

January 1, 2023  
First Sunday after Christmas

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Prelude:** "The Star Carol" Music: Alfred Burt Lyrics: Wihla Hutson

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Moment of Silent Reflection**

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

**Call to Worship VU 60** "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

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;

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

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

God of God, light of light,

lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;

very God, begotten, not created:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

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

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;

glory to God in the highest:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

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

See how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,

leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;

we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

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


**Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

Holiness, today we start the journey into the year that lies ahead. Like years gone by, we are sure that it will hold both joys and sorrows, successes and failures, surprises and challenges. As a loving parent takes a small child by the hand, take us by the hand and give us the courage, the confidence, and the strength to walk the road that lies ahead, knowing that you are right there by our side, and may we share the good news of your love for and presence with us with all whom we meet along the way. Amen.

**We Are Blessed By God**

**Anthem:** "The Carol of the Birds" By John Jacob Niles

Nancy Quinn

**Time for the Young and the Young @** 

**Hymn VU 36** "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
    come and worship, come and worship,  
    worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant Light:  
    come and worship, come and worship,  
    worship Christ, the newborn King.

Sages, leave your contemplations;  
brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations;  
ye have seen his natal star:  
    come and worship, come and worship,  
    worship Christ, the newborn King.

Saints before the altar bending,  
watching long in hope and fear,  
suddenly the Lord, descending,  
in his temple shall appear:  
    come and worship, come and worship,  
    worship Christ, the newborn King.

**Psalms 148 VU 871**

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.**

**Scripture:** Matthew 2:13-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son.

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazarene."

*The other readings for this week are: **Isaiah 63:7-9; Hebrews 2:10-18***

**Meditation:** "Life, with Christ, is a Byway"

**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!

### **We Respond To God's Grace**

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

We have received the gift of a new year – a new beginning, new possibilities, fresh hope – and with it, we have received the opportunity to share this gift with others. As we consider all that lies ahead of us this year, may we also consider the opportunities to serve our community and to bring hope to those who despair. May our giving offer new possibilities and fresh hope for all whom they touch.

#### **Offertory Hymn VU 81 “As with Gladness Men of Old” vs 3**

As they offered gifts most rare  
at that manger crude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

#### **Prayer of Dedication**

Holiness, week after week we offer our gifts for the work of your mission in this world, and we ask your blessing on them week after week, until it becomes automatic and taken for granted. This year help us to more fully appreciate your blessing, not just on what we offer, but in the very depths of our being. May we more fully grasp just how powerful, how life changing, how transformative your blessing truly is. And, as we realize the blessings you pour out on us, may we pour out blessings and transform the lives of those around us, and so transform the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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

In the darkness of time, you created all that lives and breathes.

In the darkness of Mary's womb, you nurtured the Christ-child, bringer of light.

In the darkness of our world, O God, your spirit sustains us.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

Under the cover of darkness, Magi followed the star to the Christ-child.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

In blessed desert darkness, Mary and Joseph fled to safety in Egypt with the infant Jesus.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

In quiet darkness, dreams emerge, guiding the Holy Family home to Galilee.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

In the stillness of the dark, we pray for all who need God's presence in a special way—

all who mourn a loss, especially we pray for the friends and families of Jim Simpson, Teresa Zellas, Glenda McMillan, Harry Gillard, and Marje Lanning;

all who are sick, we pray especially for Mary Kaiser, Mac Toner, and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts...

all who are unemployed, persecuted, or homeless;

all who are demoralized and discouraged,

all whose fear has turned to cynicism,

all whose vulnerability has become bitterness.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

In the embrace of darkness, we pray for those who are near to our hearts—

colleagues, partners, parents, children, neighbours, friends, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ at Emmanuel United Church in Windsor, and their minister, the Rev. George Bozanich, and the peoples of Egypt, and Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine.

We thank you, God, for them all, and ask you to bless and protect them in all that they do—  
at home, at school, as they travel, as they work, as they play.

**O God, you are with us in darkness and in light.**

In the serenity of darkness, we bring to you, O God, our fears and concerns, our hopes and our visions. In your presence, we come face to face with ourselves, and with the road that lies ahead of us. In the solitude of darkness we find expectant hope for the journey.

**O God, we know you are with us in darkness and in light.**

We continue praying, saying the words Jesus taught us.....

**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 sins,**

**as we forgive those who sin against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

## Hymn VU 91 "The First Nowell"

The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay akeeping their sheep  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east, beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the northwest;  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three,  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
and with his blood our life hath bought.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

## **Commissioning and Benediction**

May we leave this place by a different road,  
**a road littered with those left aside by our world.**

May we leave this place by a different road,  
**a road Jesus calls us to travel,**  
**a road of service to the lonely and frightened and despairing.**

May we leave this place by a different road,  
**a road shown to us by the Spirit,**  
**a road we walk with those we share this world,**  
**a road of God's wonder and grace.**

**Response: VU 62** "Once in Royal David's City" vs 4

And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child who seemed so helpless  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

**Postlude:** "In the Bleak Midwinter" By: Gustav Holst Arranged by: Grenadine Johnson

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **ALL:**

Rev. Mark will be on vacation Monday, January 16 – Sunday, January 22.  
For pastoral emergencies: Dorchester, please contact Mary Dillon at 519-878-7134,  
Union, please contact Tom Beecroft at 519-615-0281

### **UNION:**

Next week, January 8, we will be celebrating the baptism of Sullivan "Sully" Maunu.

The deadline for Annual Report submissions is January 25<sup>th</sup>.

Unified Board meets Wednesday, January 25 at 7 p.m.

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

(January 6, Epiphany)

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

(January 8, Baptism of Jesus)

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17