, and a manger full of hay.  
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,  
the ox and ass and camel which adore.

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 I give him - give my heart.

### **History**

#### **Hymn VU 73** "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy"

The virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
the virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
the virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
and they say that his name is Jesus.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

Oh, yes! believer! Oh, yes! believer!

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

The angels sang when the baby was born,  
the angels sang when the baby was born,  
the angels sang when the baby was born,  
and they say that his name is Jesus.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

Oh, yes! believer! Oh, yes! believer!

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

The shepherds came where the baby was born,  
the shepherds came where the baby was born,  
the shepherds came where the baby was born,  
and they say that his name is Jesus.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

Oh, yes! believer! Oh, yes! believer!

He come from the glory, (clap, clap)  
he come from the glorious kingdom.

### **Responsive Reading: Psalm 148**

Praise God from the heavens; give praise in the heights!  
Give praise, all you angels; praise God, all you hosts!

**Praise God, sun and moon; give praise, stars and lights!**

**Praise God, farthest heavens,  
and all waters beyond heaven!**

Let all things praise the Holy One at whose command  
they were created,

who established them for all time,

**setting bounds, which cannot be passed.**

**Praise God from the earth,  
great sea creatures and ocean depths,  
lightning and hail, snow and frost,  
gales that obey God's decree,**

all mountains and hills, all fruit trees and cedars,  
wild animals and cattle, creatures winged and earth-bound,

**sovereigns who rule earth and its people,  
all who govern and judge this world,  
young men and women alike,  
old people and children together!**

Let all things praise the name of God,  
the name above every other,  
whose splendour covers heaven and earth.

**You give strength to your people,  
songs of praise to your faithful,  
to Israel, the people dear to your heart.**

*The other readings for this week are: **1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52.** You can look them up on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and search for the passage.....in any translation you prefer (ie. King James - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

### **History**

**Hymn VU 38** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply,  
echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

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

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

See him in a manger laid,  
whom the choirs of angels praise;  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,  
while our hearts in love we raise.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

**History**

**Hymn VU 69** "Away in a Manger"

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.

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.

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.

**History**

**Hymn VU 74** "What Child Is This"

What child is this, who laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?

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

Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.

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

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!

**Commissioning and Benediction**

May the light that enlivens all the world,  
The light that darkness cannot overcome,  
Love's pure light in Jesus Christ,  
**Shine on us and in our world today and always.**

**Sung Response: VU 967** "Amen"

Amen. Amen. Amen.



## **Announcements.....**

### **Union:**

**Tax Receipts for 2021:** Please ensure all offerings are received by December 28 in order to be included on your 2021 tax receipt.

### **Dorchester:**

**Tax Receipts for 2021:** Please ensure all offerings are received by December 26 (December 28 for e-transfers) in order to be included on your 2021 tax receipt.

**2022 Offering Envelopes:** Offering envelopes for 2022 are now available. To get your set, please contact Dianne at the church office at 519-268-3154 or dorchesteruc@gmail.com

### **ALL:**

A Living Nativity will be staged at 276 Scotland Drive (just west of Westchester Bourne/Belmont Road) nightly from Sunday, December 12 until Saturday, January 1, 2022 from 5-7:30 p.m. Donations for the food bank and/or feminine hygiene products are gratefully accepted.

### **Lectionary Readings for next week:**

January 2, Second Sunday after Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18

January 6, Epiphany

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12