

St. James United Church

January 3, 2021/ Epiphany Sunday

Minister: Rev. Marion Davis
Minister of Youth/Christian Education: Susan Sheppard, DLM
Minister Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown
Music Director: Amy Dalziel
Assoc. Music Director: Branden Olsen

St. James United Church is a safe place for all people to worship, regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background or sexual orientation.

ORGAN PRELUDE

We Gather as God's People

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY/FIRST PEOPLES

LIGHTING OF CANDLE

WELCOME

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WORK

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Light shines in shadowed places.

All: Hope abounds where once there was fear.

One: God's Chosen One is born into our hearts.

All: We honour Jesus with gifts of devotion, love, and commitment.

One: And so, we worship with gladdened hearts and voices.

Laura Turnbull, Penticton, B.C. *Gathering 2020-21*

PRAYER OF APPROACH:

One: In the midst of shadows or dazzled by the glare of other lights

All: we are searching, Radiant One, for that which gives life and hope and joy.

One: Within this place and this people, this gospel and this grace

All: we encounter your call Emmanuel and warm to your light. Amen

Robin Wardlaw, Toronto, ON, *Gathering 2020-21*

HYMN: *A Light is Gleaming* VU 87

We Listen to and for God's Word

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION:

One: The scriptures proclaim to us the message of your light.

All: Loving and ever-present God shine your light on us so that we may discover and know your will for our lives. Amen

Beth W. Johnston, Nipawin, SK, *Gathering 2020-21*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

HYMN: *Spirit, Open My Heart* MV 79

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 2:1-12

We Respond to the Word

MEDITATION: "Reflection on the Word: 'Light and Life'"

MUSICAL INTERLUDE:

We Respond to God's Love

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

One: Come, O Holy One, be our light. Come, O Sovereign One, be our Guide.

**All: Receive our gifts. They are the work of our hands
and the commitment of our hearts.**

One: We bring not gold but money.

All: We bring not frankincense but our devotion.

One: We bring not myrrh but our lifelong dedication.

All: May we serve through these gifts with confidence and humility.

Laura Turnbull, Penticton, B.C. *Gathering 2020-21*

MUSICAL INTERLUDE:

We Celebrate Communion

Please refer to the laminated insert for this part of the service.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

God of new life, with joy we have received this bread and wine, giving you thanks for Jesus Christ, our peace and our hope. Unite us and your church throughout the world in continuing Christ's ministry of love and servanthood, that your name may be praised in all the earth. Amen

We Are Sent Forth to Live our Faith

HYMN: *As with Gladness Men of Old* VU 81
(masks on please)

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore your splendour see.

As with joyful steps they sped,
to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before
Christ, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with eager pace
ever seek your throne of grace.

As they offered gifts most rare
at that manger rude 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.

Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way; and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed lives at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds your glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright
none shall need created light;
you its light, its joy, its crown,
you its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing
hallelujah to our King.

COMMISSIONING:

As you resume your journey through life in faith, carry this Sunday of Epiphany and the epiphanies of the coming days with you, sharing the light of Christ with family, friends and strangers, neighbours everywhere.

George Allan, Chatham, ON in *Gathering* 2020-21

ORGAN POSTLUDE

Life and Work – January 3, 2021

We gratefully acknowledge a donation to Bridges to Hope from Sight Restored band in celebration of Douglas Matthews' graduation from The Atlantic Police Academy, Holland College, PEI. Douglas will serve with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC). Congratulations Douglas!

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations to the Bethany Danielle Pike Memorial Camp Fund:

*in loving memory of Bethany Pike from Fred & Pam Earle.

*in loving memory of Bethany from Kyle Winter.

We offer our condolences to Robert, Barry and Reg Mullett on the passing of their beloved father, Herb Mullett, on December 27. A private family service was held on December 30, live streamed on Barrett's Funeral Home website.

A Message from SuAn:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

“For everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to harvest..... a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing....”

My time in the role of office secretary/administrator at St. James has come to an end after a span of 7 years, which my brother (Michael James) feels to be very biblical. There is sadness on leaving a job I had come to love, yet happiness at the thought of trying something new, whatever that may be, just knowing that life is unfolding exactly as it should.

In those 7 years as secretary, I have listened to and kept your secrets; as administrator, I have recorded your life changes, and as a fellow human being I have chatted with you about this and that, just only to

connect on that level of Consciousness which recognizes itself in another being. St. James calls it the passing of the peace; it is the meaning of the Hindi greeting: "namaste."

Much could be said about those 7 years, so I'll just sum it up in a tribute that illustrates the spirit of St. James that I have come to know and love:

Philip Saunders was the first person I met when I began my new job at St. James back in 2013. He was helping out with the Kiwanis festival at the time, and little did I know how often our paths would cross in the coming years.

I got to know him as Phil, a pure soul with a kind and generous heart who was a friend to everyone he met. He was a staunch supporter and elder of the church, but not just on Sundays. He loved to visit during the week and hang out with whomever was in the building, finding his joy in the company of friends in faith.

His commitment to God never wavered. Every Thursday morning, he would give me a call to see if Sunday's bulletin was ready for him to proof read. He became a part of the editing group, with him and I spending many a morning discussing English grammar - the decline of the adverb, the beauty of the comma - and no morning was without a story, a chuckle and a wonder at life.

A testament to his devotion was that on the first Sunday he failed to attend the Worship Service, folks were convinced they had seen him "just now, maybe in the parking lot, maybe in the Auditorium." He passed away on September 17. I know how pleased he would be that Robin has taken on the Memory Tree and Hymn Sing, both a huge part of his offering to God.

The whole world appears to be in a state of flux; it is a good time for change - whether that be the decision to exercise a bit more, or something deeper, such as a belief that needs to be examined in the light of 2020's demands. Change is the nature of life, but as friends in faith, in our practice, we are able to discover and embrace the changeless Being that lies in our hearts. We find the harmony in the chaos: chaos abounds, yet harmony continues; the storm rages and the tree bends.

I thank each and every one of you with whom I have had the great pleasure of meeting, and know that you stay on the 'sunny side', as our Guitar Group so well reminds us.

At this time of no embracing, I hold you all in my heart and send you "Good Wishes for the Twelve Days of Christmas" from The Legend of the Christmas Prayer by Brian Morgan.

I wish you a beautiful day,
SuAn