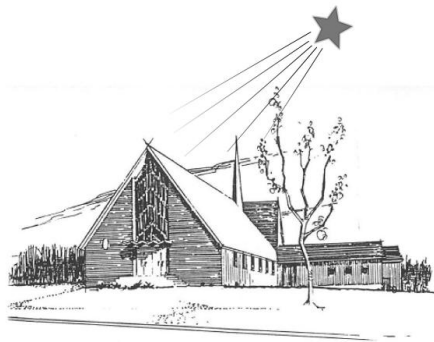


St. James United Church

December 24th, 2016/Christmas Eve/Communion



Merry Christmas to all;
on earth, peace, goodwill to all beings.

Minister:	Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald
Minister of Youth/Christian Education:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Acting Minister of Visitation:	Rev. Ettie Gordon-Murray
Organist:	Ashley Ruby
Choirs:	Youth and Senior
Band:	Sight Restored
Youth Choir Director:	Doreen Brown
Senior Choir Director:	Emma Clark

This bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of
parents, **Graham & Beatrice Pike, Capt. Stephen & Mrs.
Cecilia Penney** and **sister Bernice Pike**
from Adolphe & Minnie Penney.
And in loving memory of
parents **Winnie & Eric Parsons**
from Louise & Tom Harris.

Usher in Charge: David Hapgood

Greeters: Jennifer Tremblett, Claire Neary

Ushers: Phil Saunders, Kevin & Marilyn Pardy, Aubrey & Ruth Hill, Rev. Bill & Daphne Coish

Musical Prelude:

Sight Restored, Organ

Entry into the Celebration

Processional Hymn: *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

60

Welcome



Call to Worship

Opening Prayer: (together) Holy One, You gave us the gift of life, You put us in a stunning world, and You made us free to choose. In Jesus, Light of the World, You gave us new life and new hope for knowing You. May that Light shine through our choices, our words, and our acts, so that others will see You, source of Light and Love. Amen.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Anthem: *Still the Night*

Youth Choir

Carol: *What Child is This?*

74

Invitation to the Offering

Offering:

Sight Restored

Offering Hymn: to the tune of My Life Flows On
*Sheep softly bleat, the angels sing, wise men and shepherds seek Him.
The greatest gift we have received; a child born in Bethlehem.
With grateful and with humble hearts, these gifts we gladly offer,
to share God's love with all the earth, with Jesus Christ, our Saviour.*

Offering Dedication: (together) Many gifts are shared this evening, some hidden under shining trees, others tucked in socks and stockings. Receive all the gifts that are shared this night for Your work in the world. Bless the gifts and the givers. Bless the act of giving. Amen.

Hebrew Scripture:

Isaiah 9: 2,6

Anthem: *Noel*

Kelsey Brown and Douglas Matthews

Gospel:	Luke 2:1-3	<i>The census</i>
	Luke 2:4-6	<i>Mary's Journey</i>
	Luke 2:7	<i>The Bethel Inn</i>
	Luke 2:8-20	<i>The Shepherd</i>

Carol: *Angels We Have Heard on High* 38

Invitation to Ponder and Pray: (together) With another Christmas, we celebrate the gift of life itself and the gift of every resource that enhances life. Above all, we are thankful for the life and spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, for leading us to put our hope and trust in the spirit of life and love moving in the depths of our being. May we too be creators of a better world. May we find a good purpose and satisfaction in the life that we are given. May we leave behind us a trail of encouragement and hope. Amen.

Carol: *Silent Night, Holy Night* 67

Words of Blessing

Musical Interlude:

Carol: <i>Go, Tell It on the Mountain</i>	43
Carol: <i>Hark! the Herald Angels Sing</i>	48
Carol: <i>Gentle Mary Laid Her Child</i>	46
Carol: <i>See amid the Winter's Snow</i>	76
Carol: <i>'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime</i>	71

Welcome to those joining for Holy Communion



Call to Worship

Gathering Prayer: (together) O God of Love and Light, let us journey with Mary and Joseph to that little town of Bethlehem, to once again experience the birth of the Christ Child. Let us, like angels, proclaim this miraculous birth. O God let us, like the shepherds, offer our praise and adoration. Amen.

Carol: *In the Bleak Midwinter* 55

Scripture Reading: John 1: 1-18

Invitation to the Offering

Offering Hymn: same as page 2

Offering Prayer: (together) On this night of many gifts when the wondrous gift is given, receive what we have offered here and bless all those lives it touches, in the name of the Christ child, we pray. Amen.

Solo: *Believe* Sophie Fitzgerald

Invitation to Confession: Not all who heard of Jesus' birthLet us turn now, seeking to be freed from the powers and principalities. Let us join together in our prayer of confession:

Prayer of Confession: God, we confess that ours is still a world in which Herod seems to rule: the powerful are revered, the visions of the wise are ignored, the poor are afflicted, and the innocent are killed. You show us that salvation comes in the vulnerability of a child, yet we hunger for the 'security' of weapons and walls. You teach us that freedom comes in loving service, yet we trample on others in our efforts to be 'free.' Forgive us, God, when we look to the palace instead of the stable, when we heed politicians more than prophets. Renew us with the Spirit of Bethlehem that we may be better prepared for Your coming. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance: In the story of Christmas... .. Let us allow Christ to be born in us this night and always. Amen.

Anthem: *Once in Royal David's City* Senior Choir

Sacrament of Holy Communion: (Please see projected liturgy.)



Breaking of the Bread & Pouring of the Cup

Communion by Intinction

Prayer after Communion: (together) Holy God, on this wondrous night we have been fed by Your gifts of loaf and cup, of word and song, the gifts of one another's company and Your presence. May Your song be our song, and Your story weave with ours. O God of mystery, increase our holiness, we gratefully pray in the name of Your Christ child. Amen

Carol: *Joy to the World* 59

Blessing and Sending Forth followed by Musical Postlude