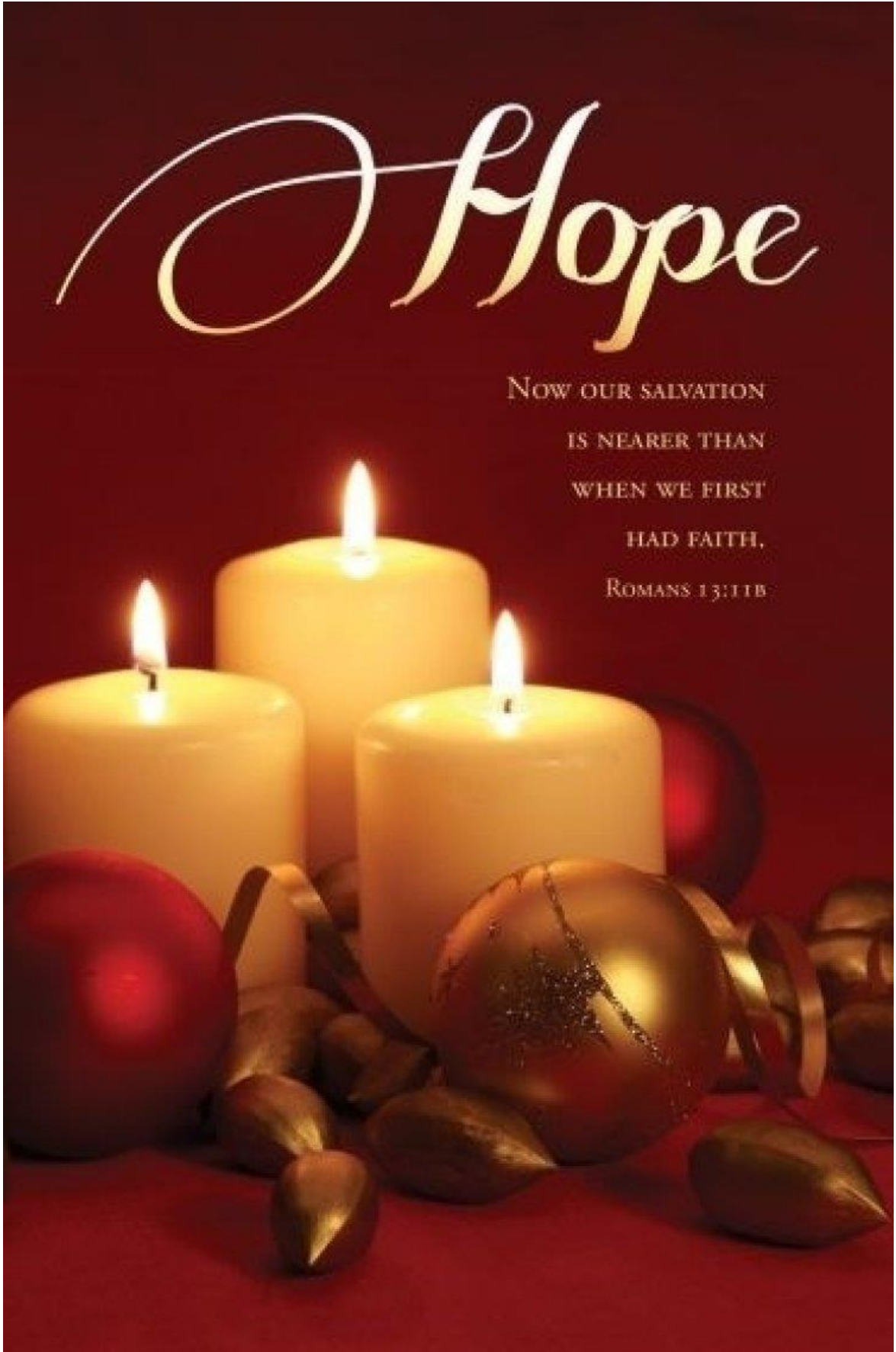


St. James United Church
A Community of Friends in Faith
330 Elizabeth Ave, St. John's, NL, A1B 1T9
Celebration of Worship for December 3, 2023

Hope

NOW OUR SALVATION
IS NEARER THAN
WHEN WE FIRST
HAD FAITH.
ROMANS 13:11B



Dedicated in Loving Memory of our Mother:
Roma Paul
(November 30, 1938 - April 27, 2013)
From: Nancy & Anthony
“Mom left a legacy of love and kindness; she personified
the Christmas spirit.”

December 3, 2023 – First Sunday of Advent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading Music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and Senior Choir
Ushers: Clyde Flight, Bill Legge, Marilyn Adams, Jean Thompson,
and Susan Pike

*Please rise in body or in spirit where there is an *.*

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME

We extend words of greeting in Innu-aimun, French and Bangla.

INTROIT: “Maranatha” (MV #19)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP

We give thanks for the land and the Indigenous peoples who steward it and pledge to be a safer and inclusive space for everyone.

* **HYMN:** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (VU 1, v. 1, 2, 5 and 6)

HONOURING THE GIFT OF LENGTHENING NIGHTS

We acknowledge the lengthening night with a time of quiet reflection.

A POETIC WORD: “Waiting” by Rabindranath Tagore

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Reader 1: As we gather on this first Sunday of Advent, we read again of how God's people waited for the coming of the Messiah.

Reader 2: This time of waiting for us, as we prepare not only to celebrate the birth of Jesus but for its meaning to be fulfilled and all of the human family walks together in the light of God's grace.

Reader 1: As part of this time, we light a candle, the flickering of the flame reminding us to wait in active hope of Christ's coming.

All: Holy One, through your Spirit you spoke to prophets, and the people prayed and waited for a Messiah to come. Through your Spirit you also spoke to Mary and Joseph, and they responded and waited for their child to be born. Through your Spirit, you speak to each of us, gifting us in love. Through that same Spirit, reveal your presence in what we do, as we wait to celebrate the coming of your Emmanuel. Amen.

REFRAIN: "We Wait for God" (*Words: William S. Kervin, 2023; Music: Deborah Park and Tom Reynolds, 2023*)

**We wait for God, creation longs to see a new day dawn.
And though the night is dark and deep
we dare to sing our song. We wait for God,
creation longs, we dare to sing our song.**

We Share

OUR LIFE AND WORK

We acknowledge the connection between our work and worship as we announce what is going on in our congregation and community.

OFFERTORY: *There are many ways to share your financial gifts with St. James United Church. There are plates as you enter the church in which to place your offering, you may contribute by pre-authorized remittance (PAR), via e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), sent through the website (www.stjamesuc.org), mailed to the church office or dropped into our secure mailbox. In whatever way you give, the community is grateful.*

* **PRESENTATION HYMN:** *We dedicate our offerings to the word of God's love as we sing "In the Bleak Midwinter" (Voices United 55 v. 4.)*

**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.**

We Listen

PRAYER OF AWAKENING

READINGS: *As each reading concludes, please say, "Thank be to God."*

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80 (VU p. 794, Part One); Luke 1:26-38

ANTHEM: "The Angel Gabriel", traditional Basque, arr. Pettman.

REFLECTION FOLLOWING THE READINGS

We Respond

* **HYMN:** "O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts" (*Voices United 472*)

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

One: Jesus came to bring God's hope and peace to the world.

All: In table fellowship may we know his joy and his love.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: God is here.

All: God is within and around us.

One: Open your hearts.

All: We gladly open them to God.

One: Let us give thanks.

All: It is good to give thanks and praise.

One: It is good to praise you, God of promise, as we gather on this Advent morning. We thank you for Jesus: born in Bethlehem, proclaimed by the Baptizer, bearer of good news for the world.

All: We give thanks too for the words of prophets, for the courage of Mary and Joseph, for the song of the angels.

One: With them we raise our own voices in praise:

All sing: Holy, holy, holy! My Heart, my heart adores you!

My heart is glad to say the words, You are holy God!

Holy, holy, holy. Hosanna in the highest!

Let all creation praise and pray: Save us holy God!

One: God of hope we give thanks, for the child born to us did not stay in a manger but grew in wisdom and announced your reign.

He grew up to heal the tormented, confront the powers, and make present your mercy.

Arrested for his witness to your truth, he was put to death; in fulfillment of your promise, you raised him to life.

All: We give thanks for his birth long ago; for his life of hope and teachings of love, teachings lived out profoundly at table.

One: He embodied these teachings on the night before he died. Gathered with his friends, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is my body, given for you."

In the same way he took a cup at the end of the meal, and after blessing it, gave it to them saying, "This is a sign of the new covenant in my life's blood. Whenever you do this, remember me."

God of peace, we remember as we gather around this table, open to your presence as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**All: Christ has died, is risen, will come again to meet us;
And walks with us the Way of his love. Holy kingdom, come!**

One: God of wisdom, open our hearts to the presence of your Spirit flowing within us and through these gifts. As you touched Mary and Jesus with Spirit's breath, so fill us with your power.

All: Renew us through this holy meal and send us pregnant with your grace to bear your love to the world.

One: Holy One we give you praise. Creator God, we praise you, through Your Word made flesh, in the power of your life-giving Spirit, now and forever.

**All sing: Holy, holy, holy. Amen we pray, with longing.
Let all creation cry Amen! Holy kingdom, come!**

THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(based on the original Aramaic):*

Radiant One: your Name shines within us, outside us - even darkness shines in you. Create your reign now, that your one desire acts with ours. Grant what we need each day in bread and insight. Forgive our hidden past, our secret shames, as we forgive what others hide. Keep us from forgetfulness, the temptation of false appearances and free us to walk your path with light and joy. For from you arises every vision; to you returns the birthing glory of the cosmos. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *(in unison)*

God of grace, we give thanks for love revealed in Mary's child, experienced anew through bread and wine. Strengthen us that we may be Advent people, sharing the gift of your love. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

* **HYMN:** "All Earth Is Waiting" *(Voices United 5)*

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

One: Go forth in hope, waiting for the One we call Emmanuel!

All: We go, blessed in the assurance that God is with us!

POSTLUDE

We accept the following donation to the General Fund:

* In memory of David Hapgood from Menetha and Sidney Dyke

We thank the AOTS for their donation to St. James

Tapestry Eventide Service in December: This month's service is two weeks early so it doesn't get bumped by Christmas. This Christmas comes early service will be on Dec. 10 at 7 pm. We are reflecting on Christmases past so bring a tree ornament or other object with a Christmas memory. We will also share refreshments.

Young Adult Christmas Gathering on December 14: James and Glen will be hosting a pre-Christmas party at their home at 7 pm on December 14. Wear an ugly holiday sweater and come watch Holiday TV classics. BYO-Treats!

St. James Christmas Bake Sale and Luncheon: Don't have time to bake your Christmas cookies, cakes or treats? Let us help you out! On **Sunday, December 17th from 12:30 to 2:30 pm**, we will be hosting a Christmas Bake sale, including breads, cookies, homemade fudge and more. Lunch we will be serving, baked beans, soup, hot dogs and muffins for \$8.00 per person. We hope to see you all there. We are accepting donations for the bake sale on Saturday evening Dec 16th from 4 - 6 pm. All donations are welcome.

Waterwerks Annual Christmas Diaper Drop: WaterWerks is collecting donations for their Annual Christmas Diaper Drop. Diapers can be dropped off at 96 LeMarchant Road, or you can donate online at diaperdrop.ca. All proceeds will be going to the Community Food Sharing Association

White Gift Sunday: It's the time of year for generosity and giving to those in need. As usual, St. James is collecting donations for Stella's Circle's clients! Donations can be made to St. James United Church Office. We will bring to Stella's Circle directly. This year's White Gift Sunday is scheduled for Sunday, December 10. Please see list:

Household Items

- * Dishes, Pots & Pans, Frying Pans (non-stick)
- * Utensils & Serving Utensils
- * Cutting Board, Dish Racks
- * Kettle, Toaster, Electric Mixer, Can Opener
- * Plastic Mixing Bowls
- * Dish & Pot Cloths
- * Bed Sheets (Different Sizes)
- * Cups, Mugs, Glasses
- * Pie Plates, Casserole Dishes, Baking Sheets, Cake Pans
- * Blanket & Pillows, Throw Blankets

- * Bath Towels, Hand Towels, Face Cloths
- * Mops, Bucket, Brooms, Garbage Bags
- * Basic Household Cleaners, Lysol Wipes
- * Laundry Detergent, Dish Liquid
- * Light Bulbs, batteries, candles
- * Hand Sanitizer, dish liquid
- * Paper Towels & Toilet Paper

Personal Care Items (for all adults)

- * Dry Shampoo
- * Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Body Wash, Deodorant
- * Hairbrushes, Combs, Hair Elastics
- * Hair Spray, Hair Moose, Hair Gels
- * Shaving Cream, Razors
- * Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Dental Floss, Q-tips, tweezers
- * Feminine Hygiene Products
- * Face Cleanser (ex. Cetaphil), Make-up Wipes, lip balm
- * Nail Care Items (Clippers, Nail File)

Other Helpful Items (for all adults)

- * Socks, Underwear, Slippers
- * Footwear (indoor & outdoor)
- * Pajamas/pajama bottoms XS-5X
- * Winter coats, Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Scarves
- * Leggings of all sizes
- * Movie Passes, Gift Cards, Colouring Books, Games

St. James Christmas Worship Services:

December 3 - Communion 11:00 am, Eventide Taizé 7:00 pm

December 10 - White Gift 11:00 am, Eventide Tapestry 7:00 pm

December 17 - Senior Choir 11:00 am, Eventide Celtic Vespers 7:00 pm

December 24 - 11:00 am Communion, 4:30 pm Family Service, 7:00 pm Candlelight Service

December 31 - 11:00 am Guitar Group and NO Eventide



MEMORY CHRISTMAS TREE FORM

At this time of the year, thoughts of our loved ones are never far from our minds. One of the ways we acknowledge this is through the Memory Tree. For a donation, a coloured bulb will be changed to a white one in memory or in celebration of loved ones. We often think of this in terms remembering those who have died but we also may have happy memories that we want to acknowledge, like the birth of a child, a graduation or perhaps an important anniversary. The money raised through your gift helps to fund the many projects and activities that make St. James the vibrant faith community we love. Please have your request into the office by noon on Friday, December 15 for inclusion in the Christmas Eve bulletin insert. Best wishes for a Christmas of peace, love and joy!

Donor's Name(s):

In Memory or Celebration of:

Address:

Donation \$ _____

Cochrane Street United Christmas Worship Services:

December 3 - 11:00 am Advent service plus baptism.

December 10 - 11:00 am Lessons and Carols - led by the choir & congregation.

December 17 - 11:00 am Advent service led by Rev. Karen.

December 24 - 11:00 am service with Communion led by Rev. Karen.

Topsail United Christmas Bake and Craft Sale: Topsail United Church Coffee Group will be holding a Christmas Bake and Craft Sale on Saturday December 9 from 10 until 1 P.M, in the Church Hall. All are Welcome.

First United Church Breakfast with Santa: Yay! We are happy to be able to have our Breakfast with Santa back again this year after the long Covid period. Bring the whole family on Saturday, December 9th from 8 - 10 am. We will be serving pancakes, sausages, toast, juice, tea and coffee. No presale tickets, just pay at the door, only \$8 for adults and \$5 for children.

Cowan Heights United Church Breakfast with Santa: Join us for pancakes and bacon and a visit from jolly old Saint Nick on Saturday, December 9th at 10am. Admission by Donation. RSVP no later than Tuesday, December 5th at Noon by emailing: office@cowanheightsunited.ca or calling (709) 745-2871.